

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Monday, June 17, 2013, at 11:40am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina. The purpose of this meeting was for budget discussions.

Present: Chair Larry Cox, Vice-Chair Tom Smith, Commissioner Larry Davis, Commissioner Karen Leys, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. Commissioner John Goudreau and County Attorney Donna Shumate were present until the recess.

Chair Cox called the meeting to order, explained the purpose of the meeting and welcomed everyone. He asked the County Attorney to discuss her opinion about the salary of the Director of Board of Elections.

County Attorney Donna Shumate provided her written opinion regarding the Board of Elections Director's salary. She reviewed the North Carolina General Statutes that pertain to this request; §163-35 and §163-37. She explained that the Statutes indicate that the salary shall be commensurate with the salary paid to other directors in counties similarly situated and similar in population and number of registered voters. She further explained that she looked at all 100 counties in terms of similarly situated, number of registered voters and population. She further explained that after reviewing all of this information and comparing populations under 15,000 and voter registered voters under 10,000, it appears to her that the salary paid to the Director is commensurate with the salary paid to other directors in terms of population and voter registration. She said that surrounding counties pay more but that doesn't compare for just justification. She stated that according to the data, the Director is not the lowest paid director in the state but the salary is in the lower 25% of the salaries paid.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the last sentence regarding the lower 25% is the key point.

Commissioner Smith talked about it is across the board that employees are in the lower 25% in regards to salary.

Commissioner Smith and County Attorney Donna Shumate talked about she did not have data that shows whether there is an assistant or not.

Chair Cox and County Attorney Donna Shumate discussed the use of actual salary and that doesn't include the length of service. She explained that she didn't have that data.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about the proposed 2% COLA and longevity change makes the difference \$1,800.

The Board talked about ways to proceed with the budget discussions.

Chair Cox declared a lunch recess at 11:51am.

Commissioner Leys talked about a spreadsheet done by Don Adams and Karen Evans that showed Alleghany County employees are unpaid.

County Manager Don Adams used Emergency Management Coordinator as an example because he is a level 3 fire inspector, which is hard to compare to other counties.

Chair Cox talked about following the budget message for conversations and the next topic is capital and capital improvements then the Board of Education. He talked about polling the Board on different issues to see which way to proceed including the Board of Education, the Hospital and Family Resource Center.

Commissioner Leys and County Manager Don Adams talked about the date for the State's budget adoption. She talked about waiting until then to decide.

Chair Cox said that he doesn't think the County can do enough to save the Family Resource Center (FRC). Commissioner Smith said that there is already \$8,775 in budget, and the amount requested was \$60,000. He stated that he doesn't have a good feeling about what is coming out of Raleigh. He said if they don't fund that he isn't comfortable funding it. Commissioner Davis talked about if this is funded this year then it will be next year also. Chair

Cox, Commissioner Davis and the County Manager talked about this is funding for 3 years. The County Manager reviewed their requests and what each level of funding would provide but if the Board is going to provide \$60,000 to the Family Resource Center to remember it's for part of the Social Services mandated services and the other part is for the other additional services. The County Manager talked about alternatives through Social Services for the mandatory part and that Mr. Blevins received a estimate of \$5,600 from the State for the mandatory services, then adding the \$8,775, which is budgeted for the FRC for a total of \$14,375 available without changing the budget to provide these services, use that money as the 40% match for Social Services turns it into \$35,937. The County Manager reminded the Board that these monies can only be spent on the mandatory services not the other services provided by the FRC and how that gets spent is in debate which will take more conversation with the Commissioners. The County Manager explained that Daymark will also start providing similar services for parenting classes to people who have substance abuse issues, reviewed the mandated services that Social Services must provide and the remaining services that must be provided. Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Leys talked about how the space issues at Social Services will not be a problem because of the new lease. Chair Cox talked about the equipment available at FRC that isn't at Social Services. County Manager Don Adams talked about the value of parenting class offered by someone other than the Social Worker and the person providing classes does not need to be the Social Worker who goes to court. Chair Cox asked if Daymark could be approached about the infant classes or non substance abuse clients. Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about supervised visits and how FRC handled that where Social Services could not. The County Manager explained that is not minimizing the importance of the FRC but the question is about the mandated services and other provided services. Commissioner Leys said she would like to wait to the last minute on that because of the State budget. County Manager Don Adams talked about one way to do that is take the \$8,775 and un-designate it while waiting to see. Commissioner Smith talked about the need for a plan to consider if the State doesn't fund it, and he doesn't have a problem to un-designate the \$8,775 for future use with the understanding that there are a lot of unknowns.

Chair Cox mentioned the recommended capital and capital improvements and asked for comments. Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Leys and Chair Cox talked about these are things that need to be done.

Chair Cox mentioned the Board of Education indicated sometime ago about money for security. Commissioner Davis talked about the money needs to be marked for security. Commissioner Leys explained she had a meeting with Dr. Cox and Cindy Holder last week where she requested detailed information on the security for the High School and Piney Creek School. Commissioner Smith talked about stipulating the money is for security. Commissioner Leys said she wants prices on the security first. Chair Cox said he would like to approach this as a match amount to be provided. The County Manager used examples of how that could be accomplished. Chair Cox asked about an amount. Commissioner Leys said she didn't want to get into the numbers until the Commissioners know more about it. Commissioner Davis talked about the rekeying project. Chair Cox talked about the High School and Piney Creek School's security needs. Commissioner Smith said for everyone to remember there is an SRO at the High School, and he is not prepared to give a dollar amount today. Chair Cox agreed and said that we want to do something on security but just don't know how much.

Chair Cox talked about discussing special appropriations. County Manager Don Adams talked about the pass-through lines, mandated lines, and grant lines. Commissioner Smith and the County Manager talked about the special appropriations with the County Manager explaining his level of funding recommendation for each special appropriation line. Chair Cox asked if there are any recommendations to change anything in special appropriations. Commissioner Leys asked about the NRSA liabilities. County Manager Don Adams explained that there will be legal fees in the coming budget year. The Board talked about New River lawsuits and the small amount of money left with New River. The County Manager reminded everyone that we are in a regional agreement to share the costs to defend lawsuits.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about the maintenance of effort agreement for the Health Department and Mental Health. Commissioner Leys asked about the maintenance of effort agreement for the Health Department. The County Manager stated he didn't know but could check with Beth Lovette.

Chair Cox talked about we may find ourselves in some type of agreement with the Wellness Center for the wellness program for the employees. County Manager Don Adams explained the key is if the Wellness Center becomes a certified center. Commissioner Smith and

County Manager Don Adams discussed how the County Manager needs to get a better understanding of what is needed.

County Manager Don Adams clarified that the Board wants to wait on the schools, FRC and the state, and then the question becomes does the Board want to go farther than the \$125,000 and ways to find additional monies.

Chair Cox asked the Board about changes to special appropriations. Commissioner Smith said he is fine with them as recommended. Commissioner Davis agreed. Commissioner Leys said it's still open to her. Chair Cox explained that this doesn't lock it in. Chair Cox said he is supportive of the funding for special appropriations.

Commissioner Davis and County Manager Don Adams talked about the wellness program timeframe.

Chair Cox asked about the undesignated \$125,000.

Commissioner Leys said she isn't ready to make any final decisions until hear back from Dr. Cox on the security and wants to wait on the State about the FRC. She asked do we need to hear from John Blevins about the services he could provide. Chair Cox also asked if we should hear from Daymark about what they could do. County Manager Don Adams clarified the request is wanting more detail from John Blevins about what he would do with the \$35,000 and Daymark about what they are doing starting next year and possibility of adding more services. Commissioner Davis asked about having to provide money for the Daymark clients. County Manager Don Adams explained funding for the substance abuse clients with all others on a contract basis, and he reiterated his conversation with John Blevins about his plan for the mandated services and then the other services.

Commissioner Leys asked about discussing the fee schedules.

County Manager Don Adams explained he has information regarding the Transportation Fund. He summarized the handouts regarding the bids for the vans came in higher than anticipated. He explained that these were the 2012/13 replacement vans and is being moved to 2013/14 budget because of the timing of receiving the bids. He discussed the amount of the difference between the original request and the current request for revenues and expenditures.

Chair Cox talked about there is 1 change on the recommended fees. The County Manager explained the change requested by Randy Blankenship. Commissioner Leys asked if this is the only fee schedule change. County Manager Don Adams answered yes but he needs to talk to the Board about the solid waste fee schedule and asked how the Board wants to proceed. The County Manager started the fee schedule discussion with Recreation. The Board of Commissioners and County Manager discussed keeping the recreation fees the same. Commissioner Leys asked about overcrowding at the pool, is the participation reasonable and safe. County Manager Don Adams said we put more lifeguards on duty if the crowd size calls for it and explained previous conversations when another lifeguard needs to be on duty. Commissioner Leys and the County Manager talked about the capacity at the pool. The County Manager explained the remodeling project that occurred at the pool. Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about charging for private parties at the pool. The County Manager discussed the fire inspection fees, building inspection fees, EMS fees. Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about the EMS fee schedule and is based on how it impacts Medicare allowable rates. The County Manager discussed the Allegheny in Motion's (AIM) rates and reminded the Board that the ED van is built into the budget for 2013/14 plus he thinks if the Board votes on the budget as it is currently it is committing to the 2-year grant. Commissioner Smith talked about when looking at the \$125,000, could the Board put some of this \$125,000 towards the costs of the ED van. County Manager Don Adams answered yes that is something the Board could do, reminded the Board that next year's budget will spend the rest of the fund balance for the Transportation Fund, and this is showing the Commissioners the worse case scenario but will not know until the end of next year what is needed. Chair Cox talked about it would show our support and intentions for the ED van by building in the capacity. County Manager Don Adams talked about solid waste fee schedule with no changes but reminded everyone of the negative lost going into next year and it's not going to be sustainable in 2-3 years then will have to look at the rates. The County Manager said the County has always tried to be rate friendly to farmers, explained what occurred this year with the Christmas tree growers being in pine tips and looking at charging the tonnage rates for the brush because it is a cost to grind the brush, and the County can't go beyond the space at the Transfer Facility. The County Manager

explained implementing a policy and will consider pine tips as brush. Commissioner Leys talked about where it falls in the fee schedule. Commissioner Davis talked about the rate being \$60 per ton. County Manager Don Adams explained that one tractor trailer load of pine tips came from Oregon to the Transfer Facility. Commissioner Leys asked about changing the wording on the fee schedule. Chair Cox asked if the Board wants to vote on the fee schedules. Commissioner Smith talked about not having all 5 members here. County Manager Don Adams explained it needs to be done prior to adopting the budget. Commissioner Leys asked for a second look at some of the wording on the solid waste fee schedule for the business category and it needs to be clearer. County Manager Don Adams and Commissioner Davis talked about commercial brush. Commissioner Leys talked about the need to be clear. County Manager Don Adams asked about the wording change. The Board and County Manager discussed the language change including adding an additional category regarding the brush.

The Board talked about when to have additional meetings regarding the budget.

County Manager Don Adams explained what has occurred in the past during the budget public hearing. Chair Cox asked does the Board need to have answers about the Hospital, Schools & FRC. The County Manager stated he is pushing for meetings because we are running out of time. Commissioner Leys said she wants to hear from the schools and wait until the last minute on the FRC. County Manager Don Adams talked about waiting until next year unless the Board wants to look at additional revenues or cutting departmental budgets. The County Manager asked when the Board wants John Blevins to come.

Commissioner Davis said he is ready to decide on the \$125,000 and move on.

Chair Cox said he has a general idea what he wants to do with the \$125,000, and he likes the rest of the budget.

Commissioner Smith asked how much more can we narrow it down. He asked haven't we accomplished what we needed to do today.

Commissioner Leys talked about John Blevins and Dr. Cox appearing before the Board on June 24 at 6pm.

The Board talked about when to meet again and decided on Monday, June 24 at 6:00pm.

Chair Cox recessed the meeting at 2:33pm until Monday, June 24 at 6:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Larry Cox
Chairman