

**May 28, 2013**

A special meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, May 28, 2013 at 6:30 pm regarding FY 2013-2014 Budget.

Members present were:

James G. "Jimmie" Smith, Chairman

Mark Gillespie, Vice-Chairman

Delilah Blanks

Charles Peterson

Daniel Dowless

Russell Priest

Michael Cogdell

Wayne Edge

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order and provided an invocation. County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Smith announced that Commissioner Pait was not present due an Eastpointe Board of Directors meeting.

Chairman Smith welcomed Bladen Community College President Dr. William Findt and asked him to present his budget request. Dr. Findt thanked the Board for the opportunity to address budget related needs and he introduced Board of Trustees Chairman Hayes Petteway, Trustee Dennis Troy, Vice-Presidents Jeff Kornegay and Jay Stanley, and Information Technology Director Phillip Pope. Dr. Findt presented a power-point presentation regarding the college's enrollment, recent accomplishments, and financial needs. He indicated that funding for sidewalk repairs is the most pressing capital need. Dr. Findt thanked the Board of Commissioners for its ongoing support of Bladen Community College.

Chairman Smith welcomed Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor. Dr. Taylor thanked the Board for the opportunity to present the school system's budget related needs. He stated that state and federal funding reductions would have a significant impact on the school system in the upcoming year. He indicated that approximately 16-17 teacher vacancies may go unfilled, 22 teacher assistants could be lost and other clerical and support positions may be eliminated. Dr. Taylor indicated that fund balance has been reduced substantially due to the use of approximately \$1,600,000.00 in the current fiscal year.

Commissioners asked questions related to local funding for charter schools, the enrollment decline of approximately 143 students, and students transferring to other public school systems. Dr. Taylor said that he has come to the reality that school choice is here and it's up to Bladen County Schools to put a better product on the table. He thanked the Board of Commissioners for its ongoing support of Bladen County Schools.

Chairman Smith welcomed Revenue Director Chris Ellis. Mr. Ellis stated that the Tax Office is having a good year regarding property tax collections. He requested that funding be included in the upcoming budget to fill a vacant tax clerk position, even though the State of North Carolina will begin collecting motor vehicle taxes in July. Mr. Ellis also requested a salary increase of approximately \$2,800.00 annually for Assistant Assessor Rene Davis.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gillespie, seconded by Commissioner Priest, and approved to hold a Special Meeting regarding the Budget on Wednesday, June 5, 2013 at 5:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Priest, and approved to adjourn at 8:00 p.m.

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James G. Smith, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Gregory J. Martin, Deputy Clerk