

Ethan Holland

Iredell County

Hello, my name is Ethan Holland and I live on a dairy farm in Olin, North Carolina, which is located in the northern part of Iredell County. I am a senior at North Iredell High School and am very active with the High School FFA Chapter, serving as Chaplain over the past year and now hold the office of Vice President. I am also very active in Iredell County 4-H volunteering at numerous events as well as competing in county, district, and state competitions. I also had the honor of participating with the Youth Leadership Iredell during my junior year where I learned a lot about my County and the many resources it has to offer me as a student and beyond once. Little did I know at the time, that I would be given the opportunity and be selected to attend the NCACC Youth Summit. This is where my journey will begin my journey will begin as I explore, interview and learn even more about my County.

I recently attended the July 16, 2013 Iredell County Board of Commissioners Meeting and was recognized as being selected to serve as a representative to attend the upcoming North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Youth Summit. In addition, I was privileged to be asked to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the meeting. I was very humbled and felt honored to have a role in the Meeting. I also had the opportunity to meet and talk with our County Manager, Ron Smith as well as the Board of County Commissioners. In addition, I arranged an appointment to meet one-on-one with Steve Johnson, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners for an interview.

On July 19, 2013, I sat down with Mr. Johnson and asked him a series of questions pertaining to how long he has served on the Board and if he would be seeking re-election. He informed me that he has served for eighteen years and he is planning on seeking re-election to continue serving Iredell County. We discussed at length various issues ranging from his local priorities and issues of importance to him to long term concerns he has for our County. He stated he has multiple priorities that are all of importance to him and those range from issues regarding taxes, property rights, public safety, economic development and education. He mentioned too that some of his concerns regarding the long term outlook of our county are land use and tax base to pay for funding for the economic growth. I then asked the question as to what were some of the biggest issues the citizens had for him and the Board. He was quick to reply, taxes! Of course, he says other concerns that are frequently asked are related to zoning, building code enforcements, and transportation. Mr. Johnson noted that some of his most challenging decisions he has faced have been zoning cases because in some instances, decisions resulted in having to say no which resulted in hindering the economic development.

All in all, my recent experiences of attending the County Commissioners meeting and interviewing Mr. Johnson, has made me realize the importance of being actively involved in my County and the importance of their positions as being elected officials and the capacity at which they serve the citizens of Iredell County. I have a deeper understanding of their roles and I value them more as individuals as they face many challenges and decisions on many issues. They indeed have a tough job in dealing with the many tasks that are brought before them which ultimately affect each of us as citizens. I must say, that I commend each of them for their time, dedication and devotion to Iredell County. Again, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be a voice on behalf of the Youth of Iredell County.