

May 24, 2021

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a Recessed Meeting on Monday, May 24, 2021 at 5:00 PM by using ZOOM—virtual meeting software (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) for Facebook Live Streaming and in person in the Commissioners' Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Tracey Johnson, Ann Keyes, Carol Phelps, Bill Sexton and Julius Walker, Jr. were present. Also present were County Manager/County Attorney Curtis Potter and Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett. Finance Officer Missy Dixon was unable to attend.

Chair Sexton called the meeting to order.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: Chair Sexton added Item 3 Closed Session for attorney-client privilege NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3).

FY22 BUDGET WORKSESSION: Mr. Potter said that the Public Utilities Director and the EMS Director are here if Commissioners would like to start with them. The Board wanted to start with EMS (Tab 37).

Mr. Potter explained the first table is for revenues for both EMS and Non-Emergent Transport. The next table is for expenditures that are EMS without the Transport expenses. Justifications and supporting documents are here also. There is no capital outlay in this year's budget for EMS. (They may be asking to replace one transport vehicle next year and ½ of the stretchers.)

Chair Sexton asked if the fund balance on the first page is correct. Mr. Potter explained. Chair Sexton said it looks like this is the lowest amount that the County has had to pull out of the fund balance for EMS. Discussion ensued regarding the CARES ACT FUNDING. Ms. O'Neal, EMS Director, said she was very careful in what she spent with that money. Mr. Potter did say that Transport was holding their own. Chair Sexton asked if what is going on at the hospital helps us. Ms. O'Neal said when the hospital was on diversion it helped the County some. Washington Regional Medical Center (WMRC) has done a lot of work in the EMS Station there and provided computers and internet which has reduced EMS bills. Ms. O'Neal said she has talked to Mr. Avignone (CEO of WMRC) and he said he wants to put a shower and kitchenette in the EMS Station and expand the sleeping area. Ms. O'Neal said she thinks the citizens are starting to trust the hospital again. Commissioner Keyes gave kudos to EMS staff—she has heard lots of good things about them and how they do their jobs. Chair Sexton asked about the line item named Fuel. Ms. O'Neal said it was decided to change the previous name of that line item since it was mostly spent on fuel for the ambulances. Only a few of the County's ambulances still run on diesel. Ms. O'Neal also said EMS now has departmental supplies for EMS and Transport.

Ms. O'Neal thanked the Board for their support of EMS.

Mr. Potter said the Landfill is Tab 33 and Mr. Doremus Luton, Public Utilities Director is here to answer any questions the Board may have about this budget. Mr. Potter started the discussion about the Landfill. Chair Sexton asked what the \$92,691 is for. Mr. Potter said that it is there to be appropriated, but if not used, it will roll over to next year. Chair Sexton asked if the Landfill is taking away the scrap metal. Mr. Potter said sometimes the Landfill waits until it has a lot to take or sometimes they take it as they get it. They used to have a contractor remove it for us, but the County would lose money if a contractor did it. The Inspector will also tell the Landfill Director when there is too much scrap at the Landfill and that it needs to be removed. Mr. Potter said the County is looking to reduce the amount from 8,000 lbs. (4 tons) per account to 4,000 lbs. (2 tons) per account and this might bring in more revenue. Discussion ensued.

Under Tab 35, the water system was discussed next. Mr. Potter said of note, there is no increase planned in the water rate. The County is under review on the integrity of its water system. Commissioner Johnson asked is the County working on changing its policy regarding water cutoffs. Mr. Potter said the water cutoffs have been dropping every month. Mr. Potter said he would rather have this conversation when the Finance Officer is in attendance. Commissioner Johnson said she thought one of the issues was where someone paid their bill at 5:00 PM on the 15th and their water wouldn't get cut back on until the next day. Discussion ensued. Mr. Potter said the Water Dept. has started calling those who didn't pay their bill on the due date to let them know if they don't pay by the 15th that their water will be cut off along with the Hyper-Reach messages going out. Mr. Potter said he feels this is helping to cut down the number of cutoffs. Chair Sexton asked where is the security fence going to go. Mr. Luton said it's going up around the whole facility (all around the plant). They don't want people tampering with the County's water system.

Mr. Potter went on to discuss the School System, Tab 26, Fund 21. The information should read \$240,000.

Next was drainage, Tab 34. Mr. Potter reminded everyone that there will be a public hearing at the June 7 meeting on the Eddie Smith Service District.

Next is Tab 38 which is the Airport for projects and Tab 39 for operations. Mr. Potter said the County may need to use some of these funds if the County decides to build a new terminal. Mr. Potter said there is also the possibility of selling timber from the airport for revenue. The FAA has indicated that the County may need to cut down some trees. There is also a ditch mower request and after touring the airport, Mr. Potter said he can see that there is a need for this; however, Chair Sexton said the County should contract it out because a ditch mower is a difficult machine to maneuver. Mr. Potter said he is hoping to have an Advisory Committee meeting of the Airport and that will be a topic of discussion. Mr. Potter suggested leaving the funds in the budget and possibly use it for a contractor. (He can move it within the line items.) Chair Sexton said even after trees are cut, ditches and land still need to be maintained. Commissioner Johnson and Chair Sexton each said they would like to be on the Airport Advisory Committee.

Tab 24, Social Services, Fund 51, flows through a trust account which is required now to be in the Budget Ordinance and will get its own Tab with approximately \$130,000 in it.

Mr. Potter said Fund 57 is not in the budget book for the CARES ACT FUND. Mr. Potter said there is nothing to use going forward, but will put the new ARP funds in there.

Mr. Potter said Fund 34, Tab 40 is the TTA. Their budget is \$161,000.

Mr. Potter said Fund 69, is the 911 Fund, Tab 41. The capital outlay line contains the PSAP upgrade. The remainder will be in next year's budget for new consoles. Commissioner Keyes asked would this upgrade help for the firefighters to get calls in the east end of the County. Commissioner Keyes said 911 had been using a patch, but it doesn't seem to be working. Mr. Potter said he will ask Ms. Fikes about it. Mr. Potter will be looking for ways to use the ARP funds to help since many firehouses were not able to hold fundraisers this past year due to COVID. Commissioner Keyes reminded everyone that our firefighters are all volunteers.

Mr. Potter said Fund 70, Tab 42 is for revaluation. There was an increase from \$33,000 to \$40,000/year because the cost of performing revals has increased. There has been more activity in this fund for last year and this year.

Mr. Potter said Tab 2 is for Budgetary Comparisons/Summaries. Commissioner Johnson had some questions. She asked about the increase in the insurance. Mr. Potter said the insurance company quoted us the workers comp and property piece separately and we've already gotten the cost for this year and the increase comes from having newer vehicles on the policy and higher rates for workers comp. Also, Commissioner Johnson said she was under the impression that the Albemarle Commission was not going to increase their fees. Mr. Potter said it is broken down in the general fund. Commissioner Johnson said she knows they had to increase the Senior Nutrition Meals program. Mr. Potter said look at Tab 32, Essential Services, it lists the total amount for the Albemarle Commission at \$13,088 and it has been broken down.

Commissioner Johnson had questions about the Commerce Building budget. She asked Mr. Potter if the County has finished with that debt. Mr. Potter said YES! Mr. Potter said since that debt has been paid the County is looking at refinancing the water bond. The rate now is 3.7% and could be reduced to 1.9% and that could save the County \$50,000 a year. Chair Sexton asked how much insurance the County has on the Commerce Building.

Chair Sexton asked about the Security at the Courthouse. Mr. Potter said it falls under Buildings/Facilities, Tab 13, Contracted Services-Courthouse Security—the County was able to use CRF funds for some of the salary for the guards during COVID-19. Chair Sexton said he feels he and Mr. Potter should meet with the judge to discuss the Courthouse security. Chair Sexton feels the Security Service is a waste of money. He would rather give extra money to the Sheriff's Dept. and have one of the County's deputies handling Security. Chair Sexton sees them not doing anything anytime he comes up here to pay his bills. Mr. Potter said a lot of bad things have happened in courthouses across the country. Mr. Potter said he will reach out to Judge Sermons. Mr. Potter needs to talk to him about mask mandates anyway. Chair Sexton said he doesn't feel we need the guards there every day, maybe just on court days. Commissioner Walker said in this day and time you never know what may happen and the County needs security in the Courthouse. Things happen when you least expect it...not just across the country, but even in our own backyard. People are always looking for opportunities. Mr. Potter said he has talked with the Sheriff about this before and it is challenging. Mr. Potter said he would rather have the Sheriff at the meeting to discuss this. Mr. Potter also said he would like to talk to Judge Sermons first. Chair Sexton said there does need to be discussions on this. Chair Sexton also asked about the Probation/Parole building that the County still leases. Mr. Potter said it's still in the budget. Mr. Potter said installation of the phones and internet for EMS in the Strader

Building was just completed and EMS is working out of that office. Ms. Mary Moscato will move over to Ms. O'Neal's previous office that she was using in the County Manager's Administration Building and then Ms. Moscato's previous office will be used by the Emergency Management Director and our offices and the Commissioners' Room will become the EOC. Planning & Safety will move to the Strader Building while the building at the Airport is being worked on for them to move out there.

Mr. Potter then went on to discuss the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Tab 46.

FY22 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN LIST (DRAFT v 5.24.21)

QP ITEM	FUND	DEPT	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	MGR SCORE	FY22 BOARD						FUNDING SOURCES	NOTES			
						FY22 REC	FY22 GF	APPROV	FY23 REC	FY24 REC	FY25 REC			FY26 REC		
1	30-GF	TAX	Tax Assessment & Collections Software	180,000	2	180,000	180,000		80,000					GF Balance; consider spreading over multi yrs	Estimate based on old vendor proposal. MGR Recommends Fall 2021 RFP to solicit competitive bids for BOCC review and vendor presentations	
2	30-GF	TAX	Eag Review Pictometry Software	86,000	3	0	0		TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD		General Fund Balance; Potential Grant Funding?	Benefits Tax assessment, GS, ES11, EM; MGR Recommends a fall 2021 RFP for competitive bids and/or presentations to staff and BOCC to demonstrate benefits and discuss costs/QP inclusion. Prior vendor indicated ability to spread costs over 3 installments	
3	30-GF	ROD	Replacement of 1 server, 3 PCs, 1 Large Format Scanner	25,000	2	25,000	25,000							GF Balance	Paid from restricted ROD funds already in GF Balance	
4	30-GF	IT	Del TR40 Tower Server Replacement	30,000	3	30,000	30,000							GF Balance; ARP?		
5	30-GF	IT/IS	Replace County Phone System	20,000	3	20,000								GF Balance		
6	30-GF	IT	Additional Contracted IT Services	30,000	3	0	0							GF Balance; ARP?		
				84,000		265,000	155,000	0								
BUILDING & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE																
7	10-GF	FAC	Courthouse Roof Repairs (4 of 6 sections)	150,000	1	150,000	150,000							GF Balance		
8	10-GF	FAC	Courthouse Awning	10,000	4	0	0		10,000						Roof takes priority	Attempt to RFP w/ other repaving opportunities in fall of 2021
9	30-GF	DS	Repaving DS	6,800	3	30,000	50,000							State Funding Over 50% recouped on CAP		
10	10-GF	SENIOR	Repaving - MTW/Senior Center	105,500	2	75,000	75,000							Consider Grant Opp		
11	10-GF	FAC	Repaving - Courthouse	30,000	3	0	0		30,000							
12	30-GF	FAC	Dream Care Providers Roof Repair	20,000	2	0	0									
13	30-GF	FAC	STRADER BUILDING DEPT RELOCATION PROJECT	17,000	2	17,000	17,000							GF Balance - To be offset by reduced rental costs for Probation/Parole		
14	30-GF	DS	DS Offices Renovation (Repainting 2-4k-2-6k) & Carpet Replacement (6k)	92,000	4	92,000	92,000							State Funding Over 50% recouped on CAP	Over 30 years since replaced	
15	30-GF	JAIL	Replace aging plumbing within detention center	30,000	1	30,000	30,000							GF Balance; ARP; Grant Opportunity?	Consider ARP eligibility	
16	30-GF	REC	Handicap Ramp/Access @ Gym	30,000	3	30,000	30,000							GF Balance; Grant Opportunities (PART)	Consider ARP eligibility due to ability to utilize gym for elections purposes with handicap access	
17	30-GF	FAC	Annual Roof Repairs Reserve	40,000	2	40,000	40,000		40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000		GF Balance	Consider separating into Central Services or Sep Fund	
18	30-GF	FAC	Annual HVAC Repair/Replacement Reserve	20,000	2	20,000	20,000		20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000		GF Balance	Consider separating into Central Services or Sep Fund	
19	58	Comm Bldg	Commerce Center Improvements/Punch List Items Prior to Sale/Lease	TBD	2	TBD	TBD	0						Grants; 15-7.1 Incentive; to be offset by proceeds of sale/lease and additional tax revenues		
VEHICLES & MAJOR EQUIPMENT																
20	30-GF	SHERIFF	3 Replacement Patrol Cruisers + Utility	96,324	2	97,500	97,500		97,500	97,500	97,500	97,500				
21	30-GF	JAIL R/H	1mpacity Sheriff Radio for 2021 VRF R Compliance	130,000	2	130,000	0		13,000	73,000				Grant; utility, off BMS, MGR to Grant	Exhaust other funding opportunities first before budgeting from GF Balance	
22	30-GF	JAIL	Deallocated vehicles for staff transportation	250,000	4	0	0								Use fleet vehicles for sporadic training needs	
23	10-GF	JAIL	Comprehensive Monitoring System Upgrade	21,278	3	200,000	200,000							GF Balance; ARP; Grant Opportunity?	Consider ARP eligibility; exhaust funding options and review scope of existing system; MGR Rec based on need to replace several individual items	
24	10-GF	RIVERLIGHT	35 Passenger Van	94,500	2	94,500	94,500		TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD		State Funding (85%)		
25	30-GF	SENIOR	15 Passenger Van	50,483	4	0	0							Grant?	Utilize Riverlight resources for sporadic travel needs related to program travel or fleet vehicles for staff travel needs	
26	30-GF	REC	TRACTOR	12,000	3	0	0							GF/Grants	Review overall BVC needs/resources in fall FY22	
27	10-GF	REC	DUMP TRAILER	7,000	4	7,000	3,500							GF Balance/Grants/Supplies Rec Property	Ask Rec to surplus remainder	
28	30-GF	CENTRALSER	Annual Cost to Replace Old Copiers Countywide	35,000	2	35,000	35,000		35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000		GF Balance	RFP in Fall; Est. include lease and maintenance	
29	10-GF	CENTRAL SER	2 New Vehicles for General Countywide Travel Needs	35,000	3	10,000	10,000		30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000		GF/Could utilize 5 year lease option	Utilize general fleet vehicles for sporadic travel needs to reduce overhead of individualized dept. travel vehicles.	
NEW FACILITIES OR MAJOR PROJECTS																
30	57		NEW AV/EM FACILITY @ AIRPORT	5,000,000	2	150,000	150,000		350,000	2,000,000	0	0		SJM Legis Request; Multiple Grants; 5.5M - SJM est. local	FY22 REC based on need to begin budgeting for design/engineering/project management costs	
31	30-GF	REC	NEW GYM	TBD	1	0	0									
OTHER																
32	57	REC	PARTY (Parks & Recreation Trust Fund) 50/50 GRANT MATCH	TBD	4	40,000	40,000		30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000		50% State Funded	Consider creation of PARTIF dept in projects/grants fund to illustrate overall growing project budget and separate from GF	
				3,000,040		180,000	180,000	0								
				6,643,087		1,455,000	1,111,500	0								

