

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
ROWAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ADJOURNED MEETING
JUNE 14, 1988

The Board of Rowan County Commissioners met in Adjourned Session in the Community Building on June 14, 1988 at 9:00 A.M.

PRESENT: Richard D. Messinger, Chairman
J. Newton Cohen, Sr., Vice-Chairman
Wilborn Swaim, Member
George C. Knox, Member
Jamima DeMarcus, Member

The County Manager, Finance Director, and Clerk to the Board were also present.

Chairman Messinger called the meeting to order. Brady Frick, Finance Director, provided the Commission with an Analysis of the City Schools' Budget. The City Schools' line items indicated a deficit of \$406,000. Also, several line items were left out such as Fines & Forfeitures and ABC Receipts as well as the unknown amount that the City of Salisbury was to fund.

The County manager then provided a revised worksheet for the County Budget to the Commission. Funds have been identified that will alleviate the deficit. As it was left last week, \$133,000 was needed to balance the budget. The County Manager made adjustments to revenues and expenses:

- 1) The Fund Balance has been adjusted from \$846,875 to \$1,000,000 which they have anticipated for next year.
- 2) The Intangible Tax was increased by another 1%--It was previously budget at an estimated 3% increase; therefore, 1% brought this amount to \$1,284,523.
- 3) As far as expenses, the County Manager reduced the line item set aside for landfill acquisition from \$750,000 to \$650,000 for the following reasons:
 - a) The County's arrangements may not be as much due to present negotiations.
 - b) The County does not know what the total amount will be next year.
 - c) Should the amount exceed \$650,000, funds would need to be appropriated through the Fund Balance.

If the Commission accepts these three (3) items, this will increase available funds to \$235,584 for next year.

If the three (3) priorities that the Commission approved are taken out (Schools, Library Debt Service, and Ambulance) which requires 7.3 cents, the remaining balance would be \$735,975. If those items that were tentatively approved at the last meeting are budgeted, there is a remaining balance of \$102,511 as opposed to the \$133,566 deficit.

The County Manager added two (2) items to be considered for funding: Strategic Planning Process Project and First Responders System. Those items that have stars (*) beside of the department numbers are ones that the County Manager requested for a possible increase in funding.

Chairman Messinger announced the Commission will go into Executive Session at 11:30 a.m. to discuss personnel matters involving several department heads as well as to speak with the new Data Processing Director.

As represented by the handout, Mr. Frick analyzed the Salisbury City Schools' Budget. The initial budget request was \$1.5 Million. This figure represents no increase from last year based on the revised ADM figures. This indicates a shortfall of \$406,027. However, the five (5)-cent tax increase for the school systems would generate \$184,809 and still leave a difference of \$221,218. After talking with John Sofley, Finance Director for the City, Mr. Frick discovered that the City is planning to meet their request for the City Schools which is \$400,000 even though the City previously planned to reduce the Special Tax Rate from ten (10) cents to six (6) cents. The City has decided to budget \$155,000 of the fund balance for the Salisbury City School System which gives the City Schools an additional \$88,000 above their request. Their share of Fines & Forfeitures is \$64,125 and the ABC Receipts are \$4,275. These items were not included in their budget. Taking all of this into consideration, it appears that the City Schools will be short \$64,618. After talking with Dr. Marcus Smith, Superintendent of Salisbury City Schools, he feels there is a good chance this entire amount will be funded from the fund balance available June 30, 1988. Chairman Messinger asked the County Manager if they can utilize the Building Reserve in Raleigh if necessary. The County Manager replied that the Commission can always appropriate a 1/2 cent Sales Tax that is in reserve to be appropriated at any time during the year.

Commissioner Cohen raