

Meeting of the Hoke County Board of Commissioners on Monday, August 15, 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Commissioners Room of the Pratt Building.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Harry Southerland, Vice Chairman
Robert Wright
Allen Thomas, Jr.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Letitia Edens, County Manager
Grady Hunt, County Attorney
Gwen McGougan, Clerk to the Board

MEMBERS ABSENT:

James Leach, Chairman
Tony Hunt

Vice Chairman Southerland called the meeting to order with a quorum present and welcomed everyone.

Commissioner Thomas gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The County Manager asked to add the Utility Services Agreement for Phase Two of Club Pond Green Apartments. Utilities Director Hilton Villines addressed the Board. This is an agreement for the County to provide water and sewer services to the second phase of Club Pond Green Apartments, a 24-unit complex located on the west side of Club Pond Road (SR 1408).

Motion: Commissioner Wright made a motion to add the Utility Services Agreement for Phase Two of Club Pond Green Apartments as Item 2e on the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

Action: The motion was approved 3-0.

Tax Collector Daphne Dudley asked the Board to add discussion of the foreclosed properties previously owned by Clinton McLaughlin to the agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Thomas made a motion to add discussion of the foreclosed properties previously owned by Clinton McLaughlin to the agenda as Item 3a, seconded by Commissioner Wright.

Action: The motion was approved 3-0.

Motion: Commissioner Wright made a motion to table Agenda Item 5 (Planning Board Reappointments) and Agenda Item 6 (Board of Adjustment Appointments/Reappointments) until the next meeting so that the full Board can be in attendance. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Southerland.

Action: The motion passed 2-1, with Commissioner Thomas dissenting.

ITEM 1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 2. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes from the July 18, 2016 meeting
- b. Minutes from the August 1, 2016 meeting
- c. NC Vehicle Tax System report
- d. Finance: Budget Amendment for new JCPC Program
- e. Utility Services Agreement for Phase Two of Club Pond Green Apartments

Motion: Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve items a-e on the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

Action: The motion passed 3-0.

ITEM 3. TAX COLLECTOR

HOKE COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT
8/15/2016

Tax Levy 2016	\$26,866,312.24
Additions to Levy YTD	\$4,041.15
Total 2016 Levy to Date	\$26,870,353.39
Refunds 2016	\$8,044.46
Releases/Abatements	\$0.00
Discounts	\$13,181.97
Adjustments	\$0.00
Write Offs	\$6.84
Advertising Charged 2016 Tax Bills	\$3.14
Collectable Levy to Date	\$26,870,353.39
Collected To Date	\$729,525.27
Uncollected Balance 2016 Tax Levy (1)	<u>\$26,140,828.12</u>
Collections July 2016	\$729,525.27
Releases July 2016	\$0.00
Percent of Levy Collected (Receipts)	2.71%

Percent of Levy Collected (Releases, Etc.)	0.00%
Prior Years Tax Levy July 1, 2016	\$2,681,435.95
Prior Years Collected in July 2016 To Date	\$92,189.87
Uncollected Balance Before Releases	\$2,589,246.08
Refunds	\$1,273.65
Releases/Abatements	\$22,855.29
Discounts	\$0.00
Adjustments	\$73.00
Write Offs/Insolvent	\$8.93
Uncollected Balance Prior Years (2)	<u>\$2,568,115.91</u>
Prior Years Collected in July 2016	\$92,189.87
Releases Prior Years July 2016	\$0.00
Percent Prior Years Collected (Receipts)	3.44%
Percent Prior Years Collected (Releases.Etc.)	0.85%
Total Uncollected Taxes (1+2)	<u>\$28,708,944.03</u>

2015 Taxes

Tax Levy July 2015	\$26,576,304.47
Collections July 2015	\$1,021,772.32
Releases July 2015	\$0.00
Percent Collected (Receipts)	3.84%
Percent Collected (Releases,Etc.)	0.00%
Prior Years Tax Levy July 2015	\$2,423,595.28
Collections July 2015	\$121,924.59
Releases July 2015	\$0.00
Insolvent	\$0.00
Percent Collected (Receipts)	4.79%
Percent Collected (Releases,Etc.)	0.00%

ITEM 3a. Property taxes due on foreclosed properties.

