

DRAFT

MINUTES

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF HENDERSON**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 1, 2010**

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a special called meeting (Budget Public Hearing) at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Historic Courthouse on Main Street, Hendersonville.

Those present were: Chairman Bill Moyer, Vice-Chairman Mark Williams, Commissioner Larry Young, Commissioner Chuck McGrady, Commissioner Charlie Messer, County Manager Steve Wyatt, Assistant County Manager Selena Coffey, Clerk to the Board Teresa L. Wilson and Attorney Russ Burrell.

Also present were: Associate County Attorney Sarah Zambon, Public Information Officer Christy DeStefano, Finance Director J. Carey McLelland, County Engineer Marcus Jones, Planning Director Anthony Starr, IT Director Becky Snyder, Elections Director Beverly Cunningham, Library Director Bill Snyder, Animal Services Director Brad Rayfield, Auditor Darlene Burgess, HR Director Jan Prichard, Soil & Water Conservation District Director Jonathan Wallin, Registrar Nedra Moles, Cooperative Extension Director Renay Knapp, Captain Greg Cochran, Sheriff Rick Davis, Fire Marshal Rocky Hyder, Tax Assessor/Collector Stan Duncan, Recreation Director Tim Hopkin, Building Services Director Tom Stauffer, Code Enforcement Director Toby Linville, Research/Budget Analyst Amy Brantley, Lieutenant Vanessa Gilbert, Auxiliary Business Manager Bill Blalock, Captain of Patrol Tim Griffin, Captain Steve Carter, Construction Manager David Berry, Director of Communications Lisha Corn, Delinquent Tax Collector Lee King, and Major Rodney Raines.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. He noted the purpose of the meeting is a public hearing with respect to the 2010/2011 budget.

Public Input

1. Andrew Tate – Mr. Tate represents the Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development. They have requested an increase for funding for the 2010/2011 fiscal year. It is unusual for them to have an increase. They have been at a steady level for many years and try to be a good steward of county and other municipal funds. The Partnership has asked each of the public funding sources that are significant partners of theirs to consider a 10% increase in funding to help staff a third person in their organization. That person would take on marketing and research communications responsibilities to allow the organization to move to the next level and be more aggressive in identifying leads that hopefully turn into projects for Henderson County and job creation announcements. The PED has received preliminary feed-back from Fletcher, Hendersonville and Mills River that the request will be included in their fiscal year budgets.
2. Greg Smith – Mr. Smith is the district forester out of the Asheville District office with the NC Forest Service. The increase in this year's proposal of \$5,601 is a result of increased costs associated with emergency pick-up firefighter cost, the need for essential equipment in the county, and career advancement earnings tied to the Skill Based Pay Program. The Skill Based Pay career advancement earnings, which have been owed to the County Ranger for the past two years, are proposed to be paid this coming year.

Chairman Moyer asked if this would supplement in part the Bridge crews that were used before. Mr. Smith responded no, the pick-up firefighter program supplements the Bridge program. The Bridge program is back in the budget and will continue to be funded.

DATE APPROVED:

3. Ralph King – Mr. King is from East Flat Rock Park and is requesting \$50,000 to match the \$50,000 received in donations. The money will be utilized for a handicapped playground. Mr. King stated he had come before the Commission before and letters had been sent requesting this match. The handicapped playground is costly due to the transfer station. The playground can be used by all children and not just the handicapped.
4. Diane Dotson – Ms. Dotson is a third grade teacher at Glenn Marlow Elementary. She is the president of Henderson County Association of Teachers. She feels without funds for the school budgets, teachers will be cut. The teachers have been giving excellent service even with the cuts.

The public hearing was closed and discussion continued.

Dues and Memberships – NACo dues

Commissioner McGrady felt that the membership fee of \$1710.00 is good value for the money. *Commissioner McGrady made the motion to restore the NACo dues at \$1710.00. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

Delinquent Tax Collector – 4-WD vehicle

The Sheriff's Department has a vehicle within surplus vehicles for the delinquent tax collector. The Tax Office will be looking at the vehicle the following day.

Fire Marshal – Communications Equipment

The Board had requested Rocky Hyder get an estimate to move one tower. Mr. Hyder provided the estimate of \$9,000.00

Chairman Moyer made the motion that the Board approves \$9,000 in the budget for moving of communications equipment. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

EMS Paramedic Bike Team

Parks and Recreation has bikes in surplus for the EMS Paramedic Bike Team.

HOME Program – Housing Assistance Corporation

Selena Coffey stated the letter received from the Home Program Housing Assistance Corporation is a request for \$50,000 however they will take a smaller cash allocation and a waiver of fees (i.e. inspection fee).

Chairman Moyer made the motion that the Board approves \$50,000 in the budget for the Home Program with no waiver of fees. The motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner Williams voting nay.

Partnership for Economic Development – Additional Staff

There was a question in regards to the Partnership paying rent or the rent amount coming out their allocation. Carey McLelland explained that it would be cleaner from an audit standpoint to give the allocation to the Partnership and they in turn write Henderson County a check for the rent owed on the Chamber building.

Commissioner McGrady made the motion that the Board approves \$25,000 for the Partnership for Economic Development with payment back to the County for rent. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Economic Development – Agriculture

Steve Wyatt noted that Polk County feels this is the best investment they have made which is greatly attributed to the individual who is a real self starter. Polk County has had great success with Farmers Markets, marketing, to working with different producers trying to maximize their business. It basically functions as a stand-alone department head that's a county employee. In Agriculture it has come back as a recommendation to look at an agri-business development officer to provide assistance to strengthen that

segment of the economy. In next year's budget there is \$50,000 not earmarked other than for agriculture related things.

Chairman Moyer questioned if the Board could look at adjusting the funding for the extension service and use some of the money to have our own position. He questioned the flexibility.

Steve Wyatt stated we operate under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Agricultural and State Technical University and NC State with around 180 days notice. This is a negotiation that took place at some point in the past and is a contract between the entities and the counties where the County Commissioners can say here are our priorities, what we think is important, and what we are willing to fund. You then negotiate with the university system to bring those types of services and that operation here. The Board may consider re-evaluating the MOU and look at having a change implemented by January 1, 2011.

The consensus was to leave funding the same as recommended by staff.

Cooperative Extension

A request has been received from the Western Carolina Communities Association which is not a direct request from the Cooperative Extension, it is an association that been moved due to the interaction of the two departments. This is an expansion request of \$1,500. It was not justified and therefore is not in the budget.

The consensus was to leave funding the same as recommended by staff.

It was consensus of the Board to request staff to move ahead with discussion in regards to the Memorandum of Understanding.

Forestry Services - Budget Expansion

Commissioner McGrady made the motion that the Board approves the addition of \$5,601 to the Forestry Service budget as recommended. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Henderson County Public Schools - Maintenance

Commissioner Williams noted in terms of Henderson County this Board has continued to try to build on the numbers significantly. Henderson County is one of a few last year which provided an increase in operational funds. As more money goes to the schools it means less money going somewhere else and frankly the lesser amount has come back on County services.

Commissioner Young made the motion that the Board adopts the staff recommendation of \$449,889 for Henderson County Public Schools maintenance. The vote passed 4-1 with Commissioner McGrady voting nay.

Discussion followed in regards to the possibility of financing bigger projects in the future.

Henderson County Public Schools - Operational

Commissioner McGrady made the motion that the Board fund Henderson County Public Schools \$305,279 representing additional operation costs for employee benefits. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Blue Ridge Community College - Operational

Commissioner Young made the motion that the Board funds Blue Ridge Community College \$11,107 representing additional operation costs for employee benefits. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Blue Ridge Community College – Maintenance

Steve Wyatt noted that \$90,924 was basically reflects the energy loan payoff. When you look at the Community College there is \$2.3 million worth of operating expenditures which includes the cost of people who actually maintain and upkeep as opposed to "capital projects" being that capital outlay money. There is

ongoing maintenance and repair of the buildings under their operational as far as capital upgrades that would be under capital outlay.

Commissioner Young made the motion that the Board funds Blue Ridge Community College \$90,924 for maintenance as recommended by staff. The motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner McGrady voting nay.

Library Positions

Commissioner Young made the motion that the Board funds a reference librarian position, and a librarian technician at Mills River adding to the library budget \$92,982. The vote passed 3-2 with Commissioners McGrady and Williams voting nay.

Library Vehicle

Request was made for a replacement truck for a current vehicle. The Sheriff's Department has a mini-van in surplus which may work for this request.

BRCC Payback

Selena Coffey stated that the payback figure is \$12,590 annually and \$37,770 total.

Chairman Moyer made the motion that the Board forgives \$37,770 owed by Blue Ridge Community College. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

BRCC Ballfield

Blue Ridge Community College had offered use of their baseball field to the county in return for maintenance.

Steve Wyatt noted the concession stand restroom facility needs work and the ballfield does not have lights. Construction Manager David Berry had provided an estimate of \$52,000 to get the field into working condition; \$26,000 in order to get the restroom in ADA compliance, and \$26,000 to upgrade ballfield. Recreation Director Tim Hopkins felt it would be a great multi-purpose field by reducing the in-field to grass and use for various functions restricted to daylight hours only. This price does not include lighting.

