

Board of Supervisors – March 11, 2021 Regular Meeting

Memo for Record: The regular BOS meeting scheduled for February 11, 2021 was cancelled due to bad weather.

The Wise County Board of Supervisors met in a Regular Meeting on Thursday, March 11, 2021 @ 6:00 pm in the School Board Education Center located at 628 Lake Street in Wise, VA. The following members were present:

Honorable J. H. Rivers, Chairman
Honorable Steve Bates – Vice- Chairman
Honorable Fred Luntsford
Honorable Bobby Cassell
Honorable John Schoolcraft
Honorable Robert R. Adkins
Honorable James Lawson (By Phone)
Honorable Robert E. Robbins, Jr. – 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 Organizational meeting minutes of January 14, 2021, the Regular Board meeting minutes of January 14, 2021 and the Planning Workshop meeting of February 17, 2021 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

AGENDA

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to approve the agenda as presented to include items in red. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING – 1% INCREASE IN FY 2020/21 BUDGET

A public hearing was duly advertised for this date to receive citizens input on a proposed 1% increase in the County's FY 2020/21 budget.

There being no public comments regarding the proposed increase, the public hearing was closed.

IN RE: AUDIT REPORT ENDING JUNE 30, 2020

Emily Viers, CPA, representing Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associated provided the Board with a brief overview of the County's basic financial statements for year ending June 30, 2020. The audit has been completed with a clean opinion, which means that the books and records are in good order under the quality of standards and in general compliance.

IN RE: COMMUNITY REMEMBRANCE PROJECT

Preston Mitchell, an Episcopal Priest, and members of the Community Remembrance Project, addressed the Board requesting permission to place a historical marker outside of the Wise County Courthouse to commemorate the three (3) lynchings that took place in Wise County from 1902 through 1927. The back of the sign will be scripted with the help of the Equal Justice Initiative and will talk about Wise County lynchings in the context of Lynching in Virginia and the US. It will also say that the history of lynching must be revealed, understood and acknowledged to begin the healing process so that lynching's legacy can be recognized. There will be no cost to the County.

Stephany Cassell, Rev. Sandra Jones and Marcia Mitchell voiced their support for placing the historical marker at the Courthouse as part of our history.

IN RE: MARK III BROKERAGE, INC– EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Jon Manfull, Senior Benefits Consultant for Mark III Brokerage, Inc, provided a power point overview on Mark III Employee Benefits that was founded on the values of honesty, integrity and hard work. He explained that through an educational format, Mark III non-commissioned benefits counselors, customize plans for employees and their families based on their needs. Mark III has assembled a team consisting of expert finance officers, insurance carrier representatives, underwriters, and former top school officials. They each work for the employer and employee to provide the best insurance solutions possible. Mark III is committed to providing benefits for the employees and employers. As an independent broker, Mark III works for the customer and not any single insurance company, which enables them to provide the best products available at the highest level of customer service.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Walter Crouse, a resident of the Hurricane section of Wise County, made comments on the following:

- Adopt a resolution restricting illegal immigrants from coming to SW Virginia
- Open schools – remote schooling is a disaster for the children and our nation
- Start a regional recycling effort
- No increase in the upcoming 2021/22 budget

Stephany Kerns, a resident of Big Stone Gap, expressed her desire to be of assistance in serving on a committee for those programs that may be funded by the CARES Act funds.

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

IN RE: CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by John Schoolcraft, seconded by Steve Bates, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

IN RE: APPROPRIATIONS 4TH QTR

Approved the 4th quarter appropriations

IN RE: CONDITIONAL REZONING – DORCHESTER ROAD – SET PUBLIC HEARING

Set a public hearing (4-8-2021 @ 6:00 pm) on a proposed conditional rezoning of property located at 4445 Dorchester Road Norton, VA

IN RE: MEMORIAL BRIDGE – SET PUBLIC HEARING

Set a public hearing (4-8-2021 @ 6:00 pm) on naming of bridge in Esserville, VA

IN RE: RESOLUTION (AMENDED) COAL ROAD COMMITTEE ANNUAL PLAN FOR ROADS & BRIDGES (6-30-21)

Adopted the amended resolution approving the Coal Road Committee Annual Plan for Roads & Bridges (7-1-20 thru 6-30-2021)

Resolution # 3-2021

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

IN RE: RESOLUTION COAL ROAD COMMITTEE ANNUAL PLAN FOR ROADS & BRIDGES (6-30-22)

Approved the resolution of the Coal Road Committee's Annual Plan for roads & bridges

(7-1-21 thru 6-30-22)

Resolution # 4-2021

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

IN RE: RESOLUTION SUPPORTING HOUSE BUDGET AMENDMENT & SENATE BUDGET AMENDMENT

Ratified Resolution supporting House and Senate Budget Amendments (Item 69#3h & 68#2h)

Resolution # 5-2021

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

IN RE: MOU - DATA CENTER EQUIPMENT TAX RATE

Ratified adopting an MOU for the purpose of establishing an equitable and competitive data center equipment tax rate and depreciation schedule to be implemented within the LP Regional Industrial Facilities Authority region.

The motion to approve the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

IN RE: COUNTY FY 2020/21 BUDGET - 1% INCREASE

A public hearing was held on March 11, 2021 to receive citizens input on a proposed 1% increase in the County's FY 2020/21 budget. There were no public comments on the proposed increase.

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to approve the 1% increase to the County's FY 2020/21 budget as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: AUDIT REPORT – ENDING JUNE 30, 2020

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to accept the County's FY 2020 audit report ending June 30 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

Supervisor Robbins asked that the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding recreational vehicles be tabled for further information.

