
Minutes
Cumberland County Board of Commissioners
June 12, 2000, 5:30 PM
Special Meeting

PRESENT: Chairman Edward G. Melvin, Jr.
Vice Chairman J. Lee Warren, Jr.
Commissioner Talmage Baggett
Commissioner Billy R. King
Commissioner Breeden Blackwell
Commissioner H. Mac Tyson II
Cliff Strassenburg, County Manager
James Martin, Deputy County Manager
Juanita Pilgrim, Assistant County Manager
Cliff Spiller, Assistant County Manager
Grainger Barrett, County Attorney
Budget Staff
Amy Cannon, Finance Director
Marsha Fogle, Clerk to the Board
Garrett Alexander, Tax Administrator

ABSENT: Commissioner Tom Bacote (due to illness)

INVOCATION: Commissioner H. Mac Tyson II

Chairman Melvin called the meeting to order.

MOTION: Chairman Melvin moved to adopt a budget with no tax increase, \$5 million for the schools, while maintaining a 7% fund balance and no reduction in the current work force (as of June 1, 2000).

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

VOTE: **FAVOR:** Commissioners Melvin, Tyson, Warren, Baggett

OPPOSED: Commissioners Blackwell and King

Mr. Strassenburg, County Manager, indicated he had prepared a Scenario that reflects the above action by the Board:

Recommended Budget	\$222,176,347
Manager adjustments	<u>123,093</u>
Revised Manager's Budget	
\$222,299,440	

Scenario above (motion):

Selected vacant positions	\$(1,967,329)
Performance Pay	(665,484)
GIS Coordinator	(60,303)
Selected outside agencies	(720,253)
Community Health Care Council	(15,000)
Web site maintenance	(20,500)
Community GIS	(386,000)
Reduction in contingency	(400,000)
Reduction in Departmental contingency	(100,000)
Reduction in FTCC current expense	(212,303)
School current expense	<u>5,000,000</u>
Total adjustments	\$ 452,828
	222,299,440

Revised Budget: **\$222,752,268**

Tax Revenue at \$.84	\$195,483,508
Fund balance appropriated (7%)	<u>14,816,448</u>

Total Revenue **\$210,299,956**

Additional Reduction Required **\$ 12,452,312**

General Fund total departmental operating	\$ 17,374,357
Less: required additional reduction	<u>12,452,312</u>
Remaining General fund operating	\$ 4,922,045

Commissioner Baggett noted he spoke with Janice Burke of the Local Government Commission in regard to fund balance, noting it recommends a minimum level of fund balance available for appropriation is 8% of prior year's expenditures.

The Board reviewed vacant positions that have been vacant less than six months, more than six months and over one year that were deleted from the budget, based on the scenario above. The consensus was to put the following positions back in the budget: 1 Mosquito Control position, 8 Emergency Dispatch positions, Planning Director position, 9 School crossing guards and 1 Central Maintenance position.

Commissioner King noted that since the above motion passed, the Commissioners don't have anything else to do. He made the following motion:

MOTION: Commissioner King moved to adjourn:

SECOND: Commissioner Tyson

DISCUSISON: Commissioner Warren said the Board needs to go through the budget department by department to see what can be cut.

Commissioner Tyson withdrew his second to the motion.

Motion died for lack of a second.

In response to a question, the County Manager said he did not think the County could operate under the Scenario above. Commissioner Blackwell asked what it would take to operate the County. The County Manager said it would take close to \$17 million.

Commissioner Tyson noted that you don't spend the entire budget all at one time. The County Attorney noted that under the law, the budget has to be balanced based on estimated revenues and expenditures for the entire year. Commissioner Tyson suggested that perhaps we could reduce some of the full time employees to part-time, saving money in benefits.

Cliff Strassenburg noted he has some difficulty in reducing county department budgets to increase appropriations to schools. In response to a question concerning the Scenario above as it relates to outside agencies, he noted the only agencies left in the budget are FAEDC, Mid Carolina Council of Governments, the new Downtown organization, the Forestry Service, Vocational Rehabilitation and the Airborne Museum.

There was also a suggestion about reducing hours at the Public Library that could save about \$400,000. The hours would be reduced to 54 to 66 based on whether it was the main office downtown or branches.

In addition the Board discussed a \$5 tax on vehicles which would not apply in municipalities, since they already tax vehicles. The County would have to get permission from the General Assembly to do this.

The Board began a department by department review of the County Manager's recommended budget. They made the following amendments:

Governing Body	Cut an additional 10% - \$38,582
Administration/Personnel Dept	Cut 5% - \$60,681 (Note: Suggestion to cut money to run agenda in newspaper – About \$30,000 a year)
Court Facilities	No additional cut
Information Services	Cut 5% - \$37,291
Board of Elections	Cut 5% - \$28,833
Finance Department	Cut 5% - \$47,758

Legal	Cut 5% - \$22,802
Register of Deeds	Cut 5% - \$69,971
Tax Collector	Cut 3% - \$28,639
Mapping/GIS	Cut 5% - \$22,612
Tax Assessor	Cut 3% - \$55,230
Building and Grounds	Cut 3% - \$138,312
Debt Service	No cut
General Government Other	3% cut, excluding Mental Health - \$202,530
Emergency Dispatch (Manager to see if uniforms are a requirement for accreditation)	Cut \$1950 – Uniforms
Sheriff	Add \$135,130 to finance cars (30)
Emergency Management	Cut 5% - \$7,274
Fire Marshal	Cut 5% - \$11,352
Animal Control	No cut
Inspections Department	5% - \$58,469
Day Reporting Center	No cut – State money
Criminal Justice Unit	5% - \$10,999 (Check on why no one is in the office on Friday afternoons)
C-5 Facility (Old Reed Lallier)	No cut
Health Department	3% cut from county money - \$214,223
Health Other	No cut
DSS	No cut

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Grant FV Care Center	No cut
Welfare Other	No cut
Veterans Service	Add: \$50,000 for receptionist and interviewer. Trying to find new location – possibly new DSS building
Senior Aides Local	County Match – no cut
Spring Lake Resource Center Adm	No cut
Library	No cut
Stadium Maintenance	No cut
Culture & Recreation Other	No cut
Planning	No cut
Economic Development	No cut
FTCC	No cut
Board of Education	No cut

These cuts total a savings of \$872,378.

Commissioner Warren said he knew how to save \$1.5 million. He noted that the State is freezing vacant positions for 90 days. He suggested the County could take it one step further and freeze for 120 days (when a position becomes vacant, it would not be filled for 120 days). Mr. Warren noted that there were 268 positions filled this past year and with an average salary of \$32,080, reduced by 33 1/3%, the County could save about \$1.4 million next year (based on last year's figures).

Commissioner Warren suggested with the above amendments to the budget we are probably within \$1.5 million of balancing the budget without a tax increase.

In order to further clarify what's in and what's out of the budget, the following clarification was made:

GIS Coordinator is in.

Outside agencies are in.
Community GIS is in.
School Current Expense remains at \$3 million.

The Board instructed staff to find \$1.5 million additional money in county budget. (The Sheriff's Department, Library and DSS had no additional cuts made to them tonight and should be considered for a cut of \$500,000 each).

Staff will put the amendments made tonight together and bring back the results tomorrow night.

The Board discussed briefly the Civic Center losses, noting the difficulty in continuing to operate the complex at a loss.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:00PM

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