

June 12, 2003

The Randolph County Board of Commissioners met in special budget session at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room, County Office Building, 725 McDowell Road, Asheboro, NC. Commissioners Kemp, Frye, Holmes, Davis and Mason were present.

### **Randolph County Schools**

Dr. Robert McRae, Superintendent, thanked the Board for their continued support. Their current expense budget request is \$15,338,265 (14.6% increase). The increase includes continuation funding and funding for expansion items such as salaries for 4 additional teachers, the addition of 17 ½-time reading specialists, raising teacher supplements by 1%, giving classified employees an additional \$50 per employee supplement, adding 1 social worker position and a \$10 per child instructional supplies and materials increase. Their capital outlay expense budget request is \$2,305,000 (9.96% increase). They need \$200,000 for 8 mobile classrooms. State cuts could mean a \$1,000,000 reduction in funding that would force school fund balance appropriation in order to pay employees. Dr. McRae said that preliminary end-of-grade testing reports are extremely favorable. They ask that the Archdale/Trinity School District Tax remain at 7.5 cents per \$100 valuation.

### **Asheboro City Schools**

Dr. Diane Frost, Superintendent, shared with the Board the system's current goals: high student achievement; safe, orderly, and caring schools; quality teachers, administrators, and staff; technology; strong family, community, and business support; and effective and efficient operations. She said end-of-grade testing showed better results this year. Their current expense budget request is \$3,115,000 (11.9% increase). Expansion items under current expense include 3 additional teaching positions, 1 assistant principal, 1 ½-time custodian, 2 high-risk positions, 1 social worker, 1 school nurse, and increased funding for teacher salaries. She mentioned that the "No Child Left Behind" regulations have increased credentialing requirements, thereby putting a financial burden on the teachers. Dr. Frost thanked the Board, County Manager and Administration staff for their assistance in securing the financing for the purchase and renovation of the Sir Robert Motel property. She said that the project should be complete and operational by the opening of school in August. Their proposed capital expense budget request includes waterproofing and replacement windows at Asheboro High School, addressing the parking lot situation at the central office, and a new heating system in the North Asheboro Middle School gym. They are not asking for an increase in the Asheboro School District tax.

### **Randolph Community College**

Dr. Richard Heckman, President, said his FY 2003-04 budget request of \$1,868,350 represents a 5.53% increase in operations budget over the FY 2002-03 budget. This figure includes no expansion items, but does include an increase in medical insurance cost and a 2½% employee salary increase. Capital fund needs total \$2,800,000 in support of the College's master plan.

### **Budget Amendment—FEMA Disaster Assistance (Ice Storm Grant)**

Will Massie, Deputy Finance Officer, said that the ice storm of December 2002 resulted in additional costs in several County departments. Fortunately, these expenditures will be funded by a FEMA disaster assistance grant. To recognize this financial assistance and the effect of these additional costs on the budgets of Public Buildings, Emergency Services and Social Services, the following budget amendment must be approved.

*On motion of Holmes, seconded by Davis, the Board voted unanimously to approve Budget Amendment # 40, as follows:*

<b>GENERAL FUND - #40</b>	
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Increase</b>
<i>Restricted Intergovernmental</i>	<i>\$ 81,660</i>
<b>Appropriations</b>	<b>Increase</b>
<i>Public Buildings</i>	<i>\$ 35,160</i>
<i>Emergency Services</i>	<i>\$ 41,400</i>
<i>Social Services</i>	<i>\$ 5,100</i>

**Request from N.C. City and County Management Association (NCCCMA) for Financial Support for Continuation of their Civic Education Project**

Frank Willis, County Manager, told the Board that in 1991 NCCCMA asked all NC counties and municipalities to help fund a project they initiated, along with the Association of County Commissioners and the League of Municipalities, to address the lack of accurate information about local government in the resources typically available to teachers. Now, NCCCMA is requesting financial assistance from counties and municipalities to fund a second round of funding (original 1991 funding has run out) for continuation of the project. At the May 7, 2001 Board of Commissioners meeting, the Board appropriated \$1250 to this project, which was year one of this current five-year campaign. He said that there are sufficient funds in the Administration budget to cover another \$1250 appropriation.

*On motion of Davis, seconded by Frye, the Board voted unanimously to appropriate \$1250 to NCCCMA for continuation of their civic education project.*

**Approval of Solid Waste Contract**

David Townsend, III, Public Works Director, said that the contract with BFI of Troy, NC has been finalized and is ready for approval by the Board. The contract includes the operation of everything at the Solid Waste Facility with the exception of the scale house and the convenience sites. The contract is for 3 years with a 3-year extension option. The hours of operation will not change.

