

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Workshop on Thursday, May 10, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the FY 2018/2019 Budget.

Members Present: Martha Hicks, Chair; Blake Vance, Vice-Chair; Faith Lacey; Tim Phillips; Wood Hall Young, Jr.

Members Absent: None

**Call To Order**

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.  
Phillip Barrier led prayer.

Chair Hicks turned the meeting over to County Manager, Phillip Barrier. Mr. Barrier stated that the county had contracted David Hill with Piedmont Triad Council to conduct a pay and classification study. Mr. Barrier introduced David Hill who explained the process that was used to conduct the pay and classification study. Mr. Hill gave a detailed presentation on the pay and classification study for Avery County and his recommendations. Mr. Hill stated that his recommendations were:

- Adopt the pay and benefits philosophy statement.
- Adopt a new step for 8 years of employment.
- Adopt the new pay plan.
- Adopt the service recognition program.
- Adopt the state holiday schedule.
- Adopt the personnel policy language regarding consistency in leave accrual.

Mr. Hill stated that the required funding to adopt the recommended pay plan is \$447,847.03.

The Board thanked Mr. Hill for his services.

**Funding of Nonprofits and other Special Appropriations**

There was considerable discussion regarding the funding of nonprofits.

Blake Vance questioned Chair Hicks who is on the Board of Trustees for Mayland Community College if the college had any plans to increase the scope of services in Avery County because it seemed like that they were in Mitchell and Yancey. Chair Hicks stated that it was her understanding that they were not.

Vaya Health has stayed the same in their request for funding.

The part time environmental health is working out with the Toe River Health District. Mr. Young stated that Toe River Health District does not pay enough to attract environmental health workers and they are in need of workers. Mr. Barrier stated that Ms. Creek was trying to find someone to contract for restaurant inspections. Mr. Young stated that Avery County actually needs two full time environmental specialists.

### **Recess**

Chair Hicks called for a brief recess.

Chair Hicks declared the meeting back in session after a brief recess.

Mr. Barrier stated that there was a slight reduction in the Morrison Library's funding.

Mr. Barrier stated that he didn't want to pay more than it takes for the tag office so he is recommending \$25,000.

Blake Vance stated that the Board needed to decide since we took the applications this year what grants that they wanted to give. Last year we funded nonprofits \$116,000. This year they have requested \$176,000. Mr. Vance suggested that \$40,000 be set aside for nonprofit grants with a \$25,000 grant; \$10,000 grant; \$3,000 grant and two \$1,000 grants and that it is decided based on the needs of the nonprofits.

There was discussion regarding the grants for nonprofits.

**Consensus to give Yellow Mountain Enterprises the \$25,000 grant; Blue Ridge Partnership \$5,000; Avery Chamber of Commerce \$5,000; Little League \$2500 and Shriners \$2500.**

Commissioner Vance stated that he wanted to say that this was no indication that we don't value the services these organizations provide but it is a matter of getting this spending under control.

### **Capital**

Mr. Barrier directed the Board to the Sheriff's Capital budget. The Sheriff had asked for ten vehicles and management cut the vehicles to five but failed to cut the lighting equipment for the cars.

**Consensus by the Board to decrease the \$49,500 down to \$22,000 for the Light N Up Lights for the cars.**

Mr. Barrier then directed the Board to the first page of the Capital items. Each department's capital items were discussed.

### **Recess**

Chair Hicks called for a brief recess.

Chair Hicks declared the meeting to be back in session after a brief recess.

Discussion continued on each department's capital items.

Discussion about the new swimming pool. Mr. Barrier stated he had talked to Rob Johnson about better numbers on the pool. Wood Hall Young, Jr. asked what was available from the first million dollars. Chair Hicks stated that we have taken some out for drawings. Mr. Barrier stated that it is going to take another budget amendment. Nancy Johnson, Finance officer stated the budget amendment would be for around 1.7 million.

Mr. Barrier discussed the estimated revenues.

Mr. Barrier stated that right now his estimated revenue neutral tax rate was 0.004545. If we round to 46 cents that would increase by \$206,753. The tax rate today is 48 cents. A penny is worth \$394,000 at a 96% collection rate.

Blake Vance stated that even though this is early in the game, he thought the tax rate might need to stay the same. This is something to think about.

Blake Vance stated that his question is how are we going to pay the debt service on the high school so where are we going to get the million dollars for the payment. We need to look at this. We have committed to do the high school. Blake Vance stated that if we leave the tax rate where it is now then we will produce \$963,000 over the budget that we have now. Next year we take the same money and put in debt service.

Mr. Barrier went over each department's budget line item by item.

**Consensus by the Board to put the adopted budget on the Avery County website.**

**Recess**

Chair Hicks called for a brief recess.

Chair Hicks declared the meeting to be back in session after a brief recess.

Chair Hicks stated that it looks like we will be needing another budget meeting which will be May 21, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. The Board will meet May 17, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. with the Fire Commission, Sheriff and Board of Education.

**Adjourn**

**Motion by Blake Vance and second by Faith Lacey to adjourn this meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion unanimously approved.**

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**Martha Hicks, Chair**  
**Avery County Board of Commissioners**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk

