



**GUILFORD COUNTY  
THURSDAY JUNE 14, 2018 BUDGET WORKS SESSION  
OLD GUILFORD COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Alan Branson, Vice Chairman Justin Conrad, Commissioners Melvin “Skip” Alston, Jeff Phillips, Carlvena Foster, Carolyn Coleman, Alan Perdue, Hank Henning

**ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** County Manager Marty Lawing, County Attorney Mark Payne, Clerk to the Board Robin Keller, Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier, Budget Director Michael Halford, Animal Services Director Jorge Ortega, Human Resources Director Karen Fishel, members of the media, and citizens of the County.

**Call to Order**

Chairman Branson welcomed all those present and called the meeting to order at 1:18 P.M.

**Potential Impact of State Budget to Counties**

County Manager Lawing provided a review of the State budgetary impacts across all state counties. He shared that while there were no major impacts there were a few items of mention including 100M from lottery proceeds for school capital funds, while this is not an increase from last year there was no additional state withholdings of lottery funds. He noted that there has been 35M allocated for school safety issues statewide, which as anticipated is not a large allocation statewide.

Chairman Branson noted that each of the state Grant requirements require grant applications due by August 31 of this year.

Lawing reviewed additional state budgetary impacts.

### **New Positions**

Budget Director, Michael Halford, reviewed the position changes for FY 18-19 including elimination of 2 grant funded positions and the addition of 5 school nurses, and noted that there were another 54 positions that were requested and not recommended.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the requested Building inspector position that was not included in the budget.

Planning Director, Leslie Bell, spoke to the position request.

The Board discussed several of the positions requested and not recommended.

Lawing discussed a position related matter regarding possibly upgrading the currently vacant Veteran's services officer position. Lawing shared his recommendation that if the position is upgraded to then have it report to the County Manager.

Commissioner Foster requested a copy of the revised job description.

Commissioner Henning spoke in support of expanding and moving the department higher up the org chart.

**Commissioner Henning motioned, seconded by Commissioner Cashion to place the Veteran's position into its own division under HHS including the classification change as well as reporting directly to the County Manager.**

Commissioner Foster shared that she would like to have more information prior to votes being made.

Commissioner Cashion noted the information that was emailed to the commissioners last Friday. She noted that we have not promoted our veteran services resources in Guilford County.

Discussion ensued among the Board concerning the motion.

**VOTE: Motion Carried 8:0**

**AYES: Hank Henning, Kay Cashion, Alan Branson, Alan Perdue, Jeff Phillips, Justin Conrad, Carolyn Coleman, Carlvena Foster**

**ABSENT: Melvin "Skip" Alston**

**NOES: None.**

### **Merit/Performance Pay**

Halford reviewed the peer pay adjustments. Halford reviewed the recommended 3% merit pool recommendation.

### **Funding for Interim Talent Recruitment and Retention Adjustments**

Lawing noted that they have reserved 1M for recruitment and retention adjustments during the year for those hard to fill and hard to retain positions. Lawing provided information regarding turnover rates by positions based on voluntary terminations.

Commissioner Perdue questioned if the adjustments are made, how does it impact the compression issues.

Lawing stated that they would need to be cautious with that and there may need to be some clear cut off points.

### **Classification and Compensation Study**

Lawing noted that there is not a specific line item budget for the study, but that they propose to use the Manager's contingency fund for this. He estimated 200K for the study.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the timeline.

Lawing stated it would be better to phase in a plan rather than not doing one at all.

### **Group Insurance Plan and Premium Adjustment Plan**

Human Resources Director, Karen Fishel, introduced her goals for the presentation.

Fishel reviewed that we currently have a highly valuable healthcare plan, but struggle with talent acquisition and retention challenges. She noted that we have at least four generations in our work force and our expectation is by 2020 we will have over 60% of our work force in the older generation populations. She also noted that 6.5% of our work force will be eligible for retirement in the next five years.

Carol Campbell reviewed a 5-year plan design strategy including gradual realignment of cost share in the plan, driving consumerism and behavior modification and modernizing to our newer work force.

Commissioner Henning noted that this is a very important topic and would like to see it in a standalone work session so that everyone has time to study the information.

Commissioner Conrad echoed those sentiments. He shared that perhaps a work session later in the year would be better.

Lawing shared that they would like to have these finalized soon.

## **Animal Shelter**

Talmage Payne of PNP Design group presented a schematic design for the new Animal Shelter facility.

Commissioner Henning questioned the size of the facility.

Jose Ortega, Animal Shelter Director, shared a blend of capacity for the proposed shelter.

Commissioner Henning questioned our capacity as compared to other counties.

Ortega stated that while we are smaller than Mecklenburg we are larger than Wake County.

Commissioner Phillips noted that the design shows that we are increasing our square footage and decreasing our capacity.

Ortega stated that in our current situation we cannot isolate animals for health-related needs.

Ms. Payne reviewed option 1 which is a smaller plan 16.5M for the smaller plan; the larger plan 18M

Commissioner Phillips questioned what the county could do at 12.5M

Ortega stated that they could reduce admin space, and medical space; however, having an onsite medical facility they spend 125K in medical in addition to regular costs. If we cut back ultimately, we will euthanize animals more often.

Ms. Payne advised that these are cost per square foot numbers, but the real numbers come in when we place the bid.

Commissioner Perdue stated that we are currently licensed for 600 animals; what do we need for our day to day population in Guilford County.

Ortega stated that less animals is better, healthy animals are easier to adopt out. We currently do not have the resources or staff to care for 600 animals. He noted that if we want to be a world class facility for animals in Guilford County this would be the model; however, if we want to cut it back that is doable we will just need to be able to cut back on some of the services. He noted that it is not about the number of animal you have; it is of people want to come to the facility to adopt. The facility needs to work and to flow to encourage adoptions. He stated that today we have roughly 304 animals, and on average we have 350 a day.

Commissioner Perdue questioned if they looked at the administrative piece of adding administrative offices on a second floor to help reduce the footprint.

Commissioner Henning echoed the recommendation to see if we look at a two story to help reduce costs.

Commissioner Phillips thanked Mr. Ortega for his leadership and all that he has done in such a short time.

Halford noted that the shelter is an after; but to make this plan viable for the next 10-20 years we will need to continue to focus on preventative efforts.

### **Review of 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan**

Halford noted that of the high priority projects selected the County will need to look at an additional 19M to fund all the projects.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the coverage of the 25M from the sale of the 2/3rds bonds.

Halford stated that it would cover the Animal Shelter Project, would do all phases of Emergency Services, and the Law Enforcement Center.

The board discussed the potential for borrowing money and where those appropriations will be going.

Commissioner Phillips expressed his concerns with the ongoing increases in construction costs and lack of clarity as to which projects can be completed.

Halford reviewed the County's limitations to start projects without secured funding. He noted that for staff to move forward they need direction to identify the priority projects and if the Board intends to

Commissioner Henning expressed frustrations that the numbers continue to move, and it is hard to hit a moving target.

(Commissioner Alston returned at 3:43 P.M.)

Lawing noted that if the County begins to take bids on projects then they need to be prepared to award a contract to get the best bids possible. He stated that they would like authorization to notify the architect on the Law Enforcement Center to begin bidding. He stated that they do not need to award until the end of the calendar year.

Commissioner Conrad mentioned allocating funds for school security. He stated that it is the most important issue facing us. He shared that he asked the Manager about making inquiries about 2/3rds bonds for school security.

**Motion to Direct staff to issue 2/3rds bonds in the amount up to 10M for school security to be determined based on the joint boundary and facility study/Seconded by Commissioner Coleman.**

Vice Chair Conrad stated that that there is nothing more important than school security. And we cannot wait to see what the State or Federal Government does. He shared that parents are demanding this. He says that he thinks this idea is a way to get funding quickly to the schools. He shared that this would be a unique opportunity to what it right for the kids and the community.

Commissioner Alston stated that the schools requested 4.9M,

Commissioner Perdue clarified that based on the avenue of this project that each project would have to come back to the board for approval to ensure that it is in.

Commissioner Cashion supported the motion. She spoke to the numbers of calls that she received as well.

**VOTE: 9:0**

**AYES: Alston, Branson**

**NOES: None**

Commissioner Perdue asked, if it would be simpler to allocate 12.3 M to build a shelter, 11 M for maintenance for logistics for EMS, another 3.5 for the old courthouse for and 14 for the LEC administration center.

Halford, and that staff would be directed to issue 2/3rds bonds to make up the difference.

Commissioner Coleman stated that staff would also need direction to bid out the items.

(Commissioner Foster out at 4:00 P.M.)

Commissioner Phillips questioned the 3Million for probation and parole project.

Commissioner Perdue clarified that the 11M is to demo the entire building and the additional 3Million will be for the up-fit of the top floors for probation and parole. Perdue suggested bidding the up-fit of probation and parole as a separate bid.

Commissioner Coleman noted that there is a lack reasoning to delay the up-fit of the top floors.

**Commissioner Phillips made a motion to issue 2/3rds bonds up to 8M to complete the identified priority projects; specifically, the animal shelter replacement up to 12.3M; OCH 3M, EMS maintenance and logistics up to 11M and the LEC up to 14M should we decide to add the additional three floors to the project. Seconded by Commissioner Perdue.**

Commissioner Cashion questioned the motion.

Commissioner Phillips stated that of the 25M available, we have other projects that we may need to fund, so at this time he would not want to exceed 25M at the time. But the goal is to get the ball rolling.

Commissioner Perdue stated that we have until March to make any additional changes to any bond issuance.

**VOTE: 8:0**

**AYES: Alston, Branson, Henning, Cashion, Conrad, Phillips, Perdue.**

**ABSENT: Carlvena Foster**

**Economic Development Organization**

Lawing reviewed the list of organizations.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the funding amounts for the economic development request for East Market Street Development. She noted that they requested an additional 15K that was not awarded in the listing. She stated that they had several buildings destroyed and this would allow local involvement. She noted that at one point they were at 50,000 from the County and that they have gone down to 20K.

Lawing noted that their application was submitted prior to the tornado, and the application increase was to improve the housing stock in the east Greensboro area and generate new private and public investment.

Commissioner Coleman stated that now in addition to their goals, they have storm damage that they would like to address. Coleman questioned if the additional 15K could be added.

Commissioner Phillips requested a more specific request as to what their intentions would be for the extra 15K.

Commissioner Branson questioned if we had the number of small businesses that were impacted by the storm and did not receive FEMA funds and if those business were under insured, or not insured.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concerns for funding or lack thereof for organizations in East Greensboro.

Commissioner Alston noted that County has participated in the tornado recovery and has contributed funds and recognizes Ms. Coleman's support in East Greensboro.

Lawing noted that the GCEDA noted that they did not request 100K for this fiscal year.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if she could get copies of those who submitted applications.

(Commissioner Alston out of meeting at 4:20 P.M.)

### **ABC Bottle Tax Requirement**

Halford stated that 43% of all of the children that came into Foster care last year was due to mental health and substance abuse. He noted that these funds will be used for the treatment of alcohol or substance abuse or for research or education on alcohol or substance abuse.

He stated that Wake County is less than 8% and Mecklenburg County is less than 20% with alcohol and substance abuse as the cause for children coming into Foster care.

Halford stated that in FY 2018-19 recommended budget \$165,500 for Alcohol and Drug Services \$100,000 for research on the incidence and impact of substance abuse in Guilford County.

### **Updated Changes to Budget Ordinance**

Halford reviewed the recommended language adjustments to the budget ordinance.

(Commissioner Alston returned at 4:50 P.M.)

**Closed Session**

By unanimous consent the Board adjourned into Closed Session 5:08 P.M.

The Board returned to Open Session at 5:30 P.M.

Gorilla

**Adjournment**

By unanimous consent the Board adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

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Chairman

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Clerk