

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
MAY 31, 2018**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Work Session on May 31, 2018, 8:30 a.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman
Charles Elders, Vice Chair
Boyce Deitz, Commissioner
Mickey Luker, Commissioner
Ron Mau, Commissioner

Don Adams, County Manager
Heather C. Baker, County Attorney
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) PUBLIC SCHOOLS: Dr. Kim Elliott, Superintendent; Ken Henke, School Board Chairman; Elizabeth Cooper, School Board Member; Gwen Edwards, Finance Officer; and Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent, were present for this item.

Dr. Elliott presented:

(a) Historic Jackson County Appropriations for Operations:

Year	Total Funding
2018	\$7,478,979
2017	\$6,915,072
2016	\$6,779,482
2015	\$6,779,482
2014	\$6,779,482
2013	\$6,779,482
2012	\$6,779,482
2011	\$6,779,482

(b) County Manager Recommendation:

- Six additional Student Support Specialists/Counselors. American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model.
- Increase in Operational Funding 2%.
- Capital Outlay Funding:
 - Maintained Technology and One to One Initiative.
 - Maintained Preventative Maintenance Allocation.

(c) Class Size Legislation:

- Additional Request: Six classroom teachers (\$385,335 including benefits)
- 2020-21 school year:

	Individual Maximum	District Average
Kindergarten	21	18
1st Grade	19	16
2nd Grade	20	17
3rd Grade	20	17

(d) Local Supplement:

- Jackson County teachers currently receive a 2% local supplement.
- Many school districts offer a higher supplement for both certified and non-certified employees.
- Additional Request: Increase funding to allow a 4% teacher supplement and a 2% supplement for other school employees.

(e) School Safety:

- Additional Request: Safe and Healthy Schools Director (\$96,629 including benefits)
- Dr. Rebecca Ensley was volunteering in this role.

Dr. Elliott stated that if they did not receive the additional six teachers, her team would have to work diligently in moving people around, overloading class size in grades 4-12 and they would have to look at the athletic programs to see if they could convert any of the athletic teachers into classroom teachers. The six teachers were critical to their ongoing meeting of a state statute.

Informational item.

(2) UPCOMING CALENDAR: Mr. Adams requested that the Board set a meeting for the next week to continue budget discussions.

Consensus: *Set a budget work session for Tuesday, June 5th at 8:30 a.m. in room A227.*

(3) HIRING POLICY: Mr. Adams presented the proposed Pay Policies for FY19. The below pay policies for hiring rate/starting salary and promotions shall be in effect July 1, 2018 and as long as career path plan is continued.

(a) Hiring Rate/Starting Salary: All employees will normally be hired at the minimum of their assigned salary grade. Appointments above the minimum may be made by the County Manager following below guidelines:

(b) Direct Experience: A new employee with direct experience may be hired at the step equivalent to the years of direct experience the employee has prior to hire. Direct experience is defined as the years of service in comparable or related position for an entity that participates in the North Carolina Local Government Employees' Retirement System (LGERS) or North Carolina Local Government Employee Retirement System for Law Enforcement Officers (LGERS LEO). Any starting salary above minimum must be approved by a management team including the Human Resources Director and Finance Director prior to County Manager appointment.

(c) Indirect Experience: A new employee with indirect experience may be hired at a step equivalent to a portion of the indirect experience the employee has prior to hire following the below formula. When calculation results in partial number or decimal, the amount should be rounded down to the nearest whole number to determine Step.

Indirect experience is defined as the years of service in a comparable or relate position for an entity who does not participate in LGERS to include employers of the private sector, non-profits, North Carolina Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) and volunteer fire departments and rescue squads. Employees coming from an entity who participates in TSERS must have creditable service in the system that is transferable to LGERS.

(d) The County Manager has the authority to hire up to Step 15. Any starting salary above Step 15 or that does not meet the above guidelines must be approved by the Jackson County Board of County Commissioners.

(e) Promotion: When a promotion occurs, the employee's salary shall be increased to the greater of (1) the minimum rate of the salary range assigned to the classification to which he/she is promoted or (2) adjusted to the career path step within the salary range assigned to the classification if promotion is within career ladder at the recommendation of the Department Head, Human Resources Director, Finance Director and approval of the County Manager provided that the adjusted salary does not exceed the maximum of the assigned salary range.

