

Board of Supervisors - December 13, 2018 Regular Meeting

The Wise County Board of Supervisors met in a Regular Meeting on Thursday, December 13, 2018 at 6:00 PM in the School Board Education Center located at 628 Lake Street in Wise. The following members were present:

Honorable Dana G. Kilgore – Chair
Honorable Robert E. Robbins, Jr. – Vice-Chair
Honorable J. H. Rivers
Honorable John Schoolcraft
Honorable Fred Luntsford
Honorable Bobby Cassell
Honorable Steve Bates
Honorable Robert R. Adkins – members of said Board and
Michael W. Hatfield – County Administrator
Karen T. Mullins – County Attorney
Annette Underwood – Executive Secretary

PRAYER

Bob Adkins led in prayer.

PLEDGE

All led in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

AGENDA

Chair Kilgore asked that the following items be added to the agenda:

- Appointment to the RIFA Board
- Presentation by SWVA EMS Council

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by J. H. Rivers to approve the agenda as presented to include the two items as noted. The motion was unanimously approved.

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

None

IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING – TAX EXEMPT ORDINANCE –ANIMAL RESCUE COALITION

A public hearing was set for this date to receive citizens' comments on a proposed Tax Exempt Ordinance for Wise County Animal Rescue Coalition.

There being no public comments, the public hearing was closed.

IN RE: SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT – RE-ACCREDITATION

Chief Rick Arnold from Wytheville Police Department presented Sheriff Ronnie Oakes and Assistant Sheriff Colonel Grant Kilgore with the Sheriff's Department's 5th Re-Accreditation Certificate from Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission.

Lt. Teresa Meade provided the Board with a brief overview of the accreditation process.

Colonel Grant Kilgore addressed the Board regarding grants that are applied for by the Sheriff's Department for the purpose of purchasing equipment and supplies that are needed.

Commonwealth Attorney Chuck Slemo presented Sheriff Oakes with a Plaque of Appreciation for his public service and for being the oldest and longest serving Sheriff in Wise County history.

Circuit Court Judge Chad Dotson presented a court order stating that a picture of Sheriff Ronnie Oakes be placed in the hall of the Courthouse for his outstanding services to Wise County and for being the oldest and longest serving Sheriff in Wise County history.

IN RE: BALLAD HEALTH

Mark Leonard, Norton Community Hospital Chief Executive, addressed the Board to assure them that Ballad Health System's proposal to restructure trauma care in Southwest Virginia will not cause harm to emergency patients. He explained that Ballad has been a help in time of need for the smaller hospitals in the region that are having financial difficulties not to mention needed equipment and renovating a long-term care unit.

Eric Deaton, Ballad Health Senior Vice- President, gave a brief overview of Ballad Health's plans to integrate trauma care, with Johnson City remaining at Level 1 while the Kingsport and Bristol facilities change to Level 111. He also mentioned the plans for a new pediatric trauma center that will be built at Niswonger Children's Hospital in Johnson City and new pediatric emergency rooms and specialties will be established at Bristol and Holston Valley. Johnson City has been chosen to remain Level 1 because it is one of Tennessee's certified "safety net" hospitals in times of disaster and because it is physically closest to the Niswonger pediatric trauma center.

Mr. Deaton noted that Ballad intends to establish a new emergency call center that will coordinate the region's emergency medical service communications. There are other planned changes to develop a Regional EMS Steering Committee, and helicopter transport.

Supervisor Luntsford stated that his local EMS personnel are concerned with these changes. He feels these changes will put an additional burden on EMS providers to make decisions about where to take a patient.

Johnson City Medical Center trauma surgeon Dr. Bracken Burns stated that Ballad will provide EMS personnel with better resources, additional education, and a better system overall.

Tim Bradshaw, a resident of Tennessee, voiced his concerns as to why these changes would not be good for Wise County. He noted also that if some part of Ballad operations becomes a public disadvantage, Virginia and Tennessee authorities can step in and help. He asked the Board to adopt a resolution opposing these changes.

Dr. Mickey Spivey, a retired Kingsport emergency physician said he supports the pediatric upgrade plans, but he believes downgrading Bristol and Kingsport's trauma ratings would not be in the best interest of the citizens. With our rugged terrain and bad weather conditions, it would be very difficult to get a lot of patients to a proper facility quick enough to avoid lost-time complications. He also mentioned that almost two-thirds of Ballad's service area is closer to Holston Valley than Johnson City. Removing several specialty providers would reduce Ballad's costs but increase the patient's costs. A trauma center is a commitment to save lives. He suggested that the Board tell Ballad to operate Holston Valley and Bristol as Level 11 facilities instead of Level 111.

IN RE: SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA EMS COUNCIL

Dr. Gregory Wood Executive Director of the Southwest Virginia EMS Council stated that the Southwest Virginia EMS Council is one of eleven regional EMS councils designated by the Virginia Board of Health to oversee regional EMS system coordination and development. In addition to developing regional patient care protocols, they lead regional EMS planning efforts including development patient destination plans for trauma, stroke, cardiac care, and mass casualties. Southwest Virginia EMS Council was founded in 1979 and has been leading EMS system development efforts since that time, and is also the region's leading provider of continuing education and cardiovascular care training for EMS providers in Virginia (and parts of Tennessee).

