

**March 27, 2019**

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Board Room 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 Joe R. Ayers, County Manager David Bone, Clerk to the Board Marion B. Thompson, and Finance Director/Deputy Clerk Cindy Ange. Commissioner Smith arrived late at 7:14 p.m.

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 Vice Chairman Bond. The invocation was provided by Commissioner Lilley.

Chairman Bowen welcomed all to the meeting and thanked them for their involvement in county affairs. Elected officials recognized were Town of Bear Grass Mayor Charlotte Griffin, Sheriff Tim Manning, and Ms. Betty Jo Shephard, field representative for Senator Richard Burr. Chief District Court Justice Regina Parker and Chief Deputy Drew Robinson were also in attendance.

## **AGENDA APPROVAL**

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

## **BUDGET PRESENTATIONS – Outside Agencies**

Several outside agencies submitted budget requests to Martin County for FY 2019-20. The following outside agencies requested to be on the agenda to present individual requests to the Board.

### **Food Bank of the Albemarle**

Executive Director Liz Reasoner, of the Food Bank of the Albemarle (FBA), thanked the Board for the support received in past years. The appropriation requested for fiscal year 2019-20 (\$3,500) would enable FBA to provide approximately 17,500 pounds of food or the equivalent of more than 14,000 meals.

FBA's fifteen (15) county service area includes: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington Counties.

Executive Director Reasoner stated, the FBA, with the help of Martin County citizens and local agencies, provided 656,542 pounds of food (equivalent to 547,118 meals) to Martin County in FY 2018-19. The Feeding America's most recent Map the Meal Gap Study revealed to bridge

the meal gap, Martin County would need to provide an additional 266,000 meals to meet the hunger needs of Martin County. As a member of the Feeding America network, FBA has adopted the national Bold Goal of bridging the meal gap by 2025. For every \$1 that came to FBA, they were able to provide four meals, along with resources from community retail partners. FBA was recently given a refrigerated food truck to help meet more needs in the community.

### **Boys & Girls Club of the Coastal Plains**

Chief Development Officer Lorene Jackson, of the Martin County Unit of the Boys & Girls Club of the Coastal Plains, thanked the Board for supporting the Boys & Girls Clubs in Martin County. The Board of Commissioners was asked to consider a continued allocation of \$25,000 for fiscal year 2018-19. The funding would support the Robersonville and Williamston Boys & Girls Clubs.

Chief Development Officer Jackson explained the history and the mission of the Boys & Girls Club, and stated the goals of the Boys & Girls Club. Ms. Jackson stated in Martin County alone, the Boys & Girls Club serves 125 young people per day in their afterschool and summer programs, serving more than 250 young people each year. 62% of those young people come from a single-parent household, and 99% of the young people served qualify for free/reduced lunch, 84% have a “C” or higher average.

Ms. Jackson shared a story about a young girl named Mya who was the 2018 Martin County Youth of the Year. Mya was a 13-year old student from South Creek Middle with dreams of being a lawyer and attending Wake Forest University. The Boys & Girls Clubs in Martin County were currently serving elementary and middle school age children with the hopes of adding high school students the next year. Also, the Clubs were working on adding some workforce development programming to help young people make good decisions.

### **Martin Community College**

Martin Community College President Dr. Paul Hutchins presented the budget request. For fiscal year 2019-20, the College requested \$1,056,806 for current operating expenses and \$170,000 for capital outlay.

Dr. Hutchins stated the college was reaffirmed for accreditation with no recommendations in 2018. Dr. Hutchins also noted new electronic signs that were installed at the Martin County campus and a small electronic sign at the Bertie campus. In April 2019, groundbreaking will occur for a new Public Safety training facility. New classroom buildings would be built for the Fire/EMS program and the equine program. Remodeling and improvements would be made on the outdoor equine arena, and in the summer of 2019, MCC would renovate their library. All of these projects would be done with state bond money.

