

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Workshop on Thursday, May 12, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC. The purpose of the meeting was to meet with the Avery Fire Commission, Avery Sheriff's Office, and Avery County Board of Education regarding the Fiscal Year Budget 2016/2017.

Members Present: Martha Hicks, Chair; Maxine Laws, Vice-Chair; Faith Lacey; Blake Vance

Members Absent: Reo Griffith

Call To Order

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Tim Greene led prayer.

Avery County Sheriff's Office – Sheriff Kevin Frye

Chair Hicks stated that the Board is here to listen today and that no vote would be taken at this meeting. Sheriff Kevin Frye thanked Tim Greene and Nancy Johnson for the well thought out and well done proposal for the Sheriff's Office budget. I do have a couple of concerns. The one thing is that every year for 3-4 years we have tried to get the part time administrative assistant changed to a full time administrative position. We are an agency with 25 road deputies. We serve 1600 to 1800 civil processes a year, we have 30 sex offenders. The concealed weapons permits have been out of the roof. With the three functions of concealed carry permits, civil processes and sex offenders that puts my administrative assistant 4 ½ hours in the hole. That does not count dealing with the public, doing deposits, keeping the books, fingerprinting all of the people that come in there or criminal records and job applications. That does not count the vacation, sick time, holiday time. I would like to make the part time person a full time position. If we house 15 inmates we will generate an income of over \$62,500 that would leave us a profit of \$30,704 of county money that is above and beyond what the cost of the position is. There was discussion about the SMCP program and the administrative assistant.

Sheriff Frye stated that he had added in this budget that was not in the budget that he gave Tim Greene. Keith Laws was the certified Def tech officer. I am going to see Lee Buchanan to school and get him to be the certified def tech officer. In order to use tear gas grenades, flashbangs, anything of that nature you must be certified as a def tech officer.

Sheriff Frye stated that he had added back in to his budget \$20,000 for the drug task force position. There was discussion regarding the drug task force position. The Sheriff stated that if he can't make the drug task force happen or make enough money to operate the \$20,000 will go back into general fund.

Sheriff Frye explained that for several years he had been saying that just getting three cars a year was not enough. He said that finally we have got in so deep that we have to do something. He said that Mr. Greene has approved 5 cars this year. If we do 5 cars this year if you do the math and look what is coming up in 2017 that means we are still going to be 9 cars with over 100,000 miles on them. If we could do six cars this year and seven cars next year, we can get on a rotation of four cars, four cars, four cars and five cars. There was discussion regarding cars.

Sheriff Frye said that he had added two tasers to the three that he had asked for previously. Sheriff Frye asked for defibrillators for the cars and for the jail. Mr. Greene stated that the defibrillators for the jail were still included in the jail budget. Mr. Greene stated that two washing machines had been included in the jail budget. Sheriff Frye requested that the maintenance agreements be increased on the fingerprint machines.

Recess

Chair Hicks called for a brief recess.

Chair Hicks declared the workshop to be back in regular session.

Avery Fire Commission

Bill Beuttell, Avery Fire Commission Chairman, explained that the Fire Commission had accumulated the different budget requests from the different departments in the county. Last budget year we spent approximately 40 hours per person trying to go over the budgets cutting them before presenting them to you and last year when we came to you with our budget we were given the fire tax and we had to deal with it. We took it upon ourselves to present to you the budget as was requested from each department knowing it would have to be adjusted at a later date. Last year we had an increase of 3 to 3 ½ percent because of growth in the county. Our expenses that we have are going up about 6 percent a year so we ask you to consider that. We are continuing to have an enrollment problem with volunteers. If we don't deal with it in the short term, we are going to deal with it in the long term. We are asking that you put this in the back of your mind about the enrollment. The equipment we have in this county are in good shape. We are looking at spending \$350,000 plus per truck. We are trying to institute a refurbishment program.

We are also trying to maximize the state grants because that is 50% savings and we are trying to work toward \$30,000 per department. The undesignated fund balance is a little over \$100,000 which is 4% of our budget; we would like to increase that through the budgetary process. We are running a pretty smooth ship right now. We ask for your understanding and assistance.

Mr. Greene stated that we are projection \$2,392,000 which would be \$35,000 over last year. Mr. Beuttell stated that if we get 3 percent we will be going backwards because of the increase in expenses.

Mr. Beuttell stated that if we could get you to appropriate the 6% increase in our budget that would help. We are doing everything we can to run an efficient organization. Chair Hicks stated that the Board appreciated the Fire Commission.

Recess

Chair Hicks asked for a brief recess.

Chair Hicks declared the workshop to be back in session.

Avery County Board of Education

David Burlison, Superintendent of Avery County Schools, did a power point presentation about Avery County Schools. The operating budget summary for 2016/2017 includes

Total Need---\$5,600,012.04.

Grants and Other Revenues - \$1,093,520

Total Local Operating Expenses Needed for the 2016/2017--\$4,506,492.04

Request of the County Commissioners---\$4,506,492.04

Increase of \$168,974.04 (3.9%)

The increase comes from a reduction in eRate reimbursements to support our network and communication costs; estimated increased required employee benefits; potential salary increases.

The capital budget includes

Total Capital Need----\$2,626,648.00

We are asking for \$741,755 from the county commissioners. We have a need that will need to be addressed soon and that is the bleachers at the Avery High Gym. They are 50 years old. Our maintenance director is concerned about the bleachers. We will need to secure an architect and engineer. A future project to be thinking about is air conditioning for Avery Middle School. We would like to phase that in.

Jeff Jaynes went over the capital project budget request booklet. Mr. Jaynes stated that he wanted to make the Board of Commissioners aware of the roof at Crossnore Elementary School. A roofing engineer will be looking at this during the summer.

Mr. Jaynes explained that 25% of the 5.6 million dollar operating budget goes to pay salaries. We have 25.8 non-instructional positions; 14.4 positions that are grant funded. The primary funding from local budgets pays the people that the state will not. They will not pay for maintenance department, technology department, transportation department, etc. 32% of budget pays benefits. There is a 3% local supplement given to every employee.

Mr. Jaynes went over the rest of the operating budget. He stated that only 10% of the overall budget goes into central office administration.

Adjourn

Chair Hicks adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Martha Hicks, Chair
Avery County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST: _____
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk