

Budget Public Hearing



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

6:00 PM

Siler City Town Hall Courtroom

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Petty called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for attending.

Present: 5 - Chairman Walter Petty, Vice Chair Brian Bock, Commissioner Mike Cross, Commissioner Pam Stewart and Commissioner Jim Elza

BUDGET PRESENTATION & PUBLIC HEARING

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County Manager, Charlie Horne, made some opening comments.

Renee Paschal, Assistant County Manager, gave the recommended budget presentation.

Linda Smith, Snack Program Site Manager, update on the program. 1,052 applications. 17 sites. This year there will be vegies and fruits as 2 or 3 servings. Siler City 1st Methodist serves 150 kids. The reaction of the children is very rewarding. We consistently over the four years have had 40 to 45 volunteers. 50% of the school children receive free and reduced lunch and breakfast. This provides that for them for 10 weeks in the summer. Chatham trades packs the food and brings it to them. We do not hold the food so that they do not get the same food over and over again. Cost \$15 per child and \$150 for the full weeks. They still have applications coming in.

Tracy Lynn, 57 Thelma Sugg Lane, Pittsboro, Program Coordinator for the Plugging Leaks program with the Chatham County Development Corporation gave the following remarks:

"I am here on behalf of the Chatham CDC to request a \$3,000 allocation from the commissioners' discretionary grant pool for nonprofits. These funds would provide 30 low income families across the county with the education and services to save from 20-40% on their monthly utility bills. Many families in Chatham are paying from \$200-350/month for electricity, on top of rents from \$400-\$500/month. Many families are going without food, medicine and gas for their cars to pay these utility bills.

Plugging Leaks is a proven program. For the past two years, we have worked with 200 families in their homes to do simple weatherization upgrades. In addition, we have trained 400 individuals and families to do simple energy audits in their homes to understand how they can save on their utility bills. We are confronting an increasing dilemma we call "energy poverty". People on limited incomes usually live in the least energy efficient housing. Many of Plugging Leaks customers are paying more than 50% of their income towards household expenses which include energy bills. They

generally rent from landlords who are unwilling, or unable, to invest in their own property. Many Chathamites live in homes built before 1960; we have 4,800 mobile homes in our county, many of them renting for \$400-\$500/month.

Commissioners, you state in your Budget Message that you are committed to studying energy efficiency and that you want to partner with private entities to accomplish savings. Plugging Leaks is your resource for job creation, energy conservation and economic development. Yes, savings from utility bills go straight into our local economy. Plugging energy and money leaks is an important strategy for creating a prosperous, thriving community.

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On page 144 of the human services budget outline, you will see that *Plugging Leaks* applied for \$10,000 from the county's nonprofit pool. Our panel review team was split on recommending an allocation but we feel that our program deserves a second look. We are simply the only organization committed to addressing energy poverty. By empowering people to own their problem and giving them the tools to pull themselves out, I believe that *Plugging Leaks* is a good investment in our community.

Plugging Leaks works with one household at a time and does not provide cash handouts. Instead, we focus on long term solutions that begin with education and end with energy saving solutions. We track utility bills of *Plugging Leaks* customers and have found that after intervention, households are saving between 20-40%- that money is then redirected to other important basic needs. We purchase 95% of all our materials from local vendors who provide generous discounts, but we need your help to leverage this program so that it can continue to serve Chatham residents.

Our application:

Chatham County Community Development Corporation:

The mission of the Chatham County CDC is to connect minority and low-income people in the county with opportunities to build sustainable livelihoods so that they can prosper, thrive and remain in the community. The *Plugging Leaks* program provides energy education and hands-on weatherization assistance that enables families to lower their energy bills by 20%- 40%.

Program: *Plugging Leaks* Annual Budget:

Personnel \$5,200

Weatherization supplies \$3,800

Training supplies- energy efficiency \$1,200

Copying & Printing \$300

Total: \$10,000

Today, we wish to ask for \$3,000 to help us deliver services to another 30 families in need. \$100 per family includes a home visit by our energy professional, and 3 hours of simple weatherization. This may include weatherstripping doors, installing door sweeps, caulking windows or in extreme cases, installing plastic over all the windows, installing low flow faucet aerators, caulking plumbing penetrations to prevent rodent infestation and air infiltration, changing out air filters, inspecting the cooling and heating system and floor vents, sealing those vents and recommending a host of behavioral changes to reduce the monthly energy bill.

Thank you for your consideration."

