

June 10, 2013

The Randolph County Board of Commissioners met at 6:00 p.m. for a special budget session in the 1909 Randolph County Historic Courthouse Meeting Room, 145 Worth Street, Asheboro, NC. Commissioners Holmes, Frye, Kemp, Haywood, and Lanier were present.

**Public Works Director Paxton Arthurs** presented his FY 2013-2014 budget request. He said that there has been an 11% decrease in tonnage at the transfer station over the past year, but a 21% increase in tires received and a 6% increase in fuel surcharge. A bobcat that was purchased in 1991 needs to be replaced. Approximately 75% is reimbursable with white goods and electronics tax funds. The expected cost is \$30,000.

Mr. Arthurs said that the City of Randleman has asked to be reimbursed for their new relocated recycling center. In the past, Randleman's recycling center was located in the parking lot of city hall, but that did not work out, so it was relocated to a lot on Depot Street that is dedicated for recycling. They have asked for reimbursement of their expenses at \$7,500 for the next two years.

The Public Works Department has been asked to hold a Household Hazardous Waste Event to give citizens a legal route to dispose of items not accepted at the transfer station and MSW landfills, such as liquid wastes, florescent light bulbs, batteries, mercury thermometers and thermostats. The cost is projected at \$15,000.

Mr. Arthurs discussed the woodpile (wood waste) at the solid waste facility. The purpose of the woodpile is to deal with banned items like pallets and yard waste. However, because the woodpile is located so remotely from the transfer station and is unmanned, a lot of unapproved material is being deposited there. He said a year ago, a representative from NCDENR advised that this problem needs to be addressed. Mr. Arthurs said that he did an RFP for grinding and sorting, but received no response due to the uncertainty of the potentially large amount of waste and the potential for damaged equipment. Mr. Arthurs subsequently did a second RFP for sorting alone. One bid was received from Larry McDowell Construction for \$24,200. That work (by McDowell Construction) is complete and the site consists of three piles: 1) pallets, 2) brush (yard waste), 3) comingled soil and wood chips. Mr. Arthurs said that NCDENR has approved our using the comingled soil and wood to close out the old LCID, but the brush and pallets cannot be used. These will either have to be grinded or hauled away. Mr. Arthurs said that \$50,000 has been budgeted for this purpose. He also negotiated with Troy to send the pallets there in the future. However, due to the remote location of this wood waste area, there is still concern, so Mr. Arthurs is recommending that the tipping fee for all wood waste be increased to \$50/ton (currently \$25/ton).

Another proposed fee change would affect residential customers at the transfer station. Mr. Arthurs said that the original design for the transfer station designated a small area to the side for citizens' pickup trucks. However, a pickup would have to cross the entrance of the transfer station to get to it, so it's essentially never been used for that purpose. Also, because of the way the facility is laid out and there being only one set of scales, commercial customers can go across scales, then on to the transfer station, then leave, because their weights are already in the system. But residential customers have to go across the scales twice and then find a place to leave, which

doubles the traffic at the transfer station. For that reason, over the years, Public Works developed an approximate method for assigning fees. Mr. Arthurs said that it has worked fairly well, but it has encouraged residential customers to go to the transfer station. That puts small cars right next to large commercial trucks, which is potentially dangerous and increases the County's liability. Mr. Arthurs recommended a minimum tipping fee of \$10 for any load weighing less than 7,000 lbs; over 7,000 lbs. would go over the scales a second time.

### **Randolph Arts Guild**

**Brooke Schmidly**, President of the Arts Guild Board, provided a PowerPoint presentation on who they are, what they do, how they do it and why they do it. They are requesting the same amount as last year: \$20,000. She said County funding is vital to the Arts Guild's ability to leverage other grant sources. She thanked the Commissioners for all their support.

### **Communities in Schools (CIS)**

**Sandi Norman**, Communities in Schools Executive Director, reported on CIS activities and successes during the past year, saying that 1,148 (unduplicated) students received services (mentoring, group mentoring, Boys' and Girls' groups, after-school fitness programs, remediation and tutoring, Backpack Pals, New Century Scholarships, SMATS, etc.) These services totaled over 29,271 hours and are valued at \$353,324. She said that CIS is in its second year of the True North grant, which has provided two full-time site coordinators in the Randleman area. Two-thirds of their salaries are paid by CIS-Randolph County; Randolph County Schools pays for the remaining one-third. CIS-Randolph County lost 1½ staff members last year due to reduced funding. One was a grant funded position that served two middle schools. The other was the site coordinator who worked with the three Randleman elementary schools. Remaining staff have had to cover these areas, which has been very difficult. She thanked the Board for their consideration of her request.

