

Haywood County “Toeprints”

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Vol. #14 Issue #6 (Subject: Mountaineer Opinion - “Our Views”, Becky Johnson Continues to Surprise!)

www.haywoodtp.net

What’s Happening?

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform Haywood County Taxpayers of what transpires at the bi-monthly County Commission Meetings. This newsletter will be written from the perspective of a casual observer, myself. Any opinions expressed will be mine.

What’s Going On at The Mountaineer?

Becky Johnson, now Editor, along with Kathy Ross, continue to change the course of The Mountaineer, this time printing an “Our Views” editorial in the Saturday edition entitled: “Ramey’s tax bills not the only actions worth examination”.

[Editor’s Note: This piece first appeared on 2/2/2023 on the on-line Mountaineer site, authored by Kathy Ross, but was almost immediately removed.]

As you recall, **Cory Vaillancourt** of the smn tabloid and **Kevin “Adjudication” Ensley** [RINO] along with **Tommy Long** [M] appeared to conspire to throw Terry Ramey [R] under the bus, and suckering **Jennifer Best** [BS] and **Brandon Rogers** [BS] to go along with their plot. How stupid were these people to think this was a good idea?

[Editor’s Note: - decipher key to party affiliation -

[RINO]	Republican In Name Only
[M]	Manikin
[BS]	Back Stabber
[R]	Republican]

[Email Dialog - Kevin "Adjudication" Ensley and Cory Vaillancourt, colorized! Cory Vaillancourt is one sick S.O.B. and a snake in the grass. 1/20/2023 1/22/2023...](#)

<https://www.haywoodtp.net/pubII/230120EnsleyVaillancourtEmailDialog.pdf>

Well, looks like Kathy Ross called them out.

[Editor’s Note: Who is Kathy Ross?]

To paraphrase a little bit, these stupid commissioners got called out with two (2) major boo-boo’s.

“First, the board addressed these questions without raising the issue with their fellow commissioner. They excluded him and presented a response representing the majority of the board without Ramey’s knowledge. Whatever commissioners feel about Ramey, and whatever citizens think about his tax history, he is a duly elected commissioner and entitled to be part of discussions involving county policy, even when they involve his own actions. Ramey

should not have discovered colleagues’ statements about his behavior by reading them in the newspaper.”

“The second concern goes beyond individual interactions. By consulting via telephone and reaching consensus outside of public sessions, commissioners are setting a dangerous precedent. Consulting each other to release an agreed-upon set of statements comes very close to making a decision that should have been addressed in open session. It could be tempting to try that approach again. County leaders and the public both need to be vigilant to ensure that doesn’t happen. The other four commissioners on the board are entitled to disagree with Ramey, to express concerns about his tax bills, to vote against him, even to criticize him publicly, should they choose. They are not entitled to shut him out of county government’s decision making processes, nor are they entitled to make decisions and issue policy statements based on consensus made via telephone or one-on-one conversations. Votes are required to be made in open sessions. Agreeing to make a statement, or making other decisions without a vote does not exempt leadership from its obligations to the state’s open meetings law or the principles of open governance.”

Boom!

[Editor’s Note: The complete “Our Views” (possibly obtained by purchasing a newspaper for \$1.00, and taking a picture of it) follows at the end. Readers are encouraged to either purchase a hard copy of The Mountaineer for \$1.00, purchase an on-line subscription, or consider making a contribution to The Mountaineer when you are paying your Federal and State Income Tax.]

Commissioners to vote on Sarah Henderson Grant Monday.

Don’t forget to come to the Monday morning County Commission meeting, to express your views about commissioners approving a \$75,735 grand to **Sarah Henderson** so she can use it to educate people “to accept and appropriate funds for Agreement Addendum 716 CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program from Division of Public Health - Women's and Children's Health Section/Immunization Branch - to focus on removing obstacles to accessing vaccine, increasing vaccine confidence, coordinating COVID-19 vaccine services, and expanding Public Health's COVID-19 vaccination program.”

Translation: Use \$70K of this to pay salary to a warm body over at DSS that had already been hired, so they can get “free money” from **Joe Biden’s** bloated spending program, and use the remaining \$5K to attempt to convince more people that this vaccine is actually good for you.

Don't forget to see:

[My Guest Column v. Dr. Mark Jaben, DSS quack doctor's Guest Column in The Mountaineer, 2/4/2023...](#)

<https://www.haywoodtp.net/pubII/230204MyGuestColumnVersusMarkJaben.pdf>

Legend: If any name is in **bold**, it can't be a good thing.

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Si vis pacem, para bellum

OUR VIEWS

Ramey's tax bills not the only actions worth examination

Whatever Haywood County citizens feel about Commissioner Terry Ramey and his \$2,000 property tax bill, the actions of his fellow commissioners also merit a hard look.

Ramey's unpaid taxes have come under scrutiny since his fourth — and, this time, successful — attempt to win a seat on Haywood County's governing board. At issue was a long list of county tax bills that he is now paying incrementally under arrangements he made after the election.

He has given several explanations for the unpaid bills, stating a number of the property taxes were on vehicles that were no longer in use and that some bills were simply put into a pile that he disregarded for some time.

Ramey's explanations should raise some questions for taxpayers. It is fair to ask whether a commissioner charged with approving the county's annual budget nearing \$100 million is qualified to make such decisions if he treats his tax obligations so carelessly.

But there is another issue unfolding in this drama — the manner in which four other county commissioners responded to questions about Ramey's actions.

Earlier in January, those commissioners — Kevin Ensley, Brandon Rogers, Tommy Long and Jennifer Best — responded to inquiries from another newspaper about Ramey's unpaid tax bills. They corresponded and issued a joint statement on the issue without Ramey's knowledge. The statement said the voters elected Ramey as a county commissioner and that he would have to answer to those voters, that citizens could take advantage of the public comment sessions at county board meetings to make opinions known.

The joint response of these four commissioners was not discussed in a public meeting.

Because a majority of the board did not meet in person to discuss the issue, and because a majority was not on a conference call at one time, the discussions may not be a technical violation of the N.C. Open Meetings Law. The

method of handling this issue, however, was far from a rousing affirmation for open government and raises two serious concerns.

First, the board addressed these questions without raising the issue with their fellow commissioner. They excluded him and presented a response representing the majority of the board without Ramey's knowledge.

Whatever commissioners feel about Ramey, and whatever citizens think about his tax history, he is a duly elected commissioner and entitled to be part of discussions involving county policy, even when they involve his own actions.

Ramey should not have discovered colleagues' statements about his behavior — at least not in the form of a "joint statement" — by reading them in the newspaper.

The second concern goes beyond individual interactions. By consulting via telephone and reaching consensus outside of public sessions, commissioners are setting a dangerous precedent. Consulting each other to release an agreed-upon set of responses comes very close to making a decision that should have been addressed in open session.

It could be tempting to try that approach again. County leaders and the public both need to be vigilant to ensure that doesn't happen.

The other four commissioners on the board are entitled to disagree with Ramey, to express concerns about his tax bills, to vote against him, even to criticize him publicly, should they choose.

They are not entitled to shut him out of county government's decision-making processes, nor are they entitled to make decisions and issue policy statements based on consensus made via telephone or one-on-one conversations.

Votes are required to be made in open sessions. Agreeing to make a statement, or making other decisions without a vote does not exempt leadership from its obligations to the state's Open Meetings Law or the principles of open governance.