

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)
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COUNTY OF STOKES)
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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA
JUNE 9, 2008

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Public Hearing regarding the proposed fiscal year 2008-09 County Budget in Courtroom “A” in the Government Center located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, June 9, 2008 at 7:00 pm with the following members present:

Chairman J. Leon Inman
Vice-Chairman Jimmy Walker
Commissioner Ron Carroll
Commissioner Ernest Lankford
Commissioner Stanley Smith

County Personnel in Attendance:
County Manager K. Bryan Steen
Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins
Finance Director Julia Edwards

Chairman Inman called the Public Hearing to order and delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Inman opened the meeting by inviting the citizens in attendance to join the Board with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Inman welcomed those in attendance and expressed the Board’s appreciation to those who have taken their time to come to take an interest in county government.

The following spoke during the public hearing.

Mr. John Hedrick
111 N Front Street
Elkin, NC
Re: **Library Support**

(Joan Sherif, Northwestern Regional Library; Ann Nichols, King Public Library; Betty Smith, Walnut Cove Public Library, and Nora Lankford, Danbury Public Library were in attendance for the Public Hearing)

Mr. Hedrick expressed his appreciation to the County Manager for proposing the funding for the second part of the salary pay plan in next year's appropriation, for proposing funding for additional staff at the King Public Library and to the Board for considering the proposed library funding. Mr. Hedrick also expressed his appreciation to the Board for the allocated funding for the renovations at the Walnut Cove Public Library.

Mr. Wayne Flippin
1040 Elastic Plant Road
Westfield, NC 27053
Re: **CoOp**

Mr. Flippin requested funding for the CoOp, which would enable the CoOp to assist farmers with the new dripped irrigation system and market produce to larger chain stores. Mr. Flippin noted an educational grant provided the funding for the implementation of the drip irrigation system last year.

The following spoke regarding funding for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants employed by the Stokes County School Administration:

Doris Meachum
2162 Taylor Road
Westfield, NC 27053

Ms. Meachum noted the following:

- ◆ Urgent need for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants in Stokes County
- ◆ Worked for Stokes County Schools for 29 years
- ◆ Salary adjustment and pay scale long overdue
- ◆ Importance and duties of a teacher aide
- ◆ In 2002, No Child Left Behind Program mandated teacher assistants must become highly qualified, years of experience was not considered
- ◆ After teacher assistants became highly qualified as required, there was no additional salary compensation
- ◆ In 2005, other employees who did not have to obtain additional training were placed on a new salary pay scale that was based on years of experience and school size
- ◆ Requested the Board provide funding for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants

Tonya Fulk
101 Princeton Court
King, NC 27021

Ms. Fulk noted the following:

- ◆ Urgent need for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants in Stokes County
- ◆ Value of teacher assistants
- ◆ Duties have changed with no salary increase
- ◆ Assistants work one on one with students
- ◆ Assistants are vital to the overall function of the school
- ◆ Support funding for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants

Pam Hall
PO Box 724
King, NC 27021

Ms. Hall noted the following:

- ◆ Need for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants in Stokes County
- ◆ Worked for Stokes County schools for 30 years with very little salary adjustment
- ◆ Set up a new classroom and actually taught the class for the first six weeks of school due to no teacher available
- ◆ Request the Board the support the salary adjustment and pay scale

Kara Yates
209 Kensington Drive
King, NC 27021

Ms. Yates noted the following:

- ◆ Need for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants in Stokes County
- ◆ Supports teacher assistants in the classroom
- ◆ A teacher assistant is a valuable support to the teacher
- ◆ Teacher assistants make a difference in the classroom and do so much for Stokes County children
- ◆ Need for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience

Shannon Boles
105 Fox Brook Court
King, NC 27021

Ms. Boles noted the following:

- ◆ Need for teacher assistants in the school system

- ◆ Teacher assistants are expected to do some of the same duties as the teacher
- ◆ Teacher assistants duties are constantly changing
- ◆ Vital to the classroom
- ◆ Teacher assistants teach students, they are student assistants
- ◆ Duties of a teacher assistant have changed drastically, so should their pay
- ◆ Request the teacher assistants receive the respect they deserve and the recognition required to keep these valuable players in our game called “school”
- ◆ A salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants is at the top of the list for funding this year

Erin Lynch

113 Pineview Drive
King, NC 27021

Ms. Lynch noted the following:

- ◆ Need for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants
- ◆ Duties of teacher assistants have changed over the years
- ◆ Expressed appreciation to the teacher assistants at King Elementary School for their dedication to the students
- ◆ Requested the Board support teacher assistants who support Stokes County children and their community

Pam Warren

110 Elinor Court
King, NC 27021

Ms. Warren noted the following:

- ◆ Request the Board approve funding for a salary adjustment and pay scale based on years of experience for teacher assistants in this year’s county budget
- ◆ Job descriptions and requirements have changed, but pay levels have not changed
- ◆ Have lost valuable teacher assistants due to low wages, some work two jobs to pay the bills
- ◆ Request support for a salary adjustment and pay scale

Crystal Vinyard

134 Jefferson Church Road
King, NC 27021

Ms. Vinyard noted the following:

- ◆ Supports a salary adjustment and pay scale
- ◆ Valuable duties of a teacher assistant
- ◆ Teacher assistants are very hard workers and very dedicated
- ◆ Teacher assistants have a passion for their job, if not, they would not work for the low wages

- ◆ Request support for a salary adjustment and pay scale

Ms. Betty Smith

PO Box 706

Walnut Cove, NC 27052

RE: **Walnut Cove Public Library Renovation Project**

Ms. Smith noted the following:

- ◆ Presented an update on the Walnut Cove Library Renovation Project
- ◆ Slightly behind schedule on the completion of the renovation project
- ◆ Walnut Cove Library's Summer Reading Program will be held at London Elementary School this year
- ◆ Anticipate a grand opening in early September
- ◆ Expressed appreciation to the Board for their support
- ◆ Invited the Board visit the new renovations

Mr. Tom Southern

203 Faye Court

King, NC 27021

RE: **King Senior Center**

Mr. Southern expressed his appreciation to the Board for funding in the 2007-08 budget for the King Senior Center. Mr. Southern noted the Center was up and running and off to a very good start.

Mr. Devin Rhodes

Stokes Rockingham Vol. Fire Chief

Pine Hall, NC

RE: **Grant Funding**

Fire Chief Rhodes spoke on behalf of Stokes Rockingham Vol. Fire Department, Francisco Vol. Fire Department, Sauratown Vol. Fire Department, and Northeast Stokes Vol. Fire Department, which were recently awarded the 2008 Volunteer Firefighter Grant (NC Office of State Fire Marshal) totaling \$57,712.20. (Francisco = \$9,660; Northeast Stokes = \$6,420; Stokes-Rockingham = \$29,787; and Sauratown = \$11,845.20)

Fire Chief Rhodes noted the following:

- There is a 50-50 match for the grants, which was not recommended, by the Fire Commission or the County Manager in the proposed 2008-09 county budget.
- Request the Board approve a small service district tax of a ¼ or ½ cent to cover the match for these grants and to provide additional funding for future grants.
- Increase could provide funding each year for possible grants
- Stokes Rockingham's grant proposal is to provide funding to an ongoing project to lower the insurance rating in the Stokes Rockingham Fire District. This would provide savings to homeowners and businesses by reducing their homeowners' premiums.

- Default on these grants could cause issues with future grants for the service district due to four grants not having the funding for the match
- Expressed his appreciation to the Board for their time and consideration

Chairman Inman requested those in attendance who support a salary adjustment and pay scale for teacher assistants continue their quest with the Board of Education for they are the ones who make the specific decisions on the use of funds appropriated by the county to the schools; Board of Commissioners does not line item the school's budget.

Chairman Inman expressed appreciation to those in attendance.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman adjourned the Public Hearing.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

J. Leon Inman
Chairman