

NCACC Youth Summit 2014 Report

My name is Amberly Glover. I am 16 years old. I am from Yancey County, NC. I will be attending the Fifth Annual NCACC Youth Summit August 15th and 16th, 2014.

I attended my local commissioners meeting on June 9th. The commissioners of Yancey County are Johnny Riddle, Jill Austin, Jim Edwards, Randy Ollis and Jeff Whitson. Jason Robinson is the Clerk to the Board. Donny Laws, Nathan Bennett, Lynne Hensley and Jamie McMahan make up the Leadership Team. They all have important roles in Yancey county to help the community through planning out what will be best for now and the future.

I have gone to several meetings to be recognized because of volunteering through 4H but, this was the first time I have ever sat through an entire commissioners meeting. They began the meeting with a prayer and the American pledge of allegiance. In that meeting they recognized the East Yancey middle school sports teams for the great year they have had. There were no public comments in this meeting. They went over and adopted the budget. The new budget fully funds all critical services for the county and does not raise property taxes, keeping the tax rate at 50 cents per \$100 in property valuation. The budget will come in nearly \$600,000 less than last year's budget.

I interviewed one of my county commissioners named Johnny Riddle. Mr. Riddle is not only the chairman of the Yancey County Commissioner's board but he also runs his own business called "Riddles Used and New Appliances" and is on seven other local boards. He has served on the Yancey County Commissioner's board for 6 years and plans on running again after his current term expires. The main issue citizens bring to the board is about their taxes and jobs. Mr. Riddle stated that he wants to do the right thing with the county's tax money as a commissioner. Mr. Riddle says a long term issue about Yancey County is getting jobs. The county commissioners are working on things to get more jobs in Yancey County. Mr. Riddle said he would like to see high school students graduate and then go on to get a job in Yancey County so they won't have to leave friends and family behind. The hardest decision he has had to deal with being a county commissioner was the debate about having a prayer at the beginning of the meetings. He said he would like to keep having prayer, but they also have to be careful in how they go about it because it offends some people and other counties have been sued over this same issue. It is very challenging and time consuming being a county commissioner, however, Mr. Riddle says he enjoys doing it and helping people. He encourages any youth who are interested in being a county commissioner to come to meetings and be a volunteer in your community. Mr. Riddle said you should be a county commissioner to help the people of your county and better your community.