

Special Meeting
Monday, May 17, 2019
9:00am
Chowan County Public Safety Center
305 West Freemason St.
Edenton, NC

Present Chair Patti Kersey, Commissioners Ron Cummings, Don Faircloth (came in late), Bob Kirby, Greg Bonner, Ellis Lawrence and Larry McLaughlin.

Staff present County Manager Kevin Howard, Finance Officer Cathy Smith and Board Clerk Susanne Stallings.

This meeting was recorded. A copy of the meeting audio is in the meeting file labeled May 17, 2019.

FY 2019-20 Budget Workshop

Mr. Howard noted that the Board previously requested he bring back another budget with little to no tax increase. He stated this budget reduces the tax increase from 3 cents to .75 cents. He noted he and the finance officer met with various departments. He stated Department Heads were given instructions to find areas to reduce expenses. He noted that many pulled off capital expenses, travel and some contracts were amended. He stated this is not an ideal budget but does provide what has been requested. He provided the Board with a handout summarizing the increases and decreases from the original budget. A copy of the handouts is in the meeting file labeled May 17, 2019.

Mr. Howard noted the increases in the budget include:

- Elections request for staff for additional Presidential primary. He stated he would recommend bringing in the Elections Director to discuss this.
- Courthouse – the budget includes a request for a security window that has been requested by the Clerk of Court for several years.
- Library-decrease of \$14,000. Reductions are for Flood Insurance (\$10,000) and Contribution to Operating Expense (\$4,000).
- Discussion of transitional positions that are budgeted for both Land Records and Finance pending possible retirements of current staff. The positions will not be filled until the position is announced.
- Vehicles included are three for the Sheriff Lease program, a used vehicle for Planning and Inspections and one for the Animal Shelter which is split between the other two counties.

The Board took a brief recess, afterwards Chair Kersey called the meeting back to order.

The Board discussed the various revenue lines including the fees associated with solar farm developments and solar permit fees. Mr. Howard stated he will look to see what other Counties are charging. He noted that the cost of the permit fee must be for the actual cost to the County.

The Board called on various departments to discuss their budget requests.

Sheriff/911/Jail

Chief Deputy Andy Bunch discussed the Sheriff's budget requests for the Sheriff, 911 and Jail budgets. The laptop request was discussed and it was decided the Sheriff would hold the line on budget requests. The Board discussed the fingerprint machine. It was noted the revenue line would increase \$5,000 for the cost of the RMS server. It was also noted the radios in the CIP plan would be taken out.

Elections

Elections Director Terrence Meyers discussed his budget request. He provided a handout explaining the additional personnel request to cover time for the 2nd presidential primary. The Board discussed removal of the additional part time personnel. Later in the meeting Mr. Meyers provided the actual reduction amount.

Library

Librarian Jennifer Finlay provided information on the Library budget request. She stated the increase from the County would help to fund a salary increase and replacement of three computers. She stated the salary increase is only approved if the regional Board approves it. She stated she was happy with the Manager's recommended budget.

The Board took a 30 minute break for lunch. Following lunch Chair Kersey called the meeting back to order.

IT Budget

Commissioner Lawrence discussed network security concerns with the Director Cord Palmer.

EMS

Unit 3 coverage and the loss of revenue was discussed. This matter will come back to the Board at a future budget meeting.

The Board took a brief recess, afterwards Chair Kersey called the meeting back to order.

Tax

Tax Administrator Melissa Radke provided the Board with her request to fund the current part time position in the Tax Office at a full time level. She stated that one personnel is eligible for

retirement. She noted the total transactions would justify the increase. She noted the cost would be split with the Water Fund to assist with Water collections.

Changes

The following changes were noted:

- Increase revenue \$5,000 with revenue from Town for RMS server
- Reduction in Elections \$20,945
- Computer purchase in Sheriff Department will be split in thirds over three years reduction of \$7,834

The Board noted currently the budget is a ½ cent tax increase.

Schools

School Superintendent Rob Jackson provided the Board with the school budget request for both Current Expense and Capital Outlay for 2019-20. He noted that he was concerned regarding the appropriation remaining flat. He thanked the Board for the increase from the previous budget of \$25,000 however the schools received a bill in the amount of \$19,911.84 which was unexpected to cover the cost of the SRO. He stated this was due to an unexpected increase in salaries. The Current Expense increase request is \$388,858. He stated his concerns that the manager's recommended budget keeps the current expense funding flat for another year. Dr. Jackson noted the Capital Outlay request is \$426,651 an increase of \$17,289 over the previous year.

Chair Kersey left near the end of the school presentation.

Adjourn

Being no further business Commissioner Kirby moved that the special meeting adjourned. Vice Chair Cummings asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0). Chair Kersey counted as a yes vote.

Patti F. Kersey, Chair

Susanne Stallings, Clerk