

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN RECONVENED ITS REGULAR SESSION OF MAY 19, 2014 ON MAY 20, 2014 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 RECONVENED MEETING WAS TO CONDUCT A BUDGET WORK SESSION.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chairman Thomas F. Mark  
Vice Chairman Jefferey S. Taylor  
Commissioner Lee Kyle Allen  
Commissioner Scott C. Dacey  
Commissioner Theron L. McCabe  
Commissioner Johnnie Sampson, Jr.  
Commissioner Steve Tyson

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Jack B. Veit III, County Manager  
Gene Hodges, Assistant County Manager - Facilities/Operations  
Richard F. Hemphill, Assistant County Manager – Finance/Administration  
Amber Parker, Human Resources Director  
Gwendolyn M. Bryan, Clerk to the Board

County Manager, Jack Veit suggested that the Board of Education Chairman, Vice Chairman, Superintendent and Finance Director be invited to the May 27 budget work session.

Finance director, Rick Hemphill stated that revenues are down by approximately \$600,000, notwithstanding the one-time infusion from North Carolina's Eastern Region, mostly due to decreases in sales tax revenues and ABC payments.

Mr. Veit prefaced review of the recommended budget, stating that the budget as presented to the Board is need based, not want based. He informed the Board that all department heads have come to terms with the necessary constraints, with the exception of the Health Department. The recommended budget does not include palliative care requested by the department, which is a policy guided decision. Health Director, Scott Harrelson, was scheduled to come and talk with the Board at the continued work session on May 21. Mr. Veit stated that the Capital Reserve Fund is funding needs amounting to \$1.9 million, without which the budget could not have been presented without a proposed ad valorem tax increase.

Mr. Hemphill, in discussing the year-to-date summary report, stated that budgeted sales tax will be achieved; however, charges for services as well as intergovernmental revenue will likely be less. It does not appear that there will be any significant (or any) contribution to Fund Balance at the end of this fiscal year. Current total Fund Balance is at 31.0%, with 24.33% of available Fund Balance, which places Craven County at the bottom of its population group.

The Board proceeded to discuss the proposed budget, beginning with the Commissioners' line items, with the following highlights:

Commissioners. Discussion of recording and audio of Commissioners' meetings resulted in potential changes to the meeting room being referred to a sub-committee, yet to be designated. Discussion of a contract with C-TV10 was deferred. Commissioner Dacey suggested reducing advertising costs by readdressing the General Assembly concerning authorization to advertise electronically

Information Technology. Budget includes a joint fiber project with Havelock to extend/replace fiber used by Craven Community College and upgrade to GIS software in Sheriff's Department vehicles.

Finance. The Board acknowledged savings being realized by the addition of a Purchasing Agent in the Finance Department, accounting for an increase in the department's salary line. There was discussion of any potential for the agent to assist the fire departments and rescue squads with bulk purchasing of their equipment. Mr. Hemphill noted a 5% increase in health and dental coverage, which will be covered by the County for employees only.

10:25 a.m. Recess

The Board returned at 10:39 a.m.

Tax. It was noted that revaluation is on track. The Board expressed interest in tracking the effect of the Tax and Tag Program on the number of employees in Tax Collections, and well as audit findings on the cost effectiveness of utilizing Tax Management Associates.

Register of Deeds. Budget request includes funds to back scan old records, which was not recommended due to limited benefit to be realized primarily by attorneys and genealogists, rather than the general public. Commissioner Dacey suggested consideration of outsourcing the scanning to a vendor, who would charge attorneys an online access fee.

Public Buildings. Mr. Veit stated that the budget includes renovation of courthouse bathrooms, replacement of carpet and repainting of stairwells in the old courthouse, and a new camera system at the Human Services Complex due to several incidences of vandalism. Commissioner McCabe requested a tour of the Human Services Complex for Commissioners.

Human Resources. The budget reflects a recommendation for the addition of criminal background checks on all new hires, which will necessitate the development of a policy if adopted.

Fire Marshall. The recommended budget reflects the addition of a fee for non-emergency ambulance franchise, and new revenue from data hosting for city police cars.

Planning. The Board requested to see a chart to demonstrate planning fees and proposed increases in comparison to other local governments in the region.

Fire and Rescue. A two-tiered approach to allocation was recommended rather than across the board allocations. The Board concurred.

Soil Conservation. The subject of stream snagging will be revisited.

Economic Development. The recommended budget includes \$35,000 for a marketing position.

Health. A new WIC position, a nutritionist, will be split between Client Services and Education line items. Following the conference with members of the Board of Education on May 27, a consultant will come before the Board to discuss the proposed sale of the County's Home Health Agency.

At 4:40 p.m. the Board was declared in recess until 8:30 a.m. May 21.

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Chairman Thomas F. Mark  
Craven County Board of Commissioners

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Gwendolyn M. Bryan  
Clerk to the Board