Vice Chairman Southerland asked the Tax Collector to update the Board on the status of the foreclosed properties formerly owned by Clinton McLaughlin. (The three parcels are located at 252 Branchwood Road, lot adjacent to 252 Branchwood Road and lot adjacent to 4336 Blue Springs Road.) The amount of the unpaid taxes on the properties at the time of foreclosure was \$6,447.48.

Mrs. Dudley said that the properties were foreclosed upon for unpaid taxes in 2015. That particular foreclosure was the first one completed by an attorney that had not done foreclosures for Hoke County before. The attorney gave the county credit for the unpaid taxes on the Settlement Statement. This differs from the way the accounting had been done in the past. Prior foreclosure accountings had provided for a check to be cut to the county for the amount of the taxes. Without this check, the tax department was unable to post the payment for the unpaid

taxes. Mrs. Dudley is requesting that the unpaid taxes in the amount of \$6,447.48 be written off as uncollectable. We currently have buyers for all three tracts and we cannot complete these sales until the tax issue is settled.

Commissioner Wright asked Mrs. Dudley how the bids compare to the unpaid taxes. Mrs. Dudley responded that the bids are typically lower than the unpaid taxes. This can occur when there exists a home and the taxes are calculated on the value of the land and home. Often these properties are abandoned and are not maintained and often vandalized, thus reducing the property value. Commissioner Wright also asked how long the foreclosure process takes. Mrs. Dudley said that most take 6 – 9 months. Commissioner Wright asked at what point the foreclosure process begins. Mrs. Dudley said that she would like to begin the process when property taxes become 2 years delinquent. Commissioner Thomas said that when a property is foreclosed and declared surplus there needs to be a policy in place with regard to the disposition of the property. The County Manager replied that she, the Tax Collector and the County Attorney are crafting a policy that they will bring before the Board when complete. Mrs. Dudley suggested that the opening bid should not be less than the taxes due and the attorney fees. The County Manager added that if a property is not sold within a period of time (to be determined when setting the policy) the Tax Collector can bring it back before the Board to consider lowering the amount of the minimum bid. Commissioner Thomas asked if we currently have properties where the amount of unpaid taxes and interest exceeds the value. Mrs. Dudley said, for that reason, these must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Vice Chairman Southerland said that there needs to be a simple policy that the County will not accept a bid that is less than the amount of taxes, interest and attorney fees. Exceptions could be brought before the Board. The County Manager said that she and the County Attorney would try to have a draft policy by the second meeting in September.

Motion: Commissioner Thomas made a motion to approve waiving the unpaid taxes on the three tracts formerly owned by Clinton McLaughlin which were foreclosed on September 3, 2015 in the amount of \$6,447.48 and approving the resolution accepting the offer of bid of \$2310 for the tract adjacent to 4336 Blue Springs Road, seconded by Commissioner Wright.

Action: The motion passed 3-0.

ITEM 4. TAX ASSESSOR’S REPORT/RELEASES

Tax Assessor Jennie Gibson addressed the Board. These are the first releases since the tax bills were mailed on July 19, 2016.

OWNER	YEAR	REASON	AMOUNT
Betty W. Black	2016	SW fee error-vacant land	128.00
Spencer Blay	2016	Data entry error – rebilled correctly	199.20
Verline L. Brooks	2016	SW fee error-vacant land	128.00
Kevin Gay	2009	Mobile home double-listed	143.21
Kevin Gay	2010	Mobile home double-listed	133.47

Kevin Gay	2011	Mobile home double-listed	128.80
Glenn & Selina Harris	2016	Home burned in June 2013	801.13
Annie Odom Hook	2016	SW fee error	128.00
Mark & Pamela Smith	2016	PP Military Exempt	4.49
B. Kennerly/M. Marshall	2012	SW fee error – only one residence	110.00
B. Kennerly/M. Marshall	2013	SW fee error – only one residence	110.00
B. Kennerly/M. Marshall	2014	SW fee error – only one residence	110.00
B. Kennerly/M. Marshall	2015	SW fee error – only one residence	128.00
B. Kennerly/M. Marshall	2016	SW fee error – only one residence	128.00
Tasha M. King	2016	Mobile home double-listed	27.31
Daniel S. Parker	2016	SW fee error-vacant land	128.00
The Nature Conservancy	2016	Exempt property	309.79
Mark Zelzler	2016	Mobile home double-listed	27.72
Total			2,873.12

Motion: Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the releases totaling \$2,873.12 as presented by the Tax Assessor, seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

Action: The motion passed 3-0.

