

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

May 5, 2023
OTHERS PRESENT

Tim Yarbrough, Vice Chair
Ethel Gwynn
Finch Holt
Jeremiah Jefferies
Frank Rose

Bryan Miller, County Manager
Carla Smith, Clerk to the Board
Melissa Williamson, Deputy County Manager
Aisha Gwynn, Assistant County Manager
Jennifer Hammock, Finance Director
Melissa Miller, Deputy Finance Director

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina, met in a budget work session on Friday, May 5, 2023 at 9:00 am at the Gunn Memorial Library.

WELCOME:

Vice Chairman Yarbrough called the meeting to order, and turned it over to the County Manager.

BUDGET WORK SESSION:

SHERIFF'S OFFICE:

County Manager Miller said you have the Sheriff's Office summary and on the next page you will find more detail. We do have the Sheriff here with us this morning if you have questions. Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked how many positions do you have open. Sheriff Durden said 2 in detention, 3 SROs, and 10 in the Sheriff's office. Then Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked what does TOY stand for? The Sheriff said Town of Yanceyville.

Commissioner Rose asked why did the capital outlay decrease by \$300,000? Sheriff Durden said that was for the 800 radios.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked what was the \$10,000 for uniforms due to, and the Sheriff said it was due to price increases and new staff.

Commissioner Rose asked what percentage was the Sheriff asking for in salaries? Sheriff Durden said a 20% increase for full and part time staff. The starting salary will increase to \$41,000 and after the one-year probation period it will go up to \$43,900. This beginning salary is right behind Person County. Commissioner Rose asked what was the starting salary for Person County? The Sheriff said Person and Rockingham starting salary is right around \$45,000 for next year. Alamance's starting salary will also be right around \$45,000 without the sign on bonus. Burlington is \$80,000 and the highway patrol is being competitive. Local talent is going other places for money and they are not staying at home.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked for a breakdown of staff? Sheriff Durden said fully staffed the administrative staff includes the Sheriff, 2 majors, and 1 captain. There are not including SROs, 37 deputies. This number does include the Sheriff, and there are 20 in the Detention. Vice

May 5, 2023

Chairman Yarbrough then asked what capacity are you running the jail at? The Sheriff said at 75%right now of a 180 bed facility with a 4-man shift.

Commissioner Gwynn asked is there a recommendation for what you used to be running in the jail? The Sheriff said the ration asked for was 26 positions, but they only received 20. Sheriff Durden said he is thankful for the 20 positions, but they can't hire more because they were only funded the 20 positions.

Commissioner Holt said fully staffed you have 56 people, but you have 60 cars on the list. Can you explain the difference? Sheriff Durden said we received 7 new cars this year and the 7 old cars will come off the list. Cars have not been sold as quickly as before so they are still on the list currently.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked about the decrease in capital outlay. The Sheriff said there is a \$300,000 decrease for radios. They also did not request vehicles this year, but will need upfit for some cars.

Commissioner Rose asked about the application process? The Sheriff said 2 deputies are trying to come from Rockingham County, but we are wading through this process. We have a one man narcotics unit. Then Commissioner Rose said you are asking for a 20% salary increase, but what's going to help you the most? The Sheriff said he needs to bring the low end deputies up and the starting salary. Commissioner Rose said if you get the starting salary up and come back next budget cycle to fill in the gaps, do you think that would help? Sheriff Durden said losing experience is the problem. Recruitment is great, but not retaining staff is the issue. With the coming casino, revenues are coming in to help the county, but with these opportunities come dangers. We need experienced deputies to make sure we don't get over run. We have got to help the citizens of this county.

County Manager Miller said we did the pay and grade scale last year, but it has not been fully implemented. We are not paying the minimum salary. We only agreed to 90% of the minimum salary. This plan will be expensive to implement since we have tenured employees, which will equate to a lot of dollars with the experience. In the process we do not want to create salary compression by adjusting some salaries and not all.

DETENTION:

County Manager Miller said we will move along to Detention since we have the Sheriff here. If you turn the page you will see the summary and detail information for the Detention Center. Commissioner Rose asked why there was an increase in the maintenance and repair line? The Sheriff said it is for the smoke control panel that has to be inspected annually.

Commissioner Holt asked how many people do you have at the detention center? The Sheriff said 20 when we are fully staffed, but we are short two.

May 5, 2023

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked on page 7, why is there an increase in the 401K line? The Sheriff said he is asking that the detention officers receive a 5% match for their 401K plan. The detention officers make the same salary as a sergeant on the other side, but they receive no 401K match.

SRO:

Then County Manager Miller said while we have the Sheriff here let's move on to the SROs, or School Resource Officers. You can see the summary and detail in your packets. The only question from Commissioners was about the addition of SROs in the schools. The Sheriff said there are 4 new positions allotted from a grant. Since these positions are paid through a grant, they will run out. It will be the Board's decision to keep these positions or to let them go once the grant ends. The grant funds are showing as revenues in the amount of \$100,000 plus.

