

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners FY 2006-2007 Budget Work Session
May 9, 2006, Commissioners Chamber, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg*

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners FY 2006-2007 Budget Work Session
1 p.m. Tuesday, May 9, 2006
Commissioners Chamber, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg**

At 1 p.m., Chairman J.D. Willis reconvened the meeting, which would focus on the FY 2006-2007 Budget Work Session. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioners John Alford, Leon Butler, Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioner Charles "Scoofer" Jordan. Staff in attendance: County Manager John A. Crumpton, Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Kevin Patterson and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman.

County Manager John Crumpton made the following presentation on the FY 2006-2007 proposed budget:

2006-07 Budget Highlights

Total General Fund Budget \$30,020,453

- 05-06 Budget \$27,891,213
- \$2,129,240 increase or 7.6 percent increase

Budget is balanced using the current \$1.10 ad valorem tax rate.

Mr. Crumpton said that Fund Balance was only appropriated for Capital and was not used for Current Expense in the proposed budget.

Major Sources of Budget Expense Increases –

- Social Services \$978,395 of which \$140,093 is for Medicaid
- Schools Current Expense \$469,329
- Schools Capital from Sales Tax Reserve \$550,000
- 3.5 Percent Cost of Living Raise for employees - \$350,000+

Mr. Crumpton said that this year is "a lucky year" with an increase in Medicaid of only \$140,000.

Major Sources of Budget Revenue Increases –

- Sales Tax Revenue - \$472,965
- Restricted Sales Tax for Schools Capital Fund - \$550,000
- Interest Revenue - \$370,000
- State Revenues for Social Services - \$856,652
- EMS Revenues - \$157,500

Personnel –

- Increase of 3 EMTs in EMS
- Increase of 1 Foster Care Worker in Social Services
- Increase of 1 Environmental Health Specialist in Health Department
- Increase of 1 Full-time Assistant in the Elections Office

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- Increase of Half-time clerk in the Register of Deeds Office
- Decrease of 1 Building Inspector
- Decrease of 1 Health Community Services Consultant
- Decrease of 3 Positions in Public Works
- Decrease of Half-time position in Elections Office
- **NET INCREASE OF ONE EMPLOYEE**

The Commissioners discussed the Register of Deeds request for a half-time clerk. Mr. Crumpton said the Register of Deeds is backlogged in scanning documents for archives, a project which might take up to five years. Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Kevin Patterson said an estimate for contracting the project would range from \$160,000 to \$180,000.

Capital Expenses – Total Capital Expenditures of \$827,227. Most of these expenditures are for Technical Equipment (Computers, Printers and Plotters), Vehicles, Parks and Recreation Improvements, and Facility Improvements.

Mr. Crumpton said some capital improvements include re-stripping of the Courthouse parking lot, heating, air and roof improvements at the Courthouse and new signage at the Annex and Courthouse. Chairman Willis suggested the County Manager get an assessment of the air conditioning system at the Annex.

Mr. Crumpton said Public Buildings, Animal Control and Inspections all requested replacement vehicles. Five new vehicles for the Sheriff's Department are included in the proposed budget. Chairman Willis explained the necessity of rotating five new vehicles into the Sheriff's Department fleet due to the wear and tear on the vehicles and the high cost of maintenance.

Mr. Crumpton said he would distribute a more detailed capital improvements list soon.

The County Manager discussed planned capital improvements at Jaycee Park.

Commissioner McPhatter asked about goals at Lincoln Park, which are still down.

The County Manager said it was his understanding the neighbors asked that they stay down. Mr. Crumpton said park equipment is planned for Lincoln Park but not goals.

Chairman Willis directed the County Manager to contact the police and survey the neighborhood for input as to whether to install goals at Lincoln Park.

County Manager Crumpton said he and Mr. Patterson reviewed requests from outside agencies. Mr. Crumpton said the agencies received what they had in the past and, where possible, received increases.

Outside Agency Requests –

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- New Request – Scotland County Imagination Place – Estimated at \$15,000 – Budget does not contain this request.
- New Request – Borderbelt AIDS Resources Team (BART) – Requested \$5,000 – Budget does not contain this request

Commissioner Alford said the \$5,000 request from BART would offset but not cover the agency's rent. He said the Health Department budgeted \$20,000 for a similar program before it was eliminated, and now BART provides that service. Commissioner Butler said he would like to review the BART budget.

- Existing Agency – North Carolina Forest Service – Increase of \$7,823 to a total of \$84,637. Budget contains increase.
- Existing Agency – Literacy Council – Requested \$15,000 - \$9,000 increase over 05-06 Budget. Budget holds funding at \$6,000 for the year.

Literacy Council Executive Director Mark Gretsch discussed the need for the \$15,000 originally request. He said the Literacy Council operates on an austere budget. He said with less money, the Literacy Council would serve less people and, as a result, it would receive less federal funding.

- Existing Agency – Scotland County Memorial Library – Requested \$285,546.03 or an increase of \$15,731.03. Budget contains \$277,681 or an increase of \$7,866.

