

**Minutes of the 6 January 2009
Regular Business Meeting of the Yancey County Board of Commissioners
Held at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the Yancey County Courtroom
Yancey County Courthouse, Burnsville, North Carolina**

Present at the 6 January 2009 regular business meeting of the Yancey County Board of County Commissioners were Walter Savage, Chairman, Members Johnny Riddle and Jerri Storie, County Manager Nathan Bennett, Jason Robinson, Clerk to the Board, Jody Higgins, and members of the general public.

Chairman Savage called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence to be observed.

The Board then moved to the approval of the agenda. Chairman Savage entertained a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Commissioner Storie made such motion and Commissioner Riddle seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion was approved.

The Board then proceeded to the approval of the minutes for the December 9, 2008 regular meeting and the December 22, 2008 special meeting. After reviewing the minutes Commissioner Riddle made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, Commissioner Storie seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous for the approval of the December 9, 2008 meeting. After reviewing the minutes of the December 22, 2008 meeting Chairman Savage made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted, Commissioner Storie seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The Board then moved to the public comment of the meeting. The first person to speak before the Board was Mr. Royce Wilson. Mr. Wilson expressed a concern about the amount of time that the public was limited to by the policy instituted by the Board. Mr. Wilson felt that by limiting public comment input would be hurt. Mr. Wilson asked for at least five minutes for each speaker and no time limit for total public comment. Mr. Bill Grover then asked the Board about the status of a mental health facility in Yancey County. Following Mr. Grover, Ms. Lois Herb wanted to ask the Board to put more recycling capabilities at the Egypt/Ramseytown Convenience Center. Ms. Herb also thanked the Board for the information that being made available to the public. Mr. Anthony Robinson agrees with Royce Wilson about the public comment policy and asked that a possible second public comment be added to the agenda each month. Chairman Savage thanked all who had made comment before the Board and that those items would be taken under advisement.

The Board then heard from Jim Parlier, the Chairman of the Cooperative Extension Service Advisory Council, about the possibility of hiring a highly trained and qualified production agriculture agent. Mr. Parlier asked for the sum of \$55,000 for the salary and benefits package to hire this agent. Chairman Savage advised Mr. Parlier that the Board would look at the possibility when the new budget was being planned. The Board also heard from Denise Baker, the Cooperative Extension Service Director, about giving the Extension Director signatory authority just as all county department heads have at this time. This has been an initiative from North Carolina State University to help expedite grant proposals. Ms. Baker stated that the Extension Director would be following the same policies and procedures as all other county department heads. After hearing from Ms. Baker Commissioner Storie made a motion to allow the Cooperative Extension Director to have the signatory authority given to other county department heads. Commissioner Riddle seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

County Manager Bennett then advised the Board that the former County Manager had applied for a grant with the North Carolina Farmland Preservation Trust Fund and had been awarded this grant for \$3,000 in August to develop a plan for farmland preservation. However, after receiving the grant no contract was signed despite numerous attempts to contact the previous Board and Manager. Bennett informed the Board that the Cooperative Extension Service would help to implement this grant which is meant to protect family farms from development. The deadline for acceptance of the grant was January 6 but Bennett informed the Board that he had been in touch with the representative from the trust fund and that the grant award would still be upheld. Chairman Savage entertained a motion to approve the contract with

the North Carolina Farmland Preservation Trust Fund and authorize the County Manager to submit all necessary paperwork. The motion was made by Commissioner Riddle and was seconded by Commissioner Storie. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

The Board then proceeded to the issue of Altamont Engineering. The County Manager informed the Board that Altamont Engineering had provided a proposal for services to provide quarterly and yearly financial reports in reference to the \$803,000 Department of Energy grant that the county has received for Energy XChange at the old landfill. The County Manager stated that Altamont has been doing several things at the old landfill for the county. The Manager also stated that the proposal had been reviewed by the County Attorney and was approved. The Manager further advised the Board that these financial reports would be done on the county's behalf and that the county would be able to review them before submission. Chairman Savage entertained a motion that the Altamont Engineering proposal for financial services be approved. Commissioner Riddle made the motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Storie. The motion was approved with a unanimous vote.

The Board then moved to the Crisis Housing Assistance Fund (CHAF). The County Manager informed the Board that he had been contacted by the High Country Council of Governments that Yancey County had contracted with the Council of Governments to administer the CHAF funds from the 2004 floods. The Council of Governments had never received a signed agreement between the Council and the County. The final property has recently been restored and the agreement needs to be signed. Chairman Savage entertained a motion to approve the agreement for High Country Council of Governments to administer the grants for the Crisis Housing Assistance Fund. The motion was made by Commissioner Storie and it was seconded by Commissioner Riddle. Upon the unanimous vote the Board moved to the next item of business.

The next item of business before the Board was the Comprehensive Recreation Grounds (CRG) property. The County Manager informed the Board that the previous Board of Commissioners agreed to purchase the CRG property in two separate parcels. The first parcel was bought for \$360,150 which included a little over 18 acres of the property. At that same time an option was offered to the county for the remaining 8.29 acres but the option had to be exercised and the property purchased by June 30, 2009. The County Manager also informed the Board that without the deed to all of the property the County could not apply for a North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant which had been submitted by the 2nd of February 2009. After hearing from the County Manager Commissioner Riddle made a motion to exercise the option and obtain the additional 8.29 acres for the Comprehensive Recreation Grounds. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Storie and the vote was unanimous. The County Manager also informed the Board that the final survey came back with 2.03 acres less than the original grant application to the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF). In order to be in compliance with the grant the application needs to be adjusted. Commissioner Riddle made a motion to authorize the County Manager to amend the application for the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant. Commissioner Storie seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The Board then proceeded to the speed limit change on Mitchell Branch Road. This request to lower the speed limit to 25 miles per hour on Mitchell Branch and Green Mountain Drive was made to the Town of Burnsville by Healthy Yancey in order to promote safety for walkers on those two roads. The Town of Burnsville wanted the County Commissioners to support a study to be done by the North Carolina Department of Transportation about this issue. The Board directed the County Manager to communicate to the Town of Burnsville that the Board supports the study by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

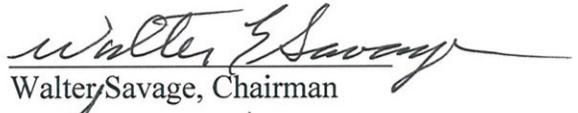
The Board then moved to Releases and Refunds from the Yancey County Tax Assessor's Office. Chairman Savage made a motion to accept the releases and refunds submitted by the Tax Assessor, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Storie and the vote was unanimous.

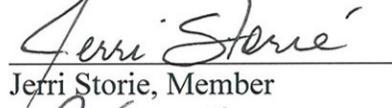
Having no further business Commissioner Storie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riddle and the vote was unanimous.

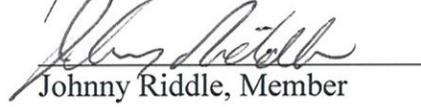
Approved and authenticated on this the 3rd day of February 2009.

Attest:


J. Jason Robinson
Clerk to the Board


Walter Savage, Chairman


Jerri Storie, Member


Johnny Riddle, Member

(county seal)

