

January 22, 2024

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a recessed meeting on Monday, January 22, 2024, at 8:00 AM in the Commissioner's Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Tracey A. Johnson, Ann C. Keyes, Carol V. Phelps, John C. Spruill and Julius Walker, Jr. were present. Also, present were County Manager/County Attorney Curtis Potter, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, Finance Officer Missy Dixon, and Assistant County Manager Jason Squires.

Chair Keyes called the recessed meeting to order. This portion of the Budget Workshop will consist of presentations/discussions from Department Heads.

Departmental Presentations:

Finance Office, Ms. Missy Dixon, Finance Officer

Ms. Dixon gave the Commissioner's an overview of the basics of what the Finance Department does. She is also the Finance Officer of the TTA and JCPC.

The things that she is asking for are as follows:

- Would like the Finance Department offices painted
- Would like to have new furniture
- Would like to have a part-time HR employee. Ms. Moore needs help. She does all payroll & benefits. Ms. Dixon is usually the one who helps her. She does not think full-time person is needed. Commissioner Phelps asked how many hours would be needed. Ms. Dixon said she would like to tie down the numbers better for time and salary. Mr. Potter said they may need them 2 days a week to help with recruitment announcements, position descriptions, setting up interviews. Mr. Squires, ACM, asked would it be possible to contract out such a position. Mr. Potter said maybe for the repetitive tasks but not our convoluted payroll over the different departments. Commissioner Phelps asked if any of the furniture would be usable. Ms. Dixon said some of it may be re-used. Mr. Potter said if a department gets new furniture, then they usually offer it up to other departments or surplus it.

The Commissioners said they appreciate all that Ms. Dixon and her staff do.

Senior Center, Ms. Renee' Collier, Senior Center Director

Ms. Collier said when she started as Senior Center Director, her goal was to clean everything up.

SENIOR CENTER

FY25 BUDGET

January 22, 2024



“ Helping seniors stay mentally alert, socially involved and physical active.”

CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

- Offer at least 27 of 31 services listed by the State (DAAS)
- General Publicity for the Center
- Marketing to Special Populations
- Aging Related Training
- Volunteer Plan and Implementation
- Certain amount of reoccurring activities a week and a month
- Special Events
- *NEW* VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING
- Drop-In Activities
- Diversity Requirements
- Advocacy for Older Adults (DOCUMENTED AND SPECIFIC)
- Transportation
- Advisory Council and Training
- Input from Participants
- Input from Non-Participants
- Create Goals
- Training and Training Plans
- Community Collaboration (MOA/MOU)
- Signage
- Building Space Utilization

Changes @ Senior Center-FY24

Building Updates

- Benches
- Garden Beds
- Spot Painting
- Art Gallery
- Pool Table

Cleanliness

- Staff regularly cleaning
- Housekeeping now coming once a week

Operation

- New Policies and Procedures
- New use for attendance software
- Back on track for Certification
- Increase in attendance and participation

Plans for Changes in FY25



New Programs

- New Craft Programs
- Less structured programming- more independent programs
- Caregiver Support Program



Staff Development

- Training Plans
- Staff Evaluations



Facilities Beautification

- Painting by Maintenance
- Floor Wax

NEEDS FOR FY25:

- Change in Fee Schedule
 - Programs current and NEW
- Increase to Departmental Supplies
 - Plotter
 - Vehicle Maintenance
 - Staff Computers
- Increase to Training
 - STHL
 - Safety
- Increase to Communications
 - Now have paid internet service due to VOiP Phone System
- Increase to Contracted Services
 - Change in General Purpose Grant
 - Create contract for CAREGIVER SUPPORT LIAISON
 - \$1328 broken between hourly rate (max amount per month) and Travel if needed

Changes in FY25 Budget

- Changes to Fee Schedule & Donations for Supplies
- 10-5150-257 increase \$200 for Craft Programs
- 10-5150-260 increase by \$7600 Departmental Supplies
- 10-5150-310 decrease by \$1000 for Senior Travel
- 10-5150-315 increase by \$2000 for Training
- 10-5150-320 increase by \$876 for Communications
- 10-5150-390 decrease by \$830 for Subscriptions
- 10-5150-600 increase by \$1000 for Contracted Services

Ms. Collier said there may be some changes needed in the Sr. Center fee schedule for new programs. She also noted the following items that were in her presentation:

- Increase supply budget---has the plotter and now prints for any departments. Chair Keyes asked about printing for the public. Mr. Potter said that would need more discussion.
- May need a new van...now using one given to them from DSS
- Need new computers...still running on Windows 7
- Will be needing to increase training budget

Chair Keyes said she appreciates all that she does for the Senior Center, especially the new classes and a caregiver support person is definitely needed.

