

**March 20, 2019**

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Boardroom of the Martin County Governmental Center, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

## **ASSEMBLY**

Chairman Tommy Bowen, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond, Jr., Commissioner Elmo "Butch" Lilley, Commissioner Ronnie Smith, Commissioner Joe R. Ayers, County Manager David Bone, Clerk to the Board Jessica Godard and Finance Officer/Deputy Clerk Cindy Ange.

County Attorney Richard James was not in attendance.

Chairman Bowen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ayers. The invocation was offered by Commissioner Lilley.

Vice Chairman Bowen welcomed everyone to the meeting. Appointed/Elected officials Martin County Sheriff Tim Manning, Bear Grass Mayor Charlotte Griffin and Register of Deeds Kimberly Griffin were recognized.

## **AGENDA APPROVAL**

Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to approve the agenda as presented, with a SECOND by Vice Chairman Bond. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

## **DEPARTMENT/ OFFICE HOLDER BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

County Manager David Bone stated the budget would be more challenging in the upcoming year than in previous years due to several projects including the Local Government retirement contribution increases and Courthouse security (capital cost and personnel costs). County Manager Bone suggested having conversations with the Board of Commissioners to establish budgetary priorities prior to the Manager proposed budget being presented.

On behalf of the Department Heads/Office Holders, Finance Director Cindy Ange thanked the Board for the opportunity to present the budgets and for the continual support of the Board of Commissioners. The following presentations were given.

Finance Director Ange explained most of the budgets presented had no salary information or insurance rates listed yet, and this was generally how this was done at this point in the budget process. The presented budget proposals were meant to give an overview projects and plans for each department.

**Finance:** Finance Director Cindy Ange explained the largest line item increase for the Finance office was for auditing services. In 2018 there was Medicaid eligibility audit and that would have to be done again in the 2019-20 fiscal year. Also, a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families eligibility audit would have to be done, in addition to the regular finance audits done on an annual basis. Also, an Other Post-Employment Benefits actuarial study must be done every

year now instead of every two years. The combination of all of the required audits was the reason for the increase in the auditing services line item in the Finance Office's budget request.

**Sheriff/Animal Enforcement Division:** Sheriff Tim Manning explained an increase in need for temporary salaries, due to more courts being held (two Districts courts / one Superior and one District court on the same days) and having to pay more part-time employees to work in court.

Sheriff Manning stated the line items for uniforms was less than the previous year, but there was \$12,000 request for replacing aging firearms/equipment.

Sheriff Manning explained he been speaking with IT Director Jeb Gardner about replacing seventeen tough book computers. The computers were aged, and the operating systems were nearing end-of-life function. \$2,000 less was requested in the building/grounds funds. There was a \$4,000 increase in the Lease/Rent fees line, due to having to pay rent on the fingerprint machines operated by the Sheriff's office and the addition of four additional licenses for software for the new School Resource Officers. The Capital outlay line had been reduced to \$175,000 for a total of six new patrol cars.

In regards to Courthouse security / one point of entry, Sheriff Manning was requesting four Deputies (no cars, but would need equipment and uniforms). Two Deputies would be at the metal detectors, one would be monitoring cameras, and one Deputy would monitor all of the outlying buildings (Social Services, Transit, Adult and Aging, etc.). Sheriff Manning also stated he wanted to take one of the Animal Control positions and convert it to 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant's (grade 72) position. This would indicate a pay increase but would be less than adding a whole new position.

County Manager Bone stated the estimates on construction costs for the potential new added Courthouse security would be ready and presented at the April 2019 Board of Commissioners' meeting.

**Social Services:** DSS/Transit Director Letecia Loadholt stated the budget contained increases for travel for the DSS Board Members (with a \$10,000 decrease in supplies/equipment). Increase request for Equipment Maintenance/Service for \$3,000 to purchase new and more secure copying machines (eliminating desk top printers). DDSS has increased its request for microfilming records in order to decrease the amount of physical records in DSS and overflow storage. Reductions in Work First, Special Assistance to Adults. There is a slight increase in the Foster Home Fund, due to a high number of foster children in Martin County and high cost placements.

In the budget request, there are reductions in Medicaid Transportation and Adoption Assistance - County. Ms. Loadholt explained she is requesting a new position in Eligibility Department (Income Maintenance Program Administration) to perform quality assurance measures to assist in meeting performance measures; this would require a 25% local match.

