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Posted By: Evelyn Baker  
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**MINUTES OF A  
BUDGET WORK SESSION  
OF THE  
JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
MARCH 30, 2006**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Work Session on March 30, 2006, at 4:00 pm, Justice & Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

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

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order and stated that the purpose of the work session is to discuss the FY2006-07 capital budget.

**AGENDA:** Commissioner Cowan moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Burrell seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

**(1) FAIRVIEW ELEMENTARY:** Chairman McMahan and Mr. Westmoreland met again with school officials and Architect John Cort. The school board's original representation of needs was to add six additional kindergarten classrooms and the county budgeted \$1.5 million for that purpose. However, school officials now prefer a stand alone building for those six kindergarten classrooms together with a restroom for each class, build four additional special needs classrooms to the present facility, renovate the present building so that all administrative offices would be consolidated, and move the modular units off campus. In order to accommodate a new building the bus parking lot would need to be re-arranged, in addition to a new 120-space parking lot, and a new entrance. The cost would be \$2.8 million which does not include furniture and fixtures.

Mr. Westmoreland stated that the county could budget the \$2.8 million if renovations to Smoky Mountain High "A" Building are delayed for a year. He also stated that it is possible that funding for Fairview could also cut into SMH "D" Building (\$1,600,000).

Mr. Westmoreland stated that the most favorable opportunity, if Fairview is substituted for SMH "A" Building, is to do nothing this calendar year, but wait until 2007. Ms. Fox explained the benefit would be moving the \$1.5 million allocated for Fairview forward one year which would reduce the debt for 2006, increase the debt for 2007, plus the advantage of adding the \$750,000 scheduled for "A" Building to the \$1.5 million. The site work at SMH is scheduled to be completed by the end of this summer.

It was the consensus of the Board that because the county cannot budget both projects this year, the school board will be requested to make the choice between: (a) only adding six new kindergarten classrooms at Fairview (FY2006-07); or (b) Fairview expansion "Alternate No. 1 (FY2007-08) and delay SMH "A" Building renovations for one year. The school board should also be apprised of the fact that a new Board of Commissioners may not want to continue with renovations at SMH.

Mr. Westmoreland stated that in the interest of long term planning, a good long term capital improvement plan that both boards can work with is needed since the school board's priorities continues to change after the original master plan was developed.

**(2) SYLVA BRANCH LIBRARY:** The library board made five recommendations at the March 20<sup>th</sup> Board of Commissioners Meeting:

- (a) New library building should be 25,000 – 30,000 sq. ft.;
- (b) "A significant percentage" of the furniture, fixtures and equipment costs be raised by the community;
- (c) Hiring a library design consultant to work with architect;
- (d) Hiring a consultant to conduct a fundraising feasibility study;
- (e) Begin requests for qualification process to hire a library architect.

Mr. Westmoreland estimated that the cost for two consultants would be \$65,000 - \$75,000. He estimated the cost for furnishing a 25,000 – 30,000 sq. ft. building would be \$1.75 - \$2 million. The present library is approximately 6,500 sq. ft.

After discussion it was the consensus of the Board that \$15,000-\$20,000 be appropriated in the FY2006-07 budget for a fundraising feasibility study consultant. If the consultant's findings reveal that "a significant" amount of funds cannot be raised, then the appropriation for a new facility, \$4.2 million, will include furnishings and equipment (FY2007-08). This may mean constructing a smaller building, but designed so it can be expanded in the future if the need arises. However, if the library board raises "significant" funds, the square footage can be adjusted accordingly. In any event, the county's limit is \$4.2 million. The library committees should consider using an architect who specializes in library construction, as with the Cashiers Library expansion, thus saving the costs for a library consultant.

There being no further business, Commissioner Burrell moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Madden seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

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Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk

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Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman