

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in recessed session on Wednesday, June 10, 2009, at 6:00pm in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Ken Richardson, Vice-Chair Randy Miller, Commissioner Doug Murphy, Commissioner Milly Richardson, Commissioner Steve Roten, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Chair Ken Richardson reconvened the recessed meeting.

John Blevins, Social Services Director, came before the Board to discuss the Social Services budget request. He talked about the Income Maintenance Investigator II position. He asked the Board to reconsider reinstating this position that has been cut from the budget. He talked about how they have one of the largest departments and they are at their busiest due to the economic conditions. He referred to a handout showing the fraud collections since 2005. He talked about their caseload increase of 21% since August 2008 in the food/nutrition services. He explained that this position is now working with the fraud and the food/nutrition services because of the large increase in the caseloads. He talked about positions cut from DSS is not a one for one match because funding comes from the State and Federal level. He explained that currently Alleghany County has \$20,000 in the food/nutrition program and an additional \$20,000 will be available in October for administrative of the program with no county match required for these monies. He further explained that the purpose of these funds is to either create jobs or save jobs that are at risk of being eliminated. He reviewed the handout showing that the funding for this position is \$45,651.53. He talked about the first \$20,000 has to be spent by September 30, and he will spread it out over the three positions. He further talked about the state personnel policy stating that if a position is eliminated, the State makes the person associated with that position eliminated regardless of longevity and other issues. He explained that if a position is eliminated they won't be properly staffed for the food/nutrition program. He said that they realize this is a tough time for everyone. He further said that he hopes that the Board will consider and review this. He urged the Commissioners to call him with questions and come by to see them.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and John Blevins talked about if a position is cut then that person is gone regardless of their capabilities.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and John Blevins talked about the money coming from the stimulus package. Mr. Blevins explained that Alleghany County will get that money even if position is eliminated but the intent is to create a position or save a position and \$5,600 is what we are looking at to retain that position.

Commissioner Milly Richardson and John Blevins talked about it will cost \$5,600 this year, and next year it will be a 50/50 match.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the County will get the \$40,000. He further explained that when he was creating his budget recommendations he had to look at positions when he was looking at cutting position and he had to put an amount of money associated with each position, and he wasn't presenting that it was that particular person. He explained that he does want this Board to look at layoffs and salary reductions. He further explained that there is still room for department heads to make the decision onto what position to cut.

Chair Ken Richardson expressed concern about how much money will be lost by not coming back into the County and no one is watching.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about this could cost more in the long run.

Commissioner Randy Miller and John Blevins talked about having the \$20,000 in the bank and have been told that the County will get the additional \$20,000. They discussed taking the \$40,000 for all three positions and being 100% money with no county match required.

The Board of Commissioners thanked John Blevins.

John Blevins thanked his staff for their efforts and job well done.

Linda Hash came before the Board to discuss the Soil and Water budget. She explained that they recognize the need for cuts and they have cut cell phones out, have been looking at the little things, and hope everyone is doing that. She talked about two lines of concern; travel and capital. She explained that travel was cut 40% last year and the number of meetings attended each year with some additional travel for the area 2 chairperson. She further explained the concern with capital being \$2,000 for two computers because their computers will be taken out by the end of December because the federal government is no longer providing the computer/tech services. She stated that they are keeping the office on their network through July 2010. She talked about a portion of their salaries is reimbursed to the county along with a portion of operating expenses. She further talked about the revenues brought in through the no-till drill. She talked about the amount of money they have encumbered for the community. She further talked about a lot of services do not generate monies.

Chair Ken Richardson asked about the 5% cut.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the Soil and Water budget was split into two budgets and both budgets add up to the budget last year.

Linda Hash talked about their services with the other budgeted funds that were used this year and purposes of funds used this year.

Commissioner Milly Richardson asked what amount in travel is needed.

County Manager Don Adams and Linda Hash talked about the amount needed for travel and capital.

Linda Hash said that they hope the Board won't have to get into salaries and benefits when reviewing the budget.

Bob Bamberg, Chamber Director, expressed their gratitude for the Commissioners' support to the Chamber over the years. He said that he thought about not coming tonight but didn't want to give the impression that the cut doesn't matter. He talked about the amount of literature produced last year to promote Allegheny County. He handed out the new Sparta magazine. He talked about supporting the tax base, promoting Allegheny County, Allegheny Stimulus 2009 project which will be an annual program to promote shopping at home. He explained that they are in the category of being phased out. He talked about talking with others in this category and everyone understands the budget constraints. He recognized three Chamber board members present tonight. He explained that when he was talking to the other groups, everyone requested to stretch the phase out to three years rather than two. He thanked the Board for their generosity.

County Manager Don Adams let the Board know that the County did receive the remaining amount of lottery monies; \$47,000.

Stacy Evans with Allegheny Trail Blazers came before the Board to discuss their budget request. He thanked the Board for their time. He asked for the children to show the signs made for the Commissioners. He passed around pictures of the area for the Board's review. He passed out papers showing the need and support letter regarding help for school-age children. He passed out a support letter for their program. He explained the number of children they are currently serving at this time, working with the six surrounding counties, several other kids wanting to participate but can't due to the limit. He talked about the need now more than ever for the County to get behind the program. He explained that Jane McCarthy could not be here but she is the one who did the proposal to the Commissioners. He further explained that she figured 45 kids at \$15 per session for \$30,000. He talked about belonging to the NARRA which has 11 regions across US, and there minimum fee is \$50 per session. He further talked about they have a lot of prescriptions that say for the person to ride two times a week, some three times a week. He explained that they have a horse show scheduled for June 27 strictly for children/adults with disabilities, trying to get businesses to support this cause,

volunteers needed, starts at 10:00am, children are the number one priority, different activities through out the day, and a \$15 fee to participate. He urged anyone interested to call 372-2025 or visit [alleganytrailblazers.org](http://alleganytrailblazers.org).

Genia Waughwin (?) explained that she works in Ashe and Alleghany counties and is based in Watauga County. She further explained that she knew there was horseback therapy in Boone and saw great results with it. She talked about a personnel experience with therapy. She explained that she talked to Stacy Evans and worked him to bring some kids here to experience the therapy. She described an experience from yesterday with a cerebral palsy girl and a boy who was terrified of animals. She urged the Board to get behind this. She talked about how this works, how simple to get on a horse and ride.

Stacy Evans talked about the pictures explain this. He talked about the support behind this is phenomena, and they only need funding support.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about never being one to pass the buck, and having to assume the responsibility. He further talked about the need to be focused on the State because they pass things along to us. He stated that this needs to be recognized by the State.

Stacy Evans stated that they are working on that.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about for all of us to address this issue there has to be money to keep this going. He further talked about this is his 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> budget, but it is the hardest because the Commissioners are talking about people's jobs and their livelihood. He stated that this board has a very difficult decision ahead of them. He explained that there will be no decisions tonight or tomorrow night because the Board is here to listen to all of the groups before discussing the budget.

Stacy Evans explained that they just have been recognized by the Board of Education and have money coming from the State Board of Education.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Melinda Kupner talked about getting in contact with Smoky Mountain and looking for assistance statewide.

Stacy Evans passed out papers to the Board regarding a fundraiser for disabled veterans. He encouraged volunteers to come. He stated his appreciation for inviting them.

Chair Ken Richardson thanked everyone for coming.

Chair Ken Richardson recessed the meeting at 7:03pm until Thursday, June 11, 2009, at 6:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans  
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson  
Chairman