Commissioner Spruill said he appreciated Ms. Collier's presentation.

Commissioner Walker said he has been to the Sr. Center, and it is well organized.

Commissioner Phelps said he knows when he calls the Sr. Center, he can find out what he needs.

Commissioner Johnson said she will come out to the Sr. Center when she retires!

Chair Keyes asked Ms. Collier would she be interested in speaking to the area churches. Ms. Collier said yes. Chair Keyes said she would make herself available.

Recreation, Mr. Randy Fulford, Director

Mr. Fulford said he was not here to ask for anything. He brought the new bus here for them to see. It is a 2024! He thanked the Commissioners for their support. Mr. Fulford said he will be glad when the new school is built and the County will be pulling in the High School athletic fields which will allow the County to host more tournaments.

The Board and staff toured the new bus. Very nice!!

Back in discussion, Mr. Potter asked how the condition of the Roper Gym was. Mr. Fulford said he has not been to it in about 5 years. Mr. Potter said he will ask the new WCS Supt. to take a peek. Mr. Potter asked about the handicapped park here in Plymouth. Mr. Fulford said some items need repair. Mr. Potter asked Mr. Squires to follow up on this. Chair Keyes asked about the Skinnerville fields. Mr. Fulford said they are holding up fairly well.

While waiting for the Tax Department to arrive, Mr. Potter went over the Strategic Plan: Safe Healthy Communities Primary Goals/Objectives & Key 2024 Strategic Actions. *[This document is incorporated herein by reference and will be made a part of these minutes.]*

Tax Office, Ms. Sherri Wilkins, Tax Administrator

Ms. Wilkins stated there are two new employees in the Tax Office who started in December 2023. They are getting some training. Ms. Wilkins said she hopes that the new software talks to Finance and goes live in September. Ms. Darlene Fikes, IT Director, is moving downstairs and making room for the new employees.

Mr. Potter said he reached out to the NCACC for their team to come back and finish their evaluation of the Tax Office. They will hopefully be here in the spring.

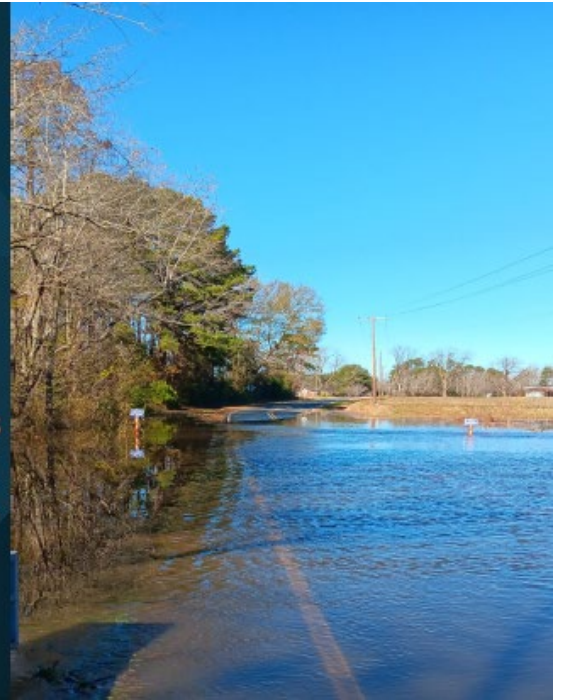
Chair Keyes asked about Albemarle Solar project discovery. Ms. Wilkins said she would be talking to them today and sending them some information they had requested. Discussion ensued regarding the farmland that solar farms are on.

Soil & Water, Mr. Chris Respass, Technician

Mr. Respass presented the following information.

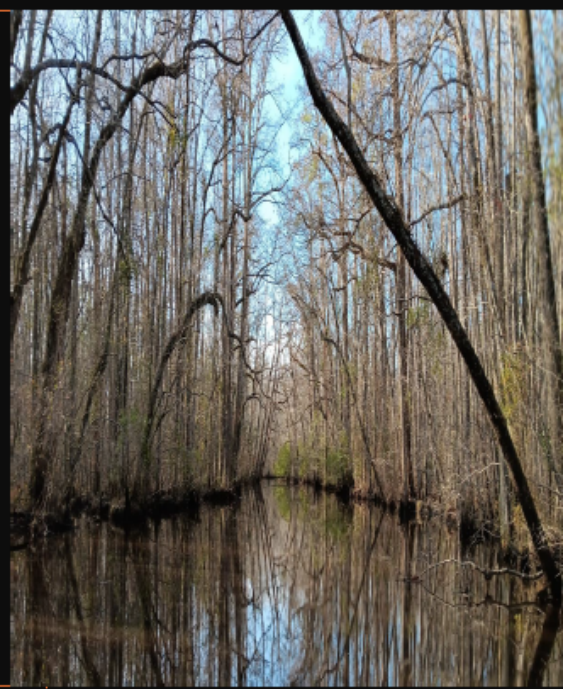
https://vimeo.com/902786091/5dbb_bfd1c4

Partnering with Albemarle Commission and Eye Candy Drone Pilots to show the effects of flooding on communities and what can be done to help by the citizens.



2024 County Budget Meeting

- **Intentions for Fiscal year 24-25 Funds**
 - S.t.r.a.p funds request through the county.(\$500,000 cap) Reimbursement grant for stream restoration efforts. It will be awarded May 14, or 15. Applications due February 23, 2024 by 5PM. [STRAP Funds Grade Sheet.xlsx](#). Requesting a total of **50,600 feet of Vegetative Debris Removal** within key waterways of Plymouth, Roper, & Creswell. On average Coastal Plain price is **\$10.86 per foot**.
 - The request being made to the S.t.r.a.p. program is for **\$549,516**. **Sending out bid opportunities in March due in June.**
 - **Work starts in F/Y 24-25. Funds reimbursed as work is completed and inspected by state inspector.**
 - Designating line item **30-8000-350: Stream Debris Removal ALLOC. From State to hold funds.**
- Creating a full-time admin assistant for duties such as cost share program, grant procurement, document retention, and other clerical duties to assist the technician in office. No field work intended pertaining to cost share only county duties.





Intentions Extended

3. Creating a roll over budget line item labeled **Vegetative Debris Removal**. The intent with this line item is to accrue funds to purchase equipment for drainage maintenance and revitalization on a small scale around the county. There are numerous areas that D.O.T. does not maintain and are major drains of homes and farmland. Coupled with Aquatic Weed Spraying putting more pressure on these areas. The goal is to put a plan in place within the next year to identify and maintain these pressure points within the county. The spreadsheet shown before helps identify and grade these areas. This **line item** is not intended to stay a **roll-over fund** for more than **7-10** years. By then equipment should be purchased and pro-active maintenance should be the main consumer of line item.
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Goals:

1. To have an **effective and efficient drainage infrastructure plan** put in place **with in 5 years**.
2. A lifelong maintenance plan for this infrastructure and equipment as well.
3. Reduction to all Drainage Line items due to routine pro-active maintenance and Planning.



