

# **Ashe County**

*150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640*



## **Meeting Minutes - Draft**

**Tuesday, June 5, 2018**

**9:00 AM**

**Budget Work Session**

**Second Floor Conference Room**

### **County Commission**

*Chairman William Sands  
Vice Chair Larry Rhodes  
Commissioner Jeff Rose  
Commissioner Paula Perry  
Commissioner Todd McNeill*

**BUDGET WORK SESSION****I. 9:00 AM - Meeting Called to Order at the Ashe County Courthouse**

*Chairman Sands called the Budget Work Session back into session at 9:03 a.m. in the second floor conference room at the Ashe County Courthouse.*

**Present:** 4 - Commissioner Larry Rhodes, Commissioner William Sands, Commissioner Paula Perry and Commissioner Todd McNeill

**Absent:** 1 - Commissioner Jeff Rose

**PRES  
18-214**

**9:00 AM - Department of Social Services - Tracie Downer & Kelly Surber**

*Department of Social Services Director Tracie McMillan Downer explained goals to stabilize workforce, particularly in Income Maintenance. She also stated concern for the age and condition of some of the department vehicles that transport clients. Ms. Downer detailed position changes in the proposed budget, challenges faced with the NC FAST program, changes in policies that will affect DSS, recommendations to improve fleet safety, and ways to increase community collaboration.*

*No changes were made.*

**PRES  
18-215**

**9:30 AM - Public Buildings - Gary Roark**

*Maintenance Supervisor Gary Roark spoke to the Board about the proposed budget for Public Buildings. He explained that the chiller will need to be replaced within the next year. Trees at the airport beacon light and behind the hangars need to be taken down at a cost of \$7,700. A request was submitted to replace one vehicle each year for the next four years due to the age and condition of the vehicles but was not placed into the proposed budget. A request was made to change the pay grade for Chris Goodman from Grade 59/Step 2 to Grade 60/Step and was not put into the proposed budget. Discussion was entered into regarding paving at the Health Department. Maintenance Supervisor Roark spoke about the problem with water runoff at the Health Department and stated that there are more problems with the building than the parking lot. An estimate to correct issues with water runoff is \$1500 - \$1800. Also discussed was removal of trees at the Sharing Center. The Board agreed to remove \$5000 for removal of the trees from the budget. The line item for Capital Outlay/Other was reduced from \$65,000 to \$25,000 by removing paving of the parking lot and utilizing the funds for repairs to the building and correcting issues with water runoff. Vice Chairman Rhodes expressed concern because of the poor job of clean up that the mowing crew does and the need to advertise for bids for a mowing contract and for the cleaning contract. The Board was in agreement to place both contracts out for bids. The Board was in agreement to reduce the line item that includes removal of trees at the airport by \$5000. Paving the parking lot and paving at the Health Department can hold for several years; the Board was in agreement to reduce the line item to \$5,000 to work on the Health Department building. The Board was also in agreement to remove \$6000 from Computer Software & Support. The Board agreed to purchase one new vehicle for the Maintenance Department this year.*

*No further changes were made.*

**PRES** 10:00 AM - Animal Control - Joe Testerman  
**18-216**

*Animal Control Director Joe Testerman spoke to the Board regarding the budget for Animal Control. The Board was in agreement to remove (3) laptop mounts under Equipment Expense from the proposed budget. In addition, the part-time shelter attendant position will be upgraded to a full-time position.*

**PRES** 10:30 AM - Ashe Medication Assistance - Shelly Elliott  
**18-217**

*Ashe Medication Assistance Director Shelly Elliott, along with Diane Harless, provided an explanation of services provided by their organization. A total of 301 patients have been served during the past year. And during the past year, \$2.5 million worth of medication was distributed.*

*No changes were made to the line item for Ashe Medication Assistance.*

**PRES** 11:00 AM - Helton Ambulance & Helton Community Center - Geneva  
**18-218** Spencer

*Finance Officer Sandra Long explained appropriations and requests for funding made over the last several years for Helton Ambulance Service.*

*Geneva Spencer, representing Helton Community Center, spoke to the Board about grants applied for to begin renovating the Helton Community Center. She told the Board that the playground equipment there is not safe.*

*The Board agreed to reduce the appropriation for Helton Ambulance Service to \$23,000 which was the amount requested from Helton Ambulance Service. Helton Ambulance Service will receive \$15,000 and Helton Community Center will receive \$8,000.*

*No further changes were made.*

**PRES** 11:30 AM - Medical Examiner  
**18-238**

*No changes were made to the line item for Medical Examiner.*

**PRES** 11:45 AM - Soil Conservation  
**18-239**

*No changes were made to the line item for Soil Conservation.*

**PRES** 1:00 PM - Tax Office - Chris Lambert & Mike Hobbs  
**18-219**

*Tax Administrator Chris Lambert, along with Mike Hobbs, provided a PowerPoint overview of the Tax Administration Department. A request was made for a full-time Present Use Value Exemption and Exclusion Specialist position; a reclassification of the Business/Personal Property Appraiser position from a Grade/Step 63/1 to 65/1; and an additional vehicle to be used between the Business/Personal Property Appraiser and the new Present Use Value Exemption and Exclusion Specialist. Finance Officer Sandra*

Long told the Board that unused funds in the current year's budget could be used to purchase a vehicle prior to June 30, 2018. The commissioners were in agreement with the requests.

