

June 13, 2016

The Bladen County Board of Commissioners held a Special Meeting regarding Budget at 6:00 pm on Monday, June 13, 2016 in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Bladen County Courthouse.

The following members were present:

Russell Priest, Chairman

Arthur Bullock

Charles R. Peterson

Billy Ray Pait

Dr. Delilah Blanks

G. Michael Cogdell

Wayne Edge

James G. "Jimmie" Smith

Excused: Daniel Dowless

Chairman Priest called the meeting to order.

An invocation was provided by Commissioner Jimmie Smith. County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 1. A. Community Funding:

Mr. Martin briefly reviewed a summary of Requests submitted by Community Organizations, noting the proposed FY 2016-17 Budget of \$5,675. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Edge, the Board unanimously approved funding levels identical to that of FY 2015-16.

B. East Arcadia Community Park Request:

Commissioner Peterson made a motion to deny the request for FY 2016-17 due to budget restraints. Commissioner Edge provided a second to the motion. Commissioner Cogdell requested the Board to reconsider a one-time allocation of \$50,000 to assist the community, due to Detention Center expenses are not scheduled to be expended in the upcoming FY 2016-17. Chairman Priest reminded the Board and those in attendance, that the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee should be approached for consideration and assistance regarding the request. Mr. Martin briefly discussed the Parks & Recreation Department's Master Plan which detailed priority of order for potential projects.

Chairman Priest reminded the Board of the motion on the floor. The Board passed the motion to not fund the request of \$50,000 to assist in funding a community park in the East Arcadia area based on budget restraints. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) AYES (Peterson, Edge, Priest, Pait, Smith) to three (3) NOES (Blanks, Bullock, Cogdell).

ITEM 3. Emergency Medical Services:

Commissioner Bullock made a motion to fund ten (10) EMS positions as requested by EMS, seconded by Commissioner Cogdell. Commissioner Peterson questioned the need for a motion to duplicate action which was approved during the previous regular meeting. Commissioner Peterson reiterated the importance of the Sales Tax Referendum being successful in order to continue funding EMS personnel and equipment. Commissioner Cogdell requested to table the topic until the motion at the previous meeting could be clarified. The motion on the floor was restated by Commissioner Bullock, as follows: to fully fund ten (10) EMS positions as requested by EMS, seconded by Commissioner Cogdell. Following discussion and upon a vote, the motion on the floor was defeated by a vote of three (3) AYES (Bullock, Blanks, Cogdell) to five (5) NOES (Priest, Peterson, Smith, Pait, Edge).

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Commissioner Cogdell made a motion to table the topic until the prior motion could be legally reviewed for clarification. Commissioner Bullock provided a second. The motion was defeated upon a vote of three (3) AYES (Cogdell, Bullock, Blanks) to five (5) NOES (Priest, Peterson, Smith, Pait, Edge). Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Edge, the Board approved to place the ten (10) EMS positions on hold until the outcome of the Advisory ¼¢ Sales Tax Referendum has been determined. The motion was approved by a vote of five (5) AYES (Peterson, Edge, Smith, Pait, Priest) to three (3) AYES (Bullock, Blanks, Cogdell).

EMS Director David Howell was asked to discuss issues the department has been experiencing as far as the need for full-time staffing. Mr. Howell stated that having become dependent upon part-time employees has created challenges assuring sufficient staffing. Part-time employees historically are more likely to call out and not be available for assigned shifts. He also stated that the county was required to supply Paramedic services.

Mr. Martin stated that the County is proposing to financially support EMS with approximately \$662,000 from the General Fund. If the ten (10) EMS positions were included, that would add an additional \$300,000 of recurring expense from General Fund.

ITEM 4. Proposed FY 2016-17 Budget Information:

- A. Mr. Martin reviewed updates to the proposed FY 2016-17 Budget, since the original presentation during the May 31, 2016 Special Meeting.
- B. Mr. Martin provided a brief update regarding revenues by fund and source.
- C. Mr. Martin reviewed a summary of expenditures by department.
Commissioner Cogdell asked for an update regarding Home Health and clarification of funding needed for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Martin also indicated that Home Health plans to update the Board on a monthly basis of its revenues and expenditures. The proposed budget includes approximately \$147,000 to assist in balancing the Home Health budget for FY 2016-17.
- D. Mr. Martin provided a brief overview of a summary of current debt.
- E. Mr. Martin provided the County's Comprehensive Fee Schedule for information, which is adopted each year along with the Budget.

ITEM 5. Discussion:

Commissioner Peterson stated that EMS staff has been and continues struggling and working very hard to service Bladen County citizens. EMS Director David Howell stated that lack of staff and trucks has created challenging issues. Elizabethtown Rescue Squad Chief Shelton Lewis was recognized to address the Board. Mr. Lewis stated that the 1,000-hour rule is quickly achieved by part-time employees. The 1,000-hour rule is based on a 12-month rolling time period, not necessarily a calendar year. Mr. Martin stated that the Paramedic level program started in 2006. Since then, demand has increased, causing the program to evolve. It is now a county priority to schedule a Paramedic on each truck.

Paramedic Mindie Bowman was recognized to address the Board. Ms. Bowman shared her view regarding EMS and the challenges which have been discussed.

Training Officer Heather Ellis was invited to address the Board. Ms. Ellis stated that non-emergency transport can generate revenue. However, if a vehicle and staff is not available, the billing cannot be submitted for payment. Emergency calls (9-1-1) are priority.

Commissioner Cogdell stepped out of the meeting at 7:12 pm.

Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Edge, the Board adopted the following FY 2016-17 Budget

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Ordinance. Following discussion, the motion passed with two (2) dissenting votes (Blanks, Bullock).



Commissioner Cogdell returned to the meeting at 7:14 pm.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, Clerk to the Board

Russell Priest, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners