

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA )  
 )  
COUNTY OF STOKES )  
 )

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA  
JUNE 1, 2009

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Public Hearing regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 Budget in Courtroom “A” in the Government Center Building located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, June 1, 2009 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 to order the Public Hearing 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.

Chairman Inman welcomed those in attendance for the Public Hearing.

**PUBLIC HEARING – Proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget**

The following spoke during the Public Hearing:

**Jack Gibson**  
Freedom Works  
Walnut Cove, NC  
Re: **Revenue Neutral**

Mr. Gibson expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- Real economic hard times
- Unemployment rates continue to rise
- Gas and food prices continue to rise
- Citizens are having to stretch their budgets
- Citizens are being forced to try to get more for less money
- Consider that a “tax hike” creates an additional burden on the family budget
- Consider across the board cuts

Mr. Gibson requested the Board cut spending and bring in a revenue neutral budget.

**Jan Spencer**

DSS Director

Re: **DSS Budget**

Director Spencer expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- Cutting resources to some of the most vulnerable citizens in the county – the children who enter foster care
- As the economy worsens, the number of foster care children increases
- Currently, 67 children in DSS custody
- DSS is monitoring 4 children for another county
- 33 children are placed out of the county due to having no local resources
- There were 52 children in custody last year at this time
- There were 46 children in custody two years ago
- Foster Care Supervisor must carry a caseload due to the number of children in foster care

Director Spencer requested the Board continue the part time temporary social worker position in the upcoming budget.

**Kristy Preston**

DSS- Social Work Supervisor

Re: **Salaries**

Ms. Preston expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- Echoed the remarks presented by Director Spencer
- Continuation of the County’s salary plan (valuable asset in recruiting)
- Current salary plan allows the department to offer experienced applicants more than the minimum starting salary
- Current salary plan also rewards employees with pay increases for longevity

Ms. Preston requested the Board carefully consider any changes, modification, or suspension to the current salary plan.

**Kathy Young**  
Register of Deeds  
Re: **Salaries**

Register of Deeds Kathy Young expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- During hard times, the budget is balanced on the backs of county employees
- Possibility of not receiving the Hold Harmless Funding from the State
- Option 2 will be a burden to county employees
- Approximately 9 husbands/wives both work for the County (furlough days will cut the family's annual revenue by 10%)
- Several employees have spouses that work for the State which is also taking furlough days
- No annual increases or COLA
- Fund balance as of June 30, 2008 was 19.574% or \$7,561,378
- Twelve (12) furloughs day would save approximately \$393,000 and no longevity pay increases would save approximately \$141,000 = \$534,000
- If option 1 is approved, recommend the longevity pay increases be included
- If option 2 is approved, recommend the furlough days be reduced to six days (starting in January 2010) and include the longevity pay increases

Register of Deeds Young reiterated her concerns regarding employees having to take 12 furlough days and receiving no pay increases.

**Carey Clemmons**  
Freedom Work  
Walnut Cove, NC  
Re: **Revenue Neutral**

Ms. Clemmons expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- Very concerned about the economic challenges facing families in Stokes County
- Lack of income due to employment loss and governmental cutbacks
- Approve a budget that is equitable to all the Stokes County citizens
- Gasoline prices continue to increase
- If property values increase, decrease property taxes

Mr. Clemmons requested the Board consider a Revenue Neutral Budget.

**Sam Hill**  
King, NC  
Re: **Tax Rate**

Mr. Hill expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- The need for a Revenue Neutral Budget

- Businesses are struggling in the County – having to lay off employees, cut expenses
- Citizens are losing their employment, retirement, insurance, etc.
- Loss of county revenue
- Consider holding off the plans for a new school on Kiser Road this year
- Citizens having to decide whether to eat or buy medicine

Mr. Hill noted good government which allows citizens to express their views and reiterated a government of the people, for the people, and by the people. Mr. Hill also requested the Board adopt a Revenue Neutral Budget.

**Erwin Timm**

Walnut Cove, NC

Re: **Budget**

Mr. Timm expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- Suggest the County place ads in the local paper for volunteers to assist departments in need
- Let the needs of the County be known

Mr. Timm noted that concerned citizens are willing to help.

**Donna Skipper**

Re: **No tax increase**

Ms. Skipper expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 County Budget:

- Can't afford to pay any more in taxes
- Working a full time job plus three part time jobs to make ends meet

Ms. Skipper reiterated not to raise taxes.

Chairman Inman expressed the Board's appreciation to all those in attendance for tonight's Public Hearing.

Chairman Inman noted the Board's commitment to create a safety net for the County's most vulnerable citizens.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman entertained a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Lankford moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

---

**Darlene M. Bullins**  
**Clerk to the Board**

---

**J. Leon Inman**  
**Chairman**