

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF GUILFORD COUNTY
WORK SESSION**

Greensboro, North Carolina
May 23, 2016

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed Work Session at 1:00 PM in the Blue Room of the Old County Courthouse, 301 West Market Street, Greensboro NC.

PRESENT: Chairman Jeff Phillips, presiding; Vice Chairman Alan Branson; Commissioners Justin Conrad; Kay Cashion; Alan Perdue; Hank Henning; Ray Trapp; and J. Carlvena Foster.

ABSENT: Commissioner Carolyn Q. Coleman.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Marty Lawing; County Attorney Mark Payne; Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier; Sheriff B.J. Barnes; Robin Keller, Clerk to Board; Michael Halford, Budget Director; Reid Baker, Finance Director; Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director; Merle Green, DHHS-Public Health Division Director; Ken Carter, DHHS-Public Health Division Assistant Director; Heather Skeens, DHHS-Social Services Division Director; members of the community and media.

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:11PM.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. JCPC DISCRETIONARY FUNDING REQUEST

1. CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH PEOPLE & PAWS 4 HOPE, INC.
- \$5,930

Deputy Manager Clarence Grier introduced the agenda item.

Jenny Caviness, Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Chair, shared that the State notified providers of additional discretionary funds available by application.

Frankie Health, president of People & Paws 4 Hope, Inc., stated a portion of the funding will be used to build a fence around the facility, which would allow the program to serve other animal rescue organizations, as well as, the Guilford County Animal Shelter. She noted funding will also be designated for a program that incorporates community transition for youth offenders with online life skills training, and noted class sizes have doubled for this program.

Heath stated the organization has met all JCPC objectives, and announced they have worked with forty (40) youth since January 2016. She shared her discussion with Robert McNiece, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director, where she requested permission from the County to place a fence on the property.

Commissioner Perdue questioned if there JCPC discretionary funds would be matched.

Ms. Health stated they received a large donation which matched the funding amount and would be seeking no additional funding from the County for this grant.

Chairman Phillips questioned if staff were concerned with improvements being made to the facility, as it is being evaluated as a potential site for the new Animal Shelter.

Grier stated there were no concerns from County staff.

Motion was made by Commissioner Ray Trapp, seconded by Commissioner Kay Cashion, to approve a contract amendment, in substantial form, for People & Paws 4 Hope, Inc., to increase the amount of the contract from \$55,054 to \$60,984 for FY 2015-2016 and amend the FY 2015-2016 budget to increase Federal/State Revenues by \$5,930 and increase the Coordinated Services budget by the same amount to allow for allocation of funds from the NC Department of Public Safety to People & Paws 4 Hope, Inc., in the amount of \$5,930.

VOTE:	Motion carried 8-0
AYES:	J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, C. Foster, J. Conrad, A. Perdue, R. Trapp, H. Henning
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	C. Coleman

B. PUBLIC SAFETY FOCUS AREA

County Manager Marty Lawing reviewed the goals of the work session, and noted the purpose is to receive feedback and direction from the Board.

1. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT AND DETENTION SERVICES

Ben Kittleson, Budget Analyst for the Sheriff's Department, discussed the jail population counts for the High Point and Greensboro Jails. He reviewed the Law Enforcement budget requests and recommendations, and revenues received from the housing of federal inmates.

Kittleson noted major budget changes, such as the decrease in vehicle fuel due to the lower fuel rates. He advised the Board of the major increases and decreases in the budget throughout the year.

2. DETENTION HOUSING UNIT AND EXPERIENCE PAY

Lawing introduced a detailed policy for Housing Unit Experience Pay.

Major C.J. Williamson reviewed the proposed policy, which included specific requirements for eligibility of the incentive pay.

Sheriff Barnes spoke to the policy and the ability to increase retention.

Chairman Phillips requested the average salary of a detention officer.

Williamson estimated the average salary was \$45,000 per year.

Chairman Phillips questioned how many officers would qualify for experience pay.

Barnes stated approximately 70-75 would qualify out of 124 officers.

Lawing stated the initial discussion was based upon gross benefits and taxes, and noted the goal was a net benefit of \$1,000, resulting in a slightly higher level of actual pay.

Commissioner Foster questioned the overall increase to the budget.

Kittleston stated that the overall increase would be \$459,211.

Commissioner Perdue questioned how the capital allocations are preserved.

Robert McNiece, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director, stated facility needs far exceed available funding and noted focus has been placed on safety, security and building envelope needs.

Commissioner Perdue expressed concerns that the County continues to place facility needs on the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) listing, and then defers the projects. He requested staff ensure there is an avenue to advocate for departmental improvements.

Michael Halford, Budget Director, noted that special facilities maintenance is different for larger CIP plans and reviewed the assessment of projects.

Barnes opined on the County budgeting for items at the end of their lifespan, in an attempt to utilize equipment longer and spend funds only when necessary.

3. JUVENILE DETENTION SERVICES

Kittleston reviewed the expenses and revenues for Court Alternatives. He discussed the juvenile inmate numbers and the current subsidy rates for Guilford County youth versus out-of-county youth. He cautioned the Board as to pending legislation that would increase the age of juveniles to 18, which would have a significant budgetary impact on Court Alternatives.

4. SECURITY

Jason Jones, Budget Analyst for the Security Department reviewed the major budget changes.

Commissioner Trapp questioned the security of the DHHS – Social Services Division (DSS) Family Visitation Center at Dundas Circle, and noted there have been concerns regarding transportation to and from the center.

Sharon Barlow, DHHS – DSS Children’s Services Division Director, stated they are gathering figures related to a presentation that would assist in facilitating changes to the bus stop location.

Heather Skeens, DHHS – DSS Director confirmed the agency will provide transportation for parents.

Jones reviewed the contracted security personnel costs and noted an additional \$45,000 was needed to replace outdated camera equipment. He discussed future security issues with the County, such as, aging camera equipment, and upcoming scanner and metal detector replacements.

5. ANIMAL SERVICES

Halford reminded the Board that the new Animal Services Department oversees the Animal Shelter, as well as, Animal Control Services.

Alex Smith, Budget Analyst for Animal Services, reviewed the overall net budget increase of approximately \$330,000 for the Animal Shelter, which is in line with the projected transition plan. He stated this budget is contingent upon monetary and food donations and cautioned the Board that decreases in these two (2) items have a significant impact upon the Shelter budget.

Commissioner Cashion reviewed the \$63,000 in budget donations and questioned if this amount supplants County allocations.

Commissioner Trapp requested the status of funds assigned to the “Unchain Guilford” fence building initiative.

Grier reported the County is awaiting transfer of these funds from United Animal Coalition (UAC).

Chairman Phillips questioned if amounts assigned to budget line items would decrease in the new Animal Shelter.

Grier confirmed efficiencies attributed to a new shelter facility would reduce costs.

Smith advised the Board that the number of animals housed within the Shelter directly impacts operational costs as well.

6. EMS

Smith reported that calls for EMS service continue to rise steadily. He reviewed items of major budgetary impact, such as the addition of an additional fire crew approved during the last calendar year. Smith discussed the upcoming budget replacements and noted reductions resulting from improved collection of ambulance fees.

Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director, discussed the fee-for-services practice and new community paramedic program designed to encourage in-home or primary physician care, in an effort to reduce the number of transports to local hospitals.

Albright stated Guilford County population growth increases by a rate of 1.7% per year, and Emergency Services cannot train and hire enough people to support the increasing demand for services. He stated the goal of the new treatment model is to provide home visits, particularly for citizens requiring chronic cardiac medical care, in an effort to bridge the gap between immediate and ongoing needs. Albright discussed future opportunities to assist citizens with diabetes, and options to transport patients to their primary care doctors to create a system of comprehensive health care.

Commissioner Foster questioned the process for this new model.

