

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners reconvened the meeting from June 7, 2012, on Friday, June 8, 2012, at 10:00am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chairman Ken Richardson, Vice-Chair Tom Smith, Commissioner Larry Cox, Commissioner John Goudreau, Commissioner Steve Roten, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. County Attorney Donna Shumate was absent.

Chair Richardson reconvened the recessed meeting at 10:00am.

Dr. Gordon Burns, President of Wilkes Community College, thanked the Board for their time/support and the opportunity to present information regarding their budget request. He talked about being able to provide more opportunities locally so citizens don't have to drive to the main campus. He said that they are aware of the economic times and their demands increase due to economic conditions. He presented their priorities in order of the importance: salary realignment of putting contracted services to salaries, benefit increases, realignment of costs by line item; technology increase for broadband access, use of current cyber campus and the need to expand their capabilities to match Ashe and Wilkes campus, second cyber classroom, remote classes at all three locations; have to pay a way for these two priorities. He talked about items that they want to do is move a custodian to a 25-hour part-time position; energy audit was performed, one-time request to provide a shade over the solarium area; final item is a liaison position between the High School and Wilkes Community College, explained the importance of this position, goal is to increase the number that enroll in Wilkes Community College after High School. He asked if the Board has any questions.

Chair Richardson talking about looking to the Federal/State government to help with the economic situation, Alleghany County's chance to assist with this is with the Community College, and asked is that the avenue that Wilkes Community College is talking about today to better prepare people for the future. Dr. Burns answered yes, the more participation means the more prepared, and people don't want to drive very far. Dr. Burns explained that it is about having as much here as possible and being a matter of convenience. Chair Richardson and Dr. Burns talked about the College's requested increase of \$40,789. Chair Richardson talked about Dr. Burns prioritized the College's needs and the Commissioners have to do so also. Chair Richardson and Dr. Burns talked about the House version of the budget has a one-time \$250 bonus for all State employees.

Commissioner Smith, Dr. Burns and Jayne Phipps Boger talked about the liaison position and how that works including the number of current students involved in the program of being in High School taking college courses. She explained that she works with Linda Miller, works closely with the High school but have other things that need to be done, and Benita Hampton works with the trade-type programs, offers financial aid workshops for any college students.

Commissioner Cox asked a question about the \$6,746 increase for broadband. Chris Robinson talked about that is just the broadband costs not anything else but they are considering options of having a ring to go both ways, or a ring that goes to Ashe to Wilkes to Alleghany, classes spend 25% of time with technological issues, point to point broadcasting decreased down time to 1%, and explained the importance of reducing down time. Commissioner Cox talked about he used part of the cyber campus for his masters and used it to teach in, and asked is the current situation with the cyber campus not adequate in broadband and space. Chris Robinson agreed and said that they have limited access to the cyber campus during the day, so it's not compatible. Commissioner Cox talked about a concern if we don't have enough students to make a class then what happens. Chris Robinson explained that this would allow putting 4 students here with 8 students in Ashe to make 12 which is enough to hold the class. They talked about classes need to be offered during the day when they can't get in the current cyber campus. Chris Robinson talked about the importance on the telephone situation.

Commissioner Cox talked about the applied technology center in the basement isn't being used, and where are we with that. Jayne Phipps Boger stated that they are having classes there and provided examples. Commissioner Cox asked are the classes with the High School. Jayne Phipps Boger explained no but they are working on that and reiterated classes that have been held.

Dr. Burns talked about flow of the High School students with dual enrollment and how they are looking at having defined career pathways and the purpose of the more defined process.

Darlene Douglas/Becky Miller/Shirley Cockerham, Becky Bingham came before the Board to talk about their request for funding. Darlene Douglas explained that the hot meal they provide daily is the only balanced meal that some clients get, insurance issues, they built the roads around them, maintain the septic system, primary provider of adult intellectual/development disability services, and explained their programs and budgets for each program, amount of salary paid out to staff/consumers and the total amount of income coming into the County. Becky Bingham talked about they helped us through the good/bad, she couldn't read when she started, gets one meal a day, learned how to do a lot, it's like a second home to them and it's a special place for disabled people, Shirley Cockerham talked about their training program, been there 20-25 years, enjoys the program, works hard, they need the air-condition vans, they work in fiber, they need the contract so they can continue working because they need money for their bills, program is to help her, enjoys working there, requested not to cut the contract off because they need it because they can't work. Darlene Douglas stated her appreciation for them coming to speak, and she understands it is difficult for them to talk. Darlene Douglas requested to keep them on the same level as health and human services.

Commissioner Smith thanked them for coming in.

Commissioner Cox thanked them for their time.

Beth Lovette, Appalachian District Health Department Director, came before the Board to review their budget request. She reviewed the sources of their funds, the various programs including the State-mandated services plus their items of concern and the grand total of \$6,738,060 for 2012/13. She explained that they have received a Kate B. Reynolds grant for a nurse practitioner and applied for a portion of the Golden Leaf grant to fully fund primary care; environmental health fees do not cover the costs of the program, food/lodging is restaurant/hotel/school inspections isn't State funded but is a State mandate; community alternative program (CAP/DA), balanced budget but has a deficit, last two months of this year looks better, share an employee with DSS to work with CAP, request was for a 5% increase. She provided papers to the Board about their fund balance and they are seeing an improvement of their budget situation. She reviewed the history of change in their fund balance since June 30, 2008, and using approximately \$250,000 this year leaves a fund balance of about \$1,822,000 or 27% fund balance that is above the 24% mark of where they need to be. She explained that the Board of Health budget should be approved on June 19, and they are working on deficit items during the first six months.

County Manager Don Adams thanked Beth Lovette for this information. He explained that when they sat down about the budget the deficit numbers were larger and in light of New River's issue he felt the need to start having public conversations about their fund balance which is nowhere near the initial \$400,000 because their initial budget used \$460,000 and that deficit has been reduced by half. He further explained his reasons for the Health Department's fund balance conversations. He reiterated that this is a much better financial picture than when he initially looked at the budget. He asked Beth Lovette what the Health Department is using for next year. Beth Lovette asked they haven't changed the budget but will revise numbers after they get them in. County Manager Don Adams talked about they are trying to adjust and although they have been dropping fund balance they have reduced expenses and are looking at ways to preserve primary care.

Commissioner Cox appreciated Beth Lovette coming with this, and the news was better than expected. He used an example of how counties use the fund balance appropriation to balance the budget, and asked are these budgeted numbers or actual numbers.

Beth Lovette and County Manager Don Adams talked about these are actual monies spent. He said that we are not out of the discussion but now has more time about primary care, and the Health Department has a year or two to work things out. Beth Lovette explained that their goal is to present a balanced budget without spending fund balance.

Commissioner Cox clarified that 24% of the budget is the Health Department's recommended fund balance. Beth Lovette agreed. Commissioner Cox talked about the Golden Leaf grant application entering into the final phase. Beth Lovette explained the Kate B. Reynolds and Golden Leaf grants and their timelines.

Chair Richardson explained that it is important for us to understand that 20% of the population uses the Health Department.

Chair Richardson declared a brief recess at 11:02am.

John Hedrick, Director Northwestern Regional Library, talked about their budget request for Allegheny County Library where only two lines have requested increases; salary increase which it takes all five counties to adopt and Stokes county will not be able to fund that so basically the Commissioners can strike that increase and the other increase is for group insurance that was budgeted at a 5% increase and came in at 11%, they made adjustments, talked to a broker got it to a 1% increase. He asked the Board to please fund them at the same level. He explained that \$780 is the insurance shortfall for Allegheny County.

John Hedrick talked about the Golden Leaf grant for the Allegheny County Technology Resource Center in the amount of \$500,000, they need a project manager, and since this is on County property they are proposing that the County Commissioners designate the County Manager as the project manager. County Manager Don Adams provided a brief summary about the Library's golden leaf request including he received a phone call from BJ Smith about him being the project manager to oversee the project and his response was that this request hasn't been brought before the Board, and he told her that he wasn't comfortable agreeing until the Board talked about it. Chair Richardson asked if it is the consensus among the Board about having the County Manager as the project manager. Commissioner Cox asked will the County Manager accept and his need to know more information about the project. County Manager Don Adams explained that the Veterans Park has been discussed numerous times, and he is comfortable putting that in because he has been before the Board. The County Manager provided examples of the type of information that is being requested on the Veterans Park. The County Manager explained that it is County property but was not sure how to proceed and he wasn't comfortable with listing himself as the project manager without discussions of the Commissioners. The County Manager asked is the Library listing him as project manager using the Library's team. John Hedrick answered yes. Chair Richardson said that this is just the consensus and the official vote will be on mid-month meeting in June.

Karon Edwards, Council on Aging Director, talked about they have cut their budget. She further talked about their recent activities and upcoming activities to get more seniors to participate. She explained several things in the budget decreased including salaries and most of the lines decreased or stayed the same. She talked about the \$135,324 from the County to meet those same items need \$139,821 which is almost a \$4,500 increase. She further talked about an outline of why they are asking for the increase.

Commissioner Smith asked about the meals provided almost daily, and those are prepared at the High School. Karon Edwards agreed. Commissioner Smith asked about the costs. Karon Edwards stated that the price is \$3.60 plus the number of meals is increasing.

Commissioner Roten asked that is where the increased is. Karon Edwards agreed.

Commissioner Smith and Karon Edwards talked about in the newspaper there was information that adults can eat at the High School for \$3.00 not \$3.60, and she is going to look into that difference.

Commissioner Cox asked have they looked at others to provide the meals, such as the Hospital. Karon Edwards stated that they are supposed to provide a number on Monday, and the Hospital has to look at whether they can or not.

Chair Richardson stated that he thinks the summer meals at the schools is a subsidiary project. Karon Edwards said it is but provided an example of meals at Glade Creek School.

Karon Edwards stated her appreciation to the Board. She explained that if they receive a cut then it will be on the service side like meals at congregate sites.

Pam Sizemore talked to the Board about the Family Resource Center's budget request. She further talked about the need to stay where they are with funding. She explained what the local funding covers. She further explained that the State allocation does not allow them to work with families once the children have been removed. She explained that they have sought other funding streams and foundations and haven't been successful including recently applied to the Governors Crime Commission which didn't work but they are going to try again in the future. She gave an example of a family that has been involved in their program and the successful outcome. She stated that without the local funding they would have had to turn her away.

Commissioner Cox talked about he knows how hard they work and how far they stretch the dollar because he has seen it. He stated his appreciation for what they do. He asked has she heard anything from the State budget. Pam Sizemore explained that 66 grants were submitted with 49 approved, and their contract was extended for another year.

Commissioner Roten asked they are not requesting an increase. Pam Sizemore said no, could use it but didn't ask for it. She explained that if they get cut they will have to turn people away.

Genia George came before the Board about the Arts Council budget, and explained that they are asking for an increase in funding this year. She explained that the Arts Council was cut 59% several years. She further explained that \$9,000 is their request which is what the Council got 14 years ago. She talked about the programs/services that they offer. She explained that they have started things that have got artists to promote Alleghany County. She talked about the programs at the Library where the major attendants are senior citizens. She asked the Board to consider the \$9,000 request. She explained that they receive a grant from NC Cultural Resources for \$6,700 which has to be matched. She further explained that contributions are down. She asked the Board to please consider this request and explained that they have not contracted for any programs until they know what funding they are going to receive.

Commissioner Smith and Genia George talked about a lot of the programs are held at the Library, including the summer reading program where the Arts Council is a major sponsor.

Chair Richardson talked about they have the agenda completed, and the public hearing has been scheduled. He said that if any Commissioner wants to request additional budget meetings let the County Manager or Clerk know to schedule those.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about he thinks the Board needs to have conversations about using \$634,000 of the fund balance and the need to look at the special appropriations.

Commissioner Smith talked about the Board probably should look at some meetings in the next week or so.

Chair Richardson explained that he asked Mrs. Evans to add budget discussions on the June 18 agenda, which should allow some time for discussions. He asked is that adequate or are other meetings needed. He reminded the Board that it needs to be by the 26<sup>th</sup> to be prepared for the public hearing and must have the budget completed by June 30.

Commissioner Goudreau said that he thinks that is acceptable. He talked about putting it in on the agenda and could recess that meeting.

Commissioner Cox talked about his thoughts about there will be need for a lot more conversations because the County Manager provided three options to the Commissioners for discussions and then there is the conversation about the Hospital. He said that he agrees about putting it on the agenda but he thinks that there will need to be more.

Commissioner Smith said he agrees.

Chair Richardson talked about next week meeting times/dates. The Board talked about dates/times to meet next week. They decided on June 14 at 6:30pm. Chair Richardson talked about the meeting for next Thursday night.

Chair Richardson recessed this meeting at 11:40am until Thursday, June 14 at 6:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans  
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson  
Chairman