

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN  
RECONVENED ITS REGULAR SESSION OF MAY 21, 2007 ON MAY 23, 2007  
AT 8:30 A.M. IN THE COMMISSIONERS' ROOM OF THE CRAVEN COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 406 CRAVEN STREET, NEW BERN, NORTH  
CAROLINA. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING WAS TO CONDUCT A  
BUDGET WORK SESSION.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chairman Johnnie Sampson, Jr.  
Vice Chairman Jason R. Jones  
Commissioner Lee Kyle Allen  
Commissioner Theron McCabe  
Commissioner Perry L. Morris  
Commissioner M. Renée Sisk  
Commissioner Steve Tyson

**STAFF PRESENT:**

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

Following the roll call, Commissioner Jones delivered the invocation.

**REQUEST BY THE COUNTY ATTORNEY FOR THE BOARD TO HEAR A  
PROPOSAL FROM NEUSE RIVER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

Theresa Lee, Director of the Neuse River Community Development Corporation, explained that the NRCDC is interested in the County's offer of the house located adjacent to Creekside Park; however, it is necessary for the agency to relocate the house. The lot identified for relocation of the house is located at 1703 Carver Court in New Bern. The lot is jointly owned by the City of New Bern and Craven County, with the City's pro rata share of the tax value at \$3,500 and the County's pro rata share of the tax value at \$2,744.19. She explained the mechanics of the NRCDC operations, stating that the City lends the money for the contractors to rehabilitate the homes, then the homes are completed and turned over to the NRCDC for sale. The proceeds of the sale are used to reimburse the City. She asked that the County, in addition to turning over the ownership of the Creekside Park house to the NRCDC, also consider relinquishing its interest in the lot at 1703 Carver Court so that the City can proceed to donate the lot for the relocation of the house. Commissioner Tyson moved for the County to relinquish its vested interest in the home at Creekside Park to the Neuse River Community Development Corporation, seconded by Commissioner Sampson and unanimously carried. Commissioner Tyson moved to relinquish the County's interest in the lot at 1703 Carver Court to be used for the purpose of relocating the Creekside home, seconded by Commissioner Morris and unanimously carried.

**REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED FY 2007-2008 BUDGET**

County Manager, Harold Blizzard, introduced the process of budget review for the benefit of new Commissioners. He stated that the Board traditionally proceeds in reviewing the proposed budget by reaching consensus with no motions or voting. He stated that one vote to adopt the entire budget is taken at the meeting during which the budget ordinance is adopted. He explained that the number of comparable counties according to population size between 50,000 and 99,000 is 27. He explained that the budget was constructed on the basis of a three percent (3%) increase in the projected ad valorem valuation with the current year's collection rate. The Board reached consensus to consider special appropriations last and then proceeded to review the budget by departmental line item beginning with General Fund 101, Department 0101, Board of Commissioners, through General Fund 101, Department 8500, Schools. There was considerable discussion concerning the following line items:

- Fees to Board members – Commissioner Sisk recommended an increase of \$300 per month to Board members, as opposed to \$200 that was recommended in the budget. The Board deferred consensus on this recommendation.
- Retiree Insurance – Finance Officer, Rick Hemphill, explained the way the retiree insurance is calculated and the Board reviewed the cost of the benefit since its inception. There was consensus to maintain the method of calculating the retiree insurance as it is for this year.
- Staff was requested to identify the fees to Equalization and Review Board members and return to the Board.
- Court Facilities – Havelock Magistrate’s Office – Commissioner Allen requested that a flagpole be placed in front of the County’s building which is utilized for the Havelock Magistrate’s Office, and the Department of Motor Vehicles. There was consensus to add this item to the budget for court facilities and staff was directed to return with an approximate cost for installing a lighted flagpole at the location.
- Sheriff’s Department – There were two new positions requested by the Sheriff, including an additional School Resource Officer (SRO) at West Craven Middle School. By consensus the request for the SRO was deferred.
- Inspections – The Board discussed a request for a fee increase that was presented at its meeting on May 21 by the Planning and Inspections Office and deferred at that time until budget work sessions. The County Manager explained that the proposed budget for Inspections includes the proposed fee increase. The Board deferred consensus.
- The budget for Township Seven Rescue Squad was deferred.
- The recommended increase in the Solid Waste Recycle fee from \$32 to \$36 and senior exemption from \$10 to \$12 was discussed. It was noted that the current contract will run for an additional two years. There was discussion concerning the viability of the recycling program which could be considered at the time of contract renewal. There was discussion concerning the provisions of the contracts of the haulers relative to the Consumer Price Index, which took a downward turn during the period of July to December of 2006. The consensus concerning this item was deferred.
- Commissioner Allen requested that the Board consider an additional appropriation above what was recommended in the proposed budget for the Havelock Library. He stated that the funds for the libraries did not appear to be equitably distributed. Consensus on this request was deferred.

At 4:00 p.m. Commissioner Jones moved to recess to reconvene at 12:30 p.m. on May 24, seconded by Commissioner Sisk and unanimously carried.

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Chairman Johnnie Sampson, Jr.  
Craven County Board of Commissioners

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Gwendolyn M. Bryan  
Clerk to the Board