Albright stated consistent system utilizers would be admitted into the program and offered an alternative option to contact an ambulance versus calling 911.

Commissioner Foster stated none of these costs are eligible for insurance or Medicaid reimbursement.

Albright stated his staff, in conjunction with DHHS staff, are researching Medicaid billing reform. He confirmed Medicare only pays for transport to a hospital, and not for treatment.

Commissioner Foster questioned where the two (2) community paramedics would be located.

Albright stated they will service the entire County, but are currently working within the Moses Cone Healthcare System. He shared the results of the pilot project conducted by the County during a six (6) month period with thirteen (13) patients, and noted they were able to reduce costs by approximately \$500,000.

Sheriff Barnes clarified these citizens still receive an initial emergency response; however, the level of patient care required is determined when emergency personnel are at the site.

Commissioner Trapp questioned the number of patients in the pilot program who presented with Mental Health issues.

Albright confirmed there is a component of mental health care and stated Guilford County is one of the few in the state to conduct alternative health screenings. He noted the department is aggressively seeking alternative funding sources, since reimbursement is not available at this time.

Smith reviewed the Fire Inspection and Investigation fees.

Albright noted the historical effort to make all fees consistent.

Commissioner Henning questioned if Guilford municipalities were aware of the fees and advised staff to let the municipalities know as soon as possible of the proposed changes.

Albright stated the municipalities had not received this information, as fee amounts are contingent upon Board decision. He recommended implementing the changes during an off-cycle of the budget year.

Commissioner Henning requested staff begin communicating with the cities and towns prior to final approval.

Commissioner Perdue echoed Commissioner Henning's recommendation to allow municipalities time to plan for this fee structure in their own budgets.

7. GUILFORD METRO 911

Smith reviewed Metro 911 fees and noted an increase of \$335,000, based upon the percentage calls. He discussed the contract which allows for a call volume split between the agencies.

Halford stated the City of Greensboro used Fund Balance to fund the operation in prior years, and noted the need for the City and the County to allocate additional monies to keep the center funded.

Halford clarified the line item budget was initially created by the City, as they are responsible for operating the center, but noted the County does have an opportunity to review the budget and make recommendations.

C. HEALTHY PEOPLE FOCUS AREA

1. HUMAN SERVICES – SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

Jones discussed County population growth and the resulting community demands for Social Services, specifically foster care. He stated the department decreased supply and materials costs by \$80,000 and reviewed the DSS program matrix of mandated and non-mandated services, along with capped-service programs.

Jones reviewed the major budget changes resulting from personnel added to the Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) and Medicaid programs, in addition to administrative positions. He discussed the merger of non-medical transportation services with the Social Services budget.

Chairman Phillips requested additional information regarding the Nurse Practitioner position.

Barlow stated this position will complete mental health and substance abuse screenings for clients.

Skeens stated the majority of the practitioner's salary can be covered through federal reimbursement, as well as, Title IV-E foster care funding, depending upon the number of children in foster care assessed.

Lawing stated while this position will initially be grant-funded, it is more cost effective to retain these services in-house, versus contracting.

Chairman Phillips requested an update on the FNS program.

Elizabeth White, DHHS-DSS Economic Services Division Director, stated two (2) training classes, housing sixteen (16) staff, are currently in progress. She noted Family & Children's Medicaid training is also being conducted and expects seventeen (17) caseworkers to complete the class.

White discussed the changes in progress within the reception area and noted the efforts to transition from appointments to walk-in processes for applications. She stated they are achieving the 98% timely application processing mandate through the use of overtime, but anticipated the eliminating this requirement once staff leave training.

Skeens discussed the DHHS call center, as well as, developing access to self-service solutions, such as, kiosks, as a goal of consolidation; and noted they are working on identifying and constructing space for those options.

Chairman Phillips questioned when the new hires are expected to impact overtime needs.

White stated approximately six (6) months beyond training is required to ensure new caseworkers can maintain caseloads comparable to seasoned staff.

