

May 27, 2015

A Special Meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held on Wednesday, May 28, 2015 at 5:00 pm Commissioners Room, 105 East Broad Street, Elizabethtown, NC. The purpose of the meeting was to continue discussing a proposed Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget.

Members present were:

Charles R. Peterson, Chairman

Russell Priest, Vice Chairman

Delilah Blanks

Michael Cogdell

James G. "Jimmie" Smith

Daniel Dowless

Billy Ray Pait

Wayne Edge

Arthur Bullock

Chairman Peterson called the meeting to order and turned the meeting over to County Manager Greg Martin.

Mr. Martin invited Sheriff Jim McVicker and Captain Jeff Singletary to address the Board regarding requested staffing for a new detention center. Captain Singletary shared that recommendations were to increase jailer staff to 8-9. However, the budget request is an additional six (6) positions. Captain Singletary had canvassed several adjacent counties regarding staffing. The Sheriff's Office request of six additional jailers is less than staffing levels of Sampson, Columbus, Hoke, Pender and Robeson.

Discussion included the possibility of housing inmates from other counties to provide a revenue stream, along with the potential of earmarking a specific pod within the new detention center to house 17-18 year old inmates for additional revenues. Captain Singletary also indicated that Bladen County's location between Fayetteville and Wilmington may allow for housing of federal prisoners.

Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that additional information is necessary regarding job descriptions of a jailer position.

Mr. Martin reminded the Board that currently there are no shell commercial/industrial buildings available for rent. This indicates that Economic Development and Bladen's Bloomin' Agri-Industrial have both done excellent jobs of attracting commercial and industrial business to Bladen County. However, not having inventory for rent tremendously reduces the ability to recruit prospective industry to come to Bladen County. Chairman Peterson also reminded the Board that should Carroll Poultry cease its operations and leave the county, the County could be held responsible for \$144,000 annually for financing obligations associated with its facility in Bladenboro. Chairman Peterson stated that plans need to be put in place for that possibility.

Mr. Martin stated that the collection rate for taxes has increased from the previous year. If the tax collection rate is increased to 94.5% for budget purposes, an additional \$180,000 in revenue could be generated. However, Mr. Martin reminded everyone that by doing so, that would create a tighter margin. It was the consensus of the Board to consider increasing the tax collection rate for budgeting purposes.

Mr. Martin provided information regarding a cost of living adjustment to all county employees annually. Currently, an automatic step increase every three years has been in practice.

Following discussion and by consensus of the Board, cost of living adjustments and its effect on the budget will be provided for consideration.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board scheduled a Special Budget Meeting for Monday, June 1, 2015 at 4:00 pm, to receive additional information from department managers and representatives of other Bladen County funded agencies who wish to address the Board.

May 27, 2015

Upon a motion by Commissioner Priest, seconded by Commissioner Edge, the Board adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm.

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, Clerk to the Board

Charles R. Peterson, Chairman