MCC was in the planning phase to pursue an EDA grant to build a new building to house all manufacturing programs. In December and January, the entire parking lot was resurfaced and striped, thanks to the contributions from the Board of Commissioners.

Most increases in operating costs are needed to continue to meet students' needs. The capital request is critical, requesting funds to help replace phone system, which is at its end-of-life, is over ten years old, and Martin Community College staff can't get replacement parts for it.

Dr. Hutchins thanked the Board for its consideration and continued support of Martin Community College and its efforts.

Chairman Bowen stated lots of changes were coming in the upcoming two years, and those changes were needed badly.

County Manager Bone stated the roof for the equine building had come up in the past and felt the bond money that the college received was very beneficial to the College and Martin County. County Manager Bone also shared that the County was in the same situation regarding the phones. The phone system at Martin County was at least fifteen years old, and the County was in the process of exploring vendors for a potential new phone system as well.

Commissioner Smith stated it would be good if the County and MCC could collaborate with the new phone systems, in hopes of being able to get a discount and to continue their partnership.

### **Martin Community Players**

President Dean McCall, of the Martin Community Players, thanked the Board for its past generosity in funding. For fiscal year 2019-20, the requested continual funding was in the amount of \$8,000.

President Dean McCall expressed appreciation, again, for the recent collaborative effort between Martin County, Martin County Board of Education and Martin Community Players, in procuring and installing much needed lighting recently for the Martin County Auditorium.

Martin Community Players continues spring and fall shows, along with a children's show, and is continually bringing in new adults and children to the group.

Martin Community Players continue to provide cultural and educational experiences through theater entertainment for the residents of Martin County and the region. Martin Community Players is a non-profit organization that relies on contribution in order to provide the entertainment /culture /educational experiences. President McCall stated the continued theater arts would continue to draw residents and non-residents to Martin County businesses and industries.

### **Martin County Arts Council**

Chair Kathy Daly, of the Martin County Arts Council, thanked the Board of Commissioners for its sustaining support in carrying out its mission. Chair Daly stated during 2016-17 MCAC reached over 4,000 children and adults through art exhibits, performances and art educational programs. MCAC requested an allocation of \$8,500 for FY 2019-20. The funding would allow the MCAC to keep their part-time Executive Director, Ms. Glinda Fox.

The MCAC has a painted piano in front of the building and would like to get more painted pianos to have in various locations in the community. Chair Daly spoke of recent events hosted by the MCAC, and the amount of people they have been able to reach on social media. Chair Daly stated many people from around the county and in surrounding counties would come and explore the various industries in Martin County.

Chair Daly spoke about an upcoming Color Fun Run in May 2019. In addition, there would be an upcoming children's art camp, as well as many other events. MCAC has a shop with various items for sale from various artists. Chair Daly invited the Board to come and visit MCAC.

County Manager Bone said with the help of MCAC, there were several paintings by local artists on display and for sale at the Martin County Airport. He said those displays help improve the look of the Airport.

### **Economic Development Corporation (EDC)**

On behalf of the Martin County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board, President/CEO Jason Semple thanked the County for its past support of its efforts to further the economic well-being of Martin County.

EDC President/CEO Semple highlighted some of the efforts of the EDC over the years. Through the efforts of EDC and other partners such as Martin County, since 2011, investments total \$158.3 million, 1,173 jobs have been created or retained, and grants or low interest loans totaling \$18,385,000 have been received.

The budget request was much different than in the past, due to several factors such as the transition of the EDC President to Martin County in July 2019, the pending sale of the Martin County Telecenter, and additional infrastructure at the Martin County Industrial Park.

The Martin County Economic Development Corporation requested appropriation for FY 2019-20 was \$160,853. This represented a net increase of \$7,200 over last year's request. This amount was the approximate dues for the NC East Alliance for the upcoming year.

EDC President/CEO stated his long-term vision for the Industrial Park was ultimately to get the Industrial Park connected to the Martin County Airport, and there were also some funds in reserve for Golden Leaf for a future shell building. The parcel of choice would be behind the current Syfan building with a "build to suit" shell building. EDC President/CEO Semple stated the economy was so strong and the demand for a shell building was high, so he expected more activity for parcels that were ready to build upon. EDC President Semple stated he would be back at the April 2019 Board meeting to discuss a recent \$.1 million infrastructure grant to upgrade and rebrand the Industrial Park.

### **Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health Department**

Health Director Wes Gray, of the Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health Department, thanked the Board for its continued support in helping to provide public health services to the residents. Health Director Gray highlighted the growth of the Health Department, citing the following current programs and services offered: Adult Health (sick visits/physicals), child

health (sick and well care), communicable disease, dental health, diabetes care, environmental health, family planning, health education, immunizations, medication assistance, prenatal care, same day sick visits, public health preparedness, home health, STD services, and WIC Nutrition.

Health Director Gray presented a PowerPoint highlighting the services offered. The clients served in Martin County in 2019 was 962 patients with 1720 visits (night clinic 54 patients with 60 visits; nurse clinic 1186 patients in 1749 visits). Health Director Gray stated the number of visits was up by 20% from the previous year. Services that were mandated to certify or make available: adult health, home health, dental public health, grade-A milk certification, maternal health, child health, family planning, and public health laboratory.

Health Director Gray discussed the efforts of M-T-W related to education and outreach and highlighted a community garden hosted by the agency. He further discussed health surveillance efforts in the district (rabies, impetigo, mosquitos). Many facility improvements had taken place in each clinic. The mobile dental (Molar Express) unit purchased by M-T-W would mainly be used to target children in schools across the district. Many grants has been received to support and expand programs within M-T-W.

Health Director Wes Gray stated M-T-W District Health was requesting a total of \$700,568 in funding from Martin, Tyrrell and Washington Counties (an increase of \$63,668 from the previous fiscal year). The requested per capita amount equals to \$17.45. Based on an estimated 2019 population of 23,510, Martin County's share of this request would be \$410,312 for FY 2019-20. The increase would support expansion of programs.

Commissioner Smith stated there was a lot of activity going on in Washington and Tyrell Counties, but Martin County has the largest population and provides the most funding. Commissioner Smith stated there was a need for dental services in Martin County, not just from the mobile dental unit. Health Director Gray stated the mobile dental unit would be in Martin County 80% of the time, mostly at schools. Commissioner Smith stated there was still a need for adult dental services in Martin County without residents having to travel to Washington or Tyrell Counties.

Commissioner Lilley stated Martin County was paying more because of the funding being per capita. The situation needed to be examined closer to focus on Martin County. Health Director Wes Gray stated he would get figures to more closely look at Martin County statistics.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Opioid Coalition**

Chief District Court Judge Regina Parker stated this would be a new court-implemented in response to the opioid crisis. The court was authorized by general statute but would not be funded by the Office of Administrative Courts, meaning each court would have to find its own funding. Judge Parker stated there was a need, and a core group of professionals had been put together to form the Recovery Court. It was the plan to implement the court in January 2020, serving all five counties in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District, with the help of funding from each county and grants.

Recovery Court Coordinator Kirsten Smith provided data showing why a recovery court was so needed. The data presented included outpatient opioid pills dispensed in the district, incarcerated

adult population, daily cost of prison incarceration, and drug-related arrests. Recovery courts were effective in reducing drug abuse and criminal recidivism. Completion rate was nearly 60%, and participants were less likely to relapse and would commit future crimes. The program included a minimum of one year with incentives and sanctions throughout the program. After care plans would be in place for six months after graduation. The target population would meet minimum requirements for the program.

Ms. Smith stated for every \$1 invested, there would be an economic benefit up to \$27 per participant, and stated results would be seen in the first budget year. Ms. Smith stated the coalition was seeking federal funding for the first year in the amount of \$124,295. The local appropriations request was \$35,000, specifically \$10,000 from Martin County (Martin County incarcerated adults accounted for 17% of total district incarcerated adult population).

