

Budget Meeting – May 22, 2014

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Thursday, May 22, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. for their annual budget meeting located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. Commissioners present were: Billy Holder, Keith Eller, Connie Orr and Raymond Williams. Commissioner Robert M. Edwards was absent and excused by the board due to sickness.

1. Commissioner Holder called the meeting to order.
2. Commissioner Holder asks Rebecca Garland, Finance Officer how much shortfall was the county now looking at. Ms. Garland stated that the shortfall is approximately \$139,000.00. Ms. Garland stated that she did not have a problem using fund balance for the shortfall due to the overage in our percentage and thanked the board for their diligence in maintaining the county required fund balance.
3. Clerk Crisp presented the board with the options concerning the health insurance and stated that the county was looking at a 33.3% increase at the beginning of negotiations and was looking into the plan that has a 9.4% increase. Clerk Crisp stated that the increase was due to the ACA Act that is being implemented and the high claims that the county had received last year. Clerk Crisp stated that she is not privileged to this information until renewal and the payout from our plan was substantial. Clerk Crisp stated that she, Manager Cable, Finance Officers Rebecca Garland and Machelie Crisp had reviewed the three proposed plans and felt the better course of action was to take option three which does raise the deductible and changes the prescription card. Clerk Crisp stated that they felt that the county was gracious in paying our premiums and we should be diligent in obtaining the lowest quote even if the benefits are not as rich as the current plan. Clerk Crisp stated that the county could not afford a 33.3% increase and it was not fair to even ask that of the board. Commissioner Eller made the motion to go with the plan with the 9.4% increase. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
4. Commissioner Holder welcomed Sheriff Anderson and Deputy Teasdale and asks them to speak. Deputy Teasdale presented the board with a possible program that would help the county earn points through license checks and writing tickets that could assist the county in purchasing new vehicles and equipment. Deputy Teasdale stated that the program is called the Governor's Highway Safety Program but it is ultimately at the Sheriff's discretion. Ms. Garland asks about the COPS Grant and if this would help with the wages. Deputy Teasdale stated that this is possible and he would be glad to work with our EDC Director Andy Cable. Manager Cable stated that Andy Cable was not able to access these sites because they are restricted and would appreciate any help that Deputy Teasdale could provide to remedy this problem. Ms. Garland stated that she had the access codes when the former EDC Director Josh Carpenter was employed and had closed out a Department of Justice Grant. Manager Cable suggested that the sheriff designate Andy Cable as the grant writer so that he can obtain the information. Deputy Teasdale discussed some line item descriptions and asks if these can be renamed due to prior confusion of the expenditures in these line items. Ms. Garland stated that she could do this and she can make amendments to these line items at any time. Deputy Teasdale stated that the deputies needed to fill out forms to collect monies for the drug excise tax after arrests are made. Deputy Teasdale stated that he had a list of requests by Chief Deputy Jerry Crisp and those are:
 - A. The department needed four new radios due to some of our deputies not having one. Deputy Teasdale stated that some had been broken and some were the old model that will not work with the new narrowband that was implemented a few months back.
 - B. The other question is where the revenue goes from the gun permits that are taken. Ms. Garland stated that this is shown as revenue to support the sheriff's budget. Ms. Garland stated that all fees taken other than the restricted fees are used as revenues to support the budget.
 - C. The other question is where the CO-OP money goes from the Forest Service. Ms. Garland stated this money is used as per the agreement as a revenue toward the salary of the deputy that patrols these grounds. Deputy Teasdale asks if a line item could be shown in the budget as to where the money goes. Again, Ms. Garland stated that this is revenue that goes 100% to the sheriff's department budget but she will make sure that she

breaks this down in the revenues listing for the department to see. Ms. Garland stated that an example of revenues in another department is the EMS and the funds that are collected from ambulance runs are used to support their budget, they do not get these revenues on top of what the board gives them for their budget request. Ms. Garland stated that the county taxpayers would have to support the budget 100% if we did not use revenues from fees to support these departments and the millage rate would be astronomical.

D. The department also needed four new vehicles. Deputy Teasdale stated that two had broken down last night and another needs a transmission. The board asks if the Governor's Highway Safety Program would assist in this purchase. Deputy Teasdale stated that he did not know how the point system worked but felt that the county would have to implement the program and be consistent before this would take effect. The board discussed certain areas in the county that needed patrol attention that could assist in them gaining points quickly. Commissioner Eller stated that the county had lots of need for vehicles in other departments of the county as well.

E. The department also needed the Air Packs for the meth lab clean-up. Commissioner Eller stated that the department could borrow the fire departments if they check them out first and he would apply for a grant in January that would pay half of the cost for the packs. Deputy Teasdale stated that we have four officers trained for the meth lab clean up but they needed the air-packs for safety and state requirements. Commissioner Eller stated that he would have ordered them this year had he known that they were needed.

F. The next item is three cameras for surveillance due to the high volume of breaking and entering and gas stealing over the past months. Deputy Teasdale stated that the game cameras did not give a clear enough picture. Deputy Teasdale stated that the cameras are \$500.00 each and they last three full days before the battery has to be recharged.

G. The department would also like to switch from LEADS to TLO with a savings of \$1000.00. Deputy Teasdale stated that this is a one year contract.

H. The department would also like to request one more full time officer and one more part time officer and the department would look for BLET Certified employees for this position. Manager Cable stated the county would not tell the sheriff how to spend his budget but stated that the department was required to stay within budget. Sheriff Anderson stated that the board had approved this in the January 13, 2013 meeting and he had never hired for these positions. Again, Manager Cable stated that the sheriff is required to stay within his budget regardless of how it is used by him.

Commissioner Williams asks why these items are being addressed to the commissioners when a budget request was already submitted and why was this item not in the budget that was submitted. The board discussed the cost of the vehicles which included extra money for lights and striping and was not opposed to vehicles but the county did not see any way to buy for one department when there are 26 titled vehicles in that department that does include the Jail Department. The board is aware that some of those are high mileage and three are at the shop. The board gave a directive to Manager Cable to contact the highway patrol and ask if they have any that are going to be sold. The board discussed putting money in contingency to build on for the purchase of vehicles. The board also discussed the need to surplus some of the old vehicles on the fleet as a way to gain revenue to be added to contingency for the purpose of buying vehicles.

1. Manager Cable stated that he needed approval to draft an opposing resolution to the North Carolina Alliance for Transportation Reform and Waysouth resolution that was written concerning Corridor K. Commissioner Williams made the motion to type a resolution opposing there resolution. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

2. Commissioner Orr made the motion to allow the sheriff's department to purchase the four radios on the condition that they shop around for the best price. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

3. Ms. Garland stated that the next discussion would be the Jail budget. Ms. Garland stated that the jail would run out of money this year due to the expenditures of medical bills, inmate housing and the vast number of commitments. The board discussed housing the inmates in other counties and the possibility of building a new jail. Commissioner Williams was not in favor of closing the jail. Commissioner Holder stated that we needed to get pricing to see how much money we were talking about. The board wanted money reserved in

contingency for the Jail for the emergency overages but to leave the request as it was last fiscal year.

4. Ms. Garland stated that the next discussion would be the Health Department and requested that the board go into closed to discuss personnel. Commissioner Orr made the motion to go into closed session under G.S. 143.318.11(a) (6) for personnel. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

5. Commissioner Orr made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

6. Commissioner Eller made the motion to raise Alicia Parham's salary equal to the DSS Director salary and to raise the lowest paid employees at the Health Department to \$10.75 per hour. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Commissioner Holder calls for a vote. Commissioners Holder, Orr and Eller voted yes. Commissioner Williams voted no. Motion carried three to one.

7. Commissioner Orr made the motion to withdraw the former motion to the Town of Robbinsville on the collection of their taxes and to offer a 5% fee for the collections of current taxes and a

10% fee for the delinquent taxes as of January 5, 2015 plus any added expenses necessary to complete the collections with a option to renew every two (2) years. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Commissioner Holder called for a vote. Commissioner Holder, Eller and Orr voted yes Commissioner Williams voted no. Motion carried three to one.

8. Commissioner Holder called a special meeting for Monday, June 9, 2014 at 9:30 a.m. at the Tallulah Valley Clinic to discuss Rural Healthcare with the owners of the clinic. All board was in favor of the meeting.

9. Ms. Garland stated that the next discussion is the DSS Department. Ms. Garland stated that they had asked for a new vehicle as well but she took that request out. Ms. Garland stated that raises had been requested for all employees with the exception of two plus the director. The board denied the request for any raise requests. The board wanted this budget to be the same as last year's.

10. Ms. Garland stated that the board would discuss the special appropriations at the continued budget meeting.

11. Commissioner Williams made the motion to continue this meeting until Tuesday, May 27, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Robert M. (Mike) Edwards, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Billy Holder, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Keith Eller, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Raymond Williams, Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board