

**MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 12, 1994**

The Board of Commissioner (the "Board") of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in special session for the purpose of holding a budget workshop, in the Classroom of the Health Administration/County Office Building, Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 9:00 a.m., on May 12, 1994.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Dunlap; Commissioners Holland, Holmes, Hanner and Pollard; County Manager Ben Shivar; County Attorney Robert L. Gunn; and Clerk to the Board Sandra B. Cape

Absent: None

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 9:00 a.m.

AGENDA

Commissioner Holland requested that the subject of the Manager Evaluation Procedure be postponed from this meeting and heard at a later date. It was the general consensus of the Board that the Manager Evaluation Procedure should be tabled until a future meeting.

A discussion followed regarding the presentation of the Manager's budget recommendations to the Board. The Manager noted that the Budget must be presented to the Board by June 1. The Manager stated that there were some items which could be heard at the May 19, 1994, budget workshop, including the Manager Evaluation Procedure, Council on Aging organizational information, and the presentation by the Chatham Education Foundation. He noted that the Board of Education and the Board would meet jointly at Bestfood Cafeteria on May 16, 1994, at 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of receiving the Board of Education budget request.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The County Manager stated that one of the purposes of the presentation by the Recreation Department is to allow the Board to consider in which direction it wished this department to take. He noted that recreation is an important program which has been well developed by Recreation Specialist Tracy Burnett. The Manager stated that the Recreation Department has no full-time staff, only a few temporary, part-time contract employees and volunteers. The Manager stated that the main question to be considered by the Board is the long-term, overall direction of the Recreation Department. He noted that the Recreation Board is working well with the Department and has expansion goals for the future which includes additional recreation sites and programs. He noted that if more programs and recreational facilities are to be developed, the Recreation Department will require additional staff. The Manager pointed out that the eighty-acre landfill site could be a good location for a recreation site.

Recreation Specialist Tracy Burnett stated that the main budget requests for the up-coming fiscal year are as follows:

- (1) A permanent, part-time recreation assistant to assist in planning and supervising activities. She noted that many activities take place at different locations on the same date and at the same time. She stated that, although this position would not eliminate the necessity for seasonal contract workers, it would reduce this need. This position could

handle on-field responsibilities and free time for the Recreation Specialist to work in an administrative capacity.

(2) The second request is for a truck which would enable the Recreation Specialist to haul equipment, field preparation materials and set-up equipment to various activities locations.

(3) Another major request is for playground equipment to replace old equipment that may pose a health hazard. This new equipment would be ADA equipped to comply with federal regulations regarding the disabled.

(4) The Recreation Specialist stated that she wished to offer more programs, such as a youth tract, soccer, and beach bingo, throughout the County for both youth and seniors. She stated that she would like to concentrate on programs for seniors which are not currently offered by other organizations and agencies. She noted that there were facilities available in the County.

The Recreation Specialist noted that she often advertises activities which are offered by Council on Aging and other agencies in an attempt to work with these agencies in offering services.

A discussion ensued regarding the need for a truck and whether or not there was a currently County owned truck which could be used by this Department. It was determined that there was not.

The Board and staff discussed the skill level of the additional personnel being requested. It was noted that this would be a part-time employee, available after normal business hours, with some experience in recreation, and qualified to be approved by the schools because in order to use school facilities, the school must approve the supervisor of the event. The Board recommended a retired coach or a student intern from the recreation department of a local university.

A discussion ensued regarding the recently applied for grant for use at the Bynum recreation facility. It was noted that the cost of the playground equipment could not be purchased through grant funds, if received, since it was not listed on the grant application. When asked what was more important, playground equipment or truck, the Recreation Specialist stated that the playground equipment would be the more important because it would directly benefit the children and because of the liability involved with the out-dated equipment. Further discussion ensued regarding the Bynum recreation facility and the need to find a more suitable location for tournaments and recreational events. The Board also discussed the possibility of placing recreational facilities on the same site as the proposed collection centers where the acreage purchased is more than actually required for the collection center.

The Manager noted that contributions are made to Siler City and Goldston, which amount has not been increased in a number of years. He stated that Pittsboro is no longer receiving any contribution from the County since it eliminated its recreation department several years ago. The Chair noted that a lot of the County's communities did not request their share of these funds and, therefore, did not receive their portion.

The Board discussed the strong community involvement by churches and organizations in recreational opportunities. It was noted that these community programs do not always include those residents who most need recreational programs. It was noted that

there are limited activities offered in the northeast section of the County.

Commissioner Pollard recommended that volunteers be trained as recreation leaders for low-risk activities. The Recreation Specialist noted that there are coaches and teachers who are trained and work during the summer months at various locations.

The cost of various activities was discussed. The Recreation Specialist noted that participation in most activities cost \$10.00 per activity season per participant. The Manager noted that approximately \$10,000 in revenue is received by the County for recreational programs, which does not cover the cost of the programs offered.

The Recreation Specialist thanked the Board for its support and consideration of her budget requests.

A copy of a summary of the Recreation Department's budget request is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

LUNCH

The Chair recessed the meeting at 12:10 p.m. for lunch.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Emergency Operations Director Rod Tidy stated that this budget was particularly difficult to prepare because of the expanded programs, such as the fire prevention program, which is going very well. He stated that the Enhanced 911 program is expanding which causes the number of dispatch calls for the Sheriff's Department, Fire Departments, three major rescue squads, Emergency Medical Services, Pittsboro Police, Siler City Police, Jordan Lake Park Rangers, Social Services, Public Works, Helpline, Rape Crises, Pittsboro and County Water Departments, Home Health, K-9, and miscellaneous other agencies for which the Emergency Operations Department dispatches calls. The Emergency Operations Director distributed a handout showing the number of dispatch calls and a page from the Insurance Services Office Rating Sheet and National Fire Protection Association indicating staffing requirements for handling dispatch calls, a copy of which is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. He noted the increase in calls from 5,230 calls in 1990 to 6,222 calls in 1991, to 10,348 calls in 1992, which is the beginning of the E-911 program, and 11,547 calls in 1993. He noted that these statistics are only emergency calls, not information or administrative calls. He also noted that over 13,000 calls are anticipated for 1994.

The Emergency Operations Director noted that, due to number of calls anticipated in the up-coming year, his top priority budget request is for three additional Telecommunicator II positions to man the three-position consoles in the new emergency operations facility in order that the Department meet the minimum staffing requirements of the National Fire Protection Association. He noted that the requested level of staffing could handle up to 20,000 calls per year. He outlined the difficulty of having only two Telecommunicators on duty at a time in that the equipment is set up for one person to receive the call, the second person to dispatch the call, and back again to the receiver of the call for recordation. He stated that with only two Telecommunicators no allowance is made for breaks by the employees, which are required, especially in light of the fact that Telecommunicators work 12-hour shifts, rotating four days on and four days off. He noted that

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there are currently eight Telecommunicators on staff. He stressed the necessity of affording these employees sufficient breaks to relieve the stress associated with this position while maintaining coverage for in-coming calls. He also noted that this is a very demanding, stressful job, which has a rate of one in five who accept the position actually staying on the job.

The Emergency Operations Director noted that the Enhanced 911 program is on schedule with all rural postal areas, Moncure, Apex, Goldston, Bear Creek, New Hill, Snow Camp, Liberty, Bonlee, and Staley having been converted and with Siler City rural routes and Sanford addresses to be completed in the next few weeks. He noted that one reason Pittsboro has not yet been converted is the naming of roads has not been completed.

The Emergency Operations Director stated that the Fire Prevention Program has gone very well with inspections being done every day with an emphasis on education to avoid loss of lives. He also noted that, as Fire Marshall, he has been working in the school system training children on action to take in case of fire, hurricanes, or other disasters.

The Emergency Operations Director stressed the need for cooperation among County departments which need telephone systems. He noted that, since the Emergency Operations Center will require a new system and the Sheriff's Department is also in need of a new system, he and the Sheriff are working together in obtaining bids for telephone systems.

The Emergency Operations Director also noted that the budget request contains requests for the following: relocation of two radio systems from fire tower to Centel Cellular tower; a Visions CAD and software system to use in the operation of its three-position console; a four-wheel drive vehicle; self-contained breathing apparatus to replace out-dated equipment required by OSHA standards; a hose tester, which would be used by the volunteer fire departments to test their fire hoses as required by the County; a computer notification and voice mail system, as required by Shearin Harris, to be utilized to keep track special needs residents.

The Manager noted that radio repair costs have been substantially lower this year than in previous years due to redirecting of the equipment already owned by the County.

The Emergency Operations Director stated that the Emergency Operations Center was on schedule for construction even though problems were confronted when it was discovered that debris from the old school building formerly located on this site was buried underground and had to be excavated prior to pouring the foundation. He stated that completion is expected by September, equipment is being put out for bid, and construction is going well.

The Emergency Operations Director stated that for many years there has been a major problem with the Jordan Dam receiver, which is part of the Department's radio network. He stated that this problem, which has finally been diagnosed as a problem with moisture in the telephone lines, has been solved by a radio link.

The Emergency Operations Director invited the Board members to come down to the Center and see how the Department operates. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to present and explain his Department's budget requests for FY 1994-95.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Water Division

Public Works Director Mark Ashness stated that the fiscal plan for the construction of the water treatment plant was based upon the County contributing \$0.03 from the general fund to the water fund and then \$0.02 for the next five years out of the general fund and then \$0.01 after the five-year period. He stated that, because of revenues received last year, the initial \$0.03 general fund contribution is being reduced to \$0.02, and it is believed that \$0.02 may not be needed, perhaps only \$0.01 per year will be required for each of the next six years. He noted that a lower than anticipated interest rate had been obtained, as well as lower bids than anticipated for the construction of the water plant. He stated that with regard to sales tax the plan was to cut the sales tax to 50% of the contribution rate during the year 2003-2004 and then eventually eliminate any sales tax contribution around 2009-2010, both of which are conservative plans. He stated that the sales tax cut during the year 2003-2004 can probably be cut to 75% and then cut to 50% and eventually cut to 25% and phase it out completely in the year 2009-2010, which would make the fund a true enterprise fund.

The Public Works Director stated that the County's current rate is one of the highest costing water utilities in the area because of the County's rural nature. He noted that the water division now has 2,868 customers; 50 homes are under construction in Governor's Club; and Fearrington is continuing to grow. He stated that the growth is greatest in the North Chatham system, which currently has 1,843 customers, as compares to 288 customers in the Moncure system and 737 customers in the Southwest system. He noted that when the new water plant goes on line in two years, it will only be at one-sixth capacity initially so it is in the best interest of the County to add customers in the North Chatham system. He stated that revenues are steadily increasing.

The Public Works Director stated that the Water Division's main goal is to continue the timely construction of the water treatment plant and other water system projects. He outlined planned or anticipated water line extensions, improvements to the system operation through monitoring and control telemetry, upgrade in personnel training, and upgrade of water system plans and maps.

The Public Works Director outlined the major expenditures for the up-coming year, which are outlined in the summary of the Public Works Department, Water Division, Budget Presentation, a copy of which is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. He noted that included in the proposed expenditures is a sewer feasibility study which he recommended so that the County can assess the areas of the County in which sewer would be most beneficial. He noted that the cost of such a study (approximately \$50,000) would be funded through the water fund.

The Public Works Director noted that no significant increases in personnel are anticipated due to the fact that this Department is making an effort to make the existing personnel more efficient through up-dated, hand-held systems and a more defined work area to cut down travel time.

The Public Works Director outlined major capital expenditures for the department as outlined in the attached summary. He stressed the importance of the billing management software being requested, estimated at \$24,365, to provide the Water Department with software specially designed for its needs. He also noted that a used ditch-witch-type backhoe and trencher, estimated at \$20,000,

is badly needed by the Department. He explained the need for the altitude valve being requested for the Jack Bennett Water Tank, estimated at \$15,000.

A discussion ensued regarding the sewer feasibility study being requested. It was noted that the areas most likely to develop, both residentially and industrially, would be more seriously considered for a sewer system. It was also pointed out that the Planning Department and Economic Development would greatly benefit from this study. The Public Works Director pointed out that the cost of operation of a sewer system is more than double the cost of a water system, which makes a feasibility study by an outside concern extremely important prior to any decision by the County on this matter.

Commissioner Pollard asked to be excused from the balance of the meeting.

Commissioner Holmes moved to excuse Commissioner Pollard from the balance of the meeting. Commissioner Hanner seconded the motion.

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0), and Commissioner Pollard left the meeting.

Public Buildings

The Public Works Director stated that the main goal for the Public Buildings Department is to improve the work and safety conditions for Building and Grounds employees by providing safety training and complying with OSHA requirements. He also noted that many of the buildings need repainting, therefore the Department was beginning an annual maintenance schedule for repainting buildings and maintaining parking lots and grounds on a rotating basis.

A discussion ensued regarding the utilization of the store building which was recently purchased by the County and the storage shed next to the street at the Law Enforcement Center. The Board recommended that the shed at the Law Enforcement Center be fixed up, a portion torn down, and the building painted in order to improve the appearance. Commissioner Holmes requested that the brick being stored outside that facility be stored inside the building.

The Public Works Director stated that this Division is requesting a part-time custodian position be upgraded to a full-time Maintenance Worker I, thus eliminating the need for contracted services currently utilized to clean the Mental Health and Hospice buildings. He also noted that the major capital expenditures budget request for the upcoming year is less than in the previous year.

Public Works Administration

The Public Works Director stated that a request for a part-time person is being submitted to fill a new position which would be responsible for visiting and overseeing on-going building projects. He noted that this position could be filled by a retired civil engineer or building inspector-type person. He noted an estimated cost of this position of \$9,000.

The Public Works Director pointed out the request for Auto-CAD software which is utilized to do design work much quicker than manual design work can be performed. In addition, he pointed out that design firms utilize this software and can furnish the County with the computer disk which contains the actual drawings for the

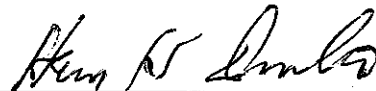
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construction. He outlined the other benefits of this system, including assisting the Economic Development Department determine cost of water line extensions rapidly and use with the GIS system. He noted that the cost of this software is estimated to be \$2,500.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Holmes moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Hanner seconded the motion.

The motion carried four (4) to zero (0), and the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.



Henry H. Dunlap, Jr., Chairman

ATTEST:



Clerk to the Board