### **Hamilton Fire/EMS**

Chief Stephan Swearingen stated Hamilton Fire/EMS was requesting additional funding of \$30,000 to help with the substantial increase in costs related to medications, equipment and supplies. Martin General Hospital was no longer providing supplies to the EMS Departments. Hamilton Fire/EMS has increased the services to Advanced Life Support care. A higher level of care means higher levels of costs to provide that care.

Chief Swearingen stated Medicare had cut funding, Medicaid reimbursements were low, private insurance coverage was not guaranteed, and the department had many patients who were self-pay. The department used a soft billing system, meaning accounts were not turned over to a collections agency for non-payment. The department did not want people to avoid calling for emergency medical services, due to not being able to pay a bill.

In addition to the increase cost for medication and supplies, there were more training and certification requirements for EMS professionals who provide advanced care. The Commissioners thanked all of the Fire/EMS workers not only in Hamilton but in Martin County for the care they provide to the residents of Martin County.

Hamilton Fire/EMS takes approximately 200 calls per year. The current funding involves a base of \$25,000 per squad, plus an additional \$45 per call with an extra \$5 per call for ALS services. Chief Swearingen thanked the Board for their continued support.

### **Jamesville EMS & Rescue**

Treasurer Tina Manning and Chief Timmy Modlin were in attendance to present a budget increase request for Jamesville EMS & Rescue. The increase in funding was due to the department offering Advanced Life Support and advanced care services. After the funding for Jamesville EMS & Rescue went up, Martin General Hospital stopped offering supplies to the rescue squads. Medication costs have increased, as well (epinephrine, Glucagon, Narcan, etc.). Jamesville EMS & Rescue had to replace their two vehicles in 2018 with remount/refurbished units, saving \$100,000 versus new units.

Jamesville EMS & Rescue also had to purchase a new defibrillator for \$35,000 to continue to provide ALS services. Appeal letters were sent to Jamesville residents last year to request

donations. Jamesville EMS & Rescue also receives a small amount of funding from the Town of Jamesville. The only other direct source of income is through insurance providers, but there are many patients who have Medicaid or no insurance at all, and the department absorbs all costs.

The department hosts several pancake fundraisers and hot dog sales throughout the year and a booth at the Annual Herring Festival to attempt to raise funds. Jamesville serves the largest EMS district in the County, covering 137 square miles. Jamesville EMS & Rescue had 319 rescue calls in 2018.

Chief Modlin stated the fireworks display each year at the Herring Festival was not a big money maker, due to the cost of fireworks and cost of insurance, but the department planned to continue that event because the citizens “expected that”. Chief Modlin thanked the Board for their consideration and the support over the years.

### **Center for Family Violence Prevention**

Outreach Director Sandy Rhodes stated last year, the program brought \$94,944 in state and federal funds into Martin County. Director Rhodes stated the program was able to offer court advocacy and counseling services at no cost to the clients. For fiscal year 2019-20, Ms. Rhodes requested \$3,750, the same as last fiscal year’s amount. Ms. Rhodes thanked the Board for all its does for Martin County and its citizens.

During the 2018-19 fiscal year, Ms. Rhodes reported the Center for Family Violence Prevention served 46 new victims of domestic violence in Martin County with a variety of services. The Center for Family Violence Prevention continues to provide emergency shelter, transportation, court assistance with domestic violence protective orders (DVPO), case management for job search and housing, safety planning, information and referral, counseling for adults and children, crisis intervention and emergency assistance. Services to victims included assisting 40 victims in obtaining DVPOs, 179 case management services, and 175 counseling services.

Director Rhodes stated every county was mandated by law to provide services for domestic violence victims. All clients are referred to Legal Aide as well for access to free legal representation. The number one priority for all clients was safety. Director Rhodes thanked the Board for the opportunity to present the budget request.

### **BHM Regional Library**

Executive Director Amanda Corbett thanked the Board for its continued commitment and support. The appropriation requested for fiscal year 2019-20 was \$114,613, an increase of \$10,419.