### **Central Boys and Girls Club (CBGC)**

**Thomas Falgout**, President of the Club, thanked the Board for their support. CBGC currently serves about 223 children, who come from low-income homes. He said that the mission of the club is to make sure that when the kids graduate high school they are more equipped, more aware and more inspired; they are introduced to a world that is bigger than what they normally would have been exposed to. He said that their request is for \$25,000, which is the same as last year, and represents about 18% of their budget.

### **Randolph Vocational Industries (RVI) (formerly Innovative Solutions of the Triad and Sheltered Workshop)**

**Michael Ayers** said that they have asked for the same financial support since 1996 until this year. He said that RVI is a training facility that offers planned vocational rehabilitation programs for the developmentally disabled, emotionally unstable, or physically disabled adults who cannot ordinarily maintain competitive employment in the community. Since the beginning of this year, RVI has already out-placed 42 people in the community to be productive workers. It has also provided 40 full-time jobs for developmentally disabled people. RVI is also an auxiliary for industries that cannot afford to pay minimum wage. Mr. Ayers said that RVI has been notified that they will receive a decrease in funding from Sandhills Mental Health in the amount of \$9,215. He said that RVI employs six full-time staff workers. He also stressed the poor condition

of their building. He asked the Board to consider RVI's request of \$25,000, which is an additional \$10,000 over last year's request and allocation.

### **YMCA**

**Bill Redding**, member of the YMCA's Board of Trustees, reminded the board of their capital request that they had presented last year that had not been funded. They have raised \$2.6 million of their goal of \$2.9 million, which leaves them a bank debt of \$300,000. He said that they don't have to have the \$250,000 all at one time, but would appreciate any funding over the next five or six years.

### **Ash-Rand Rescue**

**Greg Bryant**, Treasurer of Ash-Rand Rescue, said that last year, Ash-Rand celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In the next few weeks, they will begin construction of a new addition to their facility at a cost of \$905,000. They have saved about \$250,000 over the last several years through fund raising and donations from citizens. They plan to finance the project through USDA funding, and that this is the last year that any facility in the city limits of Asheboro can qualify for this funding. He said that Ash-Rand is asking the County for additional funding in the amount of \$25,000/year over the next five years. They want to be fiscally responsible, paying down debt as soon as possible in order to free up new funds for new equipment, training and equipment replacement. He said that all those items are what save people's lives. In the last 12 months Ash-Rand transported over 2,100 people through their ambulance service. They now run two ambulances seven days a week. Ash-Rand never charges for any urban search and rescue dive, or water calls. They currently receive about 2.25% of their budget from the County.

### **Family Crisis Center**

**Betty Byers**, member of the Randolph County Family Crisis Center Board, spoke in support of their request of \$41,000 and to thank the Commissioners for their past support and to plea for future support.

### **Eastside Improvement Association**

**Addie Luther** said that they have been in business since 1995 and are housed in the Rosenwall School on Watkins Street. They have 18 apartments. She said that during the last couple of years with the bad economy, they are struggling. They have utilized grant money through the NC Housing Finance Agency to make the necessary changes for improvements in the apartments. She said that they have run short of funds for upgrades to two apartments. The two, if they are revitalized, will help Eastside regain a full house again so that the business can take care of itself. Their mission is to serve low-income elderly persons. She asked the Board to consider funding the following request:

\$40,000 for underpinning of floors to apartments "M and "N"

\$7,000 for the installation of a concrete accessibility ramp for wheelchairs

\$26,000 to repair/repave potholes and improve driveway

\$73,000 TOTAL

### **Bennett Fire Department**

**Michael Brady**, of Bennett Volunteer Fire Department, spoke in support of their request for a one-cent increase on their fire tax rate to eight cents/\$100 valuation. Their insurance rating is

now a six. Last year, they ran 240 calls, which is up about 100 from a few years ago. The one-cent increase will bring in about \$3,900. They plan to replace some turnout gear and some other equipment with the increased revenue. They will continue to apply for grants to help with equipment replacement. He said they have 35 members, ten of whom live in Randolph County.

