

Public Hearing – June 3, 2013

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Monday, June 3, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. for a public hearing on the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. Commissioners present were: Robert M. Edwards, Billy Holder, Keith Eller and Raymond Williams. Commissioner Orr was absent due to sickness.

1. Commissioner Edwards opened the public hearing and welcomed the public.
2. Commissioner Edwards stated that this is a public hearing only and the board would not be making any decisions tonight but would be approving the proposed budget at the next regular meeting on June 17, 2013.
3. Commissioner Edwards asks Daphne Childres with the Nantahala Regional Library to speak. Ms. Childres stated that she was the Director of the Nantahala Regional Library and was here to speak on the Graham County Library budget request. Ms. Childres asks Wanda Leatherwood to speak concerning the finances of the library. Ms. Leatherwood presented the board with a breakdown of costs and explained the requested amount. Ms. Leatherwood stated that if the board would consider an increase of \$4,435.00 to cover the cost of the increased insurance costs that would be greatly appreciated. The board discussed the breakdown of revenues and expenditures by the libraries in the region. Commissioner Edwards stated that he wanted to understand how the funding generated and thanked Ms. Childres and Ms. Leatherwood for their time. Commissioner Edwards stated that the board would review their request. Commissioner Williams stated that the board saw the review in the Graham Star that quoted the library would be happy with the same amount as last year and this was how the board based their decision. Commissioner Edwards asks what the actual amount is needed. Ms. Childres stated that if the county could cover the health insurance increase of \$1377.00 they could manage. Ms. Leatherwood stated that their health insurance increased 20% causing the library to adjust the deductible amount from \$500.00 per month to \$2500.00 per month in order to be able to provide insurance to their employees. Ms. Leatherwood stated that the \$1377.00 was the actual increase in health insurance of 4.5% with the deductible change.
4. Commissioner Edwards asks Billy Corbin to speak on the Soil and Water Conservation. Mr. Corbin stated that he would like David Ferguson, NC State Soil and Water District Representative to speak. Mr. Ferguson stated that their budget was reduced over twenty thousand and the office could not make payroll with this amount. Mr. Ferguson gave a brief explanation of how the funding from the state is given to the Soil and Water and further stated that the state matches Billy Corbin's salary 50% of what the county allotment is. Rebecca Garland, Finance Officer stated that she had spoken with Cathy Shuler on how the funding works and pointed out that this department is neither county nor state. Ms. Shuler stated that the commissioners had paid for their RC&D dues last year because they did not have enough funds to cover that expense. Commissioner Edwards stated that the board would study this request and further stated that the commissioners had tried to meet a six hundred thousand dollar deficit going into the budget preparation. Mr. Ferguson told that board that he would be happy to answer any state related questions that the board may have.
5. Commissioner Edwards asks the Clerk for further public comment. Clerk Crisp presented the names to the board.
6. Commissioner Edwards asks Kristy Cable to speak. Ms. Cable stated that she was here on behalf of the Special Olympics and thanked the board for their past support. Ms. Cable stated that Graham County was able to attend the state games this year for three days in Raleigh, NC and was proud to announce that our kids won (5) five gold medals, (1) one silver and (3) three bronze medals with competition from 1400 kids statewide. Ms. Cable stated that the school would like to continue going to state and asks the board for an increase to their appropriations in order to make this happen. Ms. Cable stated that they do raise money for this event and accepts donations to help with the costs which were \$6250.00 for this trip alone. The board thanked Ms. Cable and Ms. Rhonda Davis for their dedication to our kids.
7. Commissioner Edwards asks Rick Davis to speak. Mr. Davis gave praise to Ms. Cable and Ms. Davis on the medals and for their hard work toward the Special Olympics. Mr. Davis asks that the county board support the library with the requested funding to provide the resources available to the public and asks that they be allowed to extend their hours to be open on Saturdays. Mr. Davis stated that the county can use the interest from fund balance to support the library.
8. Commissioner Edwards asks Donna Mize to speak. Ms. Mize stated that she was a Friend to the Library member and is asking or begging for the board to give the library the funds needed to open longer hours and to be able to provide supplies. Ms. Mize stated that the Friends of the Library have assisted in painting rooms, buying blinds and helping with general improvements. Ms. Mize thanked the board for their consideration.
9. Commissioner Edwards asks Jay Kelly to speak. Mr. Kelly stated that he was also in support of funding for the library and encourages the board to give them what they need. Mr. Kelly stated that the board needed to give money to the organizations that help people to gain or further an education. Mr. Kelly stated that he hoped Graham County would never entertain the thought of taking over the library. Commissioner Edwards stated that has never been a discussion. Mr.

Kelly stated that the Soil and Water Conservation is a win win for Graham County due to the funds that they provide to our county. Commissioner Edwards stated that this board tries to be the best stewards of the taxpayer's money and this has always been the goal of this sitting board.

10. Commissioner Edwards stated that the board would be finalizing the budget on June 17, 2013 at their next regular meeting.
11. Commissioner Williams made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. Commissioner Edward declared the public hearing adjourned.

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

Keith Eller, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Billy Holder, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Raymond Williams. Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board