

## MINUTES

### ASHE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

### ASHE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### SPECIAL MEETING

August 25, 2009

A special meeting between Ashe County Board of Education (BOE) and Ashe County Board of Commissioners (BOC) was held at the Ashe County Courthouse on Tuesday, August 25, 2009, at 7:00 pm. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss (1) construction and bids for Ashe Middle School Pool, (2) classroom additions and construction at Ashe High, (3) potential use of the BREMCO office, and (4) future planning of school facilities.

BOE members present: Chairman Charles King, Vice Chairman C.B. Jones, Dr. Lee Beckworth, A.B. Weaver, and Dorothy Witherspoon.

BOC members present: Chairman Judy Porter Poe, Vice Chairman Larry Rhodes, Gary Barber, and Richard Blackburn. Absent: Gerald Price.

BOC Chairman Judy Porter Poe called the meeting to order, and BOE Chairman King presented the agenda.

County Manager Dan McMillan opened the discussion with information on the Ashe Middle School Pool project and the joint agreement between the BOE and the BOC. The estimated cost of \$250,000 to build a new pool will be shared equally between the BOE, BOC, and the organized community group. Community group spokesman Lucian Jordan related that the group has raised \$62,000 through fundraisers and pledges, leaving \$21,000 left to raise.

Following a lengthy discussion, a motion by Mr. Weaver and a second by Mr. Jones gave unanimous approval to proceed with bids for the Ashe Middle School Pool provided there be a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This motion will allow Mr. Larry Greene to continue with the structural plans providing that the underlying construction of the old pool is sound. Lucian Jordan agreed to work with County Manager Dan McMillan and Superintendent Reeves regarding changes to the MOU. Mr. Greene stated that bids should take place in approximately four months. Mr. Blackburn stated he was very pleased with all the hard work the community group had done to raise money for the new Ashe Middle School Pool.

Superintendent Reeves provided information regarding approval for Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCB) that would allow the construction of four additional classrooms at Ashe High. The \$1,256,189 QSCB are interest free for 12 years which will save the taxpayers of Ashe County a significant amount. The high school will utilize the four classrooms for

additional space in the math and science departments. Superintendent Reeves stated that the school system would be interested in partnering with the Ashe Campus of Wilkes Community College to allow the campus to also use these classrooms after school hours and in the evenings. Construction on the new classrooms will begin within six months of the end of this calendar year.

Superintendent Reeves stated that Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation (BREMCO) had contacted the BOE regarding the existing BREMCO building and the possibility of using this building for the Board of Education Central Office. Superintendent Reeves proposed to the BOC that the County help purchase the BREMCO property for the BOE central office in exchange for the current central office property. After discussion, County Manager Dan McMillan stated the BOC would consult the county tax office and obtain an appraisal of the BREMCO property.

Superintendent Reeves identified long range school facility needs and stated that the BOE would have funding in 2015/16 to look at future expansion. Future school facility needs include moving sixth grade from the elementary schools to the middle school. This would provide extra classrooms in the elementary schools to accommodate the growing student population. Ashe Middle will need a minimum of twelve additional classrooms, the cafeteria and media center enlarged, along with other spaces to accommodate the extra grade level. Chairman King stated that planning needs to start now for this expansion since it is only six years away.

Mrs. Witherspoon commented on the great working relationship between the BOE and the BOC and how the students of Ashe County benefit greatly from both boards working together. Mrs. Witherspoon would like to nominate the Ashe County Board of Commissioners for an award with the North Carolina School Boards Association.

With no further items on the agenda, Mr. Weaver made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Ashe County Board of Education at 8:50 pm. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Commissioner Barber made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Ashe County Board of Commissioners at 8:50 pm. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Immediately following the joint meeting, the Board of Education held an open meeting for the purpose of discussing the mandated reduction from the school system's State General Fund Allotment as required by Senate Bill 202, Section 7.8. A motion by Mr. Weaver and a second by Mr. Jones gave unanimous approval to returning \$493,673 in discretionary funds from the classroom teacher allotment (PRC 001) and the mentor allotment (PRC 022) as recommended by the Superintendent and Finance Officer.