

May 20, 2019

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Monday, May 20 2019, 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Martin County Governmental Center, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

ASSEMBLY

Chairman Tommy Bowen, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond, Jr., Commissioner Elmo "Butch" Lilley, County Manager David Bone, Clerk to the Board Jessica Godard, and Finance Director/Deputy Clerk Cindy Ange.

County Attorney Richard James was not in attendance. Commissioner Joe R. Ayers arrived at 5:45 p.m.

Chairman Bowen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ayers. The invocation was provided by Commissioner Smith.

Chairman Bowen recognized those in attendance, including Sheriff Tim Manning, Martin County Schools Superintendent Chris Mansfield, and Dr. Brian Busch with Martin Community College. Also in attendance were Chief Deputy Drew Robinson and MTW Finance Director Andrea Freeman.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Smith made a MOTION to approve the agenda as presented, with a SECOND by Vice Chairman Bond. The Board unanimously APPROVED the motion.

BUDGET WORKSHOP / DISCUSSION

County Manager Bone recalled the Board of Commissioners previously met on Monday, May 13, 2019 for a budget work session to discuss the challenges associated with the 2019-20 budget process. Previously, the proposed tax increase was 4 cents, but was now at 2 cents with the cuts recommended by the Board of Commissioners at the previous work session.

County Manager Bone highlighted some of the updates to the draft budget including the employee merit increases being removed from the budget and replaced with a proposed 2% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). County Manager Bone also discussed the potential savings in the Board of Education budget in regards to the buildings that were purchased by Martin County. In addition, County Manager Bone stated the draft budget reflected no increase over the current year budget for the Board of Education or for Martin Community College. There would be no increase over the current year budget for MTW Health Department, and no increase in allocation for the landfill (unloading zone project removed from the draft budget per instruction of the Board). The allocation for the Roanoke River Basin would tentatively stay at \$1,000 (no increase over current allocation), the full time personal care position for Adult & Aging Services was still in the budget (staff was working with Mid-East Commission regarding potential insurance reimbursement for that position). Adult & Aging Services had requested an additional \$44,000 for the personal care

program, but that was request was removed based on the information regarding potential reimbursements for services.

Commissioner Lilley asked for clarification regarding the addition of a new position in DSS for the Medicaid Transformation job. County Manager Bone stated the position would be posted and advertised like any other job, but current employees would have the opportunity to apply for the position. The position would be funded 50% by federal reimbursements. Commissioner Smith stated if the right person was hired for the job, it could help save the county money by having the extra checks and balances and preventing costly mistakes. Chairman Bowen echoed, stating mistakes in social services could be very expensive.

Commissioner Lilley also asked for clarification regarding the full-time transit position. County Manager Bone stated hiring part-time drivers was a difficult process due to CDL requirements and pay level. If two part-time positions were combined to form one full-time position, the salary level would be the same and only benefits would be added.

Commissioner Lilley requested for clarification on the \$5,000 increase for each rescue squad. County Manager Bone and Finance Director Cindy Ange explained the reimbursement per call as well as a base amount that was allocated for each rescue squad. The funds were partly to assist the rescue squads with stocking medical supplies and medications as they were not able to restock out of the supply at Martin General Hospital any longer.

Regarding the request increase from BMH Regional Library, the request was higher than the 2018-19 budget request. County Manager Bone stated the employees at the Martin County branches had not received raises in several years and the increase would help fund raises. Commissioner Lilley wanted to make sure that Martin County was paying a proper amount in comparison with the other counties in the partnership.

Commissioner Smith requested an addition to the budget in the amount of \$500 for the NC Ag Expo that was held at the Senator Bob Martin Agricultural Center each year. There were several surrounding counties that were contributing to this event, as well. Commissioner Smith stated Martin County should continue to promote agriculture due to the aging of current farmers in the area.

Chairman Bowen stated Agape had never been funded in the past and he recommended cutting that proposed funding from the draft budget. Chairman Bowen also recommended cutting funding for the Boys & Girls Club but was met with opposition from other Commissioners. Chairman Bowen suggested not giving BMH Library the requested increase and keeping their funding the same as the current year.

Regarding the \$10,000 increase request from CADA, the initial request was a \$52,000 increase. The draft budget included a \$35,000 increase. The Board agreed to keep CADA at the current funding level of \$25,000.

Regarding the \$16,000 budget for the Recreational Trails project, Commissioner Lilley suggested taking that out of the budget for now because of the uncertainty of when the project would actually occur. When the project took place, the Board could approve a budget amendment for the local match.

Commissioner Lilley suggested keeping the tax increase at 2 cents, and take the additional money needed to balance the budget out of the fund balance.

COMMENTS / DISCUSSION

The proposed cuts included taking \$100,000 from the request from the Board of Education, cutting \$25,000 out for Agape, cutting the Library back to the current funding level, cutting \$10,000 from CADA request to current funding level, cutting \$16,000 from the trail grant until more information is received about project timeline.

An addition included \$500 for the NC Ag Expo. A 2% COLA was included for employee raises, no merit would be included. A 2 cent tax increase would be the outcome.

Dr. Busch from Martin Community College and Andrea Freeman from MTW Health were present to answer any questions the Board may have had.

Commissioner Smith asked Ms. Freeman about the new mobile dental van. Ms. Freeman stated the van would be open and ready to provide services for schools beginning in the fall of 2019. MTW had originally planned to have the van parked at MCC during the summer, but the staff they had spoken with were no longer there. The goal was to serve the adult population of Martin County during the times school was not in. Commissioner Smith felt that Martin County did not receive adequate dental services for the amount of funding that was given. Ms. Freeman stated MTW did not want to be a competitor, and Agape was providing adult dental services. Also, there were a number of services that were provided exclusively in Martin County. There were a number of challenges for being able to use the van for outreach (power and water hook-ups needed).

The Board was in agreement with the conversation regarding cuts from the budget. The Board would meet again on Wednesday, May 22, 2019 for the Manager's presentation of the proposed budget. A public hearing would be held at the regular meeting on June 12, 2019. If the Board agreed, the budget could be adopted at that meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting, with a SECOND from Commissioner Smith. Chairman Bowen adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m. The next meeting would be a Special Called Meeting for Manager's Presentation of the Draft Budget to be held on Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Boardroom.

Tommy Bowen, Chairman

Jessica Godard, Clerk to the Board