

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN RECONVENED ITS REGULAR SESSION OF MAY 19, 2014, AND RECONVENED SESSIONS OF MAY 20, 2014 AND MAY 21, 2014 AT 8:20 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

The Board proceeded with the review of the proposed budget, beginning with fire departments, with the following highlights of discussion:

- Rhems/West New Bern II – Consensus to approve budget as requested, with appropriation of \$1,739 of Fund Balance, and tax rate remaining the same.
- West New Bern I – Tax rate would need to increase by \$.002 to meet request
- Tri-Community – Debt service on a new proposed building would require a 3 ½ cent increase over three years, resulting in the highest rate among all the departments. Commissioner Mark reported that the Fairfield Harbour Property Owners Association (POA) is in agreement with the increase; however, the Mayor of Bridgeton, Rodman Williams is not. He cautioned that there are other unincorporated areas of the district that are not within the management of the POA. He has requested that they reduce the scale of the proposed new firehouse and return to the Board. The Board reached consensus on the recommendation that a one cent rate increase be approved in the 2015 budget, to be put into escrow with the County, pending approval of the scaled back project when it is presented to the Board.
- Township #5 – Carteret County has stated its intention to reduce its payment to TWP. 5 for providing protection in an area of Carteret County from \$95,000 to \$15,000, as a result of a new station in Carteret County that will provide protection to part of the area previously covered by Twp.5 by contract. County Manager, Jack Veit explained that negotiation have been in progress in an attempt to get the offer up to \$30,000. The proposed budget for TWP. 5 does not reflect the \$95,000 reduction. The budget request of the department would require a two cents rate increase. Commissioner McCabe stated that Twp. 5 will not accept \$15,000 or \$30,000 for a contract to provide protection to the remaining residents. The result would be a reduction in fire rating for many of the homeowners. This matter will be revisited at the next work session.
- Township #9 – To be revisited at next work session.
- Township #3 – The District requested a re-evaluation of the split in the allocation between Cove City, Dover and Ft. Barnwell, and it revealed that Dover is receiving more than its fair share. Realigning the apportionment according to fair share, however, would put Dover out of business. There was discussion concerning the possibility of making Dover a service district. It was noted that the amount of property being placed in use value has created a problem for the fire departments, as the tax valuation is suppressed. It was proposed that the rate be increased by ½ cent. This will be revisited at the next work session, allowing Commissioner Taylor to consult further with the departments in his district.

In other discussions taken up by the Board, there Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects were considered, including request to fund a restroom facility at the Cove City Park. There was consensus to await the results of the Parks and Recreation survey.

There was discussion of a snagging project for Brices Creek. Although it is blocked, it is not flooding, and it was determined that a more appropriate avenue would be a navigable paddle trails grant through the Recreation and Parks Department rather than through the CIP line for snagging projects.

Disposition of the building located at 509 Broad Street was discussed. Staff advised the Board that asbestos and lead abatement is needed in order for the building to be renovated and become functional, in addition to ADA compliance repairs. The Board's consensus was that the building should be put on the market before a decision is made to demolish it, and staff was also directed to explore with the City of New Bern if the City has any use for it.

At 11:45 a.m. Commissioner McCabe moved to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider performance of personnel. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Board returned to regular session at 12:25 p.m., with no action to record.

County Attorney Associate, Aaron Arnette, presented a request from the Board of Education that the County waive its right of first refusal for the portion of the old Bridgeton Elementary School property that does not automatically revert to the Town of Bridgeton. The proposed waiver would be for six months. The purpose is to allow Bridgeton to join it with the portion that reverts to the town in order to establish a park. Commissioner McCabe moved to defer the matter until June 2, seconded by Commissioner Taylor and unanimously carried.

There was discussion of several Board members' desire to visit the Structured Day Reporting Center prior to coming to agreement concerning their budget request. Interested members made plans to visit at 4:00 on June 2, immediately prior to the next work session.

Other pending matters to be resolved on June 2 were Twp. 5 and Twp. 9 Fire Departments.

Commissioner Dacey moved to recess until 5:00 p.m. on June 2, seconded by Commissioner Tyson and unanimously carried.

Chairman Thomas F. Mark
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Gwendolyn M. Bryan
Clerk to the Board