

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION** May 29, 2013

**ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

PRESENT: James “Burkie” Jennings, Chairman
Larry Yoder, Vice-Chairman
Ryan Mayberry
W. Darrell Robertson

ABSENT: Judy M. Moose

STAFF: Rick French, County Manager
Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a work session on Wednesday, May 29, 2013 in the County Administration Building downstairs conference room, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jennings called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2013-2014 BUDGET OVERVIEW

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the following highlights regarding the 2013-2014 budget:

- The proposed 2013-2014 General Fund budget totals \$34,719,716 which is \$630,913 more than the current budget year.
- There will be no property tax increase.
- 20 new employees are included – 12 at the jail, 3 at DSS, 2 at the Sheriff’s Department, one in Public Buildings, one in Human Resources, and one at the Bethlehem Branch Library (transitioning a 32-hour position to 40 hours per week).
- An engineer position is included within the Water Fund to assist with the many upcoming water and construction projects.

- A 5% water rate increase is proposed as well as several building fee increases. No fees will be increased at the landfill or convenience centers.
- \$2.7 million will be taken from Fund Balance to pay the debt service payment on the former Taylor Togs property purchased for CVCC, a full year of the 2.5% COLA implemented this budget year for employees making less than \$50,000, the Rocky Face Park PARTF grant match, increases for DSS Foster Care, and increased jail expenses (utilities, medical care for inmates, supplies, and meals).
- Revenue for housing inmates from other counties is estimated at \$756,800.

He provided comparisons of property tax and sales tax collections, expenditures and revenues, and fund balance for this and previous years, noting the improvement as time progressed. He pointed out that the current fund balance was over 29% as of June 30, 2012 and that revenues were currently \$1,465,296 ahead of expenditures.

DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS DISCUSSION

Mr. French reviewed each departmental budget with the Board, pointing out that many were proposed at less than their current budget. Budgets that included significant changes were:

- Elections – increase for payment on the new voting machines.
- Finance – increase in salaries due to a full-year of a position added this year.
- Tax – one less employee due to a retirement.
- Information Technology – increase for software needs.
- Public Buildings – one new employee, increase in utilities, and replacement of equipment.
- Sheriff's Department – 2 new employees.
- Jail – 12 new employees and increases in medical care for inmates, meals, etc.
- 911 Communications – addition of part-time help and purchase of new equipment.
- Forestry – purchase of new truck.
- Human Resources – one new employee due to health care reform.
- Inspections – increase in salaries due to employee receiving certification and purchase of new software.
- EMS – purchase of new ambulance.
- Veterans – purchase of additional flag holders and Veterans Committee events.
- DSS – 3 new employees and increase in transportation costs for nutrition sites.
- Recreation – increased due to expenses for races conducted throughout the year.
- Rocky Face – line item added for RockyFest.
- Bethlehem Library – increase 32-hour position to 40 hours.
- Schools – increase due to loss of low wealth funding.
- Special Appropriations – increase due to parade expenses and economic development incentives.

Vice-Chairman Yoder questioned why some employees were receiving special 401(k) benefit allowed specifically for sworn law enforcement officials.

Commissioner Robertson felt staff should review the effectiveness of the TESC Program given the fact that Alexander County's inmate population continued to increase. He also asked if the equipment upgrade in 911 would alleviate the need for the additional part-time employees.

Mr. French stated he would look into these matters.

PROPOSED PROJECTS

Mr. French discussed the following projects planned for the 2013-2014 budget year:

- Water System Project - \$3.4 million no interest loan from the state revolving loan fund paid with water debt.
- Courthouse renovations - \$1.5 million to complete HVAC system and ADA compliance issues.
- CVCC expansion / Taylor Togs property – renovations to be completed with a Golden Leaf grant, if awarded.
- Rocky Face Park - \$225,000 match necessary for PARTF grant to construct walking trails, shelter, etc.
- Demolition of old Dayton property – will create need to locate space for the garage, TESC Program, and Probation & Parole.
- Evidence / Storage building for Sheriff's Department – current building is at the old Dayton property and will be demolished.
- Animal Shelter renovations - \$125,000 from the current budget will be held over to the 2013-2014 budget to complete renovations.

UPCOMING BUDGET MEETINGS

The public hearing for the proposed 2013-2014 budget is scheduled for the June 10, 2013 Meeting. Mr. French suggested rescheduling the June 24th meeting to June 19th for adoption of the budget. The Board agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Robertson made a motion to adjourn at 7:31 PM. Vice-Chairman Yoder seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

James H. Jennings, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board