

# **Part IV—Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees Take the Bait, Falls in the Trap!!! —Report and evaluation by Robert A. Williams**

The Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees at their May 9, 2017 Board Meeting took the bait and fell into the trap I set for them. What did they do at the Board Meeting? What they always do. When faced with information regarding alleged wrongdoing at the highest levels or at any level, they just ignore the problems, tell a few lies-usually to the Shelby Star-and then they just shut up until the brouhaha blows over. They basically just do nothing to fix any problem or bad situation. And why not? That MO usually works in Cleveland County. We have such short memories and even shorter attention spans.

Only, this time when I only published the many problems found by the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal, I did not add to those articles what I have discovered by my own research. I wanted to see what the CCC Board of Trustees would do. My premise was, it is bad if a Trustee knows there are problems but just covers them up; but it is very much worse if a trustee is in the middle of the “swamp” but doesn’t know he or she is in the middle of the swamp.

With only the kind of shenanigans discovered and exposed by the James G. Martin Center, the Board of Trustees, if they were any account at all, they would have already fired the CCC President Dr. Steve Thornburg, CCC Executive Vice President

Dr. Shannon Kennedy and several others, called in the SBI and FBI, and then all of the Trustees should themselves all resign from the Board and let the appointing authorities bring in a whole new crowd to straighten out the rotten mess at the rotten heart of the Cleveland Community College administration. Also, The eight of the nine Cleveland County Board of Education members implicated, the Commissioners and some high level folks in the DA's office ought to resign too. Folks, it is just that bad and more, much more, is on the way.

Now, let's get down to some details.

Go back and read my Part I, Part II and Part III articles about the mess originally published by others regarding CCC, CCS, Commissioners and the DA's Office. and start putting the pieces of the puzzle together. I did not make up the allegations as others might want you to believe. All this information came from independent sources outside Cleveland County.

I will help you just a bit:

1. Dumbing down the college level courses for the Early College students. This implicates both CCC, CCS and the Commissioners in not only defrauding the students of a good and honest education but also defrauding the taxpayers as more students are run through the program that did not qualify for the program to begin with.
2. Improper sexual allegations regarding Dr. Thornburg and Dr. Kennedy at CCC. Other programs that receive tons of tax dollars run out of CCC also have obvious sexual related issues that are well known to CCC and the Commissioners, but have not been made public-YET. CCS is full of such as that too.
3. Allegedly Diverting multimillion dollar grant money going to CCC into other things is a criminal fraud. Can't you hear the deafening silence from CCC, CCS, Commissioners, etc. that is ringing in your ears???
4. Allegedly retaliating against honest employees who bring up

wrongdoing?? More silence!!!

5. Bad judgement all around at CCC, CCS, Commissioners, DA's Office and maybe even the Sheriff's Office appears obvious. Stay tuned for future articles about the crazy and crooked way Cleveland County so-called leaders operate.

This much is already out and it appears the CCC Board of Trustees have reverted to their same old MO, Do nothing, say nothing and cover up till the cows come home.

That is OK. There is much more scandal to come that has not even been brought out yet. The cows are getting ready to come home.

But first, I want to get hold of the CCC Board of Trustees official minutes for the May 9, 2017 Board meeting. This scandal is not winding down, it is just getting started. Stay tuned for the latest news as I dribble it out piece by piece so it has time to soak in real good. And when you see a CCC Board of Trustee, a CCS Board member, a commissioner or the DA walking down the street, just give them a big smile. Remember, only you can really put a stop to this mess. At the Ballot Box on Election Day. Stay Tuned!!!

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**Lively Discussions at  
Fallston Town Hall– Selecting  
New Principal at Burns High  
School Main Topic –Report By**

# Robert A. Williams

The recent and sudden announcement that Dr. Chris Blanton, controversial Principal at Burns High School, had accepted a Principal position at Watauga High School and would soon be leaving Burns. This was cause for CCS Board Member and re-election candidate Danny Blanton and Board candidate Kevin Whisnamt to put together and make the arrangements to hold a Town Hall type get together at the Fallston Baptist Church Fellowship Hall Sunday evening at 6:30 May 7, 2017 to gather community input on the replacement principal at Burns prior to the regularly scheduled school board meeting tonight at 6:pm.

