

JUNE 10, 2008

MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**NORTH CAROLINA
MECKLENBURG COUNTY**

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in a Special Session Budget Workshop in Conference Center Room 267 of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 10, 2008.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Jennifer Roberts and Commissioners
Karen Bentley, J. Daniel Bishop, Dumont Clarke
H. Parks Helms, Bill James, Norman A. Mitchell, Sr.
Dan Ramirez and Valerie C. Woodard
County Manager Harry L. Jones, Sr.
County Attorney Marvin A. Bethune
Clerk to the Board Janice S. Paige

Absent: None

FY 2008 - 2009 BUDGET DELIBERATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Roberts.

Chairman Roberts said the purpose of the meeting was to begin the Board's deliberation on the County Manager's FY08-09 Recommended Budget.

Chairman Roberts turned the meeting over to County Manager Jones, who in turn, called on Budget and Management Director Hyong Yi.

Director Yi addressed the process for moving forward and handouts that were distributed to the Board.

A copy of the handouts is on file with the Clerk to the Board.

STRAW VOTES

Note: During the straw vote process it is not necessary for a motion to have a second in order to be voted upon. Also, under the straw vote process, motions can be made by the Chairman. Commissioners can also abstain.

Motion was made by Commissioner Clarke, seconded by Commissioner Helms, to approve the County Manager's Recommended FY08-09 Budget as amended as of June 4, 2008, with the following adjustments:

1. Allocate \$1 million of the \$3 million in new revenue that was presented to the Board by the County Manager at the June 4, 2008 meeting, to the Police Services and Court Service Funding line item for public safety and crime fighting efforts. Secondly, that the \$1 million be used for the following purposes: 1) Line Item 313 – District Attorney Support Staff (it was clarified that this includes the addition of Assistant District Attorneys & an Assistant District Attorney salary supplement), 2) for Electronic Monitors, and 3) Park Security (Park & Recreation budget). Thirdly, to ask the County Manager to work with the City of Charlotte Manager, and the District Attorney in determining how to distribute the \$1 million amongst

the three areas.

2. That the remaining \$2 million of the \$3 million be allocated as follows:

- Allocate an additional \$800,000 to Central Piedmont Community College, Line Item 47 – Operations Funding.
- Allocate an additional \$10,000 to the Commissioners Budget, Line Item 119 - Office of Protocol for the purpose of fostering economic development relationships with German companies.
- Allocate an additional \$272,822 for School Nurses.
- Allocate an additional \$214,000 for the Pre-Natal Health Clinic.
- Allocate an additional \$500,000 to WTVI, Line Item 432 – WTVI Programming.
- Allocate an additional \$57,389 to Metrolina AIDS Project- Line Item 579.
- Allocate an additional \$25,000 to the Relatives (Outside Agency).
- Allocate an additional \$37,500 to the Salvation Army Women’s Shelter.
- Allocate \$56,144 to the Shelter for Battered Women and \$47,000 to the County’s Community Support Division to work with the Shelter for Battered Women.
- Finally, that any remaining balance be used for School Nurses.

It was noted that none of the above additions impact the tax rate.

Comments

Commissioner James said he didn’t have a big problem with Commissioner Clarke’s motion, even though, there were some items he would not have funded. Commissioner James said what he has a problem with is using the \$3 million in new revenue that was presented to the Board by the County Manager at the June 4, 2008 meeting for non-public safety matters. Commissioner James said the entire \$3 million should go in restricted contingency as recommended by the County Manager for public safety.

Commissioner Bishop said he also was opposed to using the \$3 million in new revenue that was presented to the Board by the County Manager at the June 4, 2008 meeting for non-public safety matters. Commissioner Bishop said taking this action is not the way to respond to the recent public outcry for addressing crime in the community.

Commissioner Bishop said the \$3 million should be set aside to respond to the recommendations of the criminal justice task force that has been formed.

Commissioner Bishop said if the motion passes, he would make a motion to reverse it and to place the \$3 million in contingency as recommended by the County Manager. In addition, to move the \$1 million the County Manager placed in the budget for Court System Planning and add it to the \$3 million; and further that an additional \$1 million be added, resulting from cuts in an equal amount.

County Manager Jones referenced a recent Board Bulletin that outlined the positions that would be funded in the court system using the \$1 million, he placed in the budget.

Commissioners Bishop and Ramirez asked would the approval of Commissioner Clarke’s motion

JUNE 10, 2008

prevent other motions from being made.

Attorney Bethune said it would, based on the way the motion was stated.

After further discussion, Commissioner Clarke amended his motion (Commissioner Helms, seconder, concurred) to read: Amend the County Manager's recommended budget as follows:

1. Allocate \$1 million of the \$3 million in new revenue that was presented to the Board by the County Manager at the June 4, 2008 meeting, to the Police Services and Court Service Funding line item for public safety and crime fighting efforts. Secondly, that the \$1 million be used for the following purposes: 1) Line Item 313 – District Attorney Support Staff (it was clarified that this includes the addition of Assistant District Attorneys & an Assistant District Attorney salary supplement), 2) for Electronic Monitors, and 3) Park Security (Park & Recreation budget). Thirdly, to ask the County Manager to work with the City of Charlotte Manager, and the District Attorney in determining how to distribute the \$1 million amongst the three areas.
2. That the remaining \$2 million of the \$3 million be allocated as follows:
 - Allocate an additional \$800,000 to Central Piedmont Community College, Line Item 47 – Operations Funding.
 - Allocate an additional \$10,000 to the Commissioners Budget, Line Item 119 - Office of Protocol for the purpose of fostering economic development relationships with German companies.
 - Allocate an additional \$272,822 for School Nurses.
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 - Allocate an additional \$37,500 to the Salvation Army Women's Shelter.
 - Allocate \$56,144 to the Shelter for Battered Women and \$47,000 to the County's Community Support Division to work with the Shelter for Battered Women.
 - Finally, that any remaining balance be used for School Nurses.

The vote was taken on Commissioner Clarke's motion and carried 5-4 with Commissioners Clarke, Helms, Mitchell, Roberts, and Woodard voting yes and Commissioners Bentley, Bishop, James, and Ramirez voting no.

Motion was made by Commissioner Bishop and failed 5-4 with Commissioners Clarke, Helms, Mitchell, Roberts, and Woodard voting no and Commissioners Bentley, Bishop, James, and Ramirez voting yes, to amend the County Manager's recommended budget by reversing all of the changes that occurred as a result of Commissioner Clarke's motion; and that the \$1 million placed in Court System Planning by the County Manager, Line Item 308, and \$1 million from Employee Compensation, Line Item 340, both be placed in contingency along with the \$3 million that was recommended by the County Manager for Police Services and Court Service Funding.

Comments prior to the vote on Commissioner Bishop's motion:

JUNE 10, 2008

Commissioner Mitchell made remarks with respect to the County taking on State responsibilities and how this can't continue.

Commissioner Helms made remarks with respect to the County being in the Human Services business and not crime fighting.

Commissioner Helms said the criminal justice system is just that a "system" and unless you fix it all, there won't be any relief in crime in the community.

Commissioner Ramirez said he believes it's the function of all governments to protect its citizenry.

Commissioner Clarke noted that per his discussions with members of the legislature, he has learned that the possibility of the County receiving authority to specify the ballot language with respect to a ballot referendum in Mecklenburg County for November 2008 on the question of increasing the local option sales tax by one-quarter cent to read "for the purpose of funding comprehensive improvements to the criminal justice system in Mecklenburg County" is "slim to none." As such, he will not be pursuing this effort, even though he felt very strongly that having

a

designated funding source to address the criminal justice system was the way to go. Thus, from his perspective he will not be pursuing placing this matter on the ballot in November.

Chairman Roberts said she appreciated everyone's efforts in trying to address crime and public safety in the community and that she feels the appointment of the task force will prove to be very beneficial. Also, that the provision of this additional immediate funding as noted in Commissioner Clarke's motion will be of benefit because it will allow things to be done immediately, rather than waiting on the recommendation(s) of the task force.

Motion was made by Commissioner Clarke and carried 6-1 with Commissioners Bentley, Clarke, Helms, Mitchell, Roberts, and Woodard voting yes and Commissioner Bishop voting no, to direct staff to take the results of tonight's straw votes and prepare a budget ordinance accordingly for consideration by the Board on June 17, 2008.

Note: Commissioners James and Ramirez did not vote.

Note: The above is not inclusive of every comment and/or question asked but reflects key points and actions taken by the Board.

Prior to adjourning there was discussion of the Public Safety Task Force.

Commissioner Woodard said she would like to receive a list of all of the applicants. It was noted that at least 300 applications have been received, thus far.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Bishop, seconded by Commissioner James and unanimously carried with Commissioners Bentley, Bishop, Clarke, Helms, James, Mitchell, Ramirez, Roberts, and Woodard voting yes, that there being no further business to come before the Board that the meeting be adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Janice S. Paige, Clerk

Jennifer Roberts, Chairman