

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  
AUGUST 6, 2012

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a recessed meeting (recessed from the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting) in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administration Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, August 6, 2012 at 4:30 pm with the following members present:

Chairman Ernest Lankford  
Vice Chairman J. Leon Inman  
Commissioner Jimmy Walker  
Commissioner Ronda Jones  
Commissioner James D. Booth

County Personnel in Attendance:  
County Manager Richard D. Morris  
Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins  
County Attorney Edward Powell

Chairman Ernest Lankford called the recessed meeting to order.

**Cooperative Extension – 40 hours Special Leave for Fiscal Year 2012-13**

Chairman Lankford noted the need to discuss the 40 Hours Special Leave for Cooperative Extension employees in that an answer is due back by August 9<sup>th</sup>. (Information just received by the County on July 31<sup>st</sup>)

The Board had no issues with discussing the item at today's recessed meeting.

County Manager Rick Morris noted the following:

- Legislature awarded 40 additional hours of paid leave to state employees as part of the budget for F/Y 2012-13
- 40 hours are granted for use from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013 only
- Special leave must be used before any other non-sick time leave
- If an employee does not use this leave in that time period, it is forfeited
- If an employee separates for any reason other than retirement, any balance of Special Leave will not be paid out – it is forfeited

- If an employee retires before June 30, 2013 and has a balance, it will be paid out
- County has the choice to approve or not approve the Special Leave
- If the County agrees to match this leave, then the employees will get the full 40 hours or prorated for those less than full time
- If the County does not agree to match, the employee will only get those hours that represent the ratio that NCSU pays
- A vote against will just reduce the total number of hours awarded

Chairman Lankford opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Booth noted:

- Cooperative Extension is the only department affected in the county
- State employees are also getting a 1.5% COLA
- Either way it is done, it will be financially the same cost for the county
- The perception is the big concern
- Can't give county employees additional paid leave
- Have concerns with leave not being given to all employees
- There will be no reduction in the financial match that the county has to pay each month with either answer, yes or no
- Even if the County says no for a 50/50 cost share for an employee, the county still pays ½ of the entire salary when the employee uses the paid hours provided by the State
- It is basically another state mandate
- If we say no, the 50/50 cost share employee only gets 20 hours of paid leave which the county ends up paying for 10 of those hours
- Reiterated the issue of not being able provide the same hours for county employees
- Confirmed Cooperative Extension employees don't get the bonus approved in the F/Y 2012-13 budget
- COLA probably equals the County's \$400 bonus
- Reiterated it is the perception

Commissioner Walker noted:

- Felt Commissioner Booth presented some good observations, points, and questions
- Over the years have been associated with several boards, one thing that is always a priority to me is to see if it is equitable, see if it is fair
- How does it compare to County employees, how is it fair to what people are getting in other places?
- What prompted the Legislature to award this special leave?
- Very concerned about the perception
- Private sector is struggling
- Talked to a person yesterday who stated that they received their first bonus in four years, no increase in benefits over the past four years
- Many people are not getting anything
- When it is a mandate from Raleigh, whether you like it or not, you must do it
- Don't like the tone of the letter

- Must first ask how this compares with our County employees?
- If voted to award the entire 40 hours, not sure I could look at the county employees and explain why one department deserves more leave
- Must ask where is the balance and fairness

Vice Chairman Inman noted:

- Can't support the special leave
- Feels NC State recognizes the issues by the following wordage included in the correspondence to the County:
  - If they do not agree to match, then we will load only those hours that represent the ratio that NCSU pays...
  - If they take paid time off, the net effect is that the County gets charged for their portion of the paid hours anyway...
  - A vote against will just reduce the total number of hours awarded.
  - "I know that our Partners may feel that awarding their portion of the 40-hour Special Leave will be unfair to their County employees not in Extension and we want to honor that if this is their wish
- With those excerpts in the letter, can't support

Commissioner Jones noted:

- Going to say basically what Commissioner Booth stated
- No doubt everyone would like more paid leave, but just not fair to county employees
- Perception even worse
- Can't see it
- Got to stay consistent
- Hasn't anything to do with who it is or what department it is
- Another unfunded mandate from the state

Commissioner Walker questioned how it would cost the county if the county said no.

Personnel Officer Darlene Bullins noted the following:

- No matter what amount of leave is awarded, the employee will continue to receive the same pay even if he/she takes all 40 hours in one month; therefore, the employee gets paid leave and the county receives no reduction in financial obligation – same pay each month

Commissioner Walker also noted:

- County continues to have a list that continues to grow, and grow, and grow, etc.
- Taxpayer ends up paying for these types of transfers
- County is at the end of the rope – can't pass down
- Can't support

Chairman Lankford noted:

- Didn't vote for it in Raleigh
- Will not vote for it in Stokes County

Chairman Lankford reiterated the need to place the item on today's Action Agenda due to the August 9<sup>th</sup> deadline.

The consensus of the Board was to place the item on today's Action Agenda.

**Action Agenda**

**Cooperative Extension – 40 hours Special Leave for Fiscal Year 2012-13**

Chairman Lankford entertained a motion.

Vice Chairman Inman moved that the County does not participate in the 40 Hours Special Leave for Cooperative Extension employees. Commissioner Jones seconded.

Commissioner Walker questioned what would happen if the Board took no action today?

Manager Morris noted the employee would get the full 40 hours if no vote was taken.

The motion carried unanimously.

**Closed Session**

Chairman Lankford entertained a motion to enter Closed Session for the following:

- To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged pursuant to GS 143-318.11(a)(3)

Commissioner Booth moved to enter into Closed Session for the following:

- To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged pursuant to GS 143-318.11(a)(3)

Commissioner Jones seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board returned to the regular session of the August 6<sup>th</sup> recessed meeting.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Lankford entertained a motion to adjourn the recessed meeting.

Commissioner Booth moved to adjourn the recessed meeting. Commissioner Jones seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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

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**Ernest Lankford**  
**Chairman**