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Posted By: Evelyn Baker
Witnessed by: _____

**MINUTES OF A
BUDGET WORK SESSION
OF THE
JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
MAY 10, 2005**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Work Session on May 10, 2005 at 3:30 p.m. in Room A201, Justice & Administration Building, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian T. McMahan, Chairman
Roberta Crawford, Vice Chair
Conrad Burrell, Commissioner
Joe Cowan, Commissioner
Eddie Madden, Commissioner
Kenneth L. Westmoreland, County Manager
Darlene Fox, Finance Director
Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk to the Board

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order and stated it was a budget work session to discuss the FY05-06 Budget.

(1) SMH SITE WORK, PHASE I: Mr. Westmoreland explained that the bids for Smoky Mountain High School Site Work, Phase I, were much higher than anticipated by the engineer. We received interest from nine companies at the pre-bid conference; however, only two submitted bids. Since that project is in excess of the informal bid requirements pursuant to state statute, it was re-bid. Bids were opened again yesterday (5/9/05) and again received the same two bids. The issue is that the bids came in \$700,000 over the engineering estimate. Phase I is primarily for a parking area in front of the high school for students, staff, and visitors, school bus parking lot, and preparation for the perimeter road. This is an extensive project – approximately 600,000 cubic yards of dirt must be moved. Mr. Westmoreland stated that he had budgeted \$1.6 million for Phase I and \$1.3 million for Phase II. Bids are at a premium and the restrictive time frame within which this project must be completed – 86 days while school is closed this summer. Buchanan & Sons bid \$2,298,000 and Phillips & Jordan bid \$3,307,000. All future projects at SMH are based on Phase I. Phase II is for relocation of the athletic fields, road connector to Jones Road, and stream mitigation. The anticipated additional funding of \$600,000 from outside sources for Phase I is no longer available. Thus, the county must be responsible for the entire project.

After discussion, it was determined there is insufficient time to re-bid the project. The low bidder is fully insured through a bid bond in the amount of \$2.3 million. Funding

for Phase I can be borrowed from Phase II and the time for commencing Phase II be delayed. This issue is on the May 16, 2005 Agenda for acceptance or rejection of the bid.

(2) **COMMUNITY HEALTH LINK** requested an increase of \$10,000 for a total of \$20,000. Mr. Westmoreland stated that, historically, the allocation is \$10,000 each year. Further, George Stanley, Community Health Link Treasurer, advised Mr. Westmoreland that the agency has sufficient revenue for the next one to two years without additional funding from the county. It was the consensus of the Board that the allocation remain at \$10,000.

(3) **REACH, INC.** requested an increase of \$35,000 for a total of \$50,000. REACH was unsuccessful in its application for a grant from the Rural Center. REACH is historically allocated \$15,000. The state has mandated that REACH provide staff to answer emergency calls 24-hours per day. At present, evening and weekend calls are routed through the 911 Office. Mr. Westmoreland stated that he had been informed REACH runs the risk of losing other grants if they do not implement the mandate. It was the consensus of the Board that the request be granted.

(4) **BOARD OF EDUCATION:**

(a) **SMH Science Bldg.:** The Board of Education inadvertently failed to submit costs for operating expenses, furniture and fixtures for the new Smoky Mountain High School Science Building until after the proposed budget was submitted.

Operating equipment & materials	\$ 109,638
Furniture	<u>\$ 26,034</u>
TOTAL	\$ 135,672

Mr. Westmoreland stated that \$26,034 could be paid from the capital projects and bond funds; however, the \$109,638 would be from the general fund.

(b) Additional funding was requested as follows:

(a) One middle grade teacher	\$ 33,000
(b) Health Benefits	\$ 60,000
(c) One custodian for new science bldg at SMH . .	\$ 20,000
(d) Contracted psychological services	<u>\$ 15,000</u>
TOTAL	\$128,000

(c) **Fairview School:** Ms. Nations, Superintendent, requested that the new Fairview kindergarten classes be considered a priority in lieu of The Hub. This Board of Education should make this determination.

(d) Commissioner Cowan suggested that the county work more closely with the Board of Education on school site locations, setting capital project priorities, architect, engineer, contractors and subcontractor selections, building designs, staff involvement, oversight, and scheduling work sessions between the two boards concerning the budget.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that the Board of Education was allocated a 5% increase over last year's budget.

BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET CHANGE: It was the consensus of the Board to fund the following:

SMH Science Bldg. operating expenses	\$ 109,638
SMH Science Bldg. furniture & fixtures	\$ 26,034
SMH Science Bldg. custodian	\$ 20,000
Health Benefits	\$ 60,000
TOTAL	\$ 215,672

The additional funding increases the allocation to 6% for FY05-06.

(6) **SHERIFF'S OFFICE** requested five new positions: 2 patrol officers, 1 narcotics detective, 1 detention officer, 1 child support enforcement officer. Sheriff Ashe stated that it was essential that a Narcotics Detective be added this year. He withdrew his request for a child support enforcement officer.

It was the consensus of the Board that one position, Narcotics Detective, be added on 7/1/05 and two Patrol Officers and one Detention Officer be added on January 1, 2006. Sheriff Ashe stated that it would not be necessary to purchase new vehicles for the new positions because they could use spare vehicles for at least a year.

Mr. Westmoreland reported that the Sheriff's Office had requested that 17 employees' salaries be reviewed based on longevity and career classification. The personnel committee reviewed those salaries and determined that 4 should be adjusted at a total cost of \$3,683.00.

(7) **TOWN OF SYLVA REQUEST FOR ABC STORE DISTRIBUTION:** The Town of Sylva requested that the county give its share of the ABC Store distribution, approximately \$51,000, to the town. It was the consensus of the Board not to honor this request.

A Budget Ordinance will be submitted on May 16, 2005.

The Board commended Mr. Westmoreland and Ms. Fox for their outstanding work on the budget.

There being no further business, Commissioner Crawford moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Burrell seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote, and the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Attested By:

Approved:

Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk to the Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman

