

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ADJOURNED MEETING
JUNE 15, 1999

At an adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Floyd County, Virginia, held on Tuesday, June 15, 1999 at 7:00 p.m. in the Courthouse thereof;

PRESENT: David W. Ingram, Chairman; Kirby Harris, Vice Chairman; Diane B. Belcher, J. Fred Gerald, James E. Thornton, Board Members; George W. Nester, County Administrator; Terri W. Morris, Assistant County Administrator.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the reading of the handicapping statement.

The Chairman called for the Public Hearing on the proposed FY00 budget and tax rates as advertised.

The County Administrator read the call for the public hearing. He also gave a synopsis of the highlights of the proposed budget.

The Chairman declared the Public Hearing open for comments from the audience.

Mr. Grant Helm - I am a life-long citizen of Floyd County. I am here to complain about the Recreation Department as a Board member and as a citizen. We could have a good recreation department but the management is terrible. Every month that we have a meeting we have complaints and I see people in the County who complain to me. We are nothing more than a puppet board as anything that the Director wants, that is the way that the vote goes. There is no adult recreation except for a little softball, which starts in July. No one wants to play in the summer. It is their way or no way. The Director brings what we wants to the Board. All of the Board members are coaches of sandlot, and the Chairman of the Board is her husband. For example, Gary Harris was at our last meeting because of a game at Check. The Umpire had made bad calls, it was an adult, the teenagers don't know what they are doing. The umpire ejected him from the game. He should have made the complaint to the umpire, not us. The game was forfeited because of what he did. The kids should not have been made to be the fault of what the adults did. We have complaints every month. Dr. Marshall was there one month complaining. The coaches want to move up with their teams. Virgel Allen gets the team he hand picks. You should withhold funds until changes are made. A lot of people are dissatisfied.

Mr. Dan Porter - I am here basically to support what Mr. Helm said. Myself and a group

of parents have been involved to try to peacefully bring about changes for over three years. There is a basic failure of the Board that they are public servants, the community pays all operating costs either by fees or contributions. Therefore, the Recreation Board should solicit, welcome and include the concerns of the people. As Mr. Helm was saying, at the meetings you hear no discussion, it is this is the way you do it. We have had numerous meetings with the Board and receive no answer back. We are fortunate to have recreational opportunities. We now have citizens banding together to form a coalition, the individual approach to come speak to the Board does not work. You go for recreation, and come back feeling angry. Either you or your child is going to pay the price for complaining. Either you don't get the chance to be a coach, your child spends the whole game sitting on the bench, or you get kicked off the team. Our coalition is made up of 18 members, one of which includes an ex Board member. I have some suggestions which are simple. Do some exit interviews with members coming off the Recreation Board, either past or present. It is amazing how many members pass through there. Bring them in and see what they have to say. Second, if you could simply, since you appoint the Board members, put an ad in the paper and give the folks a week or two to come up with someone. Do some interviews, give people a chance to become involved. I support holding back the funds until there is some obvious proof that something is being done to address the issues. It is unfortunate that it is like a para-military organization rather than a Recreation Board. We could go about it a lot differently. It is a public process. Their answer is "We are an Authority and we don't have to answer to anyone". It is a public organization.

Mr. Bill Hobbs - I am a consumer. But I have paid for something and didn't get what I paid for. My daughter is not in the sandlot program anymore, but I pay for the Recreation Board through taxes and player fees. I run a business and if I had a customer come to me and say that they didn't get what they paid for, I would be working on a solution. I feel intimidated by Cheryl and Virgel. I am not usually intimidated by people, but I am by them. I was one of the ones who went to the Board meeting, but we just got blown off. Nothing we suggested was changed except for the safety issues were taken care of. In softball, promises were made to me and were denied by Virgel. He had no authority because the rules are set out as to how the girls are supposed to be chosen for softball. The response from Cheryl and Virgel is to stonewall or denial by Virgel. Cheryl says that she runs the show. I asked where the funding came from, she would not tell me. She said I could look at the budget. I asked who was in charge. She said no one, we are an Authority. She has made it clear that she will not be accountable to anyone. I knew a letter had been received from the County Attorney concerning a possible conflict of interest. They answered that there was no conflict, it was only perceived. Virgel said he had a different opinion from his attorney. As Chairman, he could step aside. Somebody needs to do something whether it is withholding funds or whatever, at least temporarily to get their attention. They must be held responsible and accountable.

Mr. Grant Helm - how can you put that much money out for them and not have any say so over it? Put it over my way, I could use it.

After no further comments from the audience, the Chairman declared the Public Hearing closed.

Agenda Item 3 - Proposed grant application approval request from Department of Social Services. Mr. Nester presented a request from the Social Services Department for authorization to apply for grant funds for a "One Stop Shop Center". The State of Virginia is inviting applications for these centers through the Welfare to Work Program. Part of the program is to allow a mechanism where people who are unemployed can be trained with employable skills for the job market. The proposed center would be a 5,079 square foot building with room for Social Services, a Virginia Employment Commission office, a Private Industry Council office and a day-care center. A local match of 1/3 of the cost is required, the limit for proposals is \$1/2 million. Their estimated cost of the building is \$406,320, \$80/square foot which includes furnishing the building. The application is due by Friday, but it can be refused at a later date if the Board does not wish to accept it. Discussion also on the positive effects of this type of center at the Commerce Park for attracting other industries.

On a motion of Supervisor Gerald, seconded by Supervisor Thornton, and carried, it was resolved to authorize the Department of Social Services to proceed with applying for a grant for a "One Stop Shop Center" in Floyd.

Supervisor Gerald - aye
Supervisor Harris - nay
Supervisor Belcher - nay
Supervisor Thornton - aye
Supervisor Ingram - aye

Chairman Ingram suggested that intense investigation be done on the program for further details before the grant is awarded and a decision is made.

On a motion of Supervisor Harris, seconded by Supervisor Belcher, and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn to Tuesday, June 29, 1999 at 7:00 p.m.

Supervisor Gerald - aye
Supervisor Harris - aye
Supervisor Belcher - aye
Supervisor Thornton - aye
Supervisor Ingram - aye