Excavator and Attachments

60P-Excavator-2024:\$115,000

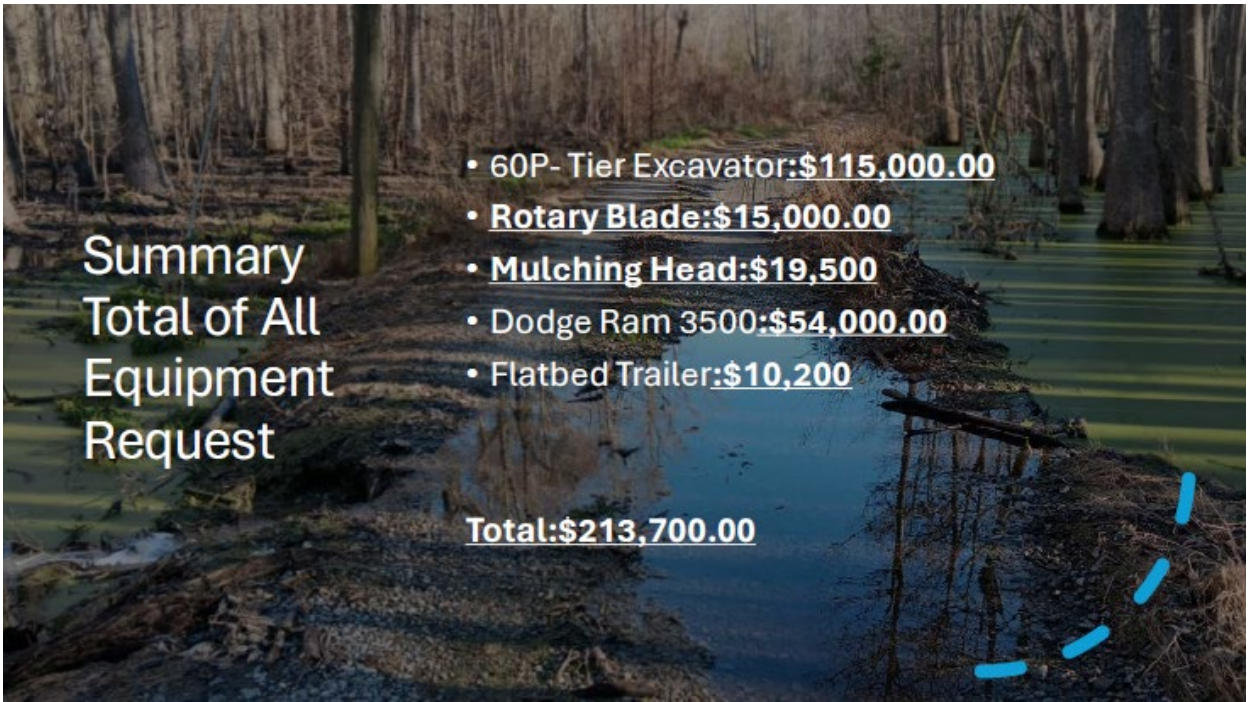
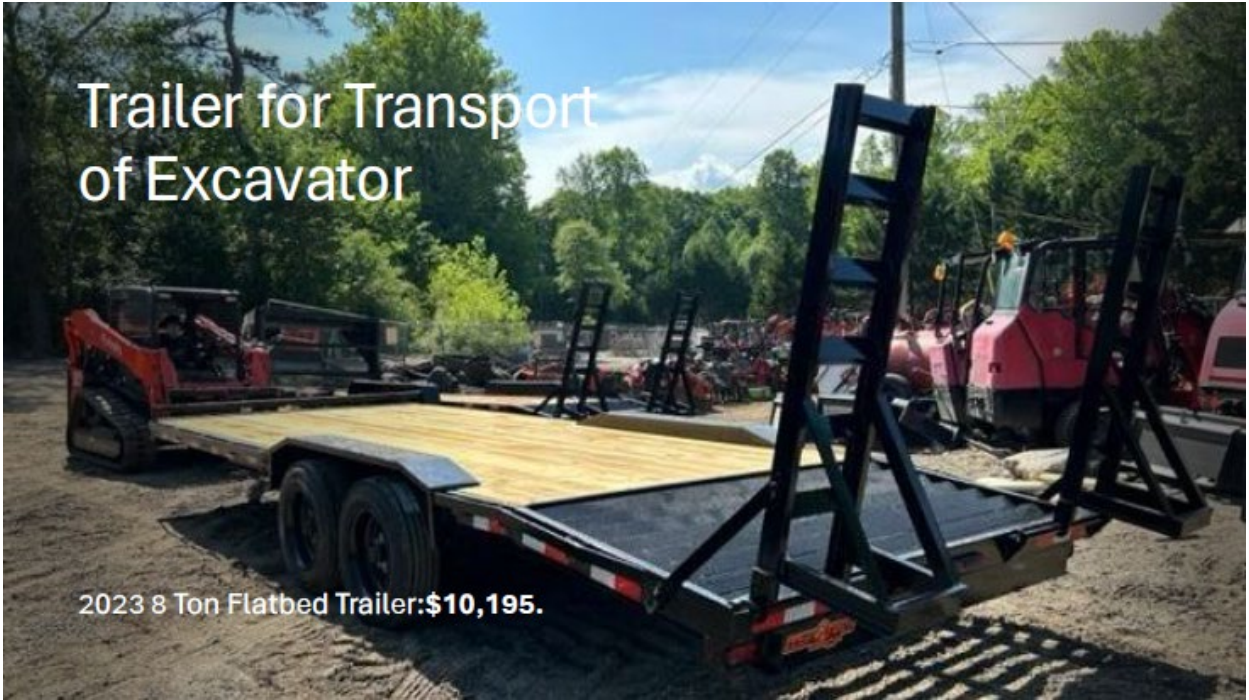
RE 50- Rotary Blade-\$15,000

Mulching Head-2023:\$19,500-23 PRINOTH M450E-900

Truck for Hauling Excavator

\$ 53,100.25 (2024 Ram 3500 Crew 4x4)







Mr. Respass explained most of the grants he receives are “Reimbursement Grants.” The County pays up front and then we are reimbursed

Mr. Respass said he would like to create a full-time administrative support position. He is usually not in the office and needs help with the cost share program. This new position would not require fieldwork.

