



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, May 26, 2015

9:00 AM

DSS Main Conference Room

Budget Work Session

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:01AM

Present: 5 - Chairman Jim Crawford, Vice Chair Mike Cross, Commissioner Diana Hales, Commissioner Karen Howard and Commissioner Walter Petty

BOARD PRIORITIES

[15-1268](#)

Vote on a request to award the bid for property and liability brokerage services to BB&T Insurance Services

Carolyn Miller, Human Resources Director, reviewed the specifics of the request.

A motion was made by Commissioner Petty, seconded by Vice Chair Cross, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Cross, Commissioner Hales, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

BUDGET WORK SESSION

[15-1263](#)

9:00 AM - Presentation on and discussion of the Agriculture Center Expenses, Policies and Fees

Attachments: [PolicyFeepresentation_NMS](#)

Agriculture and Conference Center (CCAC)

Neha Shah, Director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau, gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Agriculture and Conference Center.

Commissioner Hales asked if there would be classroom style rectangular tables available or only the round style tables shown. Staff said they would look into it and bring the information back to the Board.

Commissioner Petty stated Ms. Shah may want to visit Duplin County and Union County Conference Centers because they were also Agricultural Centers in rural areas and may be similar in not having much overnight lodging in the area.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hales, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to approve the use of alcohol in the Agriculture and Conference Center. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Cross, Commissioner Hales, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

A motion was made by Vice Chair Cross, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to approve the schedule of fees for the Agriculture and Conference Center. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Cross, Commissioner Hales, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

15-1257

Discussion of FY 2015-2016 Recommended Budget

Attachments: [Work Session Budget Summary 5-22](#)

Salaries & Benefits

Commissioner Hales had a question about how many County employees were below the proposed Federal Contract Employee Minimum Wage of \$10.10/hr. Carolyn Miller, Human Resources Director, stated no regular employees were below that wage. The lowest wage of a regular County employee is \$12.09/hr. Anyone who makes less than that is a temporary employee. Ms. Miller stated the majority of those employees are youth who work in the Recreation Department's summer camp programs. There are five adult employees in the Recreation Department who work as seasonal park attendants from March through October. There are also five temporary employees at DSS that help with the NCFAST conversion process and they make \$10/hr. The DSS employees do work full time and Ms. Miller and the DSS Director have already had discussions about increasing their pay closer in line with what case workers make. It would cost less than \$1,000 to bring them up to the \$10.10/hr minimum. Ms. Miller stated they find the DSS temporaries leave before the County has the opportunity to offer them full-time employment with benefits and having more competitive pay could help with that turnover. They do not see the same turnover with the seasonal park attendants. They have the same employees year after year. She does not believe that the park attendant job is the employee's primary source of income being that none of those employees worked more than 1,000 hours last year. The employees under the age of 18 work short terms in the summer.

Commissioner Hales stated it sounds like the County is close to having all employees at the minimum \$10.10/hr wage level but she would like to see all the Recreation and DSS workers move up to that same minimum level. Ms. Miller stated she believed the DSS situation would take care of itself as of July 1, 2015. For Recreation it will take around \$4,000 annually to bring the 5 Recreation workers to \$10.10/hr. She stated the lowest paid summer camp worker makes \$8.50/hr. Commissioner Hales stated she would still like \$10.10/hr for those workers as well.

Commissioner Howard supports bringing all employees up to \$10.10/hr but she is concerned by doing that for the summer camp workers that adults would apply for those jobs and would be competing with the youth. Ms. Miller stated that is certainly a possibility. She stated they also already have more applications than they have positions. Commissioner Hales asked what the current wage is. Ms. Miller stated the starting wage is \$8.50/hr and goes to \$9.25/hr.

Commissioner Petty made a motion to let staff continue to handle salary issues as they know the market and have an understanding of how the increases should be handled.

Discussion followed.

Commissioner Howard thinks the departments should have a conversation about whether or not there is a risk of the youth losing the opportunity for these jobs if the wages are increased.

Commissioner Hales is concerned about the \$8.50/hr employees who continue to return year after year. She could support a \$1/hr increase in the Recreation Department. She would like to see the County on a track to get to \$10.10/hr and that would get the County there faster.

Vice Chair Cross stated the County looked at surrounding jurisdictions when it was trying to bring regular employee salaries up to market and he asked if it did the same for temporary employees. Ms. Miller stated the County did not look to the same degree in regards to temporary wages, especially in terms of the recreation workers. They are learning very quickly with the DSS workers that they would like to retain those workers because they are very valuable and that is why they are already having the discussions about trying to raise their wages in order to stay competitive.

Vice Chair Cross agreed with Commissioner Petty that the staff should continue to handle salary issues and pay raises. He also stated that this late in the budget process it will be viewed as a pay increase that has not been researched. He believes if there is a need for an increase staff will come back and present that to the Board.

Chairman Crawford would especially like to see the temporaries in DSS have their work be honored the way a case worker's is. He also shares the goal of Commissioner Hales of eventually moving the County toward the Federal Contract Minimum Wage of \$10.10/hr but he is open to an intermediate step of more research by staff to see how that might shift the pay scale and what the implications of that would be.

Vice Chair Cross seconded Commissioner Petty's motion to allow staff to continue to handle salary issues and pay raises.

Commissioner Petty restated his motion to state the staff should continue to handle salary issues and to also conduct a market study of the temporary departments' salaries as they have done with all other departments.

Commissioner Hales made a motion to amend Commissioner Petty's motion to state staff will conduct a market study with a focus on no temporary employee being below the Federal Contract Worker Minimum Wage of \$10.10/hr., Commissioner Howard seconded the motion. The motion passed three (3) to two (2).

The motion was amended.

The County Manager suggested letting staff look at the market study and if staff finds that they need to adjust the wage to a different level they can come back to the Board with a recommendation. The Board agreed that satisfied the amended motion.

The recommendations for Salaries & Benefits were approved by consensus.

A motion was made by Commissioner Petty, seconded by Vice Chair Cross, to direct staff to conduct a market study of temporary employee salaries with a goal of no temporary employee being below the Federal Contract Worker Minimum Wage of \$10.10/hr. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Cross, Commissioner Hales, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

Cooperative Extension

The Cooperative Extension was approved by consensus.

Soil & Water

Soil & Water was approved by consensus.

Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Convention & Visitors Bureau was approved by consensus.

Chatham Transit

Anna Testerman, Director of Chatham Transit Network (CTN), shared a proposal for CTN to operate the Pittsboro Express Route. Chatham Transit is already running two routes for Chapel Hill Transit and they would like to continue running all the routes with the exception of the first pickup in the morning at the State Employees Credit Union location in Chapel Hill at 5:42 am and the last run that begins at the UNC Parking Deck at 5:18 PM. They also would like to eliminate stops at the State Employees Credit Union location in Chapel Hill and add stops at the UNC Ambulatory Care Center (ACC) location. Their driver has found that the State Employees Credit Union location does not have many riders getting on or off and it is also not a safe location for drop offs or pick ups. They do see a lot of opportunity for the UNC ACC location.

Ms. Testerman stated Chatham Transit is asking the County for \$100,000 for FY 2016. \$87,900 of that cost would be to purchase a 22 passenger vehicle. \$32,840 is the projected net cost to run the route. They will make a proposal to the Town of Pittsboro for the additional \$20,740 needed for FY 2016.

Ms. Testerman stated the Board would be spending Chatham County dollars with a Chatham County business. She stated they are also willing to work with the Chatham County residents to see if there are other times that would work better to fit their schedules.

Ms. Testerman stated with the growth of the County and the possibility of Chatham Park, Chatham Transit will go from a rural system to a metropolitan system. Because the county will always be a rural county, Chatham Transit will more than likely look into being split into two systems, a rural and a metropolitan system. Chairman Crawford asked what criteria needs to be met in order to become a metropolitan system. Ms. Testerman stated the Department of Transportation looks for the number of riders during the year. Once Chatham Transit reaches a certain number of riders they will not be able to receive rural funding and will have to go to a metropolitan system. If they split and have the rural location in Siler City and the Metropolitan location in Pittsboro they could receive both sets of funds.

Commissioner Howard asked what the bus fare is. Ms. Testerman stated it is \$3.00 each way. Ms. Testerman also stated that University employees received a bus pass with Chapel Hill Transit and she would be willing to talk with them to try to work out some kind of pass for those riders. She stated Chatham Transit does currently offer

fare cards which provide riders with a twenty percent discount.