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to table any action on amending the Zoning Ordinance for further information. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: FAIR HOUSING ANNUAL ACTIVITY 2021

The following items regarding the Fair Housing Annual Activity in support of CDBG requirements were reviewed and discussed by the Wise County Board of Supervisors:

- Wise County endorses a commitment to Fair Housing practices
- Wise County endeavors to ensure equal opportunity to all persons residing in Wise County to live in decent housing
- Wise County prohibits discrimination in the sale, purchase, rental, or financing of housing against any person based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, familiar status, disability, veteran status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or source of funds
- The Wise County Administrator is the designated authority for investigating all complaints of Fair Housing discrimination
- Wise County must keep aware of these provisions of Fair Housing in our County
- This item on the agenda is presented as an annual activity in support of Community Development Block Grant-funded projects in Wise County
- Does anyone have any questions or comments concerning this topic? (There were no questions or comments from the Board)

IN RE: CONTRACT FOR BROKER SERVICES OF VOLUNTARY SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS

A motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to approve the contract agreement between Wise County and Mark 111 Brokerage, Inc., for Broker services of Voluntary Supplemental Benefits for Wise County effective July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 and thereafter the contract is renewable on an annual basis, if agreeable by both parties, not to exceed five years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: PRE-AUDIT SERVICES AGREEMENT – HICOK, BROWN & COMPANY

Administrator Hatfield stated that Treasurer Delores Smith has stepped down from doing pre-audit services for Wise County, and she has recommended the Firm of Hicok, Brown & Company as a possible replacement to fill that position.

He introduced Karen Jackson and Michael Pennington, representatives of Hicok, Brown & Company, that were present to answer any questions the Board may have regarding their pre-audit services.

Ms. Jackson & Mr. Pennington provided the Board with a brief overview of Hicok, Brown & Company's services and its goal to build long term relationships with its clients.

HBC CPAs offer a wide array of accounting services including tax planning and preparation, consulting, business valuations, accounting, audit, reviews and compilations, payroll processing, bill payment services, business advisory services and litigations, to mention a few. HBC CPAs' strength is derived from its belief in teamwork, integrity, and assisting its clients to achieve their financial goals.

The firm is responsible for providing the accounting and consulting services requested. The Firm may also report or otherwise communicate to the County's management any recommendations it determines necessary resulting from the accounting and consulting services provided.

After further discussion, a motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to approve the Pre-audit Services Agreement between Wise County and Hicok, Brown & Company for pre-audit services for the years ended June 30, 2021 through June 30, 2023. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: BUDGET COMMITTEE

Chairman Rivers stated that he would like for all Board members to participate in preparing the upcoming budget: each member's input is important. It was suggested that the committee meet in the County Administrator's conference room on Tuesday, March 23, 2021 and Monday, April 5, 2021 from 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm to discuss the upcoming budget.

IN RE: SETTING PROPERTY TAX

Administrator Hatfield stated that since the County does not have its budget for FY 2021/22 prepared at this time, he suggested setting a public hearing for April at which time the Board will have met to discuss the budget and have a feel as to whether or not a tax increase is necessary.

After discussion, a motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to set a public hearing on April 8, 2021 @ 6:00 pm for the purpose of setting the property tax rate if needed. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: BUDGET AMENDMENTS

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Bob Adkins, to approve budget amendments #23-25 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

A motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by Bob Adkins, to table the Social Services Board appointment until next month. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – MECC

A motion was made by Bobby Cassell, seconded by Fred Luntsford, to table the appointment to MECC until next month. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – BUILDING CODE AND APPEALS BOARD

A motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to re-appoint Terry Mullins to the Building Code and Appeals for a term of five (5) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT -ROUNDTABLE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Robby Robbins nominated Greg Cross for re-appointment to the Roundtable Executive Board.

Fred Luntsford made a motion that nominations cease, and Greg Cross be re-appointed by acclamation. Bobby Cassell seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to re-appoint Charles Miller to the Social Services Board for a term of four (4) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – COMMUNITY POLICY & MANAGEMENT BOARD

A motion was made by Bob Adkins, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to re-appoint Michael Hatfield to the Community Policy & Management Board for a term of four (4) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

Robby Robbins nominated Glenda Collins for re-appointment to the Community Policy & Management Board.

John School made a motion that nominations cease, and Glenda Collins be re-appointed by acclamation. Steve Bates seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT - RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY

A motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by Bob Adkins, to re-appoint Robin Dotson to the Recreational Authority for a term of four (4) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to re-appoint Brian Falin to the Recreational Authority for a term of four (4) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by John Schoolcraft, to go into closed session as permitted by the Code of Virginia per the following Code Sections:

- Section 2.2-3711 (A)(6) Investing of public funds
- (A)(7) Consultation with legal counsel
- (A)(1) Personnel

Tim Collins was invited into closed session.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Following closed session, a motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to reconvene the regular meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Administrator Hatfield left the meeting at this time.

IN RE: RESOLUTION CERTIFYING CLOSED MEETING

Fred Luntsford read the certification for closed meeting.

A motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by J. H. Rivers, to approve the resolution certifying that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard or discussed by the Board of Supervisors. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Resolution # 6 – 2021

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

BOARD COMMENTS

There were few comments from Board members.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, a motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

ATTEST:

WISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Michael W. Hatfield, Clerk

J. H. Rivers, Chairman