

PERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

June 23, 2008
OTHERS PRESENT

Johnny Myrl Lunsford, Chairman
Jimmy B. Clayton, Vice-Chairman
Kyle W. Puryear
Larry H. Bowes
Larry E. Yarborough, Jr.

County Manager
County Attorney
Faye T. Fuller, Clerk to the Board
Deputy Clerk to the Board

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Person, North Carolina, met in recessed session on Monday, June 23, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' meeting room in the Person County Office Building. The purpose of the meeting was for a budget work session.

Chairman Lunsford called the recessed meeting to order.

Finance Director Andrew Davenport reported back to the Board relative to directions given him by Commissioner Puryear at the last budget work session to bring back scenarios for a 4.5% reduction to this years' budget. He said he did not include cuts to Fire Contract, Library, Mental Health, EMS, public schools, Sheriff, EDC or 100% grant funded programs, also as directed by the Board. He said he and his staff prepared the 4.5% reduction scenario based on departmental recommendations, figured full funding for schools and took remaining necessary funds from Fund Balance in order to eliminate any tax increase. He told the Board that if this scenario was accepted, approximately \$0.15 in value of Fund Balance would have to be used. He recommended this not be done.

Mr. Davenport reviewed a proposal as requested by Commissioner Clayton at the last budget work session for three scenarios of additional 10%, 12% and 15% funding for schools over the original recommended budget amount of 8%.

Chairman Lunsford received a consensus from the Board that there would be no tax increase reflected in the 2008-09 budget. He stated that the schools could not be funded 100% without a tax increase. He said there was no place else to get revenues. Further budgetary cuts would jeopardize county services.

Commissioner Clayton reminded the Board that the State of North Carolina is the chief funder of the schools with \$28,143,344 going to the Person County school system. He further stated that between the state and federal governments, \$31 million is coming to the school system before the county contributes any funds to it.

Commissioner Bowes commented that the county cannot spend what it does not have.

Commissioner Yarborough said it comes down to priorities; the public has not demanded growth of county services at the rate they have grown – public safety, economic development and education should be priorities.

Commissioner Yarborough said if Fund Balance was going to be used to balance the budget he would like to see the appropriation for the Museum in the amount of \$7,324 added back into the budget. The Volunteer Center, \$7,120, was also added back in.

Commissioner Clayton said he would recommend that employees be given a 1.5% COLA beginning in July. He also recommended appropriating at least 10% to the schools.

Commissioner Yarborough stated he would recommend appropriating 15% to the schools.

Finance Director Davenport clarified that he was to prepare the Budget Ordinance appropriating 10% above last year's appropriation to the schools, adding back in a full 1.5% COLA, \$7,120 for the Volunteer Center, and \$7,324 for the Museum. The total to be taken from Fund Balance would be \$3,256,920.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton, **seconded** by Commissioner Bowes to direct the Finance Director to prepare a Budget Ordinance using the current tax rate with the changes suggested at the current work session and bring back to the Board for review and possible adoption. The motion **carried** by a **3/2 vote**, with Commissioners Yarborough and Puryear casting the dissenting votes.

Commissioner Clayton proposed that the Board add the one-quarter cent optional sales tax on the ballot in November and see if the citizens will enact it and the funds go to the school board for operating expenses.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton, **seconded** by Commissioner Bowes and **carried** to direct the Person County Board of Elections to conduct an advisory election on November 4, 2008 on the question of the adoption of an additional One-Quarter Cent (1/4¢) Sales and Use Tax as provided for in Article 46 of Chapter 105 of the N. C. General Statutes.

By consensus, the date for the next meeting was set for Thursday, June 26, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Bowes and **carried** to go into Closed Session at 10:08 a.m. pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) *To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.*

Upon returning to Open Session at 10:36 a.m., a **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton, **seconded** by Commissioner Yarborough and **carried** to appoint Paul Bailey as Interim County Manager for a period of one month or as necessary until a new full-time County Manager is appointed. The **motion further included** that Mr. Bailey be compensated at the grade and step of County Manager for his period of service in that capacity.

RECESS:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton, **seconded** by Commissioner Yarborough and **carried** to recess the meeting until Thursday, June 26, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Faye T. Fuller, CMC
Clerk to the Board

Johnny Myrl Lunsford
Chairman