This Town Hall is totally in compliance with the official goals of the Cleveland County Board of Education to "Provide opportunities for the school board, the schools, and the community to establish and build strong relationships." Unfortunately School Board Chairman Phillip "Bully" Glover and members Shearra Miller, Richard Hooker, Roger Harris Jeff Jones, Rev. Donnie Thurman, Jr., Kathy Falls and Jo Boggs saw fit not to attend. This is especially regretful as Jo Boggs lives within walking distance and was elected in part because she lives in the Burns High School district.

These school board no-shows were not missed as the Town Hall went on well without them. It is believed they did not attend, in part, because they did not want to hear Board member Danny Blanton read a Letter of Commendation regarding a Civil Air Patrol member and Kings Mountain High School Student who has a 4.5 Grade Point Average as well as an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy at the age of 15. Yet, this student was given an unexcused absence from CCS for participating in an official emergency rescue mission to the Kinston, NC area following Hurricane Matthew while other CCS CAP members at other CCS schools received excused absences. These no-shows voted to ban the letter from being read to them at the April 24, 2017 school board meeting. I received a copy

of that letter and it will be included at the end of this article.

The Town Hall itself was very interesting as everyone participated. The discussions were lively to say the least. Many subjects and examples of the foolishness at Burns High School as well as in the Central Offices were discussed. Several things were obvious. The Principalship of "King" Chris Blanton was a reign of terror at Burns and caused a terrible loss of veteran teachers who were responsible for very high ratings for Burns prior to Principal Blanton's arrival. That teachers were afraid to speak out. And, Burns High School is on the verge of failure if a "good" principal is not selected. That "good " Principal for Burns High School was identified by consensus as Mickey Morehead, Principal at Burns Middle School.

Many other things were discussed that I want to check out as they represent significant problems and a lack of consistency within the CCS system as well as possibly being criminal in nature.

The Letter of Commendation follows. Please be sure to read it in detail.

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file="http://citizensforgoodgovernment.org/online/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Letter-of-Commendation.pdf"]

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## **Commissioners Vote for 75%**

# **County “Fire Tax” Increase!!!– Falls Votes NO, Says there is Another Way– Re-Election Politics or What??? Falls doesn’t Say! –Report and Math by Robert A. Williams**

In the midst of the already exploding scandals at Cleveland Community College, Cleveland County Schools, Commissioners, DA’s Office and the Economic Development crowd, we are not being fooled into overlooking what just happened to the volunteer fire districts in Cleveland County at the May 2, 2017 Commissioner’s meeting. Surprise! Surprise! Surprise!!! The Commissioners just got revenge for taxpayers voting down their phony sales tax increase in the 2016 election. They just raised your taxes without your vote of approval. Heck, without you even knowing about it or knowing the details. For Fallston and other districts that’s a 75% increase. Anytime you have to raise taxes by 75%, it’s a sure sign of bad leadership amongst the Commissioners. Nothing new about that.

And, let’s not forget, in Cleveland County politics there are always winners and there are always losers. Again Kings Mountain and Shelby are again the winners and the rest of us are the losers. You would think the rest of us would get the message. Vote the Commissioner fools out of office.

We haven’t done that so this is what we get for not having district representation on the Boards of Commissioners and the School Board too. And, especially us not getting out

candidates and then getting out to vote the trash out of office and put our people in office.

Now for the details of how we got screwed on this fire tax increase. And how we screwed ourselves.

I will start this report from the bottom line. The City of Shelby will spot annex the Clearwater Paper property. The county taxes and Shelby city taxes on all that expensive property (about \$500 millions in land and equipment) that is presently in the county will now go to the commissioners and the City of Shelby. ALL property remaining in Cleveland County Volunteer Fire Districts will have their property Fire Tax increased by 3.75 cents. Yeah, Shelby got the gold mine and we got the shaft. The lying commissioners have convinced all the volunteer firemen that they will get additional money too, but the bottom line on that is they will also be paying much higher taxes. Excuse me, We, make that WEEEEEE will be paying higher taxes.

Paying 75% higher taxes for what was never mentioned or discussed. Just like the sales tax increase on the 2016 Ballot never told what the money would actually be going for, the discussion and vote by the commissioners to raise the fire tax 75% never mentioned a word about where this money would go for except for one thing. \$120,000 per fire district to pay the volunteer firemen-some of whom will be paid and most will not be paid. That is a sure formula for disaster if I ever did see one. The ones getting paid will stay and the volunteers will all leave.

All of this was presented in a fancy slide show that apparently fooled all the volunteer firemen that filled the room. The firemen were told that the fire tax increase for an average house would only go up about \$5 a month. Carefully forgetting to say taxes are collected on a yearly basis and that \$5 per month is actually \$60 more on your tax bill. A big jump.

Now, for some background and some math and some adding up to a conclusion of all this mess.

Let's start with the Town of Fallston and the Fallston Volunteer Fire Department. Especially the Fallston Volunteer Fire Department that is about to go away. The Fallston Town Council surrendered the Fallston Volunteer Fire Department without firing a shot. They were blackmailed by the commissioners. Read on.

I received a Notice of Public Hearing in my Post Office Box in Fallston Monday evening. The notice stated there would be a Public Hearing June 6, 2017 where the Cleveland County Commissioners would vote whether or not to annex the Fallston volunteer Fire Department into the Cleveland County Volunteer Fire Department Service District. After attending many commissioner's meetings over the past 20 years I wondered why Fallston would be fool enough to surrender their Fire Department to the crowd in Shelby.

So, I drove over to the Fallston Fire Department to see what was going on with all of this. Several Firemen told me they were tight on money and by joining the County Fire district they would get more money. I asked if you need more money, why don't you justify why you need more money and justify raising the fire tax just for Fallston instead of turning control of our fire department to somebody in Shelby. They had tried that and the Commissioners wouldn't let them I was told. Well, how much will this raise taxes? I asked. No increase in taxes I was told. More money has to come from somewhere I said. We don't print money I said.

They were looking me in the eye and believed every word that they were saying to me was true. I knew they were repeating just what they were told, but I also certainly knew what they were saying was NOT true. Extra money does not grow on trees. It comes from somewhere and somebody pays. In this case I knew it was Fallston taxpayers that would pay the county and the



county would return SOME of the money back to Fallston, after taking their cut.

So, early the next day I called the Mayor of Fallston about this. But not before checking the Commissioner Meeting Agenda for the meeting that very night. The information I got off the County Agenda indicated a 75% fire tax increase would be voted on that very night by the Commissioners. That is the MO of the Commissioners, have a vote before anybody finds out what is going on.

When I got in touch with the Mayor of Fallston, she indicated there would be a tax increase but did not know how much. And she indicated there would be a Town Meeting that very night where the town council would vote whether or not Fallston would join the fire district. AND, the Town of Belwood would also be voting that night too, since the Fallston Fire Department also serves Belwood.

I was even more alarmed about all this for the following reason. The Notice of Hearing stated the Fire District Boundaries would be revised and some kind of report would be drafted and both would be available by May 22nd for inspection. So, the Fallston Town Council, the Belwood Town council and the County Commissioners (with nobody from Upper Cleveland) voting on a plan and boundaries before the plan and boundaries even exists is a stupid and foolish thing to do. I don't care whose toes I am stepping on when I say that. It is a formula for disaster. Maybe not today or tomorrow, but soon we will realize just how bad we are screwing up by signing on to something without knowing what we are signing on to. No wonder Shelby High School has such a high dollar baseball field, auditorium and swimming pool and we have basically nothing at Burns. I am totally convinced the Shelby folks consider us folks in the upper Cleveland County area to be fools and imbeciles. And why shouldn't they? We prove it to them time and time again by letting them get by with their mess.

I asked the Mayor to inform the Fallston Town Council of my concerns and recommended voting AGAINST the Fallston Fire Department to be annexed into the county fire district until the details could be worked out and everybody knew exactly what they were getting into. Since the Commissioner's Meeting started at 6 PM and the Fallston Town Meeting started at 7 PM I could not attend both meetings, so I decided the Commissioner meeting would probably be more important to find out just how bad Fallston and Belwood were going to be screwed over.

But, in the end it comes to this. If Fallston, Belwood and the entire Upper Cleveland County wants to be screwed over, asks to be screwed over and likes to be screwed over so much that we enjoy screwing over ourselves, why should Shelby and Kings mountain spoil our fun by not screwing us over.

Anyway, let's do some math:

Fallston has a 5 cent property tax that goes to the Town of Fallston and a 5 cent property "fire tax" that partly goes to the Fallston Volunteer Fire Department.

The 5 cent fire tax raises \$186,000 per year for the Fallston Fire Department.

A 75% increase in Fallston's fire tax should bring in \$186,000 times 1.75 or \$325,500 per year

According to the Commissioners meeting discussion Fallston would get \$230,000 per year plus an additional \$120,000 to pay salaries. \$230,000 plus \$120,000 adds up to \$350,000 per year.

Since Fallston would allegedly get an additional \$25,000 per year by being annexed into the Cleveland County Fire District, it would be in Fallston's best interest to join the County Fire District. However, plans, boundaries and such have not been finalized. Final plans could make all this increase just go away. It might be just an illusion in the first place as nothing is in writing-except Fallston Fire Taxes are going up

75%.

But two questions remain:

1. Where will this extra \$25,000 come from? Is it real money just an illusion like I stated above?
2. What happens when property is reevaluated and the value goes up? An 8.75 cent tax would generate more money than before. Who would get that money then? Nobody knows, nobody has thought about that.

Why shouldn't Fallston and Belwood get some answers before they commit to surrender their Fire Department? An insider says they were blackmailed. Previously Fallston always paid cash for all they needed, but the Commissioners made them stop paying like that and borrow money. Then the county reduced the amount of money Fallston was getting from their own taxes. Yet nobody said anything.

Now, let's add more thing.

Why did Jason Falls vote No, saying there were other ways? Why did Jason Falls NOT present his other ways for discussion. Jason Falls is up for re-election next year and Jason Falls has promised never to vote for a tax increase and to only serve two terms as a Commissioner. Has Jason Falls changed his mind about not running for another term? Was it the Commissioner's majority plan to vote for the tax increase so Jason Falls could vote against the tax increase, yet know that the tax increase would pass anyway? There is just too much stupidity going on here to suit me.

I say while there are three seats (a majority) in the Commissioners race in 2018, just get rid of the three incumbents and put in a whole new majority. A majority that includes members that will look after the best interests of the Upper Cleveland County folks too. Just my opinion folks. 2018 is next year. This can be done and all the scandals going on in Cleveland County could be stopped immediately. Thinks

about it.

But Remember, We have 2017 elections to take care of too. Run for office and all us disappointed people get out and vote. And, Don't forget the School Board Elections. Those characters need cleaning out too. I recommend voting for Danny Blanton, Kevin Whisnant, Rodney Fitch and Robert Queen (if he runs) for the school board.

On top of all that, I recommend attending the Town Hall meeting to be held Sunday night at 6:30 PM at the Fallston Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. Danny Blanton and Kevin Whisnant are putting this on regarding selecting a new principal for Burns High School. Come out. That is this Sunday, May 7, 2017. Be sure to bring some money to donate to Blanton's and Whisnant's campaign. That is my idea, not theirs.

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**Breaking News!!! Public  
Announcement!!!— Town Hall  
Meeting to Discuss New  
Principal Selection for Burns  
High School— Sunday, May 7,  
2017 at 6:30 PM at Fallston  
Baptist Church Fellowship**

# Hall Report by Robert A. Williams

Cleveland County School Board member Danny Blanton and announced School Board Candidate Kevin Whisnant have made arrangements to hold a Town Hall Meeting at Fallston Baptist Church this coming Sunday night at 6:30 PM to allow citizens in the Upper Cleveland County area to speak out regarding filling the vacancy of Principal at Burns High School. All parents, teachers and citizens are encouraged to attend as well as all other School Board members.

The next regularly scheduled School Board Meeting is scheduled Monday night, May 8, 2017 at 6:00p PM at the CCS Central Offices at 400 West Marion Street Shelby. Citizens are also encouraged to attend this meeting as well and sign up for public participation in order to voice your opinions on this important matter. Otherwise, the CCS Board will decide for you who you will get as the new Principal at Burns High School.

As many as possible are encouraged to attend both these meeting and voice your opinion. The educational futures of your children are at stake. Speak NOW or you opinions will not matter.

Fallston Baptist Church is located at 101 Circle Drive in Fallston.