

June 4, 2009

The Duplin County Board of Commissioners met in Recessed Session on Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Room, County Administration Building (224 Seminary Street), Kenansville, North Carolina.

Present: Chairman Cary Turner and Commissioners David Fussell, Frances Parks, Harold Raynor, Reginald Wells (by conference call), and Zettie Williams

Absent: None

Also Present: Mr. Mike Aldridge, County Manager; Ms. Julia Herring, Administrative Officer; and Ms. Teresa Lanier, Finance Officer; and Ms. Wendy Sivori, County Attorney

Commissioner Williams gave the invocation.

Motion was made by Commissioner Raynor, seconded by Commissioner Parks, carried unanimously, to approve the Consent Agenda which included Budget Amendments #0233 - #0235.

Mr. Brian Pearce, EMS Director, presented various options for EMS site locations as requested at the May 21, 2009 board meeting. He discussed the challenges he is dealing with in retaining and hiring paramedics due to all counties surrounding Duplin County paying higher salaries for EMS staff. Mr. Pearce stated that if he were allowed to use funds from vacant positions within his budget, he could fund a salary increase for paramedics. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Raynor, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to allow the EMS Director to use funds within the EMS budget from vacant positions to fund a salary increase for paramedics. Commissioners Fussell, Raynor, Turner, Wells, and Williams voted for; Commissioner Parks voted against.

Mr. Pearce gave an update to the board regarding the fees charged for EMS and fire continuing education classes at the community colleges. He stated that most certification and continuing education classes are taught through James Sprunt Community College and are fee-exempt. Mr. Pearce stated that a bill has been introduced to the state legislature that would require a \$45 fee per class to be charged for these types of classes. If the bill passes, continuing education classes for the county would not be taught through James Sprunt Community College.

Mr. Bee Barnett, Solid Waste Director, discussed the future capital needs of the Solid Waste Department. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Fussell to reduce the household user fee to \$60 yearly.

Commissioner Fussell withdrew his motion in order for Mr. Aldridge to review the calculation of the household user fee. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Parks, for the household user fee to remain at \$90 per year. Commissioners Parks, Raynor, Wells, and Williams voted for; Commissioners Fussell and Turner voted against.

Ms. JoAnn Hartley, Duplin County Board of Education Finance Officer, discussed cost-saving measures being taken at the board of education such as no county vehicles are driven home at night and, non-essential cell phones will be terminated when the contract ends in March. Ms. Hartley reviewed the local miscellaneous revenues and expenses and presented a proposed budget of local funds for the board's approval. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Bo Mullins, BOE Human Resources Director, was present.

Motion was made by Commissioner Fussell, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, to not approve the proposed budget as presented by Ms. JoAnn Hartley and that the Board of Education obtain the approval of the Board of Commissioners for any budget amendment that increases or decreases any purpose, function, or project allocation by greater than 10 percent of the allocation provided by the county to the Duplin County Board of Education pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-433. In addition, the board of commissioners request a quarterly report as to the current allocation and expenditure of county funds.

Commissioner Williams amended the motion that the Duplin County Board of Education obtain the approval of the Board of Commissioners for any budget amendment that increases or decreases any purpose, function, or project allocation by greater than 25 percent of the allocation provided by the county to the Duplin County Board of Education pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-433. Commissioners Parks, Wells, and Williams voted for; Commissioners Fussell, Raynor, and Turner voted against. A tie vote results in no action taken.

Since the amended motion failed, the vote on the original motion was: Commissioners Fussell, Parks, Raynor, Turner, and Williams voted for; Commissioner Wells voted against.

It was the consensus of the board to not hold the joint meeting approved at the June 1, 2009 meeting with the Duplin County Board of Education until after June 15, 2009.

Mr. Aldridge reviewed the fire tax rates for the local volunteer fire departments that are in a fire tax district. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Aldridge reviewed the non-general fund budget. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Aldridge stated that there are five county employees who have obtained a college degree this past fiscal year. He explained that for approximately the past ten years, the county has rewarded employees furthering their education with a two percent, or ½ step increase. Mr. Aldridge stated that the increase for these employees was not in the budget presented on June 1, 2009 but he urged commissioners to consider continuing this policy.

It was the consensus of the board to give a two percent salary increase to the five employees that had obtained their degree this year.

Mr. Aldridge informed the board that Ms. Cynthia Potter, Assistant Economic Development Director, had recently resigned.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Parks, carried unanimously, to instruct Commissioner Williams to contact Ms. Potter with an offer of a six month contract and return to the board with the contract terms for final approval by the board.

Mr. Aldridge discussed the policy for paying half of retirees' health insurance benefits. He stated that due to new Governmental Accounting Standards Board regulations, future costs regarding post-retirement health insurance would need to be shown as a liability on county financial statements.

It was the consensus of the board to wait till the audit report recommendations by Evergreen Solutions, LLC.

Mr. Aldridge stated that the school resource officers are not funded in the current county budget.

It was the consensus of the board for the Duplin County Board of Education to allot funding for the school resource officer in the BOE budget.

Motion was made by Commissioner Fussell, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to set the tax rate for real property at .69 per \$100 valuation for FY 2009-10. Commissioners Fussell, Raynor, Turner, and Williams voted for; Commissioner Parks voted against. Commissioner Wells was not available during the vote; therefore, his vote counts with the majority.

The board adjourned to meet again on Monday, June 15, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium at the Duplin Commons Office Complex (165 Agriculture Drive), Kenansville, North Carolina.

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Clerk