

## Budget Meeting – May 8, 2017

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Monday, May 8, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC for a budget meeting. All board was present.

1. Chairman Eller called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Eller asks Manager Rebecca Garland to proceed with the budget discussions.
3. Manager Garland stated that the board needed to have discussion on the offices closing for the Heritage Festival that is to be held on Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup>. The board discussed the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday and all agreed that it makes more sense to close on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 4<sup>th</sup> and take a day away from the Christmas Holiday. The holiday schedule for 2017-2018 will reflect the change in days.
4. Manager Garland asks the board if they had made a decision on the Official Payments System that will allow taxpayers the ability to pay their taxes online. The county will bear no cost to this system. Manager Garland stated that EMS Billing and Sanitation could also benefit from this system. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to allow credit cards to be taken online. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Manager Garland stated that she received an email from Ryan Sherby in regards to promoting the rivers and lakes of the region including the Cheoah, Fontana Lake and others. Mr. Sherby stated that he assisted Betty Huskins of Smoky Mountain Host with a Duke Energy Foundation grant to market the public access sites on our rivers and lakes which initiated this effort a couple of years ago. This steering plan has created a work plan that involved collaboration among the partners leveraging resources, strengths and knowledge. This council has applied for National Water Trail designation which would add our sites to the national network. One of the primary benefits of designation is increased national visibility, which typically equates to increased visitation and visitor spending. An MOU among the access site landowners is a requirement in order for our trails to get promoted. It simply states that you will maintain and keep the site open to the public for period of 10 years and you can terminate any involvement via written notice at any time. Mr. Sherby stated that this is a commitment to work together. The board wanted time to read the paperwork before taking action.
6. Manager Garland gave a budget overview and stated that if the mil rate stays at \$0.585 then the requested budget shows a \$52,548.00 shortfall.
7. Manager Garland stated that she did need to add Habitat for Humanity to the discussion today. They are wanting to build one home in Graham County and we needed to push the applications out to our citizens of the county. There are qualifications such as income that must be met. Manager Garland stated that the homeowner has to donate 100 hours of sweat equity and other people could volunteer for 100 hours. Manager Garland asks if the board wants this advertised or do they want to go through old applications that was taken during CDBG and USDA. The board all agreed to advertise. Manager Garland stated that the board would not be the ones to make the final decision.
8. Manager Garland gave some budget overviews and projects our revenues to be \$15,394,975.00 and the requested amount is \$15,447,523.00 leaving the shortfall of \$52,548.00. Manager Garland stated that she was proud of the departments for being realistic with their budget requests.
9. Manager Garland reminded the board that a penny on the mil rate was \$117,000.00
10. Manager Garland recommended that we stay where we are on the mil rate at this time due to the large projects.
11. The board discussed the possible 2017/2018 projects budget. Manager Garland stated that we needed to be considering where recreation will go once the new administration building was completed. The board discussed a metal building on the property at the P&J Ballfields.
12. The board discussed purchasing a building for Sanitation. The board wanted pricing on trailers.
13. The board discussed the bids that was received for the P&J Building renovations. Those were: Clark and Leatherwood, Inc. \$1,850,000.00; Graham County Land Company \$1,298,000.00; Owle Construction \$1,150,000.00. The award went to the lowest bid which was Owle Construction.
14. The board discussed the Special Appropriations.
15. The board discussed the Cemetery Budget.
16. The board discussed the Sheriff and Jail: jail staffing; sheriff pack and laptops and staffing. The Sheriff has 18 deputies and 4 administration staff and is asking for three new cars. The total of

the requested budgets for both departments is \$2,415,339.00. The board wanted a comparison of budgets with another county our size that did not have a Town Police Department.

17. The board discussed raises.

18. The board discussed possible changing of hours worked at Communications. Manager Garland stated that one benefit was closing out calls that may come in toward the end of shift and working this shift would raise the pay rates to a more even statewide rate. The board discussed that all the workers needed to be in agreement to the proposed change.

19. The board will discuss Health and Human Services at the next budget meeting.

20. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

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Keith Eller, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

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Connie Orr, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

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Jacob Nelms, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Dale E. Wiggins, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Raymond Williams, Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board