**Transit:** Deputy DSS/Transit Director Frank Halsey stated the budget included requests to increase funding for supplies and equipment (including a laptop and new uniforms for staff). Travel and training increases are included due to more DOT required trainings and meetings and CDL reimbursement for drivers. Also, Martin County Transit has requested to consolidate the

two part-time vacant driver positions into one full-time driver position with benefits, due to difficulties filling the part-time positions.

**Tax Assessor:** Tax Assessor Elisha Hardison stated the Tax Assessor Office budget requests reflected decreases for travel and contracted services. Tax Assessor Hardison noted an increase for billing services due to having to outsource this function (which was beyond her control).

**Tax Collector:** Tax Collector Christie Blevins could not be present. County Manager Bone and Finance Director Ange presented the budget request on her behalf. There is a decrease in the supplies and equipment line item because of previous computers purchases and renovations.

**Department of Motor Vehicles-License Plates Agency:** On behalf of Tax Collector Christie Blevins, County Manger Bone and Finance Officer Ange stated there were no changes in the budget request for DMV-LPA.

**Elections:** Elections Director Kristy Modlin explained there is an increase for Board Member expense, due to having a larger Board now. Also, an increase in office supplies / equipment was needed, due to more elections to be held in the upcoming year. New Board members have training and classes offered each year in Raleigh, NC. When the time comes to upgrade the election equipment, it will be a major expense. The current election equipment was purchased around 2006.

**Register of Deeds:** Register of Deeds Kimberly Griffin stated there were no changes in her budget request.

**Buildings and Grounds:** Operations Director Justin Harrison presented the budget requests for the buildings and grounds maintained by his department. Mr. Harrison stated everything was pretty much the same as the previous year, except for the CIP to purchase a new pickup for the Maintenance Department. The old pickup would be used by the Landfill staff.

Government Building (built 1982): Mr. Harrison stated there is a need for a workshop/storage/maintenance building to benefit maintenance, Sheriff's Office, and Emergency Management for a controlled environment to store equipment and other things in safely.

County Office Building: Funds were requested for continued remodeling and cosmetic work upstairs (bathrooms, replace sewer pipes, etc.). There is a slight increase in request for funding for this building.

Old Agriculture Extension Building: The budget request is the same as the current year.

Health Department Building: Budget included replacing a few air conditioning units, cosmetic improvements upstairs. Drop ceiling were being requested in the Adult and Aging Services Department.

Farmer's Market: The budget request included an increase for grounds and upkeep.

Moratoc Park: The budget request was decreased for grounds and upkeep. The capital outlay request involves the replacement of the metal chairs. County Manager Bone stated increasing the rental fee for the Moratoc Park may be considered.

Kehukee Park (built mid- '90's): The budget request included funds to continue to replace carpet and finish bricking the storage building behind the Cooperative Extension building.

Shooting Range Building: The budget request included an increase of \$1,000 for A/C repairs.

Watts Street Building: The budget request has been decreased from previous year.

Ray Street Building: Requested budgeted funds increased for utilities, contract cleaning, and buildings/grounds upkeep.

PSAP Building- The funding requested included funds for utilities, contract cleaning and grounds upkeep for the brand new building.

**Landfill:** Public Works Director Justin Harrison stated his budget included funding requests for continued clearing of the active C&D area. Also, the Landfill is required to maintain an all-weather road. Staff was preparing to crush approximately 400 tons of concrete that could be utilized on roads, in parking lots, etc., which would save the County monies on having to purchase rock.

Director Harrison stated the biggest project for the Landfill was the installation of ramps and retaining walls for large open-top roll off containers for easy access for residents. This would eliminate the need for staff to assist residents with a back-hoe each time (decreasing the possibility of injury/property damage). Staff would still assist residents, as needed, once the ramp/retaining walls were installed. The requested funds to continue to repair access roads to ground water access wells, as well as other repairs and day-to-day operations. Director Harrison stated it may be considered in the future to charge for electronics and tire disposal at the Landfill.

**Communication/911:** Communications Director Jason Steward stated the majority of the Communications budget requests remained primarily unchanged, with just a few exceptions. The uniforms line item increased slightly to accommodate jackets for staff. There is an increase in travel to assist with training for staff. The Dues/Subscriptions budget line item increased to pay for various organizational memberships for Director and Assistance Director. The budget requested includes a new line item for vehicle repairs/gas on a vehicle the department acquired since the last budget cycle.