Library Director Robert Busko said the original request would cover cost of living for Library employees and an increase in hospitalizations costs.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow to approve funding for a 3.5 percent cost of living increase for Library employees. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

- Existing Agency – Richmond Community College – Requested \$100,485 or an increase of \$4,560. Budget contains \$98,750 or an increase of \$2,825.
- Existing Agency – Southeastern Economic Development Commission – Requested \$3,960 – Budget contains this request.
- Existing Agency – Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce – Requested \$78,334 in expense funding (3 percent increase) and \$7,500 in Marketing Funding (Marketing funding was \$22,500 in 05-06). This is a reduction of \$13,728 from the previous year. Budget contains \$85,834 for Chamber.

County Manager Crumpton said the \$7,500 in Marketing Funding for the Chamber would be used toward a contract with Buxton Consulting for economic development. Mr. Crumpton said the Chamber agreed to also provide \$7,500, which would match \$15,000 from the City of Laurinburg.

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The Commissioners discussed the Board's February 2006 decision not to participate in the match with the City of Laurinburg in contracting with the Buxton firm. Chairman Willis said marketers are attempting to sell vacant buildings. He questioned what Buxton might do that is not already being done.

Chairman Willis and Commissioner McPhatter agreed that this was a City project and the County must concentrate its efforts on industrial recruitment.

Commissioner Alford said contracting with Buxton Consulting might benefit the County if it would open stores. Commissioner Butler said retailers bring in revenue through sales tax.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve funding in the amount of \$7,500 to the Chamber of Commerce. Vote: For: Commissioners Alford and Butler. Vote: Against: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioners McDow and McPhatter. Vote: Motion failed.

- Existing Agency – Scotland County Rescue Squad – There is a major change to the request from the Rescue Squad. They are asking both the City and County to support paying the volunteers a call stipend. This adds over \$18,000 to their budget, \$9,000 will be the County's responsibility.

County Manager John Crumpton said the Rescue Squad is requesting \$9,000, which would provide a stipend to volunteers who respond to a call. The stipend would cover the fuel expense. Mr. Crumpton said this is a new request.

The Commissioners discussed stipends in general and commented that volunteer firefighters in the rural stations do not receive stipends. Chairman Willis said the County would have to be consistent in how stipends would be handled.

The Board of Commissioners by consensus agreed not to pursue stipends at this time.

- Existing Agency – Scotland County Humane Society – Requested \$64,309, an increase of \$2,001 from 05-06. The Budget contains the increase.
- Existing Agency – St. Andrews College – Community Access Channel – Requesting \$8,000 an increase of \$3,000. Funded at \$5,000.
- Existing Agency – LRCOG – Requested \$25,550 in dues and matching funds. This is an increase of \$466. Total Requested is in the budget.
- Existing Agency – Historic Properties – Requesting \$18,000. This is an increase of \$4,000. New Request is in the budget.

After some discussion about the request by Historic Properties for \$18,000, the Board of Commissioners agreed to fund Historic Properties at \$14,000, the same amount it received in FY 2005-2006.

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- Existing Agency – Kuumba Festival - \$2,000.
- Existing Agency – New Request – Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is requesting \$9,000 for programs that have been previously cut by the County and now are being cut by the State. Budget does not contain the request since the request was made on 5/9.

County Manager Crumpton said as a result of some State cuts, \$9,000 is being requested by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Commissioner Alford said the funding request is necessary in order for the County to provide services for its delinquent youth. Chairman Willis said this is another program the State is passing down to the County.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to approve funding in the amount of \$5,000 for the Juvenile Justice program. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Crumpton said the County netted about \$12,000 as a result of the above cuts in funding.

He said the tax rate projection for FY 2007-2008, based on a 15 percent annual growth in Medicaid, five percent annual growth in school funding and providing the tax base stays the same, would be \$1.14.

County Manager Crumpton commended the Department Heads for holding their line items and for asking only for what they needed in the proposed budget.

The Commissioners agreed to hold the Public Hearing on the FY 2006-2007 Budget Plan at the regular meeting June 5, 2006.

Commissioner McPhatter asked if the Commissioners would reconsider the funding request proposed by the Literacy Council.

Chairman Willis suggested that Commissioner Alford secure a detailed financial statement from BART for distribution to the governing board for further consideration.

In other business, Mr. Patterson asked the Commissioners to consider scheduling a workshop in which the revised Personnel Policy could be reviewed.

Mr. Patterson said a demonstration of the time management system could be made available for review by the Commissioners.

Mr. Patterson said the County sent out an RFP for audit services. He said Lundin, the County's auditor previously, is in the midst of a peer review.

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Motion was made by Vice Chair Gholston and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow to go into Closed Session held in accordance with N.C. General Statute §143-318.11(a)(6) to consider qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointments, or conditions of initial employment of a present or prospective public officer or employee. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

OPEN SESSION RESUMED

Chairman Willis thanked County Manager Crumpton and Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Patterson for the outstanding job they did in preparing the budget for review by the Commissioners.

Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to recess to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 24, 2006 in the County Manager's Office, 231 East Cronly Street. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis
Chairman