Commissioner Johnson asked if the County needs to put a new school on the CIP. Mr. Potter said he has talked with Supt. Carr and they are in the process of trying to figure out how to operate while Pines Elementary School is not in use. They have so many unknowns right now. They have asked the County to hold WCS funding at the same amount it was last year.

Commissioner Johnson asked what Mr. Potter wants the Board to recommend. Mr. Potter said he would like to implement the \$1.1M out of the general fund for the CIP items with a Management Score of 1. Commissioner Johnson said Mr. Potter is asking for \$1.1M out of the general fund and then cut taxes 1/2 cent. Mr. Potter said there is no easy way to explain it, but the County would be bringing in more revenue.

Mr. Potter said that \$5.4M is in the fund balance and that's why he is able to put forward the items on the CIP that equal \$1.1M. Commissioner Johnson isn't comfortable with spending the \$1.1M. Mr. Potter said he could combine the 1s & 2s and see which ones of those are more

affordable. He will rework the CIP and bring it back to the June 7th meeting. Everyone did agree that the roof on the Courthouse needs to be done.

Chair Sexton said the County needs to get someone contracted to help solve the drainage issue in the County. Chair Sexton said maybe we could work with Tyrrell County since it affects them too. The Soil & Water Board met and he believes that they have talked about the same thing. Chair Sexton said they need someone who can talk to legislators. This has been an ongoing problem for the last 4 or 5 years. The federal and state folks will be at a couple of meetings in the area in the next few weeks. Chair Sexton said he'd like to be able to tell them that the County is looking at hiring a contractor to help solve some of these problems. Commissioner Keyes asked would an RFP have to be done. Mr. Potter said no, not for a service contract. The consensus of the Board would be to hire a contractor. Mr. Potter offered to talk to Tyrrell County Manager David Clegg regarding this possibility.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY MANAGER/ COUNTY MANAGER OR CLERK: None.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS§143-318.11(a)(3)--attorney-client privilege. Commissioner Keves seconded. Chair Sexton proceeded with the roll call: Commissioner Walker, yea; Commissioner Phelps, yea; Commissioner Johnson, yea; Commissioner Keyes, yea; Commissioner Sexton, yea. Motion carried unanimously.

At 8:35 PM, with no further business to discuss, **Commissioner Walker made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Phelps seconded. Chair Sexton proceeded with the roll call: Commissioner Walker, yea; Commissioner Phelps, yea; Commissioner Johnson, yea; Commissioner Keyes, yea; Commissioner Sexton, yea. Motion carried unanimously.**

William R. "Bill" Sexton
Chair

Julie J. Bennett, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board