

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

9:00 AM

Budget Work Session

Second Floor Conference Room

County Commission

Chairperson Todd McNeill

Vice Chair William Sands

Commissioner Larry Rhodes

Commissioner Paula Perry

Commissioner Larry Dix

BUDGET WORK SESSION

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

Chairman McNeill called the Budget Work Session to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Ashe County Courthouse.

Present: 4 - Commissioner Todd McNeill, Commissioner William Sands, Commissioner Larry Rhodes and Commissioner Larry Dix

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Paula Perry

Animal Control

Animal Control Director Joe Testerman spoke to the Board explaining budget requests for his department. The Board was in agreement that the ballistic vest would not be purchased but would instead be a vest donated by the Sheriff's Office. The request for four feral cat dens will be met through donations (revenues) to offset the cost. The Board was in agreement to leave \$1500 in the budget to build a holding pen at Animal Control for livestock due to losing use of the Highway 163 livestock facility. At the suggestion of the commissioners, Mr. Testerman will check to see if the cattle panels at Cooperative Extension could be utilized for the holding pen. In answer to a question from the Board, Mr. Testerman explained that the expense for ammunition is mainly for training purposes. Even though not being submitted as a budget request, Mr. Testerman asked the Board to promote Dana Shatley to the position of Supervisor Sergeant.

Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board member Carol Coulter made a request to increase the starting salary for the Parks and Recreation Director position before advertising to fill the vacant position. She explained that Ashe County's salary for the position is the lowest in the state to comparable counties and programs offered. The Board was in agreement to advertise the position at Grade 71 - \$50,780.

Environmental Services - Collections

Environmental Services Director Scott Hurley told the Board that other counties in the state are now charging to dispose of televisions and electronics due to the costs associated with disposal. These items are banned from being placed in the landfill. Chairman McNeill requested that a decision regarding setting a fee for disposal of electronics be delayed until the General Assembly votes on SB553.

The Board also discussed implementation of a sticker system for people using convenience center sites and the landfill. Interim County Manager Adam Stumb suggested allowing six months to study and to develop a policy and six months to notify the public of program implementation.

The Board was in agreement to increase the Household Solid Waste Fee to \$150 per year to pay for an additional convenience center site in Baldwin and for improvements to the Highway 16 convenience center site.

Environmental Services - Disposal

No changes were made.

Library

Commissioner Rhodes stated that since the Library received a \$100,000 grant to purchase a bookmobile, a proposal needs to be made to County Librarian Suzanne Moore and District Director Jane Blackburn to fund two part time staff for the bookmobile and all associated expenses for two years utilizing Marsh funds. If the bookmobile proves to be viable after two years, the program would need to be reevaluated and if viable, the County could agree to fund for three additional years. If the bookmobile is not viable, then the Library could sell the vehicle. Chairman McNeill, Commissioner Dix, and Commissioner Sands stated agreement to the proposal.

Emergency Management

The Board was in agreement to add a replacement vehicle for the Emergency Management Department utilizing FEMA grant funds from Fund Balance.

Animal Control

The Board discussed budget requests for the Animal Control Department. The request for one ballistic vest will be filled by utilizing an extra vest from the Sheriff's Office. The request for reclassification of one employee will not be granted. Laptop mounts will not be purchased but rather be fulfilled through a donation of laptop mounts from the Sheriff's Office if available.

Helton Ambulance (Community Center)

Funds in the amount of \$10,000 will be moved to Human Services adding a line item for Helton Community Center.

Administration

The Board discussed the salary for Interim County Manager Adam Stumb. The Board was in agreement to increase the salary 2%, the same as all County employees. The salary will be reviewed in December 2019 when the position for County Manager is open.

Miscellaneous

Chairman McNeill opened the floor for additional comments and concerns from Board members.

Commissioner Dix asked for an update regarding the property search for a livestock facility and cattle scales. The Cattlemen's Association is currently searching for a piece of property. Interim County Manager Adam Stumb stated that a feasibility grant has been submitted to the State and a response is expected this fall. Finance Officer Sandra Long explained that funds are being set aside in reserve for future miscellaneous projects and for specific projects.

Commissioner Rhodes asked for input on increasing 401K accounts for employees and asked the Finance Office to gather information regarding the cost.

Commissioner Dix stated that the commissioners need to look at how they want Ashe County to grow in the future with the completion of Highway 221.

No further comments were made.

II. Adjournment

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 4 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes and
Commissioner Dix

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Todd McNeill, Chairman

Ann J. Clark, MMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board