Ms. Testerman stated this would not require a staff increase.

Commissioner Hales asked if they would be putting up signage. Ms. Testerman stated they would be doing brochures and flyers and putting information in all the vehicles and running ads in the local newspaper. They would have to ask Lowe's for permission for a sign.

Vice Chair Cross asked if the current bus and new bus would be used for the route. Ms. Testerman stated the new vehicle could not be purchased for four or five months. They have other vehicles they can use in the interim.

The Board discussed funding the entire cost of the project, \$120,740, which includes the Town of Plattsboro's portion. It was suggested that the money the Board was going to give Plattsboro for a park could be used for the Chatham Transit Plattsboro Express Route project. The Town of Plattsboro stated at the last Board of Commissioners meeting that it was looking to spend \$18,000 to \$24,000 on the Plattsboro Express Route. The Board believed it could suggest they now use that money toward their park being that the County was going to fund the entire Plattsboro Express Route. The Board did want staff to communicate to the Town that it would need to support the Plattsboro Express Route in the subsequent years. Ms. Testerman stated the estimated cost next year would be approximately \$40,000.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Cross, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to accept Chatham Transit's Plattsboro Express Route proposal and to fund the project fully at \$120,740 and direct the County Manager to communicate to the Town of Plattsboro that the County will fund the project fully in FY 16 in lieu of funding \$20,000 for the Plattsboro pocket park and the County expects the Town of Plattsboro to support the Plattsboro Express Route in subsequent years beginning in FY 17. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Cross, Commissioner Hales, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

CIP pg. 250

The CIP was approved by consensus.

Revenues

Property Taxes

Sales Tax

Tax Rate

Revenues were approved by consensus.

New Fees/Fee Increases

New Fees/Fee Increases were approved by consensus.

Summary of Mistakes/Clarifications

The Board agreed by consensus that savings from the additional Health and Sheriff's

Office positions budgeted by mistake would offset adding the Chatham Transit Network operating expense and the library computer upgrade and that the bus for Chatham Transit will be purchased from fund balance as a onetime expense. Staff requested and the Board agreed that remaining funds would be used to move up the starting dates for new positions recommended in October or January.

Commissioner Howard asked that affordable housing be added to the discussion for the work session the Board agreed to have in late summer early fall.

Other Business:

Vice Chair Cross stated Habitat for Humanity has asked to have meetings with all the Commissioners individually. The Board agreed that they would like to have one meeting with the organization as a Board. Vice Chair Cross will communicate the Board's wishes to the organization.

Chairman Crawford stated many people had expressed concern about the 9/11 Memorial not being finished and he understood it was due to a lack of funds. He asked if there was anything the Board could do. The Board agreed that the nonprofit group responsible for the memorial would need to come to the Board with a proposal asking for funds. Chairman Crawford will communicate to the nonprofit that they need to bring forward a proposal to the Board.

Vice Chair Cross submitted a request for three different paving projects in the Moncure Industrial Area. One at the Railroad Crossing on Old US1, one at the Railroad Crossing on Corinth Road (SR1916) and one on Flatwoods Road (SR1924). The Board approved the request by consensus. The request will be submitted to Hillary Pace, Planner, and the Transportation Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Hales discussed the complaint filed by Clean Water for North Carolina. Chatham County citizen, Martha Girolami, is also a plaintiff. Commissioner Hales would like the County to file a Motion to Intervene. Vice Chair Cross stated he could not support taking legal action without discussing it with the attorney. Commissioner Petty agreed. Commissioner Howard believes the County has standing. It was suggested to discuss the item during closed session at the June 15, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting and have the attorney's opinion at that time. The Board agreed to discuss the item at the closed session.

Commissioner Hales stated the County Attorney has also looked at the draft moratorium on fracking she introduced at the last Board of Commissioners meeting and that should also be an agenda item at the June 15, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting. The Board agreed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hales, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to approve the budget and allow staff to move forward with the Budget Ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Cross, Commissioner Hales, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chair Cross, seconded by Commissioner Petty, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Crawford, Vice Chair Cross, Commissioner Hales, Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Petty