The additional funds requested would allow for a cost-of-living adjustment for the Robersonville and Martin Memorial Library employees. As part of their Five-Year Plan, BMH Regional Library was also requesting additional funds to continue expanding the book budget for the Robersonville and Martin Memorial Libraries. Director Corbett stated the citizen participation had increased, and she highlighted several community events.

Director Corbett thanked the Board for their time and consideration. A previous request regarding the donation of a vehicle would be put on hold, due to the need for additional funds for insurance/maintenance.

### **Choanoke Area Development Association (CADA)**

CADA Executive Director Sallie Surface thanked the Board for the opportunity and for its support of the programs and outreach that CADA continues to administer in Martin County. For fiscal year 2019-20, CADA asked for \$52,000.

Executive Director Surface stated previous funding had allowed CADA to offer new programs and opportunities (Homeownership Counseling and the Urgent Repair Program) , to continue programs (Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) self-sufficiency), and to leverage other funds/resources like EnergyShare through Dominion Energy (\$140,731.33 for 2018, \$97,083 to date for 2019) for Martin County residents. CADA was also planning two additional activities/services for Martin County residents (partnership with Dominion to provide weatherization assistance for Dominion Customers and “A Get the Facts” workshop to focus on different housing resources/programs).

### **Metropolitan Community Health Services (MCHS) dba Agape Community Health Services**

On behalf of Metropolitan/Agape Community Health Services, Dental Director Carol Taylor submitted a request for the Medical, Dental, and Behavioral Health Services for \$200,000 for fiscal year 2019-20. The funds would help add a behavioral health provider, a dentist, and a medical provider.

Dental Director Taylor stated Metropolitan/Agape Community Health Services has committed to deliver service to anyone in the community, regardless of their income level. Those without insurance receive services at a cost based on a sliding scale. The agency was established with the mission to provide high quality, comprehensive, coordinated, primary health and dental care to low-level income, un-served and underserved community members, and to improve the health of persons and communities with effective health interventions, patient education, and chronic disease management.

The illustration given by Dental Director Taylor showed a snapshot of the monthly medical and behavioral health clinics, dental clinic, and pharmacy patient counts and demographics for 2018. Documentation of the financial overview was not provided.

Director Taylor stated the agency had to cut back on certain services in order to be able to sustain itself. Advertising was cut back, the dental clinic was decreased, and no staff raises have been given in many years. Director Taylor stated Beaufort County government provides an allocation of \$25,000. The clinics relied heavily on grants to sustain.

Commissioner Smith commented the County is blessed to have a state-of-the-art facility such as the one managed by Agape Community Health Services, and wonders what would happen to the citizens of Martin County should the clinic go out of business. Commissioner Smith stated the organization had been before the Commissioners many times before, and had the County had not been able to financially assist them in the past. The citizens of the community were receiving

services, and Commissioner Smith stated it was “time to step it up” and try to support this organization.

### **Roanoke River Partners**

Charlotte Griffin represented Executive Director Carol Shields, of Roanoke River Partners, Inc. Roanoke River Partners was requesting \$1,000 for fiscal year 2019-20, the same amount as last year.

Ms. Griffin stated Roanoke River Partners, Inc. was currently collaborating with a number of partners to implement the Roanoke River Underground Railroad Trail, as well as the renovation of the Rosenwald School – a top priority.

Roanoke Partners will continue to develop and promote the five-county paddle trail and camping platforms to draw visitors to the region. In 2018-19, developing support for the renovation of the Hamilton Rosenwald River Center would also be a top priority, in an effort to highlight the history of the Hamilton area. The prolonged high waters in the Roanoke River had caused a decrease in revenue (more than \$18,000), since the camping platforms have been closed down since January 10, 2019.

### **COMMENTS**

The Board of Commissioners thanked the representatives of the various agencies for their contribution to the community.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Smith made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting, with a SECOND by Vice Chairman Bond. The Board unanimously APPROVED the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

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Tommy Bowen, Chairman

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Jessica Godard  
Clerk to the Board