Dr. Wood provided background information on the Statewide Emergency Medical Services Plan, the Trauma Triage Plan, and the Stroke Triage Plan. He also provided background information on the regional Prehospital and Interhospital Trauma/Triage Plan that was adopted by the Southwest Virginia EMS Council Board of Directors in 2017, and utilizes the CDC Guideline for Field Triage of Injured Patients that was revised in 2011 with minor modifications.

He reviewed the regional call volume, which shows the potential impact of changes in trauma center designation from an EMS perspective

Currently, there are no changes to regional transport guidelines. EMS agencies should continue making transport destinations using the current guideline. Current guidelines stay in effect until revised by the Southwest Virginia EMS Council. Under proposed changes, the total patients impacted can be anticipated based on call data provided.

Southwest Virginia EMS Council is developing a Needs Assessment Tool to further determine anticipated impact. The assessment will involve both agencies and hospitals to determine capabilities and identify needs. The Council remains a resource to EMS agencies and localities for identifying and addressing challenges/concerns.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Ms. Smith, a former nurse of Wellmont, felt that this merger would bring a loss of business for our transport agencies, and job loss for our health care workers, some of which work two jobs.

There being no further public comments, the public expression period was closed.

IN RE: CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Bob Adkins, seconded by Robby Robbins, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

IN RE: APPROPRIATIONS THIRD QUARTER

Approved the third quarter appropriations

IN RE: TREASURER TO OPEN MONEY MARKET ACCOUNT

Authorize the Treasurer to open a Money Market Account at Powell Valley National Bank

The motion to approve the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

IN RE: PROPERTY MAINTENANCE ORDINANCE

A motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by J. H. Rivers, to set a public hearing for January 10, 2019 @ 6:00 PM in the School Board Education Center to receive citizens' comments regarding adoption of a Property Maintenance Ordinance for Wise County. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: ORDINANCE TAX EXEMPT STATUS – ANIMAL RESCUE COALITION

A public hearing was duly held on December 13, 2018 to receive citizens' comments regarding a proposed Tax Exempt Ordinance for Wise County Animal Rescue Coalition. There were no public comments regarding the proposed ordinance.

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to approve the Tax Exempt Ordinance for the Wise County Animal Rescue Coalition as requested. The motion was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE # 2018

(Said ordinance is on file in the County Administrator's Office)

IN RE: THOMPSON & LITTON MOU#19

A motion was made by John Schoolcraft, seconded by Robby Robbins, to authorize the execution of Thompson and Litton's MOU #19 for preparation of the 2018 Annual Groundwater Report. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: SIGNING OF CHECKS

A motion was made by John Schoolcraft, seconded by Robby Robbins, to authorize Chair Kilgore to sign checks until the new signature plates arrive for the 2019 Chairman. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: BUDGET AMENDMENTS

A motion was made by Bob Adkins, seconded by Robby Robbins, to approve budget amendment #11 thru #14. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – COMMUNITY POLICY AND MANAGEMENT BOARD

Bobby Cassell nominated Cynthia Jessee for re-appointment to the Community Policy and Management Board. Robby Robbins made a motion that nominations cease and Cynthia Jessee be re-appointed by acclamation. Steve Bates seconded the motion.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers, seconded by Bob Adkins, to table the appointment to Redevelopment and Housing Authority until next month. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL FACILITY AUTHORITY

A motion was made by Dana Kilgore, seconded by Robby Robbins, to appoint Michael W. Hatfield to fill the unexpired term of Dana G. Kilgore on the Regional Industrial Facility Authority. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

A motion was made by John Schoolcraft, seconded by Robby Robbins, to set the Organizational Meeting for Thursday, January 10, 2019 @ 5:50 PM at the School Board Education Center located at 628 Lake Street in Wise. The motion was unanimously approved.

BOARD COMMENTS

Supervisor Rivers had several items of concern.

- The need for power companies to do proper tree removal from power lines
- Need to move quickly on finding a place for Social Services
- Need to look at policy for upkeep on subdivision roads
- Wants to keep updated on fund balance
- Questioned the status of the audit
- Concerns with Ballad Health merger

Supervisor Schoolcraft was concerned about the financial impact and loss of jobs with the Ballad Health merger. He also agreed that the Board needs to move quickly on finding a place for Social Services.

Supervisor Luntsford was getting complaints about 4-wheelers riding on the grounds of the Stephens Community Center and tearing up the playground area.

Supervisor Bates stated that he gets calls for maintenance/gravel on trailer parks roads and subdivision roads that are privately owned, and not eligible for gravel.

Supervisor Robbins voiced his concerns on the following:

- Appalachian Power Company's power outages are frequent, and need some type of backup source
- Complaints continue with Comcast
- Power company needs to cut trees cutting near power lines
- Concerns on Ballad Health merger

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by Fred Luntsford, to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. The motion was unanimously approved.

ATTEST:

WISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Michael W. Hatfield, Clerk

Chairman