Commissioner Williams felt it was costly in terms of the dirt used, proper drainage, etc. to convert to a multi-use field. You are essentially undoing some of the cost that has gone into preparing the field.

Tim Hopkins noted it is a nice baseball field that has served its purpose with BRCC and their baseball program. It is a shame that the baseball program is no longer in existence. At the current time Henderson County does not have an adult baseball program or adult baseball needs. If the field were converted it would be utilized for youth softball or adult softball which would require the infield grass to be removed and dirt to be added. The addition of lights would extend the playing period but as it stands as a single stand alone field Henderson County would have the usage with just daylight hours. We don't have a program that would need such a field. The time in which people would tend to want to play adult baseball is after hours and would be better served using the school facilities and working with them at one of their lighted fields.

Commissioner Messer felt there were too many needs within Henderson County Park and Recreation to put funds toward BRCC's field.

Chairman Moyer questioned the cost to mow the field and defer this with continued study and try to add to the program next year. There is no use for the field at this time.

Tim Hopkins felt to maintain the field appropriately it would require mowing twice per week plus equipment for field maintenance at a cost of around \$2,000.

Steve Wyatt felt it could be maintained through the summer and the board could study it further.

Chairman Moyer made the motion that the County maintains the grass and infield and continues studying the issue, not allowing deterioration of the field until a proper use and the cost affiliated with it has been determined.

Commissioner Williams questioned use of the fields with the restroom issue. Porta johns could be utilized to take care of this problem. If the field is being rented out this could be included in the rental cost.

It was further motioned that the Board give the Recreation Department a little adjustment of expenses to handle the field for the remainder of this year. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

E911 Fund Balance

Selena Coffey provided the Fund Balance for E911 of \$300,531.

Library Publications

Chairman Moyer made the motion that the Board funds the library publications at the staff recommended amount of \$400,000. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Affordable Housing Coalition Housing Trust Fund

Chairman Moyer suggested tabling until next year.

Mental Health

Chairman Moyer suggested keeping at current level and look at allocations in July.

Heritage Museum

Commissioner McGrady continues to feel that more money needs to be spent on Recreation and Travel and Tourism and less on the museum. He feels that the County would be better served by allowing the Museum Board to operate as a traditional charitable organization and entity and as opposed to channeling County monies to a charity that is running a museum.

Chairman Moyer did not feel that this issue should be handled along with the budget and recommended putting it on an agenda after the budget has been adopted.

Vacant Unfrozen Positions

Selena Coffey stated that a full year of funding was being carried over for the positions. During the last fiscal year only ½ year was budgeted. There are four (4) positions and Ms. Coffey knew that two of those positions had not been filled; Animal Services and the Administrative Assistant to the County Manager.

Chairman Moyer stated these positions were never filled even though partial funding was approved. Staff now wishes to carry over the funding with the right to fill the position. He feels this is a new position.

Commissioner McGrady stated if the positions are not funded they will go away.

Steve Wyatt stated that you see a multitude of people in that office constantly now and questioned if this was maximum efficient. Well it is when you are waiting on the economy to rebound and when you feel like you are over the hump and he feels that they can now get back to full staff. Money is in the budget for both the Administrative position and the Animal Control position. It would be great to have the position filled but with a negative sales tax figure monthly. He would be fine with projecting for the coming year. He would be fine with deleting both positions today.

Commissioner McGrady made the motion to delete the two positions.

Selena Coffey stated that the Animal Services position was not requested by the director because she had stopped it herself. The request however has been made to her. She requested this position be funded at least coming in January if not for a full year.

Commissioner McGrady felt if we are going to need positions then put them in the budget and fund it appropriately at whatever time we are going to hire.

Steve Wyatt stated these positions have been in the budget for some time.

Commissioner McGrady stated the previous year the Board gave a block of money and provided staff authority to fill whatever number of positions with that money. We are now in another budget year and need to know what you want to fund.

Steve Wyatt did not see filling either position in the next six months.

Commissioner Messer stated the budget must be balanced by the end of June and regardless of whether those positions have been there, he felt they should be left in the budget and move on.

Commissioner McGrady revised his motion that the Board reflects in the budget six (6) months of salary for these two positions.

Selena Coffey would be looking at the other two positions in the Health Department.

Steve Wyatt stated we would not be feeling those two positions.

All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Compensation

Chairman Moyer stated the plan would be that a pool of money is allocated for each department for incentive compensation. He questioned if the average would be 3% for each department.

