



Alleghany County Board of Commissioners Budget Meeting 6-13-18 Minutes

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in a continued meeting on Tuesday, June 13th, 2018, at 6:30 PM in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina to present the proposed budget to the Commissioners.

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

Chair Mark Evans reconvened the budget meeting from June 12th.

Brad Mabe said he appreciated all that the Commissioners do for the school system.

Chad Beasley explained some small county funding and how that money is utilized. He explained that it is possible to lose 20-25 positions due to the state funding cut. He then went over funded position cuts from 2009 to 2018. He thanked the Board for their commitment and continued support over the years of cuts.

Chair Evans asked if he could speak to the state of Alleghany County schools despite the challenges.

Chad Beasley spoke about the cuts and how the school system has adjusted to the need. He mentioned the class size number changes being an issue because it called for more staff that they had not previously had to account for.

Commissioner Tom Smith asked about the construction at Sparta school.

Chad Beasley said it should be complete by the end of July.

Commissioner Tom Smith asked what a Global School was.

Chad Beasley said it offers an opportunity to explore the world.

Chair Mark Evans thanked all the school folks for coming.

County Manager Mike James said in addition the county is adding the second school resource officer position and the Wilkes Community College career counselor at 25% that will be working into the school to count as additional support on top of the budget funding.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin noted the increase of 24 students for the coming year and the payoff of three debts.

Larry Adams, Piney Creek Volunteer Fire Department went over the construction of their new fire department and the match from the donor family. He stated that their department felt like the fire station is the most needed facility in Alleghany County.

Chair Mark Evans asked if they had any debt.

Larry Adams said as of 18 months ago no they have no debt.

Chair Mark Evans asked how that would affect the county relationships with the other fire departments. How would you approach that issue? He stated he wanted to help, but he needed help.

Larry Adams said the other department didn't ask for the money and they don't have match money like in this situation. He noted their situation is a little different because they have the matching grant.

Commissioner John Irwin said when he was asked for support, he asked all the other fire chiefs and there were issues because they felt if one got money they would want it too. He then mentioned utilizing a fire tax to help them have a stable base income every year and be able to take their funding out of the general fund.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin mentioned the opportunity of using the ¼ cent sales tax to support the school resource officer positions and the fire departments.

Chair Mark Evans thanked them all for what they do.

Chair Mark Evans called a 10-minute recess at 7:30 PM. He then called the meeting back to order at 7:40 PM.

The board discussed the public assistance line in the social services budget. County Manager Mike James explained 2/3 of the money is used for foster kids. They discussed a reduction to the line. The Board concluded to reduce the line number to \$875,000 which would allow an actual reduction to the general fund budget and would be a savings of about \$45,000.

Commissioner Tom Smith asked for clarification on the TDA funding and the insurance changes from yesterday's meeting.

The Board then discussed the additional funding to the JCPC why try program. They discussed that it was one week during the summer and couldn't see spending \$30,000 on one week. The Board agreed to not fund the extra JCPC program, Why Try.

The Board then moved to discuss the additional position in the soil and water office. They discussed the wealth of knowledge that Lind Hash provides and the newest addition to the office being a strong knowledgeable addition. They discussed the cost of additional position at a salary grade of 62 which would be about \$45,000. They concluded it would be a benefit to Alleghany County citizens. There was a 4:1 (Chair Mark Evans) consensus in favor of the position.

The board then moved on to special appropriation and moved line by line. County Manager Mike James explained in the capital loan line \$60,000 for county vehicles. The board discussed the regional library funding Commissioner Smith noted it was insurance mostly and a 1% cost of living increase. They moved on to the Appalachian Health Department they discussed the proportionally shared increase to each county. The Board agreed to move forward. They board agreed to move forward on Mental Health, BROCC, Council on Aging, and then discussed the Arts council request. The board with a three (Commissioner Tom Smith, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, and Chair Mark Evans) in favor of funding at \$6,000. Commissioner Larry Prince in favor of funding at \$3,000 and Commissioner John Irwin in favor of funding at \$0. The Board moved on to the chamber of commerce. Chair Mark Evans said they didn't make a request. Commissioner Larry Prince, who sits on the chamber board, stated with their change in leadership they had not submitted a requested, but hoped to have a new strong person in leadership and to be expecting a request next year.

