

Commissioners Meeting Budget Session

June 3, 2008

The Randolph County Board of Commissioners met in special budget session at 5:00 p.m. in the County Manager's Conference Room, County Office Building, 725 McDowell Road, Asheboro, NC. Commissioners Holmes, Kemp, Haywood and Lanier were present. Commissioner Frye was absent.

Public Works

David Townsend, III, Public Works Director, said that the solid waste tipping fee of \$44/ton will remain unchanged for 08-09, but that state legislation is proposing a \$2/ton surcharge that the County will have to collect for the State. It is possible that the County may be reimbursed for a portion of this surcharge. Mr. Townsend said that the City of Archdale is considering taking their garbage to a High Point facility because the High Point rates are less expensive than ours. If they do, Mr. Townsend estimated that the net loss to the County would be about \$17,000 for the next budget year.

Mr. Townsend said that he would like permission to close the unmanned Hillsville, Pleasant Hill and Franklinville recycling sites due to the contamination of the recyclables from other waste being thrown in. Commissioner Lanier said that they had trouble at the New Hope site as well. The Board told Mr. Townsend that they would consider the matter.

Mr. Townsend said the BFI contract will be up for re-negotiation June of 2009, and he expects a substantial increase if the cost of fuel continues to increase. According to Mr. Townsend, the Public Works Department is working with the Town of Liberty on a mutual arrangement to put a convenience site in Liberty. The estimated cost is \$160,000 and can be paid for with money from the Public Works Fund. Liberty is granting access to 1.5 acres at no charge for the next 25 years, and they have agreed to maintain the property. Mr. Townsend stated that he would like to ask Commissioner Frye for his assistance in locating a site for a much needed, manned convenience site in the northern area of the County.

Mr. Townsend stated that the Hwy 22 water line is complete with approximately 90 customers signed to tap on. The design plans for the Hwy 64 water line from Asheboro to Loflin Pond Road/Blue Mist are about 85% complete and there are still some permits to be obtained. Construction could begin as soon as the fall of 2008. Mr. Townsend also stated that there will need to be an interlocal agreement between the County and City of Asheboro regarding the ownership of the line. Richard Wells, County Manager, suggested surveying business owners and citizens along Highways 49 and 64 to determine the interest level of tapping onto a water line before the Commissioners make any further decisions on proceeding with a county-wide water plan. The results of that survey along with the costs of getting water into those pipes will be included in the consideration.

Emergency Services

Neil Allen, Emergency Services Director, said he tried to keep the same budget as last year, but did increase the fuel budget by \$25,000. He has instituted some new rules for his department regarding fuel conservation: 1) no empty emergency vehicles are to be left idling, and 2) paramedics are allowed to stop to eat out only when in-route back to the base. Mr. Allen has requested three re-mounts of ambulances rather than buying new ones, which is a substantial savings.

Mr. Allen said that for private organizations that request a paramedic and ambulance at events where an admission fee is charged to the public, he would like to be able to charge a fee. He asked the Commissioners to consider approving an hourly rate fee for such occurrences.

Mr. Allen spoke in support of the requested Tax Department position for EMS Billing/Collections, saying that the Tax Department is doing a fantastic job with collections and that a second person will help with follow-ups much sooner than they are able to provide currently. Mr. Allen is also requesting two telecommunicator positions, which can be paid for with 911 funds.

Social Services

Beth Duncan, Social Services Director, reviewed the accomplishments over the past year in regards to staff changes and software updates that have resulted in increased efficiencies. She also presented challenges that her budget will face this year due to some state actions and area job losses.

Ms. Duncan addressed the problem of the lack of funding for daycare subsidies. She stated that the child care funding is not just a problem in Randolph County. DSS is given a specific amount of money, which is awarded based on need, the parent's income and availability of funding. Ms. Duncan stressed that this is not an entitlement program.

Effective January 1, 2009, the State will increase standard foster care boarding rates, which will cost the County nearly \$200,000 in 08-09.

Ms. Duncan listed her personnel requests in order of priority, as follows:

1. Income Maintenance Caseworker—long-term care (50%)
2. Part-time Foster Care Social Worker to Full-time
3. Part-time driver for Work First
4. Lead worker in Food Stamp Program (50% reimbursable)

Administration

Will Massie, County Finance Officer, stated that worker's comp insurance increased by \$68,000, and property and liability insurance decreased.

Kim Newsom, Personnel Director, suggested that the County should implement strategies to maintain what we've already accomplished on being competitive with wages in our area. Mr. Newsom explained to the Commissioners that employee medical deductibles were increased from \$500 to \$1000 to help with increased medical insurance costs. Mr. Newsom then requested a 2.5% cost of living adjustment to continue to attract and retain highly qualified employees. He commented that no cost of living allowance for 08-09 would put us further behind and would cause the next year's request to be even greater in order to keep us competitive.

Mr. Newsom also requested one mid-level position in Personnel as they have stretched the current staff as far as they can. With all the changes in Federal and State rules, as well as changes in benefits and retirement, it has become a great task to manage.

Debt Service

Mr. Massie reviewed the debt service schedules in the Proposed Budget book for the Commissioners' information. Mr. Massie also asked the Board to consider and discuss, during their budget deliberation, priorities for Capital Improvement Plan projects.

Adjournment

There being no further presentations, the Board adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

J. Harold Holmes, Chairman

Arnold Lanier

Phil Kemp

Darrell L. Frye

Stan Haywood

Amanda W. Varner, Clerk