

THE CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MET IN SPECIAL SESSION ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2001 AT 4:00 P.M., AS ADVERTISED, IN THE COMMISSIONERS' ROOM OF THE CRAVEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 406 CRAVEN STREET, NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING MATTERS RELATED TO THE METHOD OF VOTING IN CRAVEN COUNTY AND FOR CONSIDERATION OF A SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT GRANT.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman C.W. "Pete" Bland
Vice-Chairman Johnnie Sampson, Jr.
Commissioner Lee Kyle Allen
Commissioner Donald Phillips
Commissioner J. Harold Talton
Commissioner Albert H. Toon
Commissioner Charles F. Tyson, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT:

Harold Blizzard, County Manager
George B. Sawyer, Assistant County Manager
Richard F. Hemphill, County Finance Officer
Ray H. Moser, Human Resources Director
Gwendolyn M. Bryan, Clerk to the Board
James R. Sugg, County Attorney

REDISTRICTING MATTERS

Commissioner Bland moved to rescind the Board's action of September 4, 2001 to petition the North Carolina Legislature for enactment of legislation changing the method of voting for Craven County Commissioners. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Talton. During discussion Commissioner Tyson expressed the importance of including the entire Board in any discussion regarding the change in voting method, as well as public input and careful consideration. The motion was carried unanimously in a roll call vote.

Commissioner Allen stated the belief that the only fair way of voting for Commissioners would be district wide election for every Commissioner, as is the model for the General Assembly and congressional elections. Commissioner Talton observed that Craven County is the only county in North Carolina operating under the current method, even among those that are under the Justice Department pre-clearance requirement. He urged that meetings be scheduled in the near future to discuss a change in the method of voting. Commissioner Phillips reiterated his objection to the districts being aligned according to census population as opposed to the number of eligible voters. Commissioner Sampson stated that the proposed method of voting that was advanced in the Board's meeting on September 4th was less unfair than the current system, which was his reason for having voted for it. Commissioner Toon explained that the original method in Craven County was district wide elections in the primary and general election; however, some Commissioners felt that it was unfair and the Board agreed that five (5) Commissioners would be able to run at large.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT MATTERS

Craven County Sheriff, Jerry Monette, requested that the Board approve a Governor's Highway Safety Grant in the amount of \$133,613.00, which requires a local match in the amount of \$21,905.00. The purpose of the grant is to reduce injuries and traffic fatalities. He proposed that no funds be expended from the general fund to meet the match but agreed to utilize funds in his capital outlay line item. The Sheriff stated that he would relinquish one new car budgeted in capital outlay in order to use those funds to match the grant. He explained that he would receive two cars through the grant. There was discussion concerning additional staffing in the grant, and the Sheriff explained that he

would absorb two deputy positions through attrition if the grant does not extend beyond the first cycle. He was questioned concerning the match percentages for the second and third years of the grant and responded that only the salary would need to be matched. Any equipment accrued in the first cycle of the grant would remain property of the County if the grant were not extended into the second cycle. Commissioner Sampson moved to approve adoption of the requested resolution accepting the grant, utilizing funds already budgeted in capital outlay for the local match, seconded by Commissioner Toon and unanimously carried in a roll call vote.

Craven County Manager, Harold Blizzard, sought clarification from the Sheriff concerning the function of the proposed project, its objectives, and methods of enforcement and evaluation.

At 5:05 p.m. Commissioner Phillips moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Allen and unanimously carried.

Chairman C.W. "Pete" Bland
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Gwendolyn M. Bryan
Clerk to the Board