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**Minutes**  
**Cumberland County Board of Commissioners**  
**June 6, 2000, 6:00 PM**  
**Special Meeting: Public Hearing On The Recommended**  
**FY 2001 Budget**

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**PRESENT:** Chairman Edward G. Melvin, Jr.  
Vice Chairman J. Lee Warren, Jr.  
Commissioner Tom Bacote  
Commissioner Talmage Baggett  
Commissioner Billy R. King  
Commissioner H. Mac Tyson II  
Commissioner Breeden Blackwell  
Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager  
James Martin, Deputy County Manager  
Juanita Pilgrim, Asst. County Manager  
Cliff Spiller, Asst. County Manager  
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney  
Marsha Fogle, Clerk to the Board

**INVOCATION:** Commissioner H. Mac Tyson II  
**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive comments from the citizenry on the recommended FY2001 budget.

Mr. Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager, reviewed briefly the recommended budget, the history of school funding. He noted the budget sustains the progress we have made and honors commitments made by the Board of Commissioners.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Bacote moved to allow two minutes for presentations.  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Tyson  
**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS

**SPEAKERS:**

1. Susie Gnann – Fayetteville Sentencing. Ms. Gnann introduced her staff and thanked the Board for their support. The local match of \$18,000 allows them to draw down funding from the State of North Carolina.
2. Bob White – SCAT: Have made great strides. Still more to do. Transportation is a

major issue. He asked the Board to continue to support seniors.

3. Sylvia Ray – Women’s Center: Thanks for support. The Ashton Woods Project will provide safe houses for 20 families.

4. Dave Brumble – Arts Council: Arts are important; don’t let them slide. Public gets big bang for their money. Continue to support the arts.

5. Marshall Lanter – Council on Older Adults: His budget was cut 10% last year. Needs money to hire one person that was laid off because of the cut. The person is responsible for building handicapped ramps; 20 need to be built. Consider funding that will allow the hiring of this individual.

6. Ashley Holloway – Terry Sanford: Do the right thing; ensure excellent programs in the schools. Need good books, quality teachers, good learning environment. Support school’s request.

7. Jacob Godwin – Teacher: Concerned about cutback in school budget. Industries look at school system when making a decision on whether to locate in a specific area. Don’t cut back.

8. Michelle Lourcey – Teacher: Career educator. Works 2 jobs to remain in the profession. Sacrifice will be required to put education first. She called this a shameful annual event. Support school budget request.

9. E.T. Clement: Invest in our childrens’ future. Lack of funding does not allow the education system to support education.

10. Darlene Tate – Teresa Berrian School: She is a National Board Certified Teacher. Equipment is outdated, not enough money for sufficient maintenance, need school supplies. She spent \$3111.12 of her personal money for supplies for her classroom. Support funding for school system.

11. Jim Caldwell – Mid Carolina Council of Governments. The elderly are in need of assistance and their needs can’t be met with the existing budget.

12. Carolyn Tracy – Mid Carolina Council of Governments. Cumberland County needs to provide additional matching funds so federal and state funds can be drawn down. Stand to lose \$152,560 dollars if we do not provide matching funds. Will impact on home visits, few meals served, few meals on wheels, less trips to nutritional sites, 19 less ramps, etc. Urged the Board to provide matching funds.

13. Debbie Miriello – Parent and citizen: Daughter attends Glendale Acres Academy. She is tutor of 1<sup>st</sup> graders, participates in schools activities, vice chair of PTA and girl scout leader.

Concerned that lack of funding will cause the school to lose its Spanish teacher and class room size may increase. May have to take daughter out of public school if funding does not come through. There is a direct correlation between increased spending in education and increased economic and business development. Make children the top priority.

14. Peggy Raymes – Principal at Margaret Willis: Can't do their job without increase in funding. Schools will only do an average job without the increase in funding.

15. Melanie Hamblin – Asst. Principal: Her position may be abolished if funding not approved. Cuts are detrimental to the children. Class room size will increase. Need to meet diverse needs of children.

16. Elizabeth Pope: Lives on fixed income, but supports school funding. Education is important to help decrease violence in schools.

17. Tom Holt – Attorney. Children has graduated from school. Wife has taught in the school system for 27 years. Important to support schools – don't stop the momentum now.

18. Travis Hauer: Schools need the \$11 million increase to fund the basic needs of our schools. Would appreciate the money for the school system. Kids need solid educational foundation.

19. Amanda DuFour – Student at Long Hill School: Wants to learn and be smart. Make our schools better. Education more important than a hockey game. Support school budget request.

20. Rick Glazier – Member Board of Education: Stated the Board of Education has exercised restraint in school budget. Classroom exceed recommended sizes. County not funding per pupil expenditure at North Carolina average. Trimmed \$12 million from budget request before presenting to Commissioners.

21. Kathy Baker – Volunteer at Westarea Elementary School. Moved here about 2 years ago; thought school system was better. There are a lot of good things going on – need more.

22. Judy Musgrave: "Knowledge will govern ignorance .....". Everyone must buy into the progress and commit themselves by funding the school budget. If everyone pulls together you get there more quickly. Support funding request.

23. Renee Reefer: Nothing is more important that our kids. Schools overcrowded. Inadequately trained teachers. Has to work 2 part-time jobs to make ends meet. When teachers work overtime they are taxed. Large turnover in classroom because of inadequate pay. Support school request.

24. Lodies Gloston: Husband retired from military and they remained in the County. Asked

the Board to do the right thing. County is playing catch up. Need funding to make an impact in the school system. Support funding request.

25. Dayna Carney: Schools need money to stay up with the technological boom. Please give schools money they need.

26. Kim Shaffer – Chairman, Library Board: Please consider adding the following to the Library Budget, i.e, money for 3 part time library associates for Boardeaux, Hope Mills and Spring Lake (Cost: \$33,000), funding for expansion of data base system (\$29,000), and an increase in books and periodical funding in the amount of \$250,000. She noted that 60% of the citizens of Cumberland County have a library card and 2.2 million books/periodicals have been borrowed during this fiscal year.

27. Dr. Bill Harrison – Superintendent County School System: Disappointed with what County Manager recommended. Recommended budget will move the school system backward. Not asking for the moon. School system has \$260 million budget; 18.9% is funded by the County.

28. Barbara Anderson: Put children first. Do not regress. Class size will increase if there are cutbacks. Does not feel valued when sufficient funding is not provided. Support school budget.

29. Emmett Scott – Custodian with school system: School system had \$23 million in needs. Only asked for \$11million. Schools seem to have low priority in the county. He works 30 hour week. If funding not approved his hours could be reduced to 25 with no benefits.

30. Caitlyn Cates – Glendale Acres Communication Academy second grader. Support schools.

31. Sysan Hyatt – Executive Director of “Kids Voting”: Non-partisan organization whose goal is to teach children the importance of voting. This is the first time they have asked for funding from the County. Their program increases voter turnout. Please consider funding request.

32. Ron Ross: Suggested the Board do small increases along the way as opposed to one big tax increase. Concerned a high tax rate will hamper ability to induce industry to come to the county. Need sales tax money for the schools.

33. Chip Grammar – Security Chief for School System: Concerned about breaking the cycle of violence, poverty, crime and unwed mothers. Education is an important tool in the endeavor. Understands the hard decisions that have to be made by the Board of Commissioners.

34. Terry Bunyan – President PTA and bus driver. Supports funding for school system to allow educators to meet the goals of the school system. Funding needed to open the four

new schools in the fall. Need dependable buses to transport the kids to school.

35. Wadye Ryan – Spring Lake Middle School: Teachers have to spend money out of their own pocket for supplies. Support school funding request.

36 Alice Bender – Glendale Acres parent/teacher: School system is growing and changing. Need financial support for innovative programs. Supports full funding for the school system.

37. Patty Sleem – Business woman: Supports funding of schools. Businesses need well educated people to work. Does no good to attract industry if our citizens are not educated so they can enter the workforce. Also, without industry our children leave and it is hard to get them to come back to Fayetteville. Education is an important factor in attracting good jobs.

38. Larry Lancaster – Chairman, Board of Education: Cumberland County spent \$352 per child less than state average. We would have to have \$18 million to get us to the state average. Teacher shortages a concern. 30% of new teachers leave classroom within their first three years. Supports budget request submitted by school system.

39. Jeanette Hackett: Supports funding as requested by school system. It seems we spend more money in Y2K problems than our schools. Teachers are underpaid and there are many vacancies. You get what you pay for. An increase in the tax rate is a burden worth bearing for quality education.

40. Mary Emily Royal – Member, Board of Education: Citizens want what is best our children. Has faith the Board will allow the school system to continue with their upward trend.

41. Elliott Rich – parent of three children in the school system. Understand there is a limited amount of money. Funding education is important. Hates to see our progress in educating our children decrease. Also understands that annexation affects our ability to provide funding because our portion of the sales tax is based on per capita. Annexation reduces the money we receive. Hopes the Board will be able to make the right decision.

42. Gerald Beaver – Attorney: Is in favor of tax increase. Rick Glazier, School Board member is a member of his law firm. When he says they need \$11 million, they need it.

43. Lee Tart – Vice President and General Manager of Tart & Tart, Inc.: One of the largest taxpayers in Cumberland County. Also owns Family Sports Center. Paid \$22,000 in property taxes in 1999. Does not like competition from the new Health Complex owned by the Hospital System.

44. Nick Minter – Massey Hill Classical School student: Disheartening to hear that budget was cut back. Sacrifices must be made. They are a “Governors Choice

Program". Need more than the recommended \$3 million..

45. Christina Garcias – Senior at Massey Hill Classical: Support funding. Her family is sacrificing a lot; don't make it pointless.

46. Norvelle Henderson – Supports funding for school system; however thinks they could save some money by not providing cars for people to drive home. Also thinks coliseum should be self supporting. Should look closely at non-profit groups and funding provided. Don't increase taxes until all these things are addressed.

47. Clinton Harris: Supports funding.

48. Betty Kramer – Director Veterans Service Office: Has worked there for 27 years. Needs additional staff. Also concerned that clients do not have privacy when discussing their personal problems in her office. Has asked for additional positions before. Veterans deserve better than they are getting. Support her request for funding for an additional staff person and address privacy issue. Also noted the starting salary in their department is \$19,680.

49. Troy Oates – Retired Military: Supports Veterans Service Office funding. Staff is overworked and underpaid. Should give top consideration to their request.

50. Mario Comacho – Veteran: Veterans Service Office facilities are bad. Takes 15-30 minutes to get through with the current phone system. Takes 2 to 4 hours to be seen. Hopes the Board will address the privacy issue. Supports budget request.

51. Heather Fisher – student at Massey Hill Classical School: Approve money for school. Does not understand why Massey Hill Classical School may be closed down when it has only been opened for two years.

52. Harold Livingston – parent and educator: Has son at Seventy-first Classical School. Schools are underfunded. Have to be held accountable and accountability starts here tonight. Support funding for the school system.

53. Frank Brownell: Senior can't afford a tax increase. Don't fund libraries – too much porn. Don't need arts. Live within our means. Don't increase taxes.

54. Donna Mims – Principal. County has made great strides in education. We are doing more with less. \$3 million will not sustain our gains. Class size will increase and personnel will have to be reallocated. It is difficult to recruit teachers within the State. Support funding of the schools.

55. Pia Chapman – student at Douglas Byrd Middle School. Cannot learn without computers and there are not enough in the classrooms. Classrooms overcrowded.



Approve funding for the schools.

56. George Boggs: Before additional funding is approved, County needs to count empty seats in the schools. Need to go to year-round schools. Tax increase will have a big impact on elderly population. Should mothball new schools until there is a student count showing the need for new schools.

57. Sian Panter – Dance Teacher at Mary McArthur Elementary. Teaches other classes in addition to dance. Knows we need Animal Control, Civic Center, the Arts. Suggests that attendance is not great at some of the functions at the Civic Center because of lack of education. Consider \$11 million request for schools.

58. Donna Woods – Volunteer and PTA at Longhill: Longhill's budget is less than PTA budget. Some schools are getting funding; theirs is not. They receive no Title I funding. They are frugal with their budget. Give schools what they need.

59. Franklin Bowden: His son will be in school soon. Decision made here tonight will impact his education. Noted there is a struggle every year between the Commissioners and Board of Education. Need to deal with substance. Give the schools the funds they need.

60. John Pearce – need federal funds. Supports the Veterans Service Office.

61. Wes Loffert: Represents the Northwood Temple community: Opposed to tax increase. Senior citizens are on fixed incomes. Please lighten the burden if you can. Sales tax would be a great help.

62. Beverly Cleverly – President of Fayetteville Association of Educators: Want more for the children of this county. If the school system does not get more than the \$3 million there will be a lot of vacancies in the school system. Hopes the Board will rework the budget to find the funding for schools.

63. Ethelyn Baker: Adopt the budget for education for all children. Animal Control does not provide good service. She noted a problem she had encountered with Animal Control and its service.

64. Muhammed: Work to get general assembly to approve sales tax. Thinks it should be more than one penny.

65. Larry Barner – Bonnie Doone: Don't raise taxes. Glad school board does not have taxing authority. Outside agencies should not receive money unless they are audited.

Note: A petition was submitted asking the Board to approve the \$11 million budget request from the Board of Education.

Chairman Melvin thanked everyone for attending and their input. He noted the Board will be holding work session next week to consider the budget.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:20PM

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