911 was in the process of acquiring a new phone system, which would take a tremendous amount of responsibility regarding funding. Director Steward stated the County would be saving money with the phone system. A small capital outlay request to refresh the Main Street Communications center (Governmental Center), as it would serve as a backup to the new PSAP building.

**Emergency Management:** Safety Administrator/Director Jody Griffin stated most of the increases for EM were for gasoline, 911 addressing, etc. Additional funding requested for exercises and training. Director Griffin highlighted the \$5,000 capital outlay request, as well as his intentions of requesting the same each year to be able to purchase equipment/supplies from Federal Surplus to benefit the County.

Director Griffin reiterated the need for a storage area/maintenance shop. The EM/Maintenance/Sheriff's Offices save the County money by performing maintenance on vehicles, but a County space was needed to be able to perform those tasks, as well as to store equipment in a controlled environment. He estimated \$270,000-\$290,000 as a budgetary project cost for a 9,000 square foot storage building/shop with 60x84 open storage area.

Director Griffin stated the County was in the process of re-doing the Hazard Mitigation Plan three years ahead of time at the direction of the State, which ultimately effects monies coming to the County. Director Griffin anticipated private road ordinances, base flood elevation ordinances, and stated the Hazard Mitigation Plan would eventually become a fluid document. At some point in the future, someone with planning and grant writing expertise would be needed. The state would likely deploy a Community Grading System around 2022.

**Inspections:** Director Griffin stated the only increase for the Inspections Department was for gasoline.

**Cooperative Extension:** Director Laura Oliver stated the Cooperative Extension budget was very similar to last year, with the exception possibly after the map is finished for the contracted services line item which is the salary line item. Salaries are termed differently in the Cooperative Extension budget due to cost-sharing with NCSU and NC A&T.

NCSU and NC A&T are making career ladder changes which include increases in salaries based on education level and promotions. Cooperative Extension has several positions that were vacant and some base salaries would be changing. The County match would increase should the career ladder changes increase.

**Soil and Water Conservation:** S & W Supervisor Lynn Whitehurst stated his budget request would be the same as last year, except for \$4,000 for the BMAP (Beaver Management Program) Contribution.

**Veterans:** Veterans Director Theodosia Robinson stated there were no changes in her budget request.

**Adult and Aging Services:** Adult & Aging Services Director Charmaine Hardison and Assistant Director Lisa Edmonds were unable to attend due to family emergencies. County Manager Bone stated the main request was a full-time position for the In-Home Aide Program to manage the program. The Council on Aging has agreed to pay ½ of salary and benefits cost for that position.

The second request was for the Consumer Directed Service program, which has only one client. The suggestion was to move that client to the In-Home Aide program, which would decrease the budget by \$10,000 and would be a better utilization of resources.

**Water:** Water District Manager Ed Warren stated his budget request was basically the same as the previous year. There is a slight increase in contracted services to cover consumer price index increase, as outlined in contract with the tank maintenance company. Also included is money for a maintenance agreement for an emergency generator.

The budget request for Water District #2 also reflects an increase for contracted services for the consumer price index increase and maintenance agreement.

**Data Processing:** IT Director Jeb Gardner stated the IT budget was still in development. A line item was added for gasoline. A vehicle was donated that assists in going to the outlying sites. IT Parts/Supplies was a new line item. Telephone addition – Director Gardner was requesting this increase for a county cell phone to use for business purposes and for hot spots. Vehicles repairs is a new line item. Munis services and maintenance was added as a line item to keep separate from contracted services to make showing the payment for that service easier.

Director Gardner stated one of the biggest capital projects would be the County's new phone system. The current Nortel system was obsolete. The cost of the new phone system would be around \$130,000 for 250 phones, which was a reasonable price.

**Commissioners/ County Manager:** County Manager David Bone stated the budget requests for both were pretty much the same as last year.

The Commissioners' meeting for Department/Office Holder Presentations, March 21, 2019 was not necessary and would not be held.

## COMMENTS

In conclusion, the Commissioners thanked and commended the Department Heads, Elected Office Holders, and Staff, for their service, efforts, and commitment to provide quality service.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting, with a SECOND by Commissioner Ayers. The Board unanimously APPROVED the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

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Tommy Bowen, Chairman

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Jessica Godard  
Clerk to the Board