

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 16, 2008

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Budget Work Session regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2008-09 County Budget in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administrative Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, June 16, 2008 at 9:00 am 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
Emergency Medical Services Director Monty Stevens
Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor Elwood Mabe

Chairman J. Leon Inman called the Budget Work Session to order and delivered the invocation.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Opening Remarks

Chairman Inman expressed his appreciation to everyone's willingness to work

together to adopt a 2008-09 fiscal year budget.

Chairman Inman requested Board members to note which departments they would like to discuss.

Commissioner Carroll noted the following:

- Administration
- Arts Council
- Contingency
- Economic Development
- Emergency Management
- Emergency Medical Services
- Fire Marshal
- Public Buildings
- Schools
- Senior Services
- Sheriff's Department
- Social Services
- Superior Court
- Fire Districts

Commissioner Lankford noted the following:

- All departments

Vice Chairman Walker noted the following:

- All departments

Chairman Inman suggested starting with reviewing each department.

Administration

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Administration Budget:

- Commissioner Carroll noted to the need to look at additional staff for Administration in the future, possibly sharing with Economic Development
- Possible options for additional staffing for the Administration office
- County Manager Bryan Steen noted the salary market study should be bided out in November or December with results back to the County in February 09 in order to review for the upcoming 2009-10 fiscal year budget.

Manager Steen noted that no new positions were recommended in this proposed budget, other than grant positions that have already been approved by the Board.

Animal Control

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Animal Control Budget:

- Animal Control Advisory Council – appointment process underway
- Professional Fees – increase due to veterinarian services and purchase of lethal injections for certain animal
- Supplies – increase in the cost of dog and cat food along with vaccines
- \$25,000 from the 2007-08 budget placed in Capital Reserve until the State approves euthanasia methods

Arts Council

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Arts Council Budget:

- Commissioner Carroll noted issues with a county employee (Arts Council Director) that has to secure funding for part of their salary
- Commissioner Lankford noted that the Director had no issues with securing part of his salary, Chairman Inman echoed Commissioner Lankford's comments
- Proposed director salary – funded 70% by County and 30% by Arts Council
- Need to look at 100% funding for director's position in the future

Economic Development

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Economic Development Budget:

- Economic Development Director position reinstated to full time
- Additional Kobe Wieland Copper Incentive Grant - \$160,000 if Kobe completes the requirements of the grant
- Vice Chairman Walker noted the need for additional staff in the future, possibly for tourism
- After hiring of a new director, director will need to review the budget
- Commissioner Carroll noted there is more to Economic Development than just staffing an office, at some point, the County must devote some substantial funding to Economic Development for infrastructure
- Commissioner Lankford noted the need for the County to determine which direction Economic Development should go
- Manager Steen noted after the hiring of a director, assessment done by the Economic Development Commission, funding discussion could take place in February for the upcoming 2009-10 fiscal year

- Professional Services – funding is used for marketing, website maintenance, advertising, etc.

Emergency Communications

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Emergency Communications Budget:

- Quality Coordinator position funded by EMD Grant
- Increases in health insurance and utilities
- Work load pertaining to the IT position that is housed in the Communications department, responsibilities and duties, assessment of the position during the next fiscal year, position funded by E911 funding

Emergency Management Services

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Emergency Management Budget:

- Increase in telephone and internet due to relocation of office

Emergency Medical Services

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Emergency Medical Services Budget:

- Increase in telephone and internet due to relocation of office which is shared with Emergency Management Services
- (3) ambulance remounts with financing to be in the 2009-10 budget
- Major increase in auto supplies which is for fuel only
- Email from Medical Director Dr. Carl Beavers for the need of new ambulances
- Need for a rotation plan to replace ambulances
- Mileage for front line ambulances as of June 6, 2008:
 - 2005 - Unit one = 135,510 with maintenance cost of \$19,000 for fiscal year
 - 2006 - Unit two = 75,632 with maintenance cost of \$3900 for fiscal year
 - 2005 - Unit three = 145,615 with maintenance cost of \$14,000 for fiscal year
 - 2005 - Unit four = 170,276
 - 1997 - Unit five = 331,515
- Spares
 - Unit six = 278,784
 - Unit seven = 328,821
 - Unit eight = 251,992
 - Unit nine = 267,123
- Commissioner Carroll noted the need to hear from Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor Elwood Mabe and EMS Director Monty Stevens on the issue of ambulances