### **Level Cross Fire Department**

**John Hussey**, Level Cross Fire Department Board member, said it had been about 10 years since they had asked for an increase. The past five years they have lost revenue from the county but they have offset that lost revenue with fundraisers. But the economy is making even fundraising difficult. Their trucks are still serviceable. He said that the one-cent requested increase was discussed at their annual meeting and everyone understood why the increase is needed. He said that their insurance rating is a six.

### **Proposed Budget Public Hearing**

At 7:12 p.m., the Chairman opened the public hearing and invited citizens to speak concerning the proposed budget.

County Attorney Ben Morgan read the rules for the public hearing, which included a three-minute per speaker limit.

**Recil Williamson**, Westside Fire Department Chief, thanked the Board for their support.

**Gordon Coburn** asked the Board to consider the tight budgets of the citizens of Randolph County, many of whom have lost their jobs. He knows many people who are living on a lot less than what they lived on the year before or even five years ago. In his company, salaried employees took a five percent cut two years ago that has not increased since then for the sustainability of the company. Hourly employees are working short weeks. They can't afford to pay one cent more for their taxes to give to the Arts Guild or other programs. Many programs are tremendous, such as the Family Crisis Center. He would hate for them to take any cut. But, he said, there are potters who make a lot of money and they can support the Arts Guild, rather than citizens. He asked the board to consider what the average working person is going through.

**Larry McKenzie** spoke on behalf of land owners in the county. To raise taxes in Randolph County today would be extremely difficult for property owners. Things are improving in a lot of places other than here, but rents are down in Randolph County. He said he's had to roll rents back to keep properties full and has been forced to do creative things to stay afloat. He asked the Board to please try to be creative in their decision-making, as well. To raise taxes even one time would be devastating for people who own a lot of property in Randolph County. He said that sales are improving some, but they are not getting the prices they want.

**Faye Cox** asked the Board not to raise taxes. She appreciates the Board not raising taxes for the last three years, but a 4.4-cent increase would be too much. She said she doesn't own a lot of property, but she wants to keep the property she has. Regarding ambulance service, she said an ambulance trip would cost her \$1,000 plus her co pay in an ambulance that she helped buy. And someone else can ride in it that hasn't paid a dime for it. How is that fair? There should be a way to tax everybody, not just property owners. She talked about the six new positions at DSS, which explains a lot. There are a lot of people needing more help. She talked about all the foreclosures

in the county. How can the Board consider raising taxes? She referenced vehicles and equipment that Mr. Massie had said needed to be replaced in county departments. She mentioned that things break at her house too and she hasn't been able to repair or replace them. Things haven't gotten better at her house. Raises haven't come. She said that the reason more people don't come to speak against a tax increase is because they believe it's a waste of time because the Commissioners have already made up their minds. She comes because she thinks it's important. Companies have determined they can hire employees cheaper because there are so many looking for work. Utilities, groceries and gas costs continue to increase.

**Harold Austin** said that he is 66 years old today. He said he has less today than when he came to Randolph County when he was 20 years old. He has worked seven days a week since he came here. He lost his wife seven years ago. He said he has been paying big state and federal tax for years. But the last three years, he hasn't had to pay any state or federal taxes because he didn't make enough money. He said he had 15 houses sitting empty that he can't rent or sell. Therefore, how can the Board raise taxes when he's already in this bad shape? He asked if churches have to pay property tax. The Board responded that they do not. Mr. Austin said that he was going to give some of his houses away to churches. He said that all his income is going to pay taxes. The County isn't doing anything for him. He said a citizen has to get someone from Winston-Salem to come out to issue a septic permit.

At 7:26 p.m., hearing no further comments on the proposed budget, Chairman Holmes closed the public hearing.

**Adjournment**

At 7:26 p.m., on motion by Frye, seconded by Lanier, the Board adjourned.

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J. Harold Holmes, Chairman

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Darrell L. Frye

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Phil Kemp

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Stan Haywood

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Arnold Lanier

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Cheryl A. Ivey, Clerk to the Board