911 COMMUNICATIONS:

County Manager Miller said today we have with us the 911 Director, Kenneth Everett, with us today. Take a look at the summary information and detailed sheet following that. Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked what was included in the salary increase? Kenneth said it is all wage increases. I did request 2 new positions, but they are not factored into the increase. Then Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked why was capital outlay zero this year? Mr. Everett said last year they purchased 800 radios, but they had no request for this year. Vice Chairman Yarbrough said ok. Moving down to travel and training, are you planning to travel more and attend more trainings? Mr. Everett said Josh has been selected as Regional Manager, I want to be able to cover his travel and expenses. I also want training for employees for career advancement. There is not a lot of room to move up in 911, but want to work on options for the employees. The lead telecommunication position was created to have a place to advance to.

Commissioner Rose asked what are the dues and subscriptions you have to pay for? Mr. Everett said they are resources for information and weather apps. They also include our PO Box, license, rapid SOS system for mobile phones and landlines, which will send notifications prior to the phone ringing. Texting is also allowed. There has also been an increase from the GIS company for setting the 911 addresses. This was an eligible expense, but it is not covered now. So we will have to include this in the county request.

Commissioner Holt asked was this a one-time fee, and Kenneth Everett said no, it will be annually.

Commissioner Rose asked if 911 had any open positions? Mr. Everett said we are short 3 of the 7 positions we have. We have cut peak time staff. 911 does have mandatory overtime because we are short staffed. County Manager Miller said we have included off duty incentives to help cover the overtime hours. Mr. Everett said we have no incentive for night shift and have had issues filling those positions. We need to retain staff so we really need the salary increases.

Commissioner Rose asked if the radios are up and running. Mr. Everett said no, we are still waiting on batteries, mics, and other things which are on back order. However, these things were included in the capital outlay request for radios.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

County Manager Miller said we are going to change gears a bit and move to Building inspections. We have the Central Permitting Director, Donnie Powell, with this this morning.

Commissioner Holt said the salary increase, is that from adding employees or wage increases? Mr. Powell said the increase was from the restructuring of Central Permitting. Last year the Board approved a level up step for the building inspector positions. There will be a \$1,200 increase with each step. The fees in Building inspections increased, and the money must be spent within the department. Revenues cannot be used in other areas, which will fund the increases for the Building inspectors. County Manager Miller said statutory requirements regulate the fee that can be charged.

Commissioner Holt then asked if Donnie Powell was a level 3? Mr. Powell said no. Austin the new Building Inspector is level 2. Mr. Powell said he is only administrative in the department, but he could qualify for level 2.

Commissioner Rose asked if they were fully staffed. Mr. Powell said Environmental Health has an opening since last June. Planning and Building Inspections are fully staffed. It has been difficult to attract experienced people because of the salary. They had a qualified candidate, but could not negotiate the salary and insurance cost to persuade the candidate to accept the position.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked how long before you think you will need another position? Mr. Powell said it depends. I think it will reach a peak and level off, but with the casino coming, it may change things. We are issuing more permits, and we think it is because of the casino. We need a part-time employee to help with food, lodging and child care. We try to get to things in a timely manner, but there is a 3-4 week wait time. We need more staff if work continue to increase.

CORONER/MEDICAL EXAMINER:

County Manager Miller said there is not a lot to this section. The coroner position has been done away with by this Board. The professional services cover the cost when an autopsy is needed.

Commissioner Rose asked if that charge was a flat rate, and the County Manager said yes.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SYSTEM:

County Manager Miller said on the summary page the expenditures are missing, but they will be included in the next budget copies with the manager's recommendations. Kenneth Everett, 911 Director came back to answer questions about the emergency telephone system. Commissioner Rose asked why there was such a decrease in the request? Mr. Everett said they had a new AT&T phone system, and the invoices don't come to the local level. They are paid on the state

May 5, 2023

level. Commissioner Holt asked how much they had in appropriated fund balance. Mr. Everett said at the close of the audit on September 1st, they had \$409,757 which was given to Caswell County with spending requirements.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

County Manager Miller said now we will turn over to the summary page for Emergency Management. We have with us Barry Lynch, Emergency Management Director to answer any questions you have about his budget. Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked why there was a decrease of \$11,000 in revenues? Mr. Lynch said these were ARPA funds. They were a one-time fund through EEP.