- Commissioner Lankford noted that four of the five front line have less than 200,000 with one unit under 100,000
- Reliability of the front line units
- Director Stevens and Supervisor Mabe discussed the current engine problems with the front line ambulances, only one of the five front line units is still under warranty
- Forsyth, Yadkin, and Davie counties having similar issues with the diesel units that have the series 60 engine, four of the County's five front line units have the series 60 engine, older 73 series ambulances are not having as many problems as the newer 60 series
- Director Stevens and Supervisor Mabe discussed Ford versus GMC models, if GMC is purchased, boxes will have to have modifications
- Discussion of gas versus diesel units
- Supervisor Mabe noted that improvements have been made to the 60 series since the county purchased their last unit
- Commissioner Smith noted the need to look into purchasing a "mid liner" series that could possibly provide longer longevity
- Commissioner Lankford noted that even a "new" unit can have problems
- Director Stevens and Vehicle Supervisor Mabe recommended the purchase of the two Demos possibly replacing units 1 & 5
- Director Stevens spoke with a vendor today and received the following quote: 2 Demo units available = Ford Type 1, 3200 miles, similar units, could have the unit ready immediately, new unit = \$130,000 each, demos = \$110,000 each
- Director Stevens recommendation = Purchase 2 demo units: units ready to go, this helps out right now, getting the units in services immediately, replacing units #1 and #5, reducing maintenance costs
- Vehicle Supervisor Mabe recommendation = Purchasing 2 demo units
- Discussion of 3 remounts versus 2 new demo units, remounts takes much longer at least 5 to 6 weeks turn around time
- Possibly using Truck #310 which is currently not in use for Life One
- Possibly selling one or two spare units, continuous labor on units extremely costly
- Efforts being made to conserve fuel, looking at selling Sheriff's vehicles that are usually passed to other departments and replacing them with small compact vehicles that get better gas mileage

Chairman Inman directed Director Stevens to discuss with vendor regarding all options relating to purchasing demo units or having remounts on existing ambulances.

Environmental Health

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Environmental Health Budget:

- Need for a report pertaining to contractual services being done

- Manager Steen noted that only one contract person is currently working
- Proposed increase for well permit to \$250.00 which is not included in the proposed budget
- Manager Steen presented explanation of New North Carolina Private Water Well Rules - effective 07-01-2008
- Commissioner Lankford, Vice Chairman Walker, Chairman Inman stated no increase in well permit fees until services improve
- Commissioner Smith stated that he needed more information before deciding on increasing the well permit
- Commissioner Carroll stated that fees should be imposed on those who use the services and not on all taxpayers
- County Manager Steen review the changes in the well permitting rules noting new documents to be completed, additional testing with test kit costing \$57.00
- Still having back log for permits, Commissioners still receiving complaints relating to having to wait for a permit approval
- Vice Chairman Walker requested information regarding surrounding counties fees for well inspections
- Need for further information regarding the proposed well permit increase especially from surrounding counties

Manager Steen noted the \$2.00 increase in solid waste tipping fees, the fee is being increased by the State to the County, increased fee is included in the proposed budget

Finance

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Finance Budget:

- Computers recommended by Data Processing
- Need for fireproof filing cabinet for personnel records

Fire Marshal

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Fire Marshal Budget:

- Deputy Fire Marshal position is under review and unfunded for fiscal year 2008-09
- Funding of the two Fire Marshal's positions currently being paid by Service District Funding
- Commissioner Carroll noted the need to fund the two Fire Marshal's position (currently being funded by Service District funding) with general funding
- Commissioner Carroll noted if service district funding were going to be used, it should be appropriated by population, service district, etc
- Fire Marshal positions, responsibilities, duties, etc

- Questions regarding the number of employees in the Fire Marshal's office
- Fire Service District – increased tax last year to cover the salary and benefits for the two Fire Marshal's positions
- Questioned authority to charge King Fire District, Walnut Cove Vol. Fire District, and Rural Hall Fire District regarding funding of two Fire Marshal positions

Health

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Health Budget:

- New grant position already approved by the Board – Office Support III
- Finance Director Julia Edwards presented corrected copies of the proposed budget reflecting the new grant position and additional revenue recently approved by the Board
- Grant position will not be a recurring item
- Personnel re-organization of department, replacement of physician position with an additional Physician Extender II position
- Increases in medical supplies, insurance and bonds, utilities,
- Board of Health approved the proposed submitted budget
- County General Funding = \$157,665

Home Health

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Home Health Budget:

- Professional Fees – increase due to occupational, speech, and physical therapy usage
- County Manager Bryan Steen noted the changes being experienced by Home Health, private vendors being able to house individuals in the hospitals who speak to patients regarding their services, this is taking a toll on revenues along with vacancies in nursing positions
- Commissioner Carroll stated that he had experienced individuals from private organizations in the hospitals who try to contract with the patients for home health services
- Board of Health currently exploring other options – selling to an independent entity, sending out request for proposals to be sent to interested parties
- Final decision must be decided and approved by the Board of Commissioners
- County Manager Bryan Steen discussed the loss of revenue and lack of staff
- Need for new health director to assess Home Health Services
- Vice Chairman Walker suggested possibly talking to Baptist and Forsyth regarding the issue of private organizations offering services while Home Health is not able to place individuals there – needs to be a level playing field
- Commissioner Carroll noted that when Home Health was started, there was a need to provide the services to the citizens, now there are several private organizations that offer those services

- Concerns whether all citizens in the County are being served

Jail

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Jail Budget:

- Finance Director Julia Edwards presented an updated copy of the proposed Jail budget which reflects the request from Sheriff Mike Joyce and Captain Al Tuttle to take the requested radios out of the proposed budget and fund the cost from Fines and Forfeitures in the current budget; also deletes reclassification of positions that were not proposed by the County Manager
- Budget Amendment will be forwarded to the Board for funding of the radios from Fines and Forfeitures in current budget

Closed Session

Chairman Inman entertained a motion to enter into closed session for the following:

- To consider the initial employment or appointment of an individual to any office or position, other than a vacancy in the Board of County Commissioners or any other public body, or to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, and fitness of any public officer or employee, other than a member of the Board of Commissioners or of some other public body pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(6).

Commissioner Lankford moved to enter into closed session for the following:

- To consider the initial employment or appointment of an individual to any office or position, other than a vacancy in the Board of County Commissioners or any other public body, or to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, and fitness of any public officer or employee, other than a member of the Board of Commissioners or of some other public body pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(6).

Vice Chairman Walker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board returned to open session of the June 16th meeting.

Commissioner Carroll requested the DSS Director be at a budget session to discuss the DSS proposed budget.

Commissioner Lankford requested the following information:

- Lowest interest rate on \$1 million dollars for capital needs – 5 and 10 year terms with payment starting in 2009-10

Vice Chairman Walker requested the following information:

- How does Local Government Commission (LGC) view the County's progress on building the fund balance if this year the fund balance does not increase and what effect will that be on future financing?
- What the LGC looks at and what kind of continual progress are they looking for?

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman entertained a motion to adjourn the budget work session.

Commissioner Lankford moved to adjourn the budget work session. Commissioner Smith seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

J. Leon Inman
Chairman