Phillips questioned the net County impact of these eight (8) additional positions.

Skeens stated the net impact was approximately \$30,000-\$40,000.

Halford stated the total cost for an additional seven (7) positions was approximately \$200,000 for the first year.

Chairman Phillips expressed concern that the previously added thirty (30) positions had not been fully included and implemented within the service process, and opined that the seven (7) additional positions is more a request versus a need.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the funding source for the Mental Health Senior practitioner position.

Barlow stated the position was funded by a grant from Cone Health Systems.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the department would apply for other grant funding.

Skeens stated they are currently seeking additional grant funding for the position.

2. HUMAN SERVICES – PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

Smith reviewed the 1.75 positions requested for Public Health. He discussed the elimination of three (3) grant-funded positions, and noted the quarter position change resulted from shifting funding between the Social Services and Public Health budgets.

Smith reviewed the major changes within the public health budget and discussed the recommendation for one (1) school nurse position. He noted there is an increase in Medicaid eligibility within Guilford County.

Commissioner Trapp spoke to the disparity in the school nurse to student ratio and noted this is an opportunity for Say Yes Guilford to assist with funding for additional school nurses.

Commissioner Conrad stated he would take this suggestion to the Say Yes Board.

Commissioner Foster noted the Guilford County Schools (GCS) Board of Education (BOE) does allocate funding for school nurse positions.

Merle Green, DHHS-Public Health Division Director, stated that the school system hires nurses who work one-on-one with at-risk students, which is different from the type of nurse funded by Public Health departments.

Commissioner Conrad spoke to recommendation of hiring certified medical assistants (CMA's), in lieu of school nurses.

Green stated there is a scope of practice for all positions and noted the level of independent judgement required for the position, which only a registered nurse (RN) could provide. She stated some schools utilize nurse techs who are supervised by the RNs, but noted they can only conduct eye exams, or monitor minor injuries or health needs in children. Green discussed the need to have the nurse techs receive thorough training through Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC), prior to hiring.

Commissioner Conrad requested additional options presented related to the provision of school health care.

Commissioner Trapp questioned the impact of expanded Mental Health Care services and primary care services upon the budget.

Green stated the waiver process allows for reimbursement of services provided within the Public Health realm. She discussed the department's contract with Family Services of the Piedmont, which assists staff in meeting many of the needs within the community. Green noted the department also works with Triad Adult and Pediatric Medicine (TAPM) for patients under age 18, and noted the need for Behavioral Health providers to serve this population.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the need to fund additional school nurses and stated the Board should consider increasing the number of school nurses if it is a factor in student success.

Lawing stated that the County would require six (6) positions to the proper ratio of nurse to student.

Commissioner Cashion stated that if the Board's goal is to improve community health, we should improve the number of school nurses.

Commissioner Perdue questioned the number of students that utilize the school nurse, and the types of services they provide.

Commissioner Trapp stated the Health and Human Services Advisory Committee is studying the role of school health nurses.

Green stated a school nurse visits every single student at every single school and creates a file. She stated children are prioritized based upon existing, or susceptibility for, chronic conditions. Green stated the department requested two (2) positions in an effort to present a conservative budget, but additional nurses are needed, and referenced Mecklenburg County as a model where a nurse is housed at each school, with a total of over 200 school nurses in the County.

Commissioner Perdue spoke to the need to have additional data in order to make a good decision.

Commissioner Cashion spoke in support of considering two (2) nursing positions.

The Board discussed alternatives to providing services.

3. CONSOLIDATION OF VETERANS SERVICES WITH DHHS

Lawing discussed the recommendation to include Veteran Services within DHHS. He stated the consolidation will provide additional clerical assistance to aid in the distribution of the work volume. Lawing stated the Veteran Services Greensboro office would be relocated to the DHHS building at Maple Street.

Motion was made by Commissioner Hank Henning, seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp, to accept the reorganization of Veterans Services into the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and relocating the Veterans Services Greensboro office to the DHHS building located at 1203 Maple Street, Greensboro NC.

VOTE:	Motion carried 8-0
AYES:	J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, C. Foster, J. Conrad, A. Perdue, R. Trapp, H. Henning
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	C. Coleman

4. CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

Chairman Phillips congratulated Angela Liverman, Child Support Enforcement Director, and her staff, for having the best collection rate within the state.

Kittelson reviewed the major budget changes for the Child Support department, including the addition of a NC FAST/Data Reliability Coordinator position to the department.

Commissioner Trapp questioned why Child Support was being entered into NCFAST, and the number of long-term positions required.

Liverman stated the prior NC Automated Collection and Tracking System (ACTS) system is incompatible with NCFAST, which is slowing down processes for validating information and creating duplicate files. She anticipated the new position would aid in data reliability audits, which is required for reimbursement funding.

Liverman indicated the initial budget requested two (2) positions, one (1) for the Greensboro office and one (1) for the High Point office, but noted if only one (1) position is allocated, it will be used in the Greensboro office. She stated the department has observed a decline in collections for years which they attribute to the agency not having access to NCFAST.

Chairman Phillips questioned why Guilford County's collection rate is among the highest in the state.

Liverman confirmed the strong collection rates and noted they have great support from the Courts in assisting with collections.

5. UNCG SPECIALTY COURTS ADMINISTRATION AGREEMENT / SANDHILLS CENTER

Lawing reviewed his conversations with Sandhills Center representatives regarding decreasing County contributions without reducing services. He discussed the recommendation of Sandhills absorbing the County's Therapeutic Courts contracts at approximately \$430,000 per year, which would result in a significant savings to the County with little to no transition for the specialty courts.

Chairman Phillips questioned if UNC-Greensboro was aware of the discussions.

Carrie Munns, Specialty Courts Manager, stated has contacted Sandhills with additional questions and shared her conversations with Anthony Ward, Deputy Director/Chief Operating Officer of Sandhills Center. She noted they discussed opportunities to seek additional grant funding to expand the Therapy Courts program.

Commissioner Trapp expressed concerns regarding the state's decisions related to Mental Health.

Commissioner Cashion stated she was involved in the meeting with the Manager to identify options to assist the County budget, and noted this solution would allow Sandhills to utilize excess funding that is mandated to address Mental Health needs. She spoke in support of the Therapy Courts transition to Sandhills.

Commissioner Henning requested more information regarding the contract and organizational structure.

Commissioner Perdue questioned the possibility of reducing Mental Health funding.

The Board discussed the changes to the Therapy Courts program.

Commissioner Trapp stressed there should be no changes in services.

Commissioner Trapp left the meeting at 3:28PM.

The Board recessed the meeting at 3:28PM.

The Board reconvened at 3:45PM.

D. INFRASTRUCTURE FOCUS AREA

1. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Halford reviewed the high priority projects and requested Board direction.

Chairman Phillips stated his concerns were not with the projects as identified; however, he questioned the timing of an issuance of a \$41 million bond.

Lawing reported they are awaiting negotiations with a property owner, with regards to the EMS Maintenance and Logistics facility, and noted the County is still uncertain if they will have to acquire a new site for the Animal Shelter. He stated staff have placed recommended projects to be included in the bond package, but noted the price can decrease.

Halford stated priorities established by the Board would assist in funding related projects.

Chairman Phillips requested the Board utilize the additional time, within the next three (3) weeks, to consider funding decisions and how they relate to the existing school bond debt.

Commissioner Perdue expressed his hesitancy in continuing to defer maintenance and CIP projects. He questioned if the model presented by staff is the best funding mechanism available to complete these projects.

Commissioner Henning spoke to the need for a timeline to ensure projects are implemented timely, if bonds are issued.

Lawing stated the intent is to award contracts for all the projects in July, and to issue a resolution to utilize County funds for architects and engineers which would be reimbursed when the bonds are issued. He advised the Board of the window of time allowed to issue 2/3 bonds, which should be prior to the issuance of school bonds.

Halford stated all the projects presented would begin construction in 2017.

E. REVIEW DEBT SERVICE BUDGET ESTIMATES

Reid Baker, Finance Director, discussed utilizing the available line of credit and other market factors related to the timing of the bond issuance. He stated the line of credit expires in December and noted banks have begun charging for unused portions of credit.

Baker reviewed the planned bond sales and stated the County is considering a \$115 million bond issuance in the first half of FY 20-16-2017, and an additional \$45 million issuance during the second half of the fiscal year. He shared the County would need to issue bonds for the forty-one (41) County capital priority projects prior to issuing school bonds and advised the Board that GTCC bonds would expire in May 2018.

Halford reviewed established state and local government debt amounts and noted Guilford County falls below both thresholds.

Baker discussed the benefits of pay-as-you-go funding versus financing construction projects.

D. INFRASTRUCTURE FOCUS AREA (CONTINUED)

2. COUNTY FACILITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Halford reviewed County cash projections for High Priority Capital projects and discussed the option of utilizing \$1.5 million to pay interest on the initial year of a \$41 million bond issuance, which would finance remaining projects. He advised the Board that Capital Projects should ideally be cash-funded at \$4 - \$5 million per year.

Commissioner Henning requested additional consideration for major facilities projects to ensure critical needs were addressed first.

Halford reviewed the existing facilities needs and noted the total amount of funding required is \$7 million; however, noted staff recommend \$3 million for repair of HVAC systems, sidewalks, fire sprinklers, along with additional work at the Meadowood facility. Halford discussed the ongoing challenges associated with ensuring maintenance of County facilities to prevent major building issues in the future.

3. TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Kittleson reviewed the larger projects detailed in the Technology plan, including replacement of County desktop and laptop computers, and servers.

4. VEHICLES / OTHER CAPITAL

Jones reviewed the general County fleet breakdowns and noted County vehicles have an average age of fourteen (14) years with mileage of over 134,000.

Chairman Phillips questioned how the anticipated mileage reimbursement would be off-set by the addition of ten (10) new sedans, and questioned the plan for ambulances that are removed from service.

Albright stated the department is able to sell some of the ambulances, and others are repurposed as snow removal trucks, once the ambulance box and chassis are removed.

E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREA

**1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDED FUNDING /
PUBLIC HEARING**

Halford shared the new statutory requirement for noticing and holding a public hearing to discuss economic development appropriations.

The Board discussed the process.

2. PLANNING / SOLID WASTE / SOIL AND WATER

Carmen Graves, Budget Analyst, reviewed the increases to the Planning Department which included a revision of the Planning and Development code, and the addition of a new full-time senior office specialist position.

Graves reviewed the additional position recommendations for Soil and Water.

Vice Chairman Branson expressed concerns regarding closing the tire recycling center at the Prison Farm and noted this will result in more tires and shingles dumped in rural areas.

Leslie Bell, Planning & Development Director, stated that they are considering vendors to increase tire recycling, and noted they are researching locations in eastern Guilford County.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned if Republic Waste, or any other vendors, offered pick-up sites.

Commissioner Perdue questioned the rationale behind the requirement limiting the maximum number of tires that can be dropped off for recycling.

Bell stated that he would research the matter, and encouraged citizens to participate in the special collection events held throughout the year.

Graves stated the County no longer funds the Solid Waste Trust fund, which will result in a decrease in services. She noted staff are currently seeking alternative grant funding.

III. ADJOURN

Commissioner Phillips noted a request for an additional staff person for the Family Justice Center (FJC) as a result of the high demand for services.

Lawing requested feedback from the Board regarding items they would like included on the next work session agenda.

There being no further business, the Board adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:03 PM.

Jeffrey M. Phillips, Chairman

Robin B. Keller, Clerk to Board