*On motion of Frye, seconded by Mason, the Board voted unanimously to approve a contract (ATTACHED) with BFI of Troy, NC for the operation of the Solid Waste Facility.*

**New Consolidated Mental Health Board Appointments**

*On motion of Davis, seconded by Mason, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Dr. Ann Suggs (4-yr. term), Mary Wade Carlson (4-yr. term), Ann Shaw (3-yr. term), Sue McCullah (3-yr. term), Harold Holmes (2-yr. term), Rev. Jury Price (2-yr. term), Becky Faucette (1-yr. term) and Darrell Frye as the Commissioner designee to the new Consolidated Mental Health Board.*

**Mental Health**

Mazie Fleetwood, Randolph County Mental Health Director, told the Board that they are continuing their budget development in conjunction with the Sandhills Center. Randolph's portion of this budget is \$13.7 million. Frank Willis said that he has recommended a \$972,176 allocation from the County. Ms. Fleetwood mentioned that Mike Watson of the Sandhills Center will be making quarterly reports to this Board to satisfy state regulations. She also announced that Bonita Porter will be the new

Director of Randolph Services, effective 7/1/03. Ms. Fleetwood thanked the County Commissioners for their support over the years, as she is retiring effective 6/30/03. The Board praised Ms. Fleetwood for her dedication and diligence during her tenure with Mental Health.

### **Victory Junction Gang Camp**

Brian Collier, CEO of the Victory Junction Gang Camp, told the Board that progress on the camp is going very well since their groundbreaking last October despite the inclement weather. The camp is scheduled to open the summer of 2004. A total of \$13.7 million of the \$24 million goal has been raised so far. He asked the Board to consider an appropriation to the camp.

### **Budget Public Hearing**

At 6:00 p.m. the Board adjourned to a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed FY 2003-2004 budget.

**Teresa Allen**, 476 Rocket Rd., Randleman, said that through her volunteering at Level Cross Elementary School she learned that Randolph County Schools were inadequately funded. She said that she was shocked to learn that Randolph County was at the bottom of the barrel when it comes to funding. She said that their own fundraising efforts are not only for non-essentials but to also “bridge the gap” for essentials. She said that she doesn’t understand why teachers and staff continue to work under the conditions that have to. She no longer brags about Randolph County’s low property tax rate because the children of Randolph County are suffering because of it.

**Mark Comfort**, 3994 Bethany Church Rd., Asheboro, spoke about changes in Randolph County such as the new Randleman Lake and I-73/74 that will attract new investors. He asked why the schools are not changing/improving with the times. He said that Randolph County Schools are ranked 117 out of 117 in North Carolina school systems. He supports a tax increase to increase school funding.

**Keith Edmonds**, 3658 Liberty’s Run Dr., Sophia, said that a 117<sup>th</sup> ranking was unacceptable and that we need to take a proactive stand in order to change our status regarding education. He said that teachers are educating kids to take tests because of state mandates. This needs to be changed and the only way to do this is to spend money on the schools. He asked the Board to increase the schools’ funding. He supports a tax increase.

**Jim Raines**, 7929 US Hwy 64 E., Ramseur, asked for a show of hands of people who would support a tax increase for increased school funding. Nearly everyone in the room (about 100) raised their hands.

**Robert Snyder**, Ramseur, said that he pays taxes to Franklinville Fire District although he lives in Ramseur. He said that he is treated badly at fire department meetings and is not allowed to ask questions. He wants to know how he could get information on where his fire tax dollars go. Neil Allen said that he should be able to get a copy of the fire department budget.

**Mike Macon**, 5994 Riverside Rd., Seagrove, is a life-long resident of Randolph County. He thinks the schools do a great job and we need to retain the talented educators that we have. He supports a tax increase for schools.

**John Cable**, 220 Aldridge Lane, Archdale, said that he is the Vice Chairman of the Archdale-Trinity Schools Tax Council. He said that this supplemental tax works! He supports a tax increase because he knows that the Commissioners expend funds wisely.

**Robert Whaley**, 632 Nassau Trail, Asheboro, said that he works with probation and parole. He said that there is a high dropout rate in this county and that the Hispanic population is increasing. He supports an immediate tax increase for the schools because if we don't spend the money now, we'll spend it later on the ones who don't make it through the school system.

**Allen McNeill**, 4172 NC Hwy 49S, Asheboro, spoke as a representative of the Sheriff's Dept. and also as a citizen of Randolph County. He said that children are our future, but without a safe county and safe schools our children can't learn. He supports raising taxes for schools and for current services, including those provided by the Sheriff's Dept.

**Craig Parrish**, 2976 Cedar Falls Rd., Franklinville, said that the crime rate in Franklinville has increased but there are always 4 or 5 deputies who hang out at the fire department. He said that he was walking through the fire station in Franklinville looking at the fire trucks and got served with 1<sup>st</sup> degree trespassing. He asked if this was legal. Aimee Scotton, County Attorney, will check on this.

