

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Workshop on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss with the Avery County Fire Commission; Avery County Sheriff's Office; and Avery County Board of Education the Fiscal Year Budget for 2017/2018.

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 5:00 p.m.

Avery County Sheriff's Office – Sheriff Kevin Frye

Sheriff Kevin Frye spoke about the Sheriff's Office budget for 2017/2018. Sheriff Frye stated that one of the priorities this year was for a salary study and a staffing analysis. Those two things would go a long way with what should be expected by the primary law enforcement agency in this county. In Avery County there are 15 deputies that can respond and work the road, 2 day, 2 night, 2 split, the Sheriff, Lee Buchanan, and Troy Cook. The rest of the police departments in this county have people answering calls and yet out of 235 domestic violence calls the Sheriff's office answered 201. Out of 78 grand jury indictments this year, the Sheriff's office was responsible for 68. What I am trying to say is we are shouldering a huge amount of workload that is in the county. That is why I am asking for a staffing analysis and a salary study done.

Sheriff Frye explained his requests for each line item of his budget.

Sheriff Frye stated that several years back the plan was to replace cars when the mileage was between 100,000 to 120,000 miles. We need to get into a rotation where we get four cars for three years and five cars for one year, etc. If we can get in that rotation we can maintain a good fleet. When I was getting only three cars for the past several years, it put us in a hole which we are having a hard time of digging out.

Avery County Detention Center – Sheriff Kevin Frye

Sheriff Kevin Frye explained the requests for the Avery County Detention Center.

Avery Fire Commission-Bill Beuttell; Jim Brooks

Bill Beuttell, Vice Chair of the Avery Fire Commission stated that the Fire Commission submitted a budget for 2.478 million for the upcoming 2017/2018 Fiscal Year. We had been buying two fire trucks a year but due to the costs rising we were unable to do that this year. We were only able to buy one this year. Fire trucks have went up about 10% per year. In saving the \$400,000, one of the things we are going to do is hire 3 ½ full time employees and when I use that ½ we have one part-time employee in Banner Elk. With the decline in numbers of volunteers, it is getting harder and harder for the fire departments to answer calls. After all the bills are paid, the contingency fund will be about 8%. That sounds like a lot of money but if we have a transmission to go out on a fire truck that is about \$25,000. We have asked all of the fire departments to maximize their state grants. Each year our costs go up about 7% a year. We are asking the fire departments to keep the trucks as long as possible and refurbish them if possible. The money that the taxpayers put out of the fire tax is the one payment that they actually make money on because the fire ratings that the departments have in the county they save enough money on their fire insurance to pay for the fire tax.

Avery County Board of Education- Dr. David Burleson

Dr. David Burleson gave a power point presentation regarding the Avery County School System. Dr. Burleson explained the operating budget summary for 2017/2018:

Total Need--\$5,746,904.2
Grants and Other Revenues - \$1,105,352
Total Local Operating Expenses Needed for the 2017/2018 - \$4,641,552.20
Request of the County Commissioners - \$4,641,552.20
Last Year's Request - \$4,410,013
Increase of \$231,539.20 (5.3%)

Dr. Burleson also explained the capital budget summary:

Total Need - \$2,033,532

Examples of Capital Budget needs:

One to One Initiative

Avery Middle Air Conditioning-\$200,000

Playground Equipment-\$55,000

Replace Bleachers at Newland Elementary-\$14,000

Activity Bus with Lift-\$86,000

Replace Roof at Crossnore-\$687,500

There was discussion regarding the operational needs and capital needs for Avery County Schools.

Adjourn

Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Blake Vance to adjourn this meeting at 7:45 p.m. Motion unanimously approved.

Martha Hicks, Chair
Avery County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST: _____
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk