

CLARKE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
February 10, 2009 Budget Work Session 5:30 p.m.
Board of Supervisors Meeting Room

At a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Clarke County, Virginia, held in the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Clarke County Circuit Courthouse, Berryville, Virginia on Tuesday, February 10, 2009.

Board Members Present

Barbara Byrd; J. Michael Hobert; John Staelin; David Weiss

Members Absent

A.R. Dunning, Jr.

Staff Present

David Ash, Tom Judge, Lora Walburn

Others Present

Robina Rich Bouffault, Treasurer Sharon Keeler, Sheriff Tony Roper, Chief Deputy Mike McWilliams, Commissioner of the Revenue Warren Arthur, Commissioner of the Revenue Deputy Clerk II Sally Sheckels, Ron Sheckels, County Assessor Donna Peake, Tom Nolan, Laura Oleniacz, Layla Wilder and other citizens

Call to Order

Chairman Staelin called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Capital Budget

Tom Judge reviewed budget adjustments made at the direction of the Finance Committee.

- Gypsy Moth Program eliminated.
- Opus Oaks funding reduced to current level.
- Equalize Volunteer Fire Contributions.

- 105K Landfill Credit included in net funding.
- Showing a \$2,883,778 deficit with still more to come from the Schools.
- 3-cent tax increase is assumed.

- Discussion Items:
 - o Use of Rainy Day Funds.
 - o Impact of tax rate change on FY09.
 - o Impact of personal property tax changes.
 - o Groundwater study.
 - o Registrar increases from the Commonwealth do not include salary increases.

- Personnel Issues
 - o Part-time personnel reduction.
 - o Sheriff funding for School Resource Officer was eliminated for FY09 and FY10 – federal government eliminated COPS grant funding. Sheriff is seeking local funding for one of two positions. Vice Chairman Hobert put forth that if federal and state funding is being phased out the locality will not be able to pick up the funding and will not be responsible for filling those positions.
 - o Commonwealth Attorney has withdrawn request for additional office assistance.
 - o Victim Witness grant has been reduced; and to fund, part-time office staff has been reduced.
 - o Open polling in Voter Registration would mean additional staffing for a month prior to elections for absentee voting. Funding has not been entered into the budget until final disposition of bill is known.
 - o Parks and Recreation Center minimum wage increases caused a minor change to salary structure to maintain fairness. No new positions were created. By consensus, minimum wage increase will remain.
 - o Existing employees shall fill County Administration Receptionist position.
 - o Elimination of Economic Development position from FY10 budget.

Minor Capital

Tom Judge reviewed the report FY10 Budget Minor Capital Requests and Actions. The total requested was \$95,881 with \$11,745 approved.

- The General District Court copier was added back into minor capital after affirmation from David Ash indicating that the IT Director had determined that a copier was necessary.

Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Tony Roper joined the Supervisors to discuss the Sheriff's Office budget.

- The total cut from the General Assembly is still uncertain.
- He has done his best to reduce the Sheriff's budget by 6 ½% in local funding.
- October 2009 retirement of senior officer will result in a savings of \$19,000. This officer will be replaced at a lesser rate.
- Another deputy is contemplating retirement, which could result in further reduction.
- Cuts in operating and salary have already been made.
- Patrol staff is operating at 80% of last year and revenue from fines has been reduced, as well as the ability to support special projects and investigations in lieu of responding to emergency calls.
- Travel and training reduced.
- Supervisory staff responsibility has been redirected.
- Two supervisors are doing the work of field staff.
- Progress toward accreditation has slowed.
- Estimated approximately \$20,000 less in fines due to reduced patrolling. Anticipate that this will be offset by increases in court security fee increase.
- Sheriff's Office is prioritizing. He stated that while he believed the School Resource Officer position was valuable field staff is needed to respond to emergencies and to protect the community.
- Encouraged the Supervisors to continue to support his office in the General Assembly.
- Chairman Staelin instructed Tom Judge to revise FY10 to reflect these realities.

Commissioner of the Revenue

Warren Arthur joined the Supervisors to discuss the Commissioner of the Revenue budget.

- Optimistic that the state will reduce the proposed funding cuts.
- Commended his office staff for their willingness to adapt to changes necessitated by funding cuts.
- Reassessment was in process.
- Full-time staff would perform data input for the reassessment, historically contracted to an external source that could result in a cost avoidance of approximately \$15,000.

- Treasurer is making her office staff available to assist with reassessment.

Treasurer

Sharon Keeler joined the Supervisors to discuss the Treasurer's budget.

- Treasurer's Office already operates on a minimal budget.
- Voluntarily budget reductions have been made.
- Part-time salaries have been eliminated. This covers approximately 75% of the budget shortfall.
- Beyond part-time salaries, there is little left to cut that is not essential.

Chairman Staelin extended his thanks to the Treasurer's staff for their willingness to help in these difficult times.

Schools

Robina Rich Bouffault, School Board White Post representative, joined the Supervisors to discuss the School's budget.

- School Board had been notified of an additional \$745,000 funding cut.
- School's budget public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, February 17, with presentation to the Supervisors in March.
- Hopeful that the School Board will have an opportunity to review the proposed budget prior to the public hearing.
- She outlined her suggestions to her fellow School Board members that they first fund the K-12 core; and then, perform an analysis of the discretionary programs rank them by priority and decrease as necessary with a plan to add back in if funds became available.
- Michael Hobert said that he had heard little from the Schools. He opined that the Schools had already suffered an \$800,000 cut from a change in the composite index.
- Supervisor Byrd noted the reduced average daily membership. Ms. Bouffault interjected that reduced ADM could mean \$30,000 less in state funding than projected.

Concluding Remarks

David Weiss stated that he was concerned that the budget cuts discussed might be even more detrimental to the community than a tax increase.

John Staelin reminded that nothing had yet been agreed and the budget was far from finished with priorities still to be reviewed and set.

Chairman Staelin concluded the evening's discussion expressing his hope that the Supervisors would be able to help people in the community to keep their jobs. He made poignant reference to the difficulties faced by those persons in the community that are unemployed or underemployed.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the Board at 7:00 pm Chairman Staelin adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting Date

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors is set for Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room, 101 Chalmers Court, 2nd Floor, Berryville, Virginia.

ATTEST: February 10, 2009

John Staelin, Chair

David L. Ash, County Administrator

Minutes Recorded and Transcribed by:
Lora B. Walburn
Deputy Clerk, Board of Supervisors