Steve Wyatt stated the equivalent is about 1.4% of salary of benefits. That block of money would be used in each department to utilize through the evaluation process and reward the manner that the department heads and managers see as their best investment for rewarding their best performers.

It was consensus of the Board that the County Manager's compensation packet was acceptable as presented.

Reductions in Revenues

Building Inspections – Tom Stauffer

Steve Wyatt stated that prior to this meeting staff had provided a chart that basically showed the building inspections budget which in previous years was covered 100%. The Inspections Department has an overall budget of about \$1 million with two thirds being recovered. The issue is workloads and if they are appropriate per inspector.

Tom Stauffer stated their goal is ten inspections per day per inspector. A recent analysis of the past month indicates nine inspections per inspector per day. There are more inspections as a greater number of smaller jobs are being done that do not bring in as much revenue. During the months of April and May there has been an increase in the amount of fees collected because of a few bigger commercial projects. One issue is it takes years to get inspectors trained and thousands of dollars to be certified by the state. If we reduce the inspectors and cut staffing we have a long curve to get back when things turn around because the inspectors do not have the ability to go out and look at especially the larger buildings. We were audited by the Insurance Organization, ISO, that rates all the fire departments, inspection departments, etc. and they mandated that we have to do plan reviews on residential buildings. We were not doing that in the past as it

was not required. It is not required by the state but ISO wants it to be done or they will drop the counties rating for ISO for insurance which would affect residents of the county that this rating is what the insurance companies use to figure premiums on all buildings in the county.

Steve Wyatt, referring to page 83, stated you can see the number of employee and a break-down of expenditures. There have no recommendations or conversation of adjustment of fees. He is comfortable with and eight (8) to twelve (12) inspections per day. Any order to cut into the revenue loss would require a figure and the some type of plan to reduce those costs.

Environmental Health

Steve Wyatt noted to his knowledge Environmental Health has never been at cost recovery. A substantial \$700,000 supplement of county tax base goes into that department. Mr. Wyatt was unaware if their workload was similar to that of the inspections department.

Chairman Moyer felt the Board should take another look at this department at a later date.

Parks Projects

Steve Wyatt referred to documents from the April 21, 2010 Board meeting. Parks and Recreation staff, working with Engineering staff had provided recommendations for Parks with 3 priority levels.

Chairman Moyer questioned the distinction between capital and maintenance. He felt the prior presentation was a mixture.

Steve Wyatt stated they were referring to capital equipment (i.e. capital upgrade or maintenance and repair of an existing facility). Staff has discussed the capital reserve funding that will be available is in the range of about \$1.7 million. Some commitments have been made.

Commissioner Williams did not agree with all of the priorities given the current economic condition. There is need of repaving from the winter weather. The public perception may be instead of having a newly paved parking lot they may prefer a new playground. Commissioner Williams would like for the Board to look at the possibilities of artificial turf at high school football fields. It would benefit the schools and Recreation Department.

Commissioner McGrady felt that some of the capital fund balance should be used to address the issues that go beyond repair. Jackson Park is in awful shape with the paving really bad deteriorated. The trails are also in bad shape. The Board needs to make a significant commitment.

Chairman Moyer said that the Board had already committed to address some of the issues such as Stoney Mountain.

Tim Hopkin stated that Parks and Recreation does have a maintenance budget which addresses grass cutting, etc. It does not address the roads except for patching the road as they do not have the equipment to pave.

Chairman Moyer made the motion that the Board designates \$750,000 of the capital reserve balance to cut into the list and look at priorities in July as part of a work session. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Commissioner Young would like to know if there are more significant injuries reported with artificial turf.

PARTG Grant

Selena Coffey noted that a separate fund will be set up which will be included in the budget ordinance when it is adopted.

Issues discussed at the June 1st Workshop		Reductions	Additions
1	Dues and Memberships - NACo dues		\$ 1,710
2	Fire Marshal - Communications Equipment		\$ 9,000
3	HOME Program - Housing Assistance Corp		\$ 50,000
4	Partnership for Economic Development - Additional Staff		\$ 25,000
5	Partnership for Economic Development - Rent		\$ 12,900
6	Forestry Services - Budget Expansion		\$ 5,601
7	HCPS - Operational		\$ 305,279
8	BRCC - Operational		\$ 11,107
9	Library Positions		\$ 92,982
10	Library Vehicle	\$ 20,000	
11	BRCC Payback		\$ 12,590
12	Vacant Positions	\$ 47,683	
TOTAL		\$ 67,683	\$ 526,169

ADJOURN

Commissioner McGrady made the motion to adjourn at 9:35 p.m. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Attest:

Teresa L. Wilson, Clerk to the Board

William L. Moyer, Chairman