Commissioner Holt asked if the increase in salaries due to adding people or positions? Mr. Lynch said it is an increase in salaries. There is a 10% increase for the director and 20% for all other employees. The director position is a hybrid position. Mr. Lynch is the director of Emergency Management and Emergency Medical Services. Commissioner Holt said the percentage difference in 2023 and the 2024 request was more than 20%, and asked if he could explain that. Mr. Lynch said the 2023 adopted salary line is less than the actual salaries because the pay study came after the budget was adopted. County Manager Miller said it is a difference of 7%. Salaries in 2023 are 7% less than what is shown for 2024. Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked if the Board could be provided the 2023 adopted amounts and the amounts after the salary study. County Manager Miller said it will be in the manager's recommended budget. None of the 2023 adopted salaries are after the salary study adjustments.

Commissioner Rose asked why is there an increase from the 23 adopted and the 24 requested in telecommunication expenditures? Mr. Lynch said the increase is in SIS cards and backup for testing in an emergency situation. The increased cost also includes the cost for internet in the new building.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough said is there an initial cost for the new building and Mr. Lynch said yes. Commissioner Rose said he thought these costs were included in the grant that Emergency Management Services received. Mr. Lynch said the grant was to cover building the new space, but it doesn't include maintaining it.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES:

County Manager Miller said moving along to Emergency Medical Services. You have the summary and the next page is more detail. Vice Chairman Yarbrough said Why is there an increase in the contractual services? Mr. Lynch said it is for billing. Vice Chairman Yarbrough said what percent do you collect? Mr. Lynch said we collected \$1 million in collections from billing. Then Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked how much do they collect per transport? Mr. Lynch said the cost per trip depends on the insurance. Medicaid only pays \$120 as full payment but may cost as much as \$900. Vice Chairman Yarbrough then asked how many positions they had open? Mr. Lynch said 3 on paper. In two weeks it will be down to 2 positions. How many

part time and full time employees do you have asked Vice Chairman Yarbrough? Mr. Lynch replied 1 part time and 31 full time employees. Commissioner Rose said the paper reflects the position being filled.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked if the salary increase was wage increased or added positions? Mr. Lynch said salary increases. He was not asking for any new positions. Then Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked Mr. Lynch to explain the \$20,000 increase in supplies. Mr. Lynch said the call volume is increasing so they needed more supplies.

Commissioner Rose said on page 28, can you explain the Medicaid cost settlement? Mr. Lynch said it's hard to estimate it. We are hoping to see an increase in the rate so there will be more funds. That fee could be \$745. The reimbursement is given to offset the cost for Medicaid transports. Last year, we received a \$94,000 check for 5 years of shortages.

Commissioner Rose then asked about the number of ambulances they have in service. Mr. Lynch said they had 3 that were on the road 24 hours a day. There is 1 peak hour and 1 community paramedic.

Commissioner Holt asked why is there outsource billing, and Mr. Lynch said because there is no billing in the county.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked capital expenses. County Manager Miller said they are broken out on the capital outlay supplemental sheet.

Commissioner Jefferies said what ever happened to the ambulance that was out of service? Mr. Lynch said it was fixed. It was remounted after months and has been back in service now for about 6 weeks. The money was rolled over from the previous year's budget because they were waiting for parts to have the ambulance rebuilt.

ANIMAL CONTROL:

County Manager Miller said moving along to Animal Control. Salaries increased by 6.5%. The contractual services did increase in this projected budget because they can now utilize tranquilizers to trap animals. The 1260% increase is because we need a medical person to prescribe medical direction. This is the same as some other departments in the county. There is a \$400 per month cost and the cost of tranquillizers. They just started this process and have received training. Commissioner Holt asked what was wrong with the old method? County Manager Miller said we needed to be able to trap dogs that posed danger to the children and residents in the area. They tried to trap the animals but weren't always able to capture them.

Commissioner Rose asked who was the contractual services through? County Manager Miller said he was not sure of the person or company, but the vet was not in the county.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough said how many positions do they have, and County Manager Miller said 2.

May 5, 2023

Commissioner Rose asked was the biggest change the use of tranquilizers and County Manager Miller said yes. Commissioner Rose then asked had they gone to this method already. County Manager Miller said no. They can't begin this method until we receive the tranquilizers from the vet. Commissioner Rose said last question what is included in the contractual costs? County Manager Miller said the cost of the tranquilizer and the vet difference. The vet will review our policies and procedures to make sure we are following the guidelines, and then he will prescribe the medicine. This is similar to the medical director's job duties.

Vice Chairman Yarbrough asked if the fee is monthly, and County Manager Miller said yes, whether we use him or not.

A **motion** was made at 10:31 am by Commissioner Rose and seconded by Commissioner Holt and **carried unanimously** to adjourn the meeting. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Jefferies, Rose, and Yarbrough)

The next budget work session is scheduled for May 12, 2023 at 9:00 am at the Gunn Memorial Library.

Carla R. Smith
Clerk to the Board

Tim Yarbrough
Vice Chairman

May 5, 2023