The board moved through the Transfer to the re-valuation. Then they discussed the piney creek volunteer fire department matching fund. Commissioner Tom Smith asked for them to come back to that topic. Then they moved through all the fire departments, fire commission, fire control/forestry, rescue squad, hospital, planning committee. They discussed where the planning committee money goes. Then moved on to Wilkes Community College increase because of the career counselor position. The board then discussed the health advisory council they discussed what they do and the decrease. They moved on to Alleghany Connections, Fireworks, and to JCPC which was the original request. Then they moved to the occupancy tax which will be moved to its own account. Next, the fines and the forts which comes from the courts and goes to the

schools. They moved on to the wellness center. They discussed the development and services for the county. The membership and the membership dues. The board decided on \$10,000 for the wellness center with a 3 (Commissioner Tom Smith, Chair Mark Evans, Commissioner Larry Prince): 2 (Commissioner Bobby Irwin and Commissioner John Irwin) conclusion. The board moved forward through the red cross, deed stamp. Karen Evans requested the deed stamp be increased by \$5,000. Then they moved through transfer to the ROD Enhancement fund, Transfer to transportation fund, senior services, Alleghany County Group Homes, Channel 50/21 support, Potential Liabilities, and then discussed Sparta Revitalization Committee they talked about the support of music on main through the SRC request. Everyone agreed and moved on to Blue Ridge BDC, Security, Emergency Service Communication Tower Lease, and they moved to the Historical Society which the board concluded to add the \$2,500 back to the budget for their services. Music on Main is at \$0 because it is moved to the SRC budget request. The Board then moved on to the Partnership for Children request at \$50,000 Chair Mark Evans gave some background on the request from last year and from the fall retreat information. Commissioner Bobby Irwin questioned the need for that amount again this year. Chair Mark Evans explained the organizations plan moving forward and the local commitment to show the State Employees 4:1 (Commissioner Bobby Irwin).

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked what their savings were currently.

County Manager, Mike James said \$109,000.

The board then moved back to the Piney Creek Volunteer Fire Department discussion Commissioner Tom Smith said he would be in favor giving them \$25,000 this year and support it for next year. Commissioner Larry Prince said he would like a plan or guideline on how to distribute money. Commissioner John Irwin said he will request that the Board begin discussing a fire tax. They discussed surrounding counties fire tax and how it can be divided through the county. They discussed the additional ¼ cent sales tax use for possible fire department money. Chair Mark Evans said he understands that if the board supports this it will change things and he said change was needed moving forward to show them that the Board will do their very best to help support them. Commissioner John Irwin said he felt with the savings if the \$25,000 is given to Piney then give \$10,000 to each of the other departments. With a 4:1(Commissioner John Irwin) the board agreed to give \$25,000 to Piney Creek towards their matching grants.

The board discussed giving \$10,000 to the additional fire departments. Chair Mark Evans clarified that the \$10,000 would not be included for Piney Creek. There was a consensus to give each department the additional funds.

Then the board discussed the positions discussed previously. County Manager Mike James said it was asked if the here social services positions needed to be replaced and he said it was his recommendations to replace those positions. The Board then discussed the necessity of both election positions and their duties during non-election times of the year.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin questioned the price and if there were bids for the veteran's park parking lot. County Manager, Mike James said he did not have any quotes yet. Chair Mark Evans said they've estimated \$40,000 for the tar and chip.

Chair Mark Evans went over the fee schedules and noted the only changes were to the solid waste fees. County Manager Mike James explained the changes for the solid waste fees. Commissioner John Irwin suggest tonnages be increased to \$5. County Manager, Mike James explained the changes to 7, 8 and 9 which are start charging for large amounts of brush, taking large furniture and animal mortality. Chair Mark Evans suggest adding a \$5 charge for a certified weight.

Chair Mark Evans asked about the capital loan. County Manager Mike James explained the capital loan would be \$280,000 for this year.

The board discussed some items they would like to add to a future agenda.

Commissioner Tom Smith made a motion to recess to June 19th at 6:30 PM.
Commissioner Larry Prince seconded. Vote 5:0

Respectfully Submitted,

Attest:

Lauren Linker
Clerk to the Board

Mark Evans
Chair of the Board