ITEM 5. PLANNING BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Tabled until next Board of Commissioners meeting.

ITEM 6. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPOINTMENTS

Tabled until next Board of Commissioners meeting.

ITEM 7. HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT – HELENE EDWARDS

Health Director Helene Edwards addressed the Board seeking approval of a mutual aid agreement with Moore County Health Department that will provide a backup Sudden Infant Death counselor in the event that the SIDS counselor for either county is unavailable.

Motion: Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the mutual aid agreement with Moore County, seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

Action: The motion passed 3-0.

Vice Chairman Southerland commended Ms. Edwards on the excellent job her department did partnering with Sandhills Center on the forum held on August 4, 2016. This program brought awareness to the community about the services offered by Sandhills Center and the Hoke County Health Department.

The County Manager and Commissioner Wright also recognized Ms. Edwards and the Health Department. They received notification from the State of NC that the Medicaid Cost Settlement funds for 2014 will be disbursed during this budget year. Hoke County's portion will be approximately \$320,000.

ITEM 8. SANDHILLS REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

Library Director Sheila Brown Evans introduced Dr. Anthony Chow from UNC-Greensboro's Library and Information Studies Department and Mr. Jesse Gibson, Director of Libraries for Sandhills Regional Library System.

Mr. Chow presented the Hoke County Public Library Strategic Plan for 2016 to 2020. Hoke County leadership, community and patrons participated in this year-long study. The study reveals that Hoke County's library is in line with the trend nationally: Libraries aren't used less, but they are used differently. Patrons expect services and resources to be available using current technology.

Hoke's library is significantly behind other libraries in the region with regard to funding and staffing. The Needs Assessment portion of the study found that, aside from increasing funds and staff, the library building needs renovations, a branch in the Rockfish area of the county and staff needs training in technology. Other needs mentioned include a bookmobile and satellite locations in businesses or public buildings within the county.

ITEM 9. MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Leticia Edens told the Board that the Auditors were here the week prior to the meeting and they indicated that they have seen improvement in the County's financials. We are waiting for the OPEB report from a consultant; this report should be submitted to Hoke County by September 9, 2016. We are also waiting for DSS reports from the State that are needed to complete the audit. The auditors will return in October to complete the audit.

The Utilities Department is moving forward with the engineering for the Best Street infrastructure project. Vice Chairman Southerland asked Utilities Director Hilton Villines to be sure and advertise the project in the newspaper and local radio.

Commissioner Thomas asked if the scope of the Best Street project has been defined. The County Manager replied that the Utilities Committee determined the scope and the amount was included in the Utilities Department's 2017 budget request. The project is now ready to bid. Commissioner Thomas asked if the work on the road will be done to comply with Department of

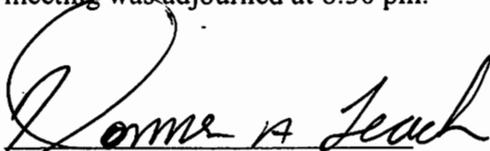
Transportation standards. Mrs. Edens replied that the work was being done to repair the infrastructure and repairs to the road was a part of that. Hilton Villines said that, while there was discussion about bringing the road to DOT standards, the scope of work was determined by the fact that there is only neighborhood residential traffic. Commissioner Thomas said that there needs to be more discussion and Vice Chairman Southerland recommended that Commissioner Thomas consider adding it to a future agenda as an action item before advertising for bids.

ITEM 10. CLOSED SESSION – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OR PERSONNEL

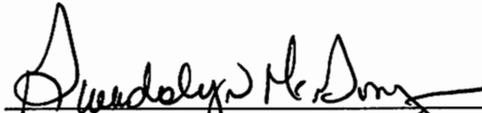
No Closed Session was held.

ITEM 11. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Hoke County Board of Commissioners, Commissioner Thomas made a motion to adjourn, with Commissioner Wright seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.



James A. Leach, Chairman



Gwendolyn McCougan, Clerk to the Board