

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairman Booth invited those in attendance to join the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chairman Booth commented:

- Would like to take a moment to extend the Board's appreciation to Senator Randleman for all she has done for the County and look forward to what she can do in the future
- Would like to welcome Representative Hall to his first special meeting with the Board
- Representative Hall is new, but has hit the ground running
- Appreciate Representative Hall speaking at the recent Area Two Soil and Water District Meeting (13 counties)

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Chairman Booth entertained a motion to approve or amend the March 30, 2016 Agenda.

Commissioner Jones moved to approve the March 30, 2016 Agenda as presented.

Commissioner Walker seconded and the motion carried (4-0) with Chairman Inman absent.

Discussion

Vice Chairman Booth noted that the Board would allow representatives to speak on the Legislative goals provided by North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.

PE-4

Seek Legislation to repeal the statutory authority under NCGS 115C-431 (c) that allows local school boards to file suit against a county board of commissioners over county appropriations for education.

Senator Randleman commented:

- Not sure why the Association referred to HB561, the content of HB561 sets the precedent when employee personnel records can be suspended
- Not sure about the information from the NCACC that HB561 relates to school boards filing suit against a county board of commissioners over county appropriations for education
- Do not think that HB561 has anything to do with when school boards can sue the counties
- HB726 deals with Board of Education being able to sue the counties

- HB726 went through the house, fell on the house floor (52 ayes - 66 no)
- I support the bill
- Was no party line voting on the bill
- Believe the bill would have gained favor in the Senate
- If passed, HB726 would not allow school boards to file suit against a county board of commissioners over county appropriations

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Wished that bill had passed

Senator Randleman continued:

- Briefly discussed a lawsuit filed by a county that dealt with user fees versus fines similar to the Board of Education being able to sue the Board of County Commissioners over funding allocations

Commissioner Lankford questioned Senator Randleman whether HB726 would be coming up in the short session?

Senator Randleman responded:

- The only way HB726 could come up in the short session would be attached to another bill that is germane in context – could be attached to another education bill
- Not sure there is someone who would push the bill in the short session
- Not sure that the bill would not die in the House again
- Can identify four of the no votes that are all education

Commissioner Lankford continued:

- The representatives are not voting what the people's wishes are
- The people supports this bill

Representative Hall commented:

- The original intent of the bill last session dealt with Union County

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Have spoken to county commissioners in a county that was sued by the Board of Education
- It caused chaos in that county
- Commissioner Lankford makes a good observation; we have people elected today who don't pay attention to what the people want

Senator Randleman commented:

- Union County was actually the county that sued the state user fees versus a fines

Representative Hall commented:

- One of the no votes was former Representative Holloway

- Representative Holloway had stated he voted against the bill because he did not feel it was necessary for the state to always step into local issues

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Believe what happens inside of North Carolina, is in some way, eventually a Raleigh issue
- Can see both sides
- Would support the bill
- Confirmed with Senator Randleman that she could raise the issue to see if we can get an attraction to the bill

Senator Randleman responded:

- Wording in HB726 would actually lead it to the local level
- It causes the two boards to meet without a mediator, if there is no compromise/decision, the decision is made by the county commissioners and it is final

Vice Chairman Booth commented:

- The Board of Commissioners knows what funds are available for allocation
- Being sued by the Board of Education would cause chaos
- Our two entities that have been working very well together
- The County does not have a problem now working with our Board of Education

Senator Randleman continued:

- If the HB726 would have passed, the final decision would be the Board of County Commissioners if the two boards could not agree

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Don't have a problem now, but could change any year

The Board unanimously encouraged Legislative Delegation to support the bill that would not allow the Board of Education to sue the Board of County Commissioners over funding allocation.

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Few years back, former Representative Baker got a local bill passed without anyone knowing about the bill
- The local bill - the Board of Education would have three candidates every election cycle
- Would like to see that changed back (like the Board of Commissioners)

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Don't have any issues with the way the cycle is for the Board of Education

Commissioner Lankford continued:

- Don't like the current cycle, it makes no sense

- It causes the lowest vote getter to have to run every two years – costing more
- The point is that this was changed and not brought to the people

Senator Randleman commented:

- Would need for the Board of Commissioners to discuss this with the Board of Education and then present a resolution to us when you are ready to move on it

Commissioner Walker noted that this is a school board decision, not a county

commissioner decision.

Commissioner Lankford noted that he just wanted to get it on the table for possible

discussion.

TF-4

Seek legislation to authorize local option revenue sources already given to any other jurisdiction.

Senator Randleman commented:

- Relates to HB518 – being able to earmark sales taxes for other reasons
- Majority of counties have not exercised the 2.5 option which would make a 7 cents sales tax
- Not sure what it will do in the Senate since the majority of the counties have not opted to approve the 2.5 option
- Parts of HB518 was incorporated into SB605
- Bill passed in the House in September 28, 2015
- Senate did not receive until September 29th
- Senate did not do anything with the bill because of the late date
- Believe the bill will be discussed
- Not sure what will happen since the majority of the counties have not exercised the 2.5 sales tax option

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Seems like more and more is being passed on to the counties
- Questioned representatives how they see this

Senator Randleman responded:

- From my perspective, when the Federal government makes cuts, it trickles down and everyone has to share in the pain
- Would like to see the funding from the lottery returned to the counties as it was originally (40% of the lottery is used for teaching positions)

Senator Randleman spoke briefly about the new sales tax for economic development, schools, and community colleges.

Senator Randleman commented:

- \$84 million has been earmarked to go to rural counties
- Stokes County will benefit from the new sales – projected to get additional \$1.5 million in FY 2016-17

County Manager Rick Morris questioned Senator Randleman about the projections that have been made regarding the \$1.5 million that Stokes is to receive in FY 2016-17 and how should the county budget the projected \$1.5 million?

Senator Randleman commented:

- Should trust the projection because it is very conservative
- Unless the economy goes south quickly for some reason, feel like the County will get the \$1.5 million
- Would budget the projected \$1.5 million because it is a very conservative estimate

Commissioner Walker confirmed with Senator Randleman that this \$1.5 million is based on solid data.

GG-2

Support legislation, regulations and funding that would preserve local option and authority where needed to deploy community broadband systems and ensure community access to critical broadband services

Vice Chairman Booth requested Manager Morris to provide a brief update regarding the expansion project for high speed internet in Stokes County.

County Manager Morris presented the following brief update:

- County issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the expansion of high speed internet (general statute allows the county to use local funding for grant funding for the expansion of high speed internet)
- County received two bids – RiverStreet Networks and Surry Telecom (serves a small portion of Stokes) (Riverstreet won the competition)
- Will start negotiations with RiverStreet Networks on what amount the county will provide (based on their proposal) (bring that contract back to the next meeting)
- Board has authorized the County to start discussions with Surry Telecom due to RiverStreet is not allowed to cross into Surry Telecom's area to see if there is anything the county can do in that area
- RiverStreet is building a new facility in Danbury along with investing millions in Stokes County to expand high speed broadband

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Would really appreciate any effort that you both can give the County to see that more of what we need to use locally is not taken at the state level -- be a champion for the local level

Senator Randleman commented:

- Spoke briefly about Justice Reinvestment - inmates who had a 90 day or less sentence at the Department of Corrections were shipped back to the counties
- Counties were very close getting those misdemeanors with no money
- This is how the Misdemeanor Confinement Program came about which brings revenue to the counties
- Representative Hall and I can't be involved in every legislative discussion just like the Justice Reinvestment; however, we can monitor those things
- 1,000 bills run the legislature on a regular basis
- For example, Commerce is pushing for \$100 million to set up in a fund for startup businesses
- Feel we need to help our existing businesses
- Commerce is wanting this \$100 million to come from the escheats fund set up at the State Treasurer (unclaimed property such as bank accounts, wages, utility deposits, insurance policy proceeds, stocks, bonds, etc, that are turned over to state after a certain amount of time)
- Have a problem taking money from the Escheats Fund -- it belongs to NC residents
- Don't think there are enough votes to take the funds from the Escheats Fund
- Will support the \$100 million if it comes from somewhere other than the Escheats Fund

Commissioner Walker confirmed with Senator Randleman that the funding would go to citizens wanting to set up businesses.

Senator Randleman commented:

- HB432 that worked on broadband systems was never heard in the house and not eligible for the short session

Vice Chairman Booth, with full support of the Board, requested that Senator Randleman and Representative Hall support any bill that would provide state funding for broadband expansion.

Senator Randleman stated that she would support state funding for broadband expansion as long as it does not come from the Escheats Fund.

Commissioner Walker requested time for Representative Hall to speak.

Representative Hall commented:

- Support these legislative goals

- Will help Stokes County if possible
- Sit on the IT Appropriations Committee which could be a benefit with high speed internet project
- Will be as supportive as I can

Senator Randleman commented:

- Believe you should have the authority to make decisions at the local level – you know your county better than anyone else
- Can't always rely on the state and federal government

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Noted the three- year moratorium recently passed by the Board on fracking
- Have told the citizens that this is a state issue
- What benefit would there be if the County adopted a local ordinance?
- Would it have any effect at all?

Senator Randleman commented:

- The change in the bill that allows fracking was one word (prohibit to regulate)
- Don't believe the County wants to regulate fracking
- The County can't be inconsistent with what state law does
- Don't believe the moratorium would be in conflict with the state since the moratorium does not regulate
- Believe the change in the wording from prohibit to regulate keeps the moratorium from being in conflict with the state – moratorium is for gathering information
- I was hesitant in voting for the bill but after you heard representatives stand up and talk about the positive economic impact for their counties, it was hard not to vote for it
- Have had people from Stokes County call me that don't want and those who want it
- The report does not even mention Stokes County – don't think there is enough in Stokes County for a business to come

County Manager Rick Morris commented:

- The moratorium states this Board will continue to seek factual information

Commissioner Walker commented:

- This group against fracking is a very active group in Stokes County
- Another thing on the rise is the coal ash
- Attended a public hearing sponsored by the NC Department of Environment Quality here in Danbury to see what citizens want done with the coal ash at Belews Creek

Commissioner Walker requested Clerk Bullins to provide the Board with a copy of the moratorium for review.

Vice Chairman Booth expressed the Board's appreciation to Senator Randleman and

Representative Hall for their attendance at today's meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Vice Chairman Booth entertained a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting.

Commissioner Lankford moved to adjourn the Special Called Meeting. Commissioner Jones seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

Vice Chairman James D. Booth
Chairman