

Board of Commissioners met on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 5 pm in the County Administration Building at 348 South Main Street in Sparta, North Carolina, for budget hearings from special appropriation groups.

Present: Chair Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, Commissioner John Irwin, Commissioner Larry Prince, Commissioner Tom Smith, County Manager Mike James, Finance Officer Karen Evans, and Clerk Lauren Linker.

Chair Mark Evans called the budget meeting to order. He then led the pledge of allegiance and gave the invocation.

County Manager Mike James gave a preview for the public of the County website highlighting the budget section. He then explained a change in the special appropriations for Wilkes Community College now back to giving the \$50,000 from current years budget and only the \$25,000 for next year.

Steve Mason from the Wellness Center explained last years budget and went over the positive growth for the facility. He then thanked the Board and community for their support throughout the year.

Chair Mark Evans asked about the debt for the wellness center and the future for the facility.

Steve Mason explained the remaining debt, plans to consolidate the debt and future plans for the property.

Commissioner Larry Prince asked about the wages for the front desk.

Steve Mason explained the amount was for eight part-time employees and him.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked if the prices for membership had been raised and what the number was for membership.

Steve Mason explained the way membership price was determined and the number of members for the year. He then thanked all the people and groups that came to support the wellness center.

County Manager Mike James spoke about the comprehensive marketing plan and the

Joseph McGrady, Alleghany-Sparta Volunteer Fire Department Chief, explained the expenditures for the department last year. He went on to talk about the amount of calls the department responds to.

Commissioner John Irwin asked if he spent more time fighting fire or raising money.

Joseph McGrady said raising money.

Commissioner Prince asked what the biggest obstacles in recruiting.

Joseph McGrady said younger people aren't as interested and it takes time.

Chair Evans asked what the intent was for buying the property next to them.

Joseph McGrady explained they bought the property to allow the opportunity to expand later if there was a need. He said if someone else had bought the property there would have been nowhere else for the fire department to expand.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked if the fire department does more than fight fire.

Joseph McGrady said yes they deal with all hazards.

Commissioner Smith thanked all the fire departments for what they do and gave a few ideas for recruitment.

Carroll Royal went over the number of calls and number of man hours spent on calls.

Commissioner John Irwin asked if the calls included responses.

Carroll Royal said yes and explained how they determine who responds and the layout of members across the County.

Commissioner John Irwin noted the large amount in saving and clarified the amount was for the replacement of one vehicle.

Danny Brooks, Laurel Springs Volunteer Fire Department, went over the number of calls in their different capacities. He noted the training facility is a wonderful option for all the departments.

Chair Evans asked about the building that is being built.

Danny Brooks noted it was a state mandated reason that the trucks be placed in a heated facility so the trucks are ready to go.

Chair Evans and Commissioner Smith asked if there is anything that needs to be done to make the training facility better.

Commissioner Prince asked how many properties are in the fire district.

Danny Brooks said he was unsure of the exact number.

Commissioner John Irwin asked if Ashe County came over and used the training facility.

Tammy Taylor, Appalachian Senior Programs explained what they do in the County.

Chair Evans asked how many clients there are in Alleghany County. He went on to ask how someone could become a client.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked about the numbers compared to the amounts of money.

Chair Mark Evans recessed for a break at 6:20 pm. He then called the meeting back at 6:25 pm.

Dale Caveny went over what things the Business Development Center does to help with the economic vitality of the County as well as all the programs they support.

Commissioner Larry Prince asked about their loss of rental income in the amount of \$26,000.

Dale Caveny explained when the library moved into the building the teapot storage had to move out and that was an income for the Business Development Center of \$26,000.

Commissioner Smith asked about the office availability in the Business Development Center.

Dale Caveny said there are three offices open, but a current client is looking to take those offices over.

Shirl Daemer, Our House of Wilkes County explained what Our House of Wilkes County does for children in Wilkes and in the surrounding counties.

Chair Mark Evans asked if they are able to work with the environments.

Shirl Daemer explained the family advocacy program that helps deal with the environments.

Commissioner Tom Smith asked what sets Our House apart from Social Services or other organizations in similar lines of work.

Shirl Daemer said the court ordered supervised visitation was the biggest difference.

Commissioner Larry Prince thanked the group for their heart for what they do and asked if they track the children to see where they end up.

Shirl Daemer said yes that's how they know what needs to change with their programs.

Cindy Atwood from the Historical Genealogical Society explained all the things the group does in the County. She then went over the numbers from last year's budget and thanked the Board for their contribution last year. She next went over the number of people that have visited the museum and what it meant to have someone keep the history of the County.

Chair Mark Evans thanked them for all they do.

Daniel Murray, Cherry Lane Volunteer Fire Department went over the numbers for the department over the past year.

Chair Mark Evans asked about the membership

Daniel Murray said they were currently good with their numbers, but understood the struggle other departments are having.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Tom Smith seconded. Vote 5:0

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Lauren Linker  
Clerk to the Board

Mark Evans  
Chair