

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Workshop on Thursday, April 30, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC.

Members Present: Robert "Reo" Griffith, Chairman; Maxine Laws, Vice-Chair; Martha Hicks; Faye Lacey; Blake Vance

Members Absent: None

**Call To Order**

Chairman Griffith called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Chairman Griffith stated that the Board instructed the County Manager and the Finance Officer with some specific duties yesterday of which they have diligently worked at and have come with some more decreases. We have bits of good news. Chairman Griffith stated that he had been on the telephone with Jeff Jaynes and Mr. Burleson and that concerning the approximately \$400,000 a good portion of that we may not have to incorporate into our budget pending state funding.

Tim Greene led prayer.

Tim Greene, County Manager, stated that there had been some telephone calls to the commissioners regarding the Little League funding. In the 2013/2014 budget, Little League never requested any money but it was still in the budget. I held the check during that budget year waiting on a request for that money but never got a request and voided that check. In the 2014/2015 budget, the money was not requested and we never sent the money out so I didn't put it in the budget. There was discussion regarding Little League. It was decided to fund Little League at \$2500.00.

Mr. Greene stated that he and the finance officer went back through the budget and made additional cuts. We took out any insurance that someone does not have. If someone takes a position and requires insurance we will not have money in the budget for that. In an attempt to reduce the cushion at the end of the year, we have made cuts. We have got it such to where in our opinion we may have more line item transfers than usual and there may be some budget amendments that need to be made. Mr. Greene explained the cuts that have been made up to this point. Mr. Greene stated that anytime you do not fund a recurring expense with a recurring revenue you are going to be in trouble unless you have some place to take it from. There was discussion regarding paying debt service out of the old capital reserve fund.

Chairman Griffith stated before the Board has done cuts we are at a 5 cent tax rate decrease.

Gerald McKinney, County Attorney, was present at the budget meeting to explain the "capital reserve fund". Mr. McKinney stated "I spoke yesterday with Kara Millonzi about what had happened with respect to the money we had been putting in to what we believed was a capital reserve fund. We have a statute that controls or determines the capital reserve fund. The general statute is 159-118. Every time that it is funded you have to make a resolution and the resolution has to say what the purpose is for, how much is going to be for that purpose, where the money is coming from and how long it is going to last. In 2006, the Board of Commissioners enacted a resolution regarding the capital reserve fund. Ms. Millonzi stated that a resolution needed to be made every time that money is transferred into a capital reserve fund. What she said is that for the years 2006-2009 that it was not a capital reserve fund and that money was still in general fund. In 2009, the statute had been followed in so far as it stated the purposes, amounts, length of time and source of the money. In 2009 we have a valid capital reserve that was created and to the extent it was funded that year but it went on to do the same thing this other resolution did. When you put money in the capital reserve fund you have to have a specific resolution for that period of time. In 2009 we have money in a capital reserve fund and every other year according to her we do not have a capital reserve fund. Any money from 2009 until now is considered to be in the general fund. Mr. McKinney stated that he is supposed to get a written opinion from Kara Millonzi regarding this issue. Chairman Griffith stated that whatever the written opinion is to make sure the manager, clerk and commissioners have a copy of that.

Jeff Jaynes, Avery County School Finance Director, stated that the school board had asked for \$417,673 increase in the budget which the Commissioners had committed to. If the state allocates the funding for transportation and drivers education then the request would be \$179,248 for the increase. Chairman Griffith stated that instead of the Board having to incorporate \$417,673 dollars into the budget which we had committed today, this is pending state funding, we are being asked to incorporate \$179,248 into our budget with a promise if state funding does not come through with a promise of an extra \$238,425.00.

**Unanimous consensus by the Board if state funding does not come through to the school board the Board of Commissioners will provide the other \$238,425.00.**

Mr. Greene stated that right now we are committing to give the school board \$179,248. We have just committed to \$179,248 extra than what was built into the budget. In the budget we have \$14,000 in the available for appropriation. We have been funding drug court at \$10,000. A new line item for drug court will be created. New requests for funding were discussed. Drug court will be funded at \$12,000; \$2,000 more than last year. No funding for the smoke chaser. Chamber of Commerce will be funded at \$3,000. Oasis will be funded at \$1,000.

There was discussion regarding the available for appropriation. If anything was transferred from this fund, then the board will see this in their agenda consent items the following month with an explanation of where the money was moved to. The available for appropriation is funded at \$16,000 which the \$16,000 is spoken for. Chairman Griffith suggested that \$19,000 be added to the available for appropriation.

**Recess**

Chairman Griffith called for a brief recess.

Chairman Griffith declared the meeting to be back in order after a brief recess.

Discussion regarding the "special" appropriations. These are put in at the same amount as last year. Yellow Mountain funded at \$24,000; Toe River Health District \$300,000; Humane Society funded at \$3,000; \$1,000 for Shriners; Museum \$3,000; Avery County Little League \$2500; Smart Start \$5,000. YMCA will not be funded.

Discussion regarding Smoky Mountain Center funding. The County Manager was instructed to contact the County Attorney regarding the amount of funding and if this funding can be cut.

**Recess**

Chairman Griffith called for a recess for lunch.

Chairman Griffith declared the meeting to be back in order at 12:30 p.m.

Discussion regarding outsourcing the in-home aides at the Senior Center. The Senior Center is recommending that all of this service be outsourced to another facility. This would allow the center to increase their service by 15%. The downside of this would be that the Avery County employees would not be county employees. More information was requested regarding this issue.

Each department's budget was examined and discussed. Consensus by the majority of the board to remove \$20,000 dollars from the Drug Fund Expenses line item regarding the drug task force position; \$4,000 will be left in the budget for dog food, veterinarian expenses, etc. Consensus by the majority of the board not to include a new position for administrative assistant for the Sheriff's office.

A tentative date for the next budget meeting will be Monday, May 11, 2015; time to be determined.

**Adjourn**

Chairman Griffith adjourned this meeting at 2:00 p.m.

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**Robert Griffith, Chairman**  
**Avery County Board of Commissioners**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk

