

Commissioners Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2009

The Randolph County Board of Commissioners met in special budget session at 5:00 p.m. in the County Manager's Conference Room, County Office Building, 725 McDowell Road, Asheboro, NC. Commissioners Holmes, Frye, Haywood and Lanier were present. Commissioner Kemp was absent.

Emergency Services

Donovan Davis, Emergency Services Director, stated that his requested budget is the same as last year but provided information on short-term and long-term needs of the Emergency Service departments for their future planning.

- The NC Office of Emergency Medical Services is requiring Emergency Medical Service departments to develop and implement a comprehensive in-house Quality Assurance/Management program. At present, the EMS Dept. does not have a staff position available to provide this service. Mr. Davis would like to add a Deputy Director position when possible. The Deputy Director would assist with the daily operations. The current EMS Operations Officer position would then be responsible for training and the new State-required comprehensive in-house Quality Assurance/Management program.
- The FCC has issued new regulations that must be implemented by the year 2012. The narrow banding regulation will require all licensed radio frequency holders to reduce their transmit power to 25 watts and by 2017 to 12.5 watts. This regulation affects Emergency Services and the Sheriff's Department. This change will require the addition of multiple radio frequency repeaters across the county. Preliminary estimates exceed three million dollars or \$516,000 per site. Additional sites may also be necessary. In addition, mobile radios will have to be replaced by 2017 because the current ones cannot handle the watt reduction. Staff members are currently researching this issue.
- The 9-1-1 Call Center averages 9,900 incoming calls a month and dispatches an average of 6,900 calls to Fire, EMS, Law Enforcement and Rescue per month. Telecommunicators are responsible for simultaneously answering calls and radio dispatching information for service. Due to the increase, it has become more difficult for one person to do both in a favorable timeframe. Dispatch calls or response to the radio are often delayed because they are answering incoming phone calls. Mr. Davis doesn't feel this is good customer service to other departments or the citizens. Mr. Davis would like to see the two functions be handled by two people instead of one. This would require the addition of twelve full-time employees in the 9-1-1 Center at an additional cost of \$570,000. Mr. Davis suggested adding four employees each year for three years.
- EMS has six 24-hour paramedic bases and one 12-hour base in Trinity. The total call volume exceeds 15,000 annually. In the near future, Mr. Davis would like to make the Trinity base a 24-hour unit to cover that area. This would require the addition of two employees and funding for 24-hour coverage. This unit is currently sharing Station 39 of Guil-Rand Fire Department, and we are not being charged for use of the space. Mr. Davis is concerned that construction of a base facility in Trinity may be needed in the future.
- Mr. Davis stated that there are no ambulance bases on the south side of Hwy 64. On average, it takes 20-25 minutes to get to those rural areas. If the Asheboro base ambulances are all on calls, another base would respond, increasing the response time by 25 or more minutes. Due to the increased volume of calls, sometimes there are no available ambulances, and surrounding counties provide mutual aid response. Mr. Davis suggested adding two 24-hour bases to increase patient care services to the Coleridge-Erect and Farmer areas.

- Randolph Hospital will no longer be replacing supplies used on ambulance. ES would need to begin to stock needed items in a location that would be temperature controlled. The current location for storage is not very large. Options to recover the expense were to bill out to the patient or raise the ambulance fees.
- Future facility needs:
 1. Archdale, Randleman and Ramseur base--New furniture
 2. Liberty base--Very old and in need of major renovations and a new base suitable for a 24/7 EMS operation for the Liberty/Staley area may be a better option than trying to make repairs
 3. Asheboro base--furniture, new facility constructed to consolidate the Asheboro ambulances/living quarters, 9-1-1 Call Center, Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Fire Marshal's offices, training room, expanded technical room and the administrative offices;
 4. Temperature controlled environment for medical supplies
 5. Trinity base--construction of a base facility for unit
 6. Headquarters- Not currently adequate in size for EOC if the command center needed to be activated in an emergency situation. Furniture not suited for an emergency condition. Parking for employees is an issue during heavy court days and downtown Asheboro events
- Equipment, Vehicles and Technology for the next two to five years:
 1. Cardiac monitors
 2. Three Fire Inspector's vehicles
 3. Three ambulances, each with over 200,000 miles, need replacing. One is included in the '09-'10 budget, but need to consider the purchase of two additional full ambulances at \$125,000 each.
 4. Reverse Emergency Calling System needs to be updated to keep up with technology.
 5. Ambulance billing and call reporting software. NC Office of Emergency Medical Services (NCEMS) requires participation in the Prehospital Medical Information System, which is internet based. Current software makes it difficult to meet the NCEMS reporting requirements. ES, Tax and IT recommend replacement.
 6. The mobile data computers used on ambulances for patient care reporting, GIS and mobile computer-aided dispatch will need replacing within four years.

Mr. Davis asked the Board if they would consider imposing Fire Inspection fees. He said most Counties have been charging these fees for years. Mr. Davis and staff will continue development of the proposal at the instruction of the Board.

Mr. Davis also asked about taxing the untaxed fire protected covered areas so that everyone is paying for the services provided. The Board said they would look into what would be required to implement this request.

Public Works

David Townsend, III, Public Works Director, reviewed personnel changes within Public Works. Ann Lawson transferred to the department and brought contract tracking with her responsibilities, allowing for some consolidation between departments. A position was also eliminated.

Mr. Townsend sees the continued trend in reduction of solid waste from industries and individual traffic. He doesn't foresee any changes to recycling revenues. The solid waste tipping fee of \$44/ton will remain unchanged for 09-10. Mr. Townsend said that the City of Archdale made the change last year by taking their garbage to a High Point facility because the High Point rates are less expensive than ours. Mr. Townsend said this change negatively impacted his budget.

Mr. Townsend stated that the Liberty convenience site should open in July or August and that the Town of Liberty has been very gracious in their support by granting access to 1.5 acres at no charge for the next 25 years. They have also agreed to maintain the property.

Mr. Townsend said that the CDBG funds would be used to complete the repairs to twenty homes instead of nine. The Board asked what the criteria were for applications. Mr. Townsend said they must be homeowner occupied with no liens and stick-built. Mr. Townsend also stated that each house is physically inspected.

Mr. Townsend stated that bidding for the Hwy 64 water line would begin in the next two months and by late summer, pipes could be going in the ground.

The Board asked Mr. Townsend what his plans were for the EPA Federal Stimulus that had been applied for. Mr. Townsend stated that the main consideration was to add solar panels for renewable energy to the new courthouse, jail and the administration building. He is also researching the possibility of a solar farm at the landfill on some of the cleared land and the capturing of methane gases for recycling into usable energy. The energy can be resold. The extent depends on how far funds can be stretched and the best option for saving the County money.

Social Services

Beth Duncan, Social Services Director, stated that last August the County Manager directed all Department Heads to find ways to increase department efficiency, and she listed items that DSS has been able to accomplish:

- Reorganized, consolidated and streamlined jobs.
- A clerical position was relocated to a computer technician.
- A Work First position was relocated to fraud investigator.
- A fraud hotline was established.

Ms. Duncan stated that by making organizational changes they were able to create space, increase efficiency, enhance client confidentiality, increase employee safety and maximize existing County resources.

Ms. Duncan reminded the Board that the uncertainty of how Federal and State legislation will impact DSS leaves them at a disadvantage and gave the following as examples: proposed cuts to the FNS (old food stamp program), guardianship, and foster care/adoption programs.

Ms. Duncan said the Federal Stimulus package gives a 13% increase in funds to the FNS that will be reflected on the EBT card, but this program is good for only two years. There are concerns about what will happen when the recipients no longer have this increase.

On behalf of the DSS Board, Ms. Duncan, listed the needs of the department:

- Fund unfunded positions
- Adult Medicaid Income Maintenance Caseworker
- LINKS position that is now part-time, change to full-time
- CSSA position that is now part-time, change to full-time

Ms. Duncan also wanted the Board to know that the Register of Deeds office has supplied employees from time to time to help convert the paper files into electronic files and expressed her appreciation for the cooperation between departments.

Administration

Will Massie, County Finance Officer, reviewed the Administration section of the Proposed Budget and stated that some cuts had been made, but everything else was the same.

Debt Service

Mr. Massie reviewed the debt service schedules in the Proposed Budget book for the Commissioners' information. Commissioner Haywood had requested to see numbers for the fund balance and Mr. Massie discussed scenarios of using the fund balance.

Adjournment

There being no further presentations, the Board adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

J. Harold Holmes, Chairman

Arnold Lanier

Phil Kemp

Darrell L. Frye

Stan Haywood

Amanda Varner, Deputy Clerk