**PRES**  
**18-220**

1:30 PM - Cooperative Extension - Jennifer Glass

Interim Cooperative Extension Director Jennifer Glass, along with Travis Birdsell, made a request for a new van to be used by their department. The van will be a County van and will be used by Soil and Water, Extension, the Agriculture Club, 4-H, and Master Gardeners. It would cost over \$3000 per month to rent a vehicle and availability when needed would be an issue. There is extra money in the budget to pay for the van because of the vacant Cooperative Extension Director position. Finance Officer Sandra Long stated that there is \$63,000 in the line item that will not be used and can be used in this year's budget to pay for a van. The Board was in agreement to utilize this option for the purchase of a van.

No changes were made to the Cooperative Extension budget for FY2018/19.

**PRES**  
**18-221**

2:00 PM - Library - Suzanne Moore

County Librarian Suzanne Moore and Regional Director Jane Blackburn spoke to the Board about the recommendation from a company hired to evaluate the pay scales of Library employees. The three counties that fund the Appalachian Regional Library, Wilkes -Ashe -Watauga, have been requested to increase staff salaries by one-third to their minimum pay on the new pay scale, plus a 1/2 percent per year of service increase, and to continue to increase the appropriation for the Library for two additional years in order to implement the new pay scale by FY2020/21. The reason for the request is because salary levels are much lower than the average salary rates paid in other libraries comparable to Appalachian Regional Library, and employee turnover is high. The requested appropriation for FY2018/19 is \$460,378 which is an increase of \$22,642 from the previous year. The Board will consider the appropriation request after the final numbers have been calculated at the end of budget work sessions.

**PRES**  
**18-222**

2:30 PM - Ashe County Schools - Phyllis Yates

School Superintendent Phyllis Yates, along with Amanda Coldiron, spoke to the Board regarding the budget requests for Ashe County Schools. The line item request for School Current Expense includes 4.57 teaching positions and matching benefits in the amount of \$300,000; funds for professional development in the amount of \$30,000; mentor pay for beginning teachers in the amount of \$30,000; and reading resources in grades K-2 in the amount of \$125,000. The Board was in agreement to add \$118,720 and \$143,548 for a total amount of \$262,268.

**PRES**  
**18-240**

3:00 PM - Ashe County Rescue Squad - Rob Blevins

Rob Blevins with the Ashe County Rescue Squad made a request for an appropriation of \$45,680 which would include all expenses for a paid squad member that would respond to all West Jefferson and Jefferson calls as a first responder.

The request will be revisited at the end of the budget work sessions.

**PRES**  
**18-243**

3:30 PM - Ashe County Airport - Director Eric Payne

*Airport Manager Eric Payne told the Board that \$40,000 was included in the budget request for tree removal. Since this could possibly be paid for with grant monies when the trees are removed, Mr. Payne recommended that the Board reduce the line item for Maintenance and Repair/Buildings & Grounds to \$8,000 for removal of trees around the beacon. The Board was in agreement with the recommendation.*

**PRES**  
**18-242**

3:45 PM - Parks & Recreation - Director Scott Turnmyre

*Parks and Recreation Director Scott Turnmyre highlighted several items in the budget request for the Parks and Recreation Department. In the line item for Capital Outlay/Equipment, a request was made for an increase of \$31,000 to purchase a new tractor. The current tractor they are using is 17 years old and is requiring more and more expensive maintenance. The older tractor would be used at Family Central for smaller jobs related to ballfield maintenance and spreading gravel in parking lots. The new tractor would be used at Ashe County Park which is a 73-acre site.*

*The Board was in agreement to purchase the new tractor for Parks and Recreation. The line item for Maintenance & Repair/Buildings & Grounds will be reduced to \$30,000. The line item for Equipment Expense will be reduced to \$4,000. The line item for Contractual/Officials will be reduced to \$40,000. Dusty Farmer will be moved to Grade/Step 64/2 and Jimmy Taylor will be moved to Grade/Step 60/5.*

*No further changes were made.*

**PRES**  
**18-245**

4:00 PM - E911 Coordinator - Planning Director Adam Stumb

*Planning Director Adam Stumb told the Board that the Planning Department assumed the duties of E911 Coordinator upon the retirement of Lannie Jones. A request has been made for a part-time employee to handle calls, assist in the Inspections Department, and to sit at the front desk for Building Inspections during lunch.*

*No changes were made to the E911 Coordinator budget. However, the Board was in agreement to add \$7,000 to the existing \$5,000 in the line item for Part-time Personnel bringing the total to \$12,000 in the Planning Department budget.*

**PRES**  
**18-246**

4:30 PM - Veterans Service Office

*The Board was in agreement to remove the line item for Part-time Personnel, \$1500, from the Veterans Service Office budget.*

*No further changes were made.*

**PRES**  
**18-247**

5:00 PM - Cultural Arts

*The Board was in agreement to move \$3,500 in the line item for Professional Services - Other for Todd Community Preservation Organization to Human Services and to reduce the recommended amount for FY2018/19 to \$4,000. The line items for Ashe County*

*Civic Center and the 1904 Courthouse Preservation Organization will both be increased to \$80,126.67.*

*No further changes were made.*

## **II. Recess**

*The meeting was recessed at 5:30 p.m.*

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