

March 22 2012

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Thursday, March 22, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Martin County Governmental Center, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

ASSEMBLY

Chairman Elmo “Butch” Lilley, Vice Chairman Tommy Bowen, Commissioner Ronnie Smith, Commissioner Derek Price, Commissioner Bob Hyman, County Manager David Bone, and Clerk to the Board Marion B. Thompson.

County Attorney J. Melvin Bowen was absent.

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

Chairman Lilley welcome all to the meeting and recognized elected officials present.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Smith made a MOTION, with a SECOND by Commissioner Price to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously APPROVED.

DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

County Manager Bone began by stating this is the first step of the budget development process. Staff has been asked to hold funding at the same level as 2011-2012 and to be thinking of cuts should they be needed. Department heads will highlight their budget requests. Agency presentations are scheduled for April 18th. A joint board meeting with the Board of Education will be scheduled once their budget is received. Tentatively the budget public hearing is scheduled for the thirteenth of June; hopefully, on June 13th the budget will be adopted also.

Preparation of the annual budget is a big part of the planning process for effective government and is crucial to the future of the county.

The goal is to hold down expenditures while addressing the needs of the community. As this budget document is developed and transmitted from staff to you, staff is here with you, to support and assist you in this budget process as it becomes your budget.

Finance: Finance Officer Cindy Ange began by thanking the Board on behalf of all employees. Finance Officer Ange thanked the Department Heads for keeping a tight budget and for understanding.

Except for an increase in other professional services for Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) evaluation, the finance budget was the same as last year.

Communication: Telecommunications Supervisor Gertie Bowen explained the justification for the request for addition funds. A request was made for a full-time position (\$22,837) to serve as backup relief personnel to fill in during emergencies, training, vacations, sickness, and extreme workloads; additional funds (\$3,000 increase) to cover overtime due to schedule changes or other unforeseen staffing shortages; longevity (\$600); additional equipment added to contract (\$10,500); a PC (\$1,414) to use for training and as a backup CAD; and (2) color infrared CCTV cameras to monitor entry/exit doors facing the back parking area (\$2,100).

E911: Telecommunications Supervisor Gertie Bowen requested \$23,918 for a NICE Focus II Recorder System Upgrade to replace the current system with the updated version. The new NICE Call Focus III has dual power supplies and will be able to record VOIP, digital and analog voice transmissions; Positron VIPER POWER 911 (96,320.58) to replace the Lifeline 100 ANI/ALI Controller and would complete the 911 telephones upgrade; and APC Galaxy 4000 UPS (\$35,500) which would be a centralized UPS to service all the CommCenter computers and servers. The most of the money for these upgrades would come from E-911 funds.

Tax Assessor: Tax Assessor Hilton Edmondson stated the Tax Assessor Office will try to keep their budget in line. Due to new state regulations, motor vehicle billing will change. Tax Assessor Edmondson estimated an increase cost of \$7,500. An amount was allocated to replace a twenty (20) years old printer, if needed. Additional amounts were allotted for postage and an increase on the appraisal contract (\$400) by the firm.

Tax Collector: Tax Collector Christie Belvins noted small increase due to longevity pay and advertising to cover promoting the new Motor Vehicle billing. The rest is the same.

Department of Motor Vehicles: Tax Collector Christie Blevins stated she had allotted \$1,500 in the budget for training for the new motor vehicle regulations in January 2013. More was shown for wildlife fees. However, the revenue account will offset the increase. The rest is the same.

Elections: Elections Director Kristy Modlin stated that Elections budget reflected the cost of the general election in the fall. HAVA monies are no longer available. As indicated by the State last year, the software maintenance fee (\$20,630/yr) will be transferred to the County beginning fiscal year 2012-2013. She added there is the option of a one year, three year, or five year plan at a slightly lesser cost. She cautioned against the longer plan. Should the state decide not to use this equipment any more we would be obligated to the contract.

Commissioner Smith commented that the local governments are paying the bill for the state and federal elections.

Manager Bone stated the legislation had the option to provide some state money with a local match and decided against it for various reasons.

In response to the recommendation of Chairman Lilley to send a letter to Raleigh in opposition to the transfer of cost, Director Modlin stated the local Board of Elections of 98 out of 100 counties, ours being one of them, have already sent letters to Raleigh.

Register of Deeds: Register of Deeds Tina Manning expressed her thanks for the repairs done to the Register of Deeds office, especially, being repainted after twenty some odd years. Register of Deeds Manning stated her budget has an increase in travel of \$500 due to the district Register of Deeds meeting at the beach. Line items included a decrease in computer indexing. She requested \$4,000 for a slant-top desk to replace an older desk in the vault. R.O.D. Manning added that the residents love having accessibility to register of deeds online.

Maintenance: Supervisor Justin Harrison spoke on the budget for the buildings maintained by his department. In addition to increases for gasoline costs, Supervisor Harrison asked for an additional \$14,000 for two new roof air conditioner units. An extra \$2,500 was added for miscellaneous such as making signs more recognizable and consistent. Some line items for 2012 are over, due to lack of reimbursement from the hurricane. An extra \$4,500 was requested to repair and repaint boxing on the Ag Building.

Vice Chairman Bowen asked what the plans were for repairs at the Transit building. Maintenance Supervisor Harrison replied the hope is to combine the Department of Aging CDBG grant with the Transit grant to make the county match.

The ten year roof on the Health Department, in its twelfth year, is leaking. Effects to repair the roof cause more cracking to the asphalt when trying to fix the roof. The intent is to repair the roof in sections by doing the front of the building now, a wing in the second year, etc. Estimates are \$60,000 for a metal roof; TPO \$40,000 with a 20 year warranty.

Chairman Lilley recommended considering vinyl siding rather than repainting when possible.

At the Moratoc Park, recommended repairs to the Little Red Schoolhouse are estimated to cost \$2,500. The rest of the buildings show little or no change.

Sheriff: Chief Deputy Manning, on behalf of the Sheriff Office, requested increases in monies over last year for six refurbished computers, console, push bumpers, cages, and maintenance for fourteen GPS units. State drug monies would pay for the fourteen GPS units. The request was that the county would pay for the maintenance cost (\$5,000). Capital outlay was increased by \$4,000 for potential cost increases for cars and taxes.

Chief Deputy Manning gave a detailed explanation on the state regulated changes in procedures for concealed weapons, domestic violence, and sex offenders. The request was made for an additional office deputy due to more foot traffic in the department and the requirement to follow through with these regulations in a timely manner.

Chairman Lilley commented that increased revenue would be generated.

Emergency Management: Director Mike Stalls stated his budget request held to the same except for an increase in gasoline.

Building Inspector: Inspector Jody Griffin stated that his budget included a request for a replacement vehicle. He also asked that the part-time position be converted to a full-time position. The present vehicle for building inspection would be used for the full-time person.

The state has added a complete book on energy conservation. More office hours are required as more regulations are added.

When Chairman Lilley questioned the amount of additional revenue that could be generated with the added staff, Inspector Griffin answered revenue would increase by 50%. Martin County is one of only three counties in the east with only one inspector. The other two counties are Washington and Tyrrell. Additionally, state required training is only given Monday through Friday making it very difficult for a part-timer to received the mandated training.

Inspector Griffin further explained that revenue was lost due to lack of enforcement personnel particularly during the hurricane. In accordance with regulations, any remodeling project above \$5,000 or larger than 12 x12 should be inspected and permit issued by the county.

Vice Chairman Bowen questioned if permit costs in Martin County were cheaper than other counties. Inspector Griffin responded they are about mid-way. With the present economy, he recommended that rates not be increased.

Starting March 1, 2012, state mandated that construction of residential housing air filtration, air conditioning, heat loss & gain be inspected like commercial building (a pressure test of the home by monitoring air leakage). Someone at state level did not print code books on time so implementation has been delayed.

Animal Control: Manager Bone explained that the Animal Control budget was very much the same as last year except for an increase for gasoline, a new line item for office supplies (\$200), and money for additional pens for the outside shelter on the other side of the building. State regulations do not require heating or air conditioning for outside pens.

In answer to a question asked by Chairman Lilley about the number of animal adoptions, Animal Control Officer Pete Brock stated that although adoptions are not as aggressive as

before they are taking place at the shelter. However, fifty percent of the animals adopted or fostered through Moratoc Animal Rescue are from the Martin County Animal Shelter. Moratoc Animal Rescue frequently set-up animal adoptions stations at places such as Walmart.

Landfill: Landfill Supervisor Maurice Robinson stated the budget presented was in line with last year's except for an increase for gasoline, equipment repairs (\$16,000, crawler) refuse service (\$14,000), and capital outlay (siding for office building \$4,000). Supervisor Robinson listed decreases to engineer fees, land maintenance, and garbage disposal. Due to age of the equipment, even with regular maintenance, cost for repairs has increased.

County Manager Bone added the model years for vehicles at the landfill are '97 and '84. He commented it would be nice to get another vehicle out there.

Cooperative Extension: Cooperative Extension Director Al Cochran stated the budget included an increase for hospitalization (5.3%) and gasoline. Even with the tentative increases, there should be an actual decrease in budget. The salary to replace the vacant position has been reduced by \$5,000. Salaries are now send-in and are listed under contracted services.

Director Cochran reminded those present of the NC A&T Small Farmer Award at the farm of Thomas Pierce March 26, 2012. Also, he mentioned the livestock show at the Farmer Market on April 12, 2012.

Soil and Water Conservation: Supervisor Lynn Whitehurst stated his budget request is the same as last year.

The Mid-East RC&D coordinator position is not with the county anymore. Supervisor Whitehurst asked the Board to consider their contribution to Mid-East RC& D stating he did not know how effective they will be without the position. Some counties have opted not to contribute. It was the consensus of the Board of Commissioners to continue to be a part of Mid-East RC&D.

Social Services: Director Susan Davenport stated there are few changes to the budget except for the following: increase for Child Support Program (new regulation regarding DNA paternity test), gasoline, supplies & materials, postage, vehicle repairs & maintenance (aging vehicles), and adoption assistance (possible increased number of adoptions). Food stamp issuances were decreased (county share only included in amount listed). The TANF program has been cut out of the budget by the federal government. Therefore, funds for domestic violence and day care have been decreased. However, funds will be available for TANF services due to a private donor who left monies to Social Services for this program. Since the 1950's, the Department of Social Services has received funds each year from her estate and have been good stewards of the donation.

Veterans: Veterans Director Theodosia Robinson reminded the Board of Commissioners that Veterans Services pays for itself through services. Through the aide of the Veterans Office, one veteran was able to receive \$291,000 in retro pay. Slight increases were listed for postage, office supplies and travel.

Veterans Director Robinson thanked Commissioner Smith for serving in the Veterans Forum in Robersonville at the W. C. Chance Building. There will be another forum in June.

Commissioner Smith responded that the place was packed. A lot of people do not know what their benefits are. A lot of information was received. There were open questions and great dialogue.

Same as last year, Director Robinson requested a new sign for the front of the building that houses Veterans Service, Emergency Management, United Way, and management offices for the Water District and Maintenance.

Manager Bone commented this would be addressed under the maintenance budget.

Division of Aging: Director of the Division of Aging Marsha Anderson stated there were minimum changes to revenue. The salary for the volunteer receptionist has been frozen for six months. Increases noted for travel & training and gasoline. Congregate nutrition list has dropped off (decrease noted for meals). Approximately \$15,000 has been cut from the budget. The contractor for meal is working out well and the contract is good for another two years.

Water: Water District Manager Ed Warren stated that increases were listed for uniforms, gasoline, and postage. WD2 contracted services showed an increase of \$7,500 related to the Thurman Griffin water tank/water maintenance contract.

One hundred sixty (160) WD2 customers never tied on for services and will payout the minimum \$27.00 monthly fee in June 30, 2012. Beginning fiscal year 2013, there will be a shortfall in WD2 of \$51,840 due to this drop off and water usage being less than originally projected.

A Water District computer crashed but the replacement cost (\$800) might be absorbed in this year's budget being split between the WD1 and WD2.

Transit: Director of Martin County Transit Betty Jo Keel stated that her budget was the same except for grant changes. Sales and services may be less partly attributed to the fact that Martin Enterprise may drop services. Line item increases were noted for consultant fees, gasoline, office supplies (fax machine), and drug testing (regulations require outsourcing rather than in-house for background checks, credit checks, and driver's license checks, etc. previously done by the County Communications Office).

Chairman Lilley questioned the number of Transit vehicles on the road and the answer was fifteen (15). In answer to Vice Chairman Bowen, there are eighteen (18) total with three (3) inoperable waiting State approval before being disposed.

County Manager Bone stated the state has not released funds for last year. We are still waiting on last year's and this year's vans.

Commissioner Smith asked what was the largest van Transit owned and the answer was the largest and oldest vehicle is the twenty (20) passenger unit. Transit Director Keel added parts are not available for the twenty passenger van. Two vans are being used to replace this one.

County Manger/Commissioners: Manager Bone stated that the budgets for County Manager and Commissioners were the same as the last except for new line items for codification of ordinances (\$9,000), consultant services (land use plan \$36,000 1st yr, \$40,000 to \$65,000 2nd year and retreat-\$1,000). Other counties have gotten the municipalities on board to reduced cost. Monies were included for a printer for the clerk.

Manager Bone stated that telephone costs will be reduced due to the phone system purchase. Figures will be updated before the final budget.

Chairman Lilley commented he had reservations on the land use program and instructed Manager Bone to include the land use plan on the monthly agenda before making any commitments to a consultant. Manager Bone assured him no commitments have been made only estimates obtained for budget purposes.

Comments

Chairman Lilley thanked the department heads for their attendance and attentiveness of each presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Vice Chairman Bowen made a MOTION, with a SECOND by Commissioner Price to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously APPROVED, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Elmo "Butch" Lilley, Chairman

Marion B. Thompson, Clerk to the Board