He discussed a rollover budget for debris management. There are many places that DOT does not take care of and the County could if he had the equipment. Grants will buy equipment. This budget will be for maintenance of this equipment. Mr. Respass said he wants the Board to think about this for the future--not this year’s budget.

Mr. Potter asked Mr. Respass to talk about the need for converting the current part-time position to a full-time position. Mr. Respass said he currently budgeted \$13,000 for a part-time person but have had problems hiring someone. He is out in the field most of the time and needs someone in the office while he is out.

Discussion ensued regarding wells.

Mr. Respass also discussed beaver dams.

Commissioner Walker made a motion to recess to 1:00 PM. Commissioner Spruill seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Keyes reconvened the budget workshop @ 1:00 PM.

Mr. Ed Goodwin, Representative, stopped by to see the Commissioners. He said he was on the road today visiting counties that he represents. He spoke about various things that went on in the last session.

Facilities, Mr. Ricky Young, Supervisor

Mr. Young said he has had some pretty big projects--some a year long, He hopes to be done with the remodeling at the Airport this week. He would like to see Housekeeping doing all departments. The County needs a Courtroom roof. He found 27 holes in the roof where areas have just been patched over 3 years ago. Mr. Potter asked about the Courthouse elevator. Mr. Young said it has been doing well for the last 3 months since the last repairs. Mr. Potter asked more about the Courtroom roof leaks. Mr. Potter said the roof needs to be looked at. Mr. Potter asked Housekeeping has to do all departments, is additional staff needed. Mr. Young said no, he thinks his girls could handle it.

Commissioner Spruill asked how old the roof on the courthouse is. Mr. Young said he had no idea. Some holes he has found looks like termite holes.

Chair Keyes said to Mr. Young that the Board has heard a lot of positive things about his work.

Commissioner Phelps asked about putting a metal building on the Creswell EMS lot with a roll-up door to be able to drive in so the ambulance would be covered in frost/snow/bad weather. Mr. Potter said their might not be enough room on the lot but will check.

DSS, Clifton Hardison, Director & Lynn Swett, Deputy Director

Ms. Swett mentioned that they are meeting with the DSS Board at the end of this month.

Highlights:

Server maintenance and security runs out in May 2024. Quote from Dell on one model down, \$9,300 and add software needed and it will be about \$10,000. It is 50% reimbursable.

Travel/Training: will have an increase in this based on changes coming into the agency.

Would like to purchase a new vehicle for \$28,000. Could be reimbursed at 50%.

Increase on MOU line: a lot of citizens have had needs this year

Medicaid expansion staff is adequate but may need to convert another position into one for Medicaid expansion.

Hyde Co DSS Director is talking about a facility in Engelhard. They want to lease it to a non-profit and asked would Washington County DSS be able to spend \$35,000 each year to be a part of this consortium for foster care, to have a place for children with behavioral issues. They are not asking for money now. Discussion ensued.

Chair Keyes mentioned the positive comments she has heard in the community on Riverlight Transit.

IT Department, Ms. Darlene Fikes, IT Director

Ms. Fikes spoke about the following items:

- Getting Keystone migration software in Tax in September
- VOIP to be installed at 2:30 PM on Jan 31, 2024
- Moving her office to the basement—a very sizeable move. Has expressed her concerns on humidity for the equipment. Also, would have to rewire the whole courthouse with CAT5 cable. Does not feel it is feasible. Mr. Potter said the decision has already been made...she is moving.
- Planning for her retirement in 5 or 6 years. Trying to get someone in here to do what she does is going to be difficult.

Cooperative Extension Office, Ms. Rebecca Liverman, Director

Ms. Liverman showed her Citizen's Academy video on what Cooperative Extension does. She also showed their SWOT analysis. The Board will see this more in their budget.

Last year, in their travel line, it was for fuel, but a vehicle (truck) was not available to them so please do not take that line item away from them.

Mr. Potter mentioned that Ms. Liverman should look at the Strategic Plan under Safe Healthy Communities at Action SHD2024.5

Commissioner Spruill asked about public beach access for Washington County and would like us to look into that.

Commissioner Phelps made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Spruill seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ann C. Keyes, Chair

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