**Harry Daniel**, 2474 Scott Mountain Rd., Asheboro, said that he is a 20-year resident of Randolph County and is the Science Dept. Chairperson and the Athletic Director at Southwestern Randolph High School (SWRHS). He is pleased that the Board of Education is finally repairing the gym roof but SWRHS needs new athletic facilities. The bleachers at the football stadium are inadequate and unsafe. They do not have the seating capacity for 3-A designation and the school could be moved to a 4-A designation in the near future due to increasing student enrollment. He said that we need to do everything we can to support our student-athletes. It has been documented that student-athletes average a letter grade higher than other students. There also needs to be more funding for teacher and coaching supplements.

**Sharon Hughes**, 6142 Jackson Creek Rd., Denton, said that she is President of the Athletic Boosters at Uwharrie Middle School (UMS). While out in the community soliciting funding for the new athletic programs at UMS this past year, she repeatedly heard comments from citizens that they thought funding for these programs should come from the County. They didn't realize that the majority of the programs are funded by volunteer athletic booster clubs. Fortunately, UMS was able to offer a full slate of sports for their student-athletes the first year due to community financial support.

**Alesha Cashett**, 5763 Davis Country Rd., Randleman, asked if a tax increase would have to be a property tax increase. She suggested a sales tax increase. She was told that only the State legislature could authorize a sales tax increase.

**Clint Harris**, 1511 Westmont Dr., Asheboro, supports a tax increase for the schools but thinks that now is a really bad time to do it because of the poor economy.

**Teresa Asbill**, Winding Woods Lane, Asheboro, said that she is the parent of a child at UMS and that the athletic programs really suffered this year because of lack of funding from the schools.

Chairman Kemp closed the public hearing.

### **Approval of Fire District Tax Rates**

*On motion of Davis, seconded by Mason, the Board voted unanimously to approve all the fire district tax rates as requested: Bennett, 7¢; Climax 9.3¢; Coleridge, 7.3¢; Eastside, 5.5¢; Fairgrove, 6.5¢; Farmer, 7.5¢; Franklinville, 6.5¢; Guil-Rand, 10¢; Julian, 10¢; Level Cross, 10¢; Northeast (Liberty), 6.8¢; Randleman (Rural), 10¢; Seagrove, 9.7¢; Sophia, 10¢; Southwest (New Hope), 10¢; Staley, 10¢; Tabernacle, 8.7¢; Ulah, 6.1¢; Westside, 8.5¢.*

### **Approval of School District Tax Rates**

*On motion of Davis, seconded by Frye, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Asheboro City Schools tax rate at 13.85 cents and Archdale-Trinity Schools tax rate at 7.5 cents, as requested*

### **Budget Discussion; Adoption of Final Budget**

Commissioner Frye thanked the citizens for coming and speaking out in support of the schools. Commissioner Holmes mentioned that the 117<sup>th</sup> ranking in school funding did not reflect the funding that the County has appropriated for school capital construction.

The Board also discussed the possibility of paving the entrance to the solid waste facility and constructing a separate entrance to the animal shelter. David Townsend, III stated that he hopes to have funds left over from the Courthouse project to help with these projects. However, the old jail demolition and construction of the parking lot will not be complete until probably next spring. The Board discussed appropriating funds from fund balance for the paving and then reimbursing the fund balance with any funds left over from the Courthouse project.

The Board discussed additional funding for the schools.

*On motion of Frye, seconded by Holmes, the Board unanimously adopted the 2003-04 Budget Ordinance (ATTACHED), with a property tax rate of 50 cents per \$100 valuation (2 cent increase) and with the following changes to the proposed budget:*

- *increase the recommended County employee salary increase from 2½% to 4% @ \$333,930;*
- *add an additional ambulance bay and ambulance in Archdale and the necessary staff to operate only during the 12 primetime hours of the day @ \$350,281;*
- *allocate a new MIS-III position in Computer Services and eliminate one part-time position @ \$25,004;*
- *allocate a civil deputy position in the Sheriff's Dept. @ \$35,000;*
- *add the holiday buy-back plan for Sheriff's Dept. employees @ \$80,000;*
- *add \$15,000 to the Tax Dept. postage budget;*
- *increase funding to the County Schools Current Expense by \$382,075 and County Schools Current Capital by \$201,625;*
- *increase funding to the Asheboro City Schools Current Expense by \$91,670 and Asheboro City Schools Current Capital by \$48,375;*
- *add one new vehicle for the Planning & Zoning Dept. @ \$20,000;*
- *appropriate \$50,000 to the Victory Junction Gang Camp;*
- *appropriate \$98,000 from County Fund Balance to the Public Works budget for the paving of the solid waste facility entrance.*

These changes produce a budget totaling \$86,113,163 that has \$998,000 fund balance appropriated.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

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Phil Kemp, Chairman

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Darrell L. Frye

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J. Harold Holmes

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Robert B. Davis

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Robert O. Mason

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Cheryl A. Ivey, Deputy Clerk to the Board