

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF STOKES**

**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA
JUNE 17, 2008**

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Budget Work Session in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administrative Building located in Danbury, North Carolina on Tuesday, June 17, 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 Services Director Monty Stevens
Sheriff Mike Joyce
Captain Mike Marshal- Sheriff's Department

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

Vice Chairman Walker 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.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – BUDGET WORK SESSION

Emergency Medical Services

EMS Director Monty Stevens noted the following information from Mr. Ricky Hamby,

Northwestern Emergency Vehicles:

- Mr. Hamby quoted another option for the Board's consideration, two demos at \$110,000 each with less than 4,000 miles/factory warranty remains and one remount with deferred payment until July 2009
- If the Board decided to go with remounts, the first unit would be ready in approximately 6 weeks after receipt of the unit, it will then take 60 days for each remount
- Total estimated cost for 3 remounts = \$240,000
- Demos are similar to current units with a 6.3 liter engine, Type I Truck chassis, Horton boxes
- Surrounding counties have purchased this type of ambulances and have had no problems so far
- If two new units were purchased, two units could be sold

The Board discussed the available options with Director Stevens.

Chairman Inman requested preference from the Board and Director Stevens regarding the purchase of ambulances.

Commissioner Lankford responded: 2 demos or 3 remounts

Commissioner Carroll responded: \$240,000 has been budgeted for EMS vehicles at the discretion of the director

Commissioner Smith responded: 2 new demos and start of a rotation program

Vice Chairman Walker responded: leaning toward the 3 remounts

Chairman Inman responded: 2 demos would provide new ambulances (dependable units on the road immediately, the immediate need to start a rotation plan this year in order to not be in this shape again

Director Stevens responded: the 2 demos would put 2 new ambulances on the road immediately

Director Stevens discussed surrounding counties' rotation plan:

- Forsyth for the most part, replaces a unit after 100,000 miles
- Yadkin normally gets one new truck a year
- Davie also normally gets one new truck a year

Director Stevens noted the following maintenance cost for the current fiscal year on the current fleet which also includes regular maintenance:

- Unit 1 = \$18,999
- Unit 2 = \$3,973
- Unit 3 = \$14,138
- Unit 4 = \$7,299

- Unit 5 = \$6,418
- Unit 6 = \$1,132
- Unit 7 = \$1,580
- Unit 8 = \$12,085

The Board discussed the maintenance cost with Director Stevens.

Manager Bryan Steen noted the following call volume and revenue estimates:

- Fiscal Year 2004/05 = approximately 6,000+ calls
- Fiscal Year 2005/06 = approximately 7,000+ calls
- Fiscal Year 2006/07 = approximately 7,500 calls
- Fiscal Year 2007/08 as of June 1, 2008 = approximately 7,000 calls
- Delinquent accounts are decreasing due to the billing of private insurance
- Revenue constantly increasing due to the increase of calls
- As of June 16th, \$1.4 million in revenue has been collected

Vice Chairman Walker questioned transporting of non emergency transfers, not advocating this option, just wants what is best for the citizens of Stokes County.

Director Stevens noted that by contracting non-emergency calls, there would be a loss of revenue and sometimes routine transfers often become emergency transfers. With the right organization, it could work, but the public would need to be educated regarding the services provided by EMS. Director Stevens stated that it would need to be carefully studied before implementing such a change.

Chairman Inman echoed Director Stevens' comments, reiterating it would need a very careful assessment to ensure that no one is ever without service.

The Board discussed a rotation plan for purchase of ambulances with Director Stevens. Director Stevens noted that a rotation plan would decrease maintenance costs tremendously, enable the department to plan for the future, and prevent personnel from having to continuously swap units due to breakdowns.

Vice Chairman Walker suggested Director Stevens work with the County Manager

to develop a rotation plan and also have the County Manager look at other departments who need to be on a rotation plan.

King Clinic

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed King Clinic Budget:

- Manager Steen noted it would take some time to build up the clientele due to the clinic being closed so long
- Possibly looking at providing medical services for newborns in the near future
- Need for prenatal care in Stokes County
- New service providers should increase revenue
- Need marketing to inform the public that the clinic is open, place information on the County's website
- Need for clinic to be self sustaining

Commissioner Carroll noted that the King Clinic should never have been pulled out separately from the Health Department's budget, half of the WIC program is operated from the King Clinic with none of the revenue reflected in this budget.

Legal

Manager Steen noted that County Attorney Powell is very good to work with and ready to assist the county at anytime.

Library

Manager Steen noted that the proposed Library Budget included funding for the second year salary study implementation.

Chairman Inman noted that Director John Hedrick had expressed his appreciation to the Board for their continuous support for the local libraries in Stokes County.

Medical Examiner

Finance Director Julia Edwards noted the proposed budget remained the same, very hard to predict.

Sheriff's Department

Sheriff Mike Joyce and Captain Mike Marshall presented the following information regarding the proposed Sheriff's Department Budget:

- Mileage for the Dodge Charger = 17.96
- Mileage for the Crown Vic = 20.20
- Mileage for the Ford Taurus = 23.12
- Fuel Conservation Plan recently implemented where officers must turn their vehicles off when out of the car unless emergency lights are being used; combining trips when transporting inmates; CID using Ford Taurus which gets better gas mileage
- Changed to white patrol vehicles which are cheaper
- Does not like front wheel drive for patrol vehicles
- Crown Vics will change to a smaller body size in 2010
- Brush guards (deer guards) have saved the county a tremendous amount
- Used drug seizure funding to purchase monitors for Magistrate first appearance, and to replace 15 year old weapons – saving county dollars
- Negotiated pricing with a new vendor on uniforms saving county funding
- Request for an additional Detective position – presented the following information regarding the request
 - Crime has increased 14% during the past year (domestic violence, break-ins, etc (recent crime spree in the King area
 - No detective positions have been added in the last 9 years
 - Would use drug seizure funding for the first year for salary and benefits
 - Investigation takes a lot of time
 - Need to do the people justice and serve the public
 - Drug seizure funding can only be used for one year and would be left up to the County to fund after that first year
 - Sheriff Mike Joyce stated that he did not ask, unless he needed it
 - Has sufficient funding to cover the position
- Have had several comments made in Community Watch meetings why additional officers have not been hired to help control the break-ins
- Even if the position was not funded after the first year, the citizens of Stokes County would benefit from the first year

The Board discussed the requested Detective position with Sheriff Joyce.

Mental Health

Chairman Inman noted there was no increase in the proposed Mental Health Budget and the cooperation received from CenterPoint with the new Mental Health Coordinator position.

Chairman Inman noted possibly additional funding from the State for mental health services.

Natural Resources

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Natural Resources Budget:

- Three year grant position – District Watershed Coordinator -100% Federal reimbursement

Parks

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Parks Budget:

- Finance Director Julia Edwards presented a corrected proposed budget – deleting the zero turn lawnmower

Planning

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Planning Budget:

- Increases in auto supplies – fuel

Public Buildings

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Public Works Building Budget:

- Renovations for Courtroom “C” funded in Capital Reserve
- Funding included for replacement roofs for Government Center, E911 Building, Danbury Library, and paving for Government Center and Danbury Library Parking Lot – funding will be financed
- Increase in utilities
- Miscellaneous contractual services for HVAC systems
- Commitments for park facilities – possibly trying to acquire PARTF Grants and need to have further discussion after the budget is adopted regarding possible community grants

The Board discussed financing options for capital improvements.

Finance Director Julia Edwards noted the following rates for borrowing \$1 million for capital needs:

- BB&T = 3.69% for 5 years and 3.79% for 10 years
- RBC = 3.55% for 5 years and 3.94% for 10 years

Manager Steen noted that the Financial Advisor will be presenting their findings in either July or August. Manager Steen stated that he had requested a timeline from Superintendent Hobbs regarding land purchase, planning documents, and capital needs.

Purchasing

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Purchasing Budget:

- Manager Steen noted no significant changes in the proposed budget.

Recreation

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Recreation Budget:

- Manager Steen noted no significant changes in the proposed budget.

Vice Chairman Walker noted the need to continue to look at the entire County's recreational needs, what the County is really getting from the recreational funding, and to investigate the possibility of creating a county recreation department.

Chairman Inman suggested that possibly Vice Chairman Walker chair a committee to assess the recreational programs in the County.

Commissioner Lankford stated that creating a new recreation department would be more expensive than the current contract with YMCA.

Register of Deeds

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Register of Deeds

Budget:

- Slight increase in proposed budget
- Misc. contractual services for first payment of the Index Conversion paid from Register of Deeds' fees
- Equipment Rental – indexing of documents
- Revenues –decrease in recordings and copying (documents available on line

Schools- Current Expense

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Schools-Current Expense

Budget:

- Implementation of Teacher Assistant Salaries based on years of experience
- Tremendous increase in utilities and fuel cost

Commissioner Carroll noted that the implementation of the Teacher Assistant Salaries based on years of experience does not have anything to do with what this Board does or does not appropriate – totally separate issues. Commissioner Lankford stated that is a School Board call.

Commissioner Carroll stated that he had looked at the numbers several times and concluded that if he were Superintendent, he would really need \$192,000, but if push comes to shove, \$88,000 could make it work. The \$88,000 will cover the difference in the fuel and utilities cost and allow adjustments in salary schedule, but will cut out all new requests and require some cutting in other areas.

Commissioner Carroll also stated the need to talk to DSS Director Spencer before finalizing a definite number for the schools.

Manager Steen noted the following amounts that could be allocated to the proposed budget:

- \$55,498 – Hold Harmless
- \$30,000 – Appropriating only \$20,000 in Capital Reserve for EMS facility
- \$1,700 – Sheriff's Department radios being purchased in the current budget from Fines and Forfeitures
- \$6,000 – Public Buildings – Purchasing zero turn lawn mower from current year
- \$6,084 – Reclassification of a position in the Health Department–reducing expenditures
- \$99,782 – total funding available for allocation to the proposed budget

Finance Director Edwards noted the steps for salary increases for longevity were

already added in each department's proposed budget along with \$200,000 in Contingency for some type of salary adjustment for employees.

Chairman Inman recessed the meeting until 12:45 pm.

The Board returned to the Budget Work Session.

The Board discussed the 2% adjustment to the County's Salary Scale as proposed by County Manager.

Commissioner Lankford noted the need to give a two-step increase to all employees.

Commissioner Carroll suggested adjusting the salary scale by 1% and increasing the bonus to \$375 for part/full time permanent employees.

The Board discussed the options regarding salary adjustments for county employees.

Senior Services

Finance Director Julia Edwards presented the Board corrected copies reflecting the ROAP Funding (Elderly and Disabled Transportation and additional funding (\$500 for fans.

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Senior Services Budget:

- Decreasing van service to Nutrition Sites from 5 days to 4 days per week
- Closing Nutrition Sites 5 days between Christmas and New Years and also on Easter Monday
- Need to make sure services are provided with the suggested changes
- Increase mileage reimbursement for volunteers who deliver meals from 45 cents to 47 cents

Sheriff's Department

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Sheriff Department Budget:

- Increase in auto supplies – fuel
- Patrol vehicles to be financed
- Bullet proof vests

Vice Chairman Walker and Commissioner Carroll stated that they were in favor of adding the requested Detective position.

Commissioner Lankford noted that he has concerns with adding a position that could be taken away after the first year.

Commissioner Smith noted that he had mixed feelings at the present time.

Chairman Inman stated that he is uncertain at this time, but one thing to remember is that Sheriff Joyce usually does not ask for something unless he really needs it.

Social Services

Finance Director Julia Edwards presented corrected copies of the proposed budget reflecting the ROAP funding (Work First Program .

Commissioner Carroll reiterated the need to speak to DSS Director Spencer regarding the requested new positions.

County Manager Steen discussed the possibility of adding a Social Worker CAP/DA position to lessen the workload of an existing employee.

The Board deferred further discussion until after meeting with Director Spencer.

Finance Director Edwards requested the Board change the total number of employees to 54 instead of 55 (reducing one Social Worker III position - typo.

Solid Waste

Manager Steen noted that the proposed budget included a \$2 per ton tipping fee increase per State's requirement.

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Solid Waste Budget:

- Federal minimum wage increase
- Auto supplies – fuel
- \$2 per ton tipping fee increase

Special Appropriations

Finance Director Julia Edwards presented corrected copies of the proposed budget reflecting the ROAP funding.

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Special Appropriations Budget:

- Walnut Cove Senior Center – request for additional funding
- King Senior Center – no allocation requested
- YVEDDI allocation

Vice Chairman Walker brought to the attention of the Board, the request from YVEDDI for funding for the Weatherization Program. Vice Chairman Walker noted the program provided funding to Stokes County citizens for weatherization needs.

Manager Steen noted that YVEDDI currently receives an allocation from the State for Stokes County and there are other grants funds available for weatherization programs that could be acquired by YVEDDI.

Superior Court

Commissioner Carroll suggested transferring the \$18,200 allocated for the court system telephone expenses to Contingency until the State decides who will be responsible for funding the court system telephone expenses.

Tax Administration

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Tax Administration Budget:

- GIS Administrator position merged with Tax Administrator position
- Reallocation of positions between Tax Administration and Revaluation

Vehicle Maintenance

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Vehicle Maintenance

Budget:

- Diagnostic Scan Tools needed for newer model vehicles

Veterans

Chairman Inman noted there were no significant changes.

Capital Reserve

The Board discussed the following regarding the proposed Capital Reserve Budget:

- Need for a new EMS Facility at Pinnacle
- Courtroom C Renovations
- Walnut Cove Library Renovation Project Funding

Enhanced 911 Fund

Chairman Inman noted there were no significant changes.

Revaluation

Chairman Inman noted there were no significant changes except for reallocation of positions between Tax Administration and Revaluation.

Schools – Capital

Commissioner Carroll requested to allow the Board of Education (if so desired to be able to transfer \$250,000 from Current Expense Fund Balance to Capital Outlay.

Regional Sewer Fund

Finance Director Julia Edwards noted the Regional Sewer, Danbury Water Fund, and Stokes Water and Sewer Authority are being charged for services provided by the Public Works (reading meters .

Stokes Reynolds Memorial Bond Fund

The Board discussed the following regarding the Stokes Reynolds Memorial Bond Fund:

- Hospital operations = \$300,000

Danbury Water Fund

Finance Director Julia Edwards noted the Regional Sewer, Danbury Water Fund, and Stokes Water and Sewer Authority are being charged for services provided by the Public Works (reading meters . Finance Director Edwards noted that the \$18,000 in Salaries and Wages-Contract needs to be transferred to Professional Fees before adoption of the Budget.

King Fire District Fund

Finance Director Julia Edwards presented corrected copies of the proposed budget reflecting county appropriation.

The Board discussed the following regarding the King Fire District Fund:

- Allocation of funding
- Reduction in revenues – (sales tax
- Sharing the cost of Truck #310 personnel
- Grant positions

Commissioner Carroll noted the cost for Truck #310 personnel should be funded from General Fund through the Fire Marshal's office, if not, it doesn't need to be divided equally among 15 departments. It should be divided either by population or property valuations.

The Board further discussed sharing the cost of Truck #310 personnel.

Rural Hall Fire District Fund

The Board discussed the following regarding the Rural Hall Fire District Fund:

- Reduction in revenues – (sales tax
- Sharing the cost of Truck #310 personnel

Walnut Cove Fire District Fund

The Board discussed the following regarding the Walnut Cove Fire District Fund:

- Sharing the cost of Truck #310 personnel
- Reduction in revenues – (sales tax

Service District Fund

The Board had no issues with the proposed budget, but discussed the sharing cost of Truck #310 personnel.

Senior Service Center Fund

The Board had no issues with the proposed budget,

Other Comments

Commissioner Lankford suggested the following items regarding the \$1 million financing:

- Two ambulances = \$240,000
- EMS station = \$219,000
- 8 Vehicles = \$176,000
- Paving of Parking Lots = \$385,000

The Board discussed Commissioner Lankford's proposal regarding financing capital projects/improvements.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman entertained a motion to recess the Budget Work Session until Wednesday, June 18th at 11:00 am.

Commissioner Smith moved to recess the Budget Work Session until Wednesday, June 18th at 11:00 am. Commissioner Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

J. Leon Inman
Chairman