

April 18, 2018

A Special Meeting regarding FY 2018-19 Draft Budget of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held on Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 4:00 pm in the Commissioner's Room on the lower level of the Courthouse, 106 East Broad Street, Elizabethtown, NC.

Members present were:

Ray Britt, Chairman

Michael Cogdell (arrived at 4:25pm)

Charles R. Peterson

Daniel Dowless

Arthur Bullock

Dr. Ophelia Munn-Goins (arrived at 4:25pm)

Russell Priest

Ashley Trivette

David Gooden (arrived at 4:52pm)

ITEM 1. Call to Order:

Chairman Britt called the meeting to order at 4:08pm. Chairman Britt provided an invocation. County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Britt recognized Sheriff Jim McVicker to address the Board. Sheriff McVicker and Sergeant Gary Turlington addressed the Board regarding a planned Response Plan Exercise scheduled for 11am on Friday, April 20, 2018. Sgt. Turlington further explained that the exercise will stage on the Elizabethtown Middle School property and will also include activities on the Paul R. Brown Academy (PRB) property. The exercise will assist in training law enforcement and other first responders in a force integration exercise in the PRB Academy facility. Safety measures will be in place to assure that no live weapons will be utilized. The exercise will be announced through Bladen County schools and local media outlets. Sgt. Turlington stated that a full evacuation of the PRB facility is planned to be completed by 1:00-1:15pm.

Commissioner Bullock asked Sgt. Turlington to provide an audio file so that an announcement can be broadcast by the local radio station as well.

Sgt. Turlington and Sheriff McVicker extended invitations to the Board members who may want to attend the exercise.

The Board expressed appreciation to Sgt. Turlington and Sheriff McVicker for the information and for their continual training of Bladen County's first responders.

Chairman Britt addressed the Board to provide a brief update regarding a recent meeting with Chemours. Chairman Britt stated that he and Economic Development Director Chuck Heustess attended a meeting with Chemours representatives. He stated that he felt positive with recent well water testing in the Fayetteville area showing lower levels of GenX. He shared that the Chemours management team is working diligently to abate GenX emissions.

ITEM 2. Fiscal Year 2018-19 Draft Budget Information and Discussion: (Greg Martin, County Manager)

A. Mr. Martin expressed appreciation to the Board for their engagement in the budget process and beginning the process earlier than in recent years.

Mr. Martin reviewed Fiscal Year 2018 year end projections, detailed revenue projections and a Fiscal Year 2019 draft budget. He stated that the final tax base estimates are not yet available as extended business personal property returns are not yet due and requests have not yet been received from Bladen County Schools or from Bladen Community College.

Mr. Martin reviewed a number of points regarding the FY 2019 budget plan, as follows:

- Ensure recurring revenues equal or exceed operating expenses
- Consider the use of Fund Balance for Capital or Non-Inventorable items non-recurring expenses)

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- Include the first year of automatic steps in accordance with the adopted pay study
- Strong emphasis on Public Safety

Topics of discussion for review included:

- Personnel – additional position in the draft budget
- Sheriff – misdemeanor program
- Capital and non-inventorable items
- Education

Sheriff McVicker provided additional information regarding a request for additional Detention officers. He stated that the initial staffing recommendation which was determined during the detention and law enforcement design phase was not utilized. The detention center now has 5 officers on day shift and 6 officers on night shift. The proposed staffing levels for FY 2019 includes the addition of four (4) officers. Sheriff McVicker stated that there are 24-25 inmates housed daily in the misdemeanor program. However, he stated that it continues to grow.

Mr. Martin reviewed FY 2019 draft budget by department, including departments' requested budget versus the draft budget.

Mrs. Coleman shared that Medicaid transportation and Day Care expenses which had been processed through the County will now be processed strictly by the State. Those funds will no longer be reflected in the County's budget. These programs will reduce the County's budget by approximately \$1.454 million annually.

Mr. Martin stated that the FY 2019 Draft Budget places priority to public safety and maintenance of county facilities.

Mr. Martin discussed budget items for Bladen Community College which were included from a prior Capital Improvement Program (CIP) request. A restroom renovation project has been included in the draft budget, as this would be the second year of a three-year project.

The Board discussed in more detail the EMS draft budget, which includes one remount ambulance.

Other items which were discussed included, but not limited to:

- Gym facility
- Kelly building purchase for EMS station
- Radios for fire departments
- Parking needs at the County park
- Bladen County School historical funding levels
- Article 44 Sales Tax expansion, with use of funds limited to public education, community colleges, and economic development
- Employee compensation, including retirement system contribution increases for both general employees and law enforcement
- Community Matching Grant for recreational opportunities

Upon a motion by Commissioner Trivette, seconded by Commissioner Munn-Goins, the Board unanimously revised the start time to 4:30pm for the April 30, 2018 Draft Budget Special Meeting.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Cogdell, seconded by Commissioner Trivette, the meeting as adjourned at 5:40pm.

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, Clerk to the Board

Ray Britt, Chairman