Alexandra McAnarney, Resource Development Coordinator with the Hispanic Liaison of Chatham County gave the following remarks:

"Members of the Budget Committee,

I'd like to start by thanking you for the continued support you've provided the Hispanic Liaison of Chatham County over the years. Without the County as a partner and funder, the Liaison would not have been as effective reaching the County's Latino population which continues to feel the damaging effects of poultry plant and other industry closures, and continues to lag behind employment and income trends despite claims of a recovering economy. For 14-15, we have been recommended for full funding for our Community Services Program and we thank you for that. We are happy to report that this will help us build on gains achieved in 13-14, including providing bilingual assistance for SNAP enrollment and the Affordable Care Act. Unfortunately, our Youth Leadership and Gang Prevention/Intervention program has only been recommended for partial funding. This program serves 200 at-risk rural Latino youth across three Chatham County High Schools and one Chatham County middle School. The goal of the program is to help youth who have faced language, cultural, and economic barriers achieve their post-high school goals and dreams and set them on the right path to become successful, civically engaged community leaders. To speak to the youth group's impact, I'd like to introduce Guadalupe Rodriguez. She was a member of our youth group and has grown through our organization where she currently works as In-take Assistant"

Guadalupe Rodriguez, Intake Assistant with the Hispanic Liaison of Chatham County gave the following remarks:

"Good Evening Chairmen of the Committee,

My name is Lupe Rodriguez. Have you ever heard a song and deeply in your heart it relates to your life story? I know I have and for me it's my stress reliever. I believe the Hispanic Liaison's Youth Group is the song that Youth Group members relate to. It's the safe place where you can be yourself in this new, strange world which is now

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called home. The safe place that guides you to the right direction. The "someone" who you feel you can count on because your parents work 7 days a week and come home tired. The father or mother you never had. Or the brother and sister you wished you had. It's my second home. The home who encourages youth to dream and helps them succeed. I would like to thank you for the support you give us because without your funding very little is possible. Working together equals successful youth. I ask you to Please fully fund the Hispanic Liaison Youth Group.

Thank you!"

Ms. Paschal gave the commissioners a follow up from previous day's budget work session:

Ms. Paschal stated that Central Permitting does not have sub permits but there is a blanket permit and there will be a bigger re-inspection fee.

She also stated that with the Central Permitting the goal will be to allow all permits to go through the web portal but we will not do that initially.

Ms. Paschal stated the shed at the community college is a 26x38 structure. It is more like a picnic shelter with an awning. It is a lot of site work and utilities that have to be relocated. She stated that due to the size of project and machinery involved and the liability, it was not good project for the students.

Vice Chairman Bock asked if they can wash the fruit there. Ms. Paschal stated she would check and she showed a rendering. Chairman Petty asked if this is a wash station that is mandated and are there any guidelines on what it should look like. Vice Chairman Bock stated he believed it is supposed to be an outdoor teaching area.

Ms. Paschal stated that the washing facility in the garage is only to wash the underside of the buses. It is not to wash vehicles. Commissioner Elza asked if the County had any vehicle washing station. Ms. Paschal stated it did not.

Ms. Paschal stated the money for the shed would be moved to contingency and staff could have the faculty come talk to the commissioners about that project. Commissioner Cross stated he felt the commissioners should go out to the site to look at it. Commissioner Petty stated the budget was very tight this year; even the discretionary funds they normally use were decided not to be used. He did not see how they could approve a \$30,000 item such as this.

Vice Chairman Bock asked if the college had the money if the Board did not give it to them. Ms. Paschal stated if they would if they had enough fund balance.

Ms. Paschal stated she would ask them to come to the July 21, 2014 Board of Commissioners meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Elza, seconded by Commissioner Cross, to approve moving the \$30,000 budgeted for the college washing station to contingency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Petty, Vice Chair Bock, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Stewart and Commissioner Elza

Commissioner Elza asked if Ms. Paschal was still concerned about a \$40,000 amount in the jail budget, there was \$40K you were concerned about. Ms. Paschal stated it was a typo in the budget.

Fees: (starting on pg. 244)

Ms. Paschal stated there were several changes in Planning fees to make them match current ordinances and make them match current staff costs that were either a zero fee or a nominal fee. The Planning Director did look at surrounding Jurisdictions to see if we were reasonable. Ms. Paschal stated we were still lower than average than surrounding jurisdictions.

Chairman Petty asked the Board if there were any questions about the budget as a whole or any recommendations on changes.

Chairman Petty thanked Ms. Paschal and the staff and all the departments for the work put into the budget. He stated it allows the Board to accomplish its goals without a tax increase and to be good stewards of the dollars. He stated he is looking forward to another year and we are on a great track by fully staffing the jail and funding the schools. He stated there are a lot of things we would like to do if we had more resources. The efforts we are making to attract more industry will bring

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more revenue and will allow us to do things we want to do and not just have to do.

Chairman Petty stated to all the organizations, especially nonprofits, that if there is anything he can do and others can do to get involved with community efforts with fundraising as commissioners, please let them know. They would be glad to help and participate with that. He thank again the manager and staff and department heads for their contribution to this budget.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Bock, seconded by Commissioner Cross, that the recommended Budget for FY 2014-2015 be approved with the recommended changes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chairman Petty, Vice Chair Bock, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Stewart and Commissioner Elza

ADJOURNMENT

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

Aye: 5 - Chairman Petty, Vice Chair Bock, Commissioner Cross, Commissioner Stewart and Commissioner Elza

Walter Petty, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lindsay K. Ray, Clerk to the Board
Chatham County Board of Commissioners