

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 8, 2017 – 5:30 PM
117 DICK STREET, 5TH FLOOR, ROOM 564
SPECIAL MEETING – FY18 BUDGET
DEPARTMENT HEAD APPEALS/WORK SESSION
MINUTES

PRESENT: Commissioner Glenn Adams, Chairman
Commissioner Charles Evans, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Michael Boose
Commissioner Jeannette Council
Commissioner Marshall Faircloth
Commissioner Jimmy Keefe
Commissioner Larry Lancaster
Amy Cannon, County Manager
Melissa Cardinali, Assistant County Manager
Sally Shutt, Assistant County Manager
Phyllis Jones, Assistant County Attorney
Vicki Evans, Finance Director
Deborah Shaw, Budget Analyst
Heather Harris, Budget Analyst
Bob Tucker, Accounting Supervisor
Ivonne Mendez, Financial Specialist
Jeffery Brown, Engineering and Infrastructure Director
Brenda Jackson, Department of Social Services Director
Candice White, Clerk to the Board
Kellie Beam, Deputy Clerk to the Board
Press

Chairman Adams called the special meeting to order and stated the purpose of the meeting was to hear appeals from county department heads and have a work session regarding the proposed FY18 budget. Commissioner Evans provided the invocation.

Chairman Adams called on Amy Cannon, County Manager, who advised there were no county department heads signed up to speak.

Chairman Adams called on Brenda Jackson, Department of Social Services Director, to give a brief update on SB546 regarding giving local government the option to decide how to structure and administer social services programs throughout the state and discussion followed.

Ms. Cannon stated the recommended budget included \$6.5 million for jail health services which was the amount submitted by the Health Department in the event they remained the service provider for jail health services at the Detention Center. Ms. Cannon further stated the Finance Committee approved the recommendation to seek a contract with Southern Health Partners, Inc. to provide comprehensive jail health services in the Detention Center which will reduce the recommended budget by \$3,445,500 and result in a reduction of the tax rate by 1.5 cents. Ms. Cannon stated this bring the proposed tax rate down to 80.7 cents based on the recommendation from the Finance Committee.

Discussion followed about community funding items. Chairman Adams requested full funding remain in place for the Boys and Girls Club, the Child Advocacy Center, the Council on Older Adults, the Veterans Council, the Vision Resource Center and the Southeast North Carolina Radio Reading Program. Ms. Cannon stated this equates to roughly \$25, 700.

Ms. Cannon stated the debt refunding that was presented at the June 5, 2017 meeting will create a projected interest savings of about \$128,000 per year which will bring the proposed tax rate down to 80.6 cents. Commissioner Council asked whether there are other possible cuts. Ms. Cannon stated she understands there is a desire to reduce the tax rate as much as possible but also to maintain fiscal integrity. Ms. Cannon stated another item finance staff have been working on is for \$825,000; this represents recurring funds from the debt that was reduced this year that was

moved to the capital investment fund. Ms. Cannon stated this represents .4 cents and would bring the proposed tax rate down to 80.2 cents.

Discussion followed regarding proposed repairs/renovations and maintenance.

Commissioner Faircloth stated he would like to explore passing a revenue neutral budget which would be a \$3.2 million dollar tax increase and funding other expenses with the items in the budget he feels are soft commitments that may not be needed. Commissioner Faircloth further stated he believes the County could use money from the County's Fund Balance because there is usually a surplus of funds at the end of each year. Commissioner Faircloth stated he believes going to revenue neutral would still result in a surplus of funds next year. Questions and discussion followed.

Chairman Adams stated he believes to improve the community and keep it looking nice the budget will have to reflect the improvements. Commissioner Council stated she believes there is no way to get to revenue neutral and still provide the basic services to the citizens of Cumberland County. Commissioner Council further stated she believes there needs to be emergency funds in the budget in case of situations like Hurricane Matthew. Commissioner Evans stated he wants to see the County be able to provide the mandated services without hurting citizens or employees. Commissioner Keefe stated there are so many unknowns right now and he believes the most important thing to do is to get stable.

Commissioner Lancaster stated according to the recent adjustments the proposed tax rate is currently at 80.2 cents. Commissioner Lancaster further stated he would like to propose that the county manager bring back figures to the next budget work session that show what would have to happen to get the proposed tax rate to 79 cents. Commissioner Faircloth stated he would prefer to see the proposed tax rate at revenue neutral or 79 cents. The consensus was to request staff to bring back further information to the next budget work session.

Chairman Adams stated the next budget work session would be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Approved with/without revision:

Respectfully submitted,

Kellie Beam
Deputy Clerk to the Board