

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in recessed session on Monday, June 21, 2010, at 4:52pm 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 at 4:52pm. He reminded the Board that the County Manager presented a menu of funding reductions. He said he thinks the Commissioners need to hear any department or individual to come before the Board on Wednesday night about their concerns about the budget before the Board makes any decisions. He talked about needing to have some idea at least how the majority of the Board is proceeding regarding keeping the current tax rate and the \$789,890.

Commissioner Steve Roten and Commissioner Milly Richardson stated that they think the Board needs to go line by line rather than as a whole.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that until he hears from the departments how these cuts will impact affect them, he can't decide.

Commissioner Steve Roten and Chair Ken Richardson talked about the groups appearing before them and groups that don't come before the Board assuming that they are ok with the changes. Commissioner Roten stated that someone has to look out for the ones that don't say anything.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about the library being part of a regional library system and how they get money from the State.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the maintenance of effort agreement that the State requires for regional library systems.

Commissioner Doug Murphy, Chair Ken Richardson and County Manager Don Adams talked about not hearing anything from the State regarding regional library systems. Chair Richardson explained as being part of the regional system allows each branch to have access to a degreed librarian because Elkin has one which allows the regional system to qualify for more monies and each individual library, too.

Commissioner Steve Roten talked about eliminating the fireworks from the budget.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about how much traffic comes into the County for July 4th.

Commissioner Steve Roten talked about some of these should be getting assistance from somewhere else, and he tries to voice the opinions of the public. He reiterated that by taking money from the future; this will only get worse and a lot of this stuff will have to be cut plus he doesn't see any other way to do it.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about looking at the information from the State, information from Dr. Cox, lottery proceeds being cut and Medicaid reimbursements. He said he can't support raising any kind of taxes without looking at cuts and how things are done. He talked about debt reduction for the upcoming years.

Commissioner Steve Roten and Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about debt reduction has already been factored in.

Commissioner Doug Murphy asked everyone to keep in mind that these monies can be used to increase the fund balance. He talked about freezing expenditures until the audit comes in.

Chair Ken Richardson started down the list starting with BROCC. He asked does the Board want to eliminate BROCC.

County Manager Don Adams informed the Board that there are currently 18-20 agencies currently coming to Wednesday's meeting.

Chair Ken Richardson reviewed the County Manager's funding reductions. He asked the Board what they want to do regarding BROOC.

Commissioner Milly Richardson stated that the recommended 10-11 is what she thinks.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that since the Board has heard from BROOC today he can talk about BROOC but can't say on the others until he hears from them about these funding reductions.

County Manager Don Adams and Chair Ken Richardson talked about the County Manager's recommendations from June 1.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about funding the Family Resource Center, monies used to assist women and children, and they do a very good job of taking care of their resources.

Commissioner Milly Richardson agreed.

Commissioner Steve Roten stated that he personally thinks that these are things the County should be supporting and having no problem with leaving them as they are.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that he has to look at this not just in dollars and cents but the impact.

Chair Ken Richardson asked about Red Cross.

Commissioner Steve Roten talked about the national issues but they do a lot of good stuff.

Commissioner Doug Murphy asked does the Board leave Red Cross or what. He said that the Board has to start making decisions at some point.

Commissioner Milly Richardson stated that she is in favor of leaving Red Cross at the County Manager's original recommendation.

Commissioner Steve Roten, Commissioner Doug Murphy and County Manager Don Adams talked about Channel 50/21 is not self supporting at this point.

Commissioner Steve Roten asked who is coming to the meeting on Wednesday.

Clerk to the Board Karen Evans listed people that are coming to Wednesday's meeting.

Commissioner Steve Roten, Commissioner Milly Richardson and Chair Ken Richardson talked about what the Planning Committee, Health Advisory Committee and Wilkes Center for Deaf are.

Chair Ken Richardson and Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about the Group Homes.

Chair Ken Richardson asked the Clerk to call Group Homes and ask them to come.

Commissioner Steve Roten asked can the Board talk about the revaluation money.

County Manager Don Adams provided an update for the Board including \$181,000 is currently in the account, next revaluation is in 2015 but it will start in 2013, currently behind right now, last contract was little under \$400,000, might save a little

money next time because they won't have to have all of the digital photos taken.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about it should costs less every four years and then every two years.

County Manager Don Adams agreed it should but it doesn't. He named counties that does this is currently; Surry, Davie, Yadkin, Person, Stokes, Lee, but they have a revaluation department above and beyond the normal tax office staff. He reiterated that the County is putting aside \$40,000 per year, and these others have two/four people on the revaluation staff.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that he totally agrees about our obligation but what bothers him is that the Board is talking about taking money away from services and putting it into revaluation because \$40,000 goes a long way to address some of these issues.

Commissioner Steve Roten talked about he is just looking at the future because the money will have to come from somewhere.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about the debt reduction over the next six years. He stated that he agrees with the Chairman on this to help these agencies.

Commissioner Milly Richardson reminded everyone that there is a distant possibility that it may be cheaper.

County Manager Don Adams stated that people have to have certifications above and beyond for staff to perform reval. He explained that it takes years to get the certifications because the classes aren't offered all of the time. He said that the County can't take it all over, but the County could do some.

Commissioner Doug Murphy asked has this ever been discussed in the Tax Office.

Rita Miller, Assistant Tax Administrator, explained that it has been discussed, and it seems like it would be more expensive.

County Manager Don Adams talked about looking at the counties that do this, and they will pay the salary to get the people away from revaluation companies. He further talked about the County could spend the money to do the reval, run the danger of training the people, and they leave for a higher salary. He said that it is a difficult thing to take over reval.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about the County needs to look at everything, and this is a start.

Commissioner Steve Roten and Rita Miller talked about the last revaluation company and the problems with the revaluation.

Commissioner Milly Richardson and Rita Miller talked about the number of parcels; approximately 16,000, and the number of appeals during the last revaluation.

Chair Ken Richardson stated since most of the special appropriation departments are coming; the Board needs to move in another direction.

Commissioner Doug Murphy asked can the Board agree from the time the budget is approved until the audit is received from Martin Starnes in November to not allow additional allocations. He asked what the process is.

County Manager Don Adams stated that it is a policy set by the Board.

Commissioner Steve Roten said he would be willing to agree to that.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the research that he has about the ¼¢ sales tax including this sales tax doesn't have to be shared with the Town so it will be

around \$180,000 plus the process to proceed and the deadline of mid-August for the general election. He stated that under the current law it would be effective July 1, 2011, if approved.

Commissioner Steve Roten stated he would be willing to support that.

Commissioner Randy Miller stated that it is fair for everyone.

The Board talked about Wilkes County's referendum is tomorrow.

County Manager Don Adams talked about there is a technical bill currently that would make it effective April 1 rather than July 1.

Commissioner Randy Miller and County Manager Don Adams talked about there is no costs associated with the referendum if it is scheduled for the general election. The County Manager explained that the only way it would cost money then would be if the question would make it a second page on the ballot.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated this is something to think about.

Chair Ken Richardson asked the County Manager to prepare a resolution to bring to the Board. He stated if the public passes it, the Board still has to adopt it.

Commissioner Steve Roten stated that one thing he likes is that it involves the public.

County Manager Don Adams asked the Board for another meeting date. He reminded everyone that staff has to have time to prepare the budget ordinance once the Board has decided upon the proposed budget.

Commissioner Randy Miller talked about the Board needs to talk to some of the special appropriations because there are ways to get money other than from the County. He used the fireworks, for example, being pledges from businesses.

County Manager Don Adams explained how the fireworks came into play for the County several years ago when a prior group stopping doing them, the Board at that time elected to fund the fireworks rather than not having fireworks. He stated that the costs is \$5,000 split between the County and the Town.

Commissioner Randy Miller talked about personally supporting the wellness center. He stated that only roughly 10% of the population uses it. He said he is going to speak to board members about having pledge drives for them because that is another way for them to raise money.

Commissioner Doug Murphy agreed about the wellness center and if pledge cards are sent to people then they would be willing to give. He talked about there is everything from core to karate to swim team to health/fitness and camps at the wellness center. He further talked about the Board has to be aware of dollars but if cuts are made, the private sector is going to step up. He said the Board doesn't need to lose track of the amount of things that are going on for the children and the older generation.

Commissioner Steve Roten and Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about the fees at the wellness center.

Commissioner Randy Miller and Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about the pool cover and grants for the center.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about \$2,000,000 was raised for the facility by a lot of support/effort of the public. He said that it is up to each Board member to decide at what level to support the wellness center, if any. He talked about the benefits of the people using the facility.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that it is very important to the community.

Commissioner Randy Miller stated that his suggestion was for them to help themselves. He said if anyone hasn't been there; go see what they do. He further said it is a good place and good cause.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about a Commissioner mentioned the arts council at a previous meeting, and everyone should have seen the turn out for the recent show at the Methodist Church. He further talked about being a very important part of the county.

Commissioner Milly Richardson said she mentioned the arts council, wellness center and chamber. She further said that she thinks they are all very important but the Board has come to the point that the Board has to scale back and fund the necessary expenses. She talked about there are a lot of people in the community that can keep these programs going.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that he knows what Commissioner Milly Richardson is saying but each one of the Commissioners have to answer to the public.

Being no future business, Chair Ken Richardson adjourned the meeting at 5:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson
Chairman