Informational item.

(4) SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Dr. Don Tomas, President; William Brothers, Vice President for Financial and Administrative Services; Dr. Marc Boberg, Director of Facility Services and Operations; and Curtis Dowdle, Dean of Public Safety, were present for this item.

Mr. Brothers presented:

(a) Assumptions affecting 2018-2019 budget:

- NC Community College System implemented a legislative increase in recurring individual compensation 17/18 and plans to do so in 18/19. The College increased operations funding to account for the proposed increase and to create internal equity among State and County-funded employees. The proposed increase was 2% and raises minimum salary to 31,200.00 for employees subject to the State Human Resources Act.
- Capital requests steadily decreased as the College and County have worked together to meet capital needs. Capital requests were down 96% from 17/18 and 194% from 16/17.
- The College was attempting to identify ways to minimize operational costs while meeting the needs of aging facilities.
- Operational requests have increased only 2.82% versus actual 17/18 funding on only 1.60% from 17/18 requests.

(b) Operating Expenses – Budget and Actual:

- 2016-17 Requested: \$1,940,028.00
- 2016-17 Funded: \$1,940,028.00
- 2017-18 Requested: \$2,002,725.17
- 2017-18 Funded: \$1,978,829.00
- 2018-19 Requested: \$2,034,680.93

(c) Capital Requests – Budget and Actual:

- 2016-17 Actual: \$1,405,670.00
- 2017-18 Budget: \$935,800.00
- 2017-18 Actual: \$768,043.00
- 2018-19 Budget: \$477,225.00

Dr. Tomas presented:

(d) SCC Firing Range Desired Outcomes:

- Safe live fire range capable of conducting the best possible live-fire training and qualification leading to competence and confidence of future and current law enforcement professionals.
- Implement best management practices, minimize the possibility of lead migrating off of the firing range while facilitating future lead reclamation.
- Be good neighbors by mitigating sound to the extent possible while maintaining the necessary environment for live fire training and qualification.
- Continue to be the best stewards of limited public resources.

(e) Recommendation:

- Option 1 Estimated Cost of \$287,000
 - Backstop Improvements
 - Raise Berm with Wall / CONEX
 - Borrow Source Stabilized with Grass
 - Leyland Cypress Trees
 - Add 2 Firing Lanes to increase throughput / reduce range time
 - Electric Target System
- Option 2 –in 3 years at additional cost of approx. \$95k
 - Add Tactical Bay to change firing direction for some weapon systems
- Assess progress after 5 years to determine if additional measures were needed

(f) Miscellaneous Cost Projections:

- Rubber berm bullet trap instead of soil version -\$1300 per LF = \$150k
- Pneumatic Target System \$45k-\$55k
- Overhead cover over the 50 meter firing line +\$60k
- Overhead cover over the back 40' of Firing Lanes + \$540k
- Overhead cover over Tactical Bay +\$720k
- Replacement of Classroom Building with 3,000 SF pre-engineered building, site work, parking, etc. +\$1,000,000

Informational item.

(5) SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT: Sheriff Chip Hall; Major Shannon Queen; and Captain John Buchanan, were present for this item.

Sheriff Hall stated that the SRO's and schools were a high priority to make sure students, faculty, staff and facilities were well protected and prepared. He made the following requests:

- Two deputy sheriffs assigned to investigations.
- Juvenile investigator to work with all the schools.
- Capital requests including the replacement of military surplus rifles.
- Replace seven motor vehicles.
- Additional funding for controlled substance campaigns.
- Increase in uniforms.
- Increase contracted services for radios.
- New backup system.
- New disposable meal trays for the jail.
- Security fence maintenance.

Informational item.

(6) HARRIS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES: Matthew Burrell, EMS Operations Manager; Stephen Plemmons, Senior Director of Emergency Services; Toby Moore, EMS Service Supervisor; and Kyle Dowling, EMS Service Supervisor, were present for this item.

Mr. Burrell presented:

(a) Qualla Area 24 Hour Coverage Proposal:

- Harris EMS had seen a substantial increase in call volumes over the past five years. In 2013 the service ran 4,521 calls. In 2017 service ran 5,794 calls. This was a 28% increase in call volume since 2013. Qualla Fire District had shown a 37% increase from 2013-2017 (444 to 609).
- Although they did see a decrease in the number of calls between 2200-1000 from 2016 to 2017 (less 13 calls) they still had a substantial need for this unit 24 hours. Calls during this time frame over the past five years increased by 18%. They still had the same amount of units during this time frame now as they did then.

- In October, 2015, they added a 12 hour ambulance between the hours of 1000 to 2200. This offset the work load during the busiest times. However, between the hours of 2200 and 1000, they saw call volumes that tax the service and often times exceed resources on hand.
 - There were 56 on-call activations during 2017.
 - When resources were exceeded, they would activate the on-call crew, which would have 15 minutes to respond to the base and have an ambulance en-route. Harris EMS was one of the few services that had an on-call crew. That made it difficult for them to recruit and retain employees.
 - The proposal was that the Qualla unit be taken to a 24 hour unit, which would eliminate the need for an on-call crew and better provide coverage for the citizens of the county. This would consist of adding four additional full-time employees.
- (b) Average Response Times**
- Average 2016 response times Qualla District only:
 - 14.07 minutes for emergent calls.
 - 16.06 minutes for non-emergent calls.
 - Average 2017 response times Qualla District only:
 - 11.19 minutes for emergent calls.
 - 13.85 minutes for non-emergent calls.
 - The reason that they were not meeting the ten minute average response time for emergent calls was because the unit was only operational from 1000-2200. They still had increased response times between the hours of 2200-1000 in that area.
- (c) Day vs Night:**
- 2017 response time unit staffed 1000-2200:
 - 9.29 Emergent
 - 11.68 Non-emergent
 - 2017 response time unit not staffed 2200-1000 (no Qualla coverage):
 - 15.55 Emergent
 - 17.95 Non-emergent
 - 2018 response time unit staffed 1000-2200 1/1-5/22
 - 10.0 Emergent
 - 13.1 Non-emergent
 - 2018 response time unit not staffed 2200-1000 1/1-5/22
 - 16.3 Emergent
 - 19.5 Non-emergent
 - With this unit staffed 24 hours a day, they fully anticipated to be able to meet the goal average response times both day and night:
 - Less than 10 minutes for emergent
 - Less than 15 minutes non-emergent
- (d) Harris EMS call volume increased 28% from 2013 to 2017.**
- (e) 2200-1000 call volume increased 18% from 2013 to 2017.**
- (f) Qualla Fire District increased 37% from 2013 to 2017.**
- (g) Medic 6 24 hour proposal:**
- EMS starting paramedic pay annually: \$40,809.60
 - Employer cost per employee medical: \$5,421.24
 - Employee cost per employee dental: \$126.36
 - Total \$46,230.84
 - Four additional full time employees starting pay: \$184,923.36
 - Elimination of on call crew: \$19,710.00

(h) Conclusion: Qualla unit 24 hours:

- Decreased response times.
- More resources for the entire county.
- Reduction in workload for staff. Increase recruitment and retention.
- Enables Harris EMS to provide timely response to the citizens of the county in their time of need, regardless of where they lived or the hour of the day.

Informational item.

(7) **LIBRARY:** Tracy Fitzmaurice, Librarian, stated the past year had been busy with both libraries seeing a growth in visitor attendance at programming, circulation of material and outreach. They introduced the new StudentAccess initiative in the public schools, The Catamount School and Mountain Discovery Charter School. Their initial request for the fiscal year 2018-19 budget was for \$1,163,763, which represented a 6% increase from fiscal year 2017-18. The request included a \$0.25 raise per hour for each employee, increasing one employee from part-time to full-time in the Cashiers branch and an anticipated 12% increase in the cost of employee health insurance premiums. Fortunately, the health insurance premiums came in significantly less than estimated by the providers and because of this, they were able to make some adjustments to the original budget request.

The new requested consideration was \$1,141,060. The proposed budget for both libraries was \$1,120,117, a 2% increase from fiscal year 2017-18. The additional request of a further \$20,943 would enable them to maintain the current level of service, give a \$0.25 raise to each employee and make the Youth Services position at the Cashiers branch a full-time position.

Informational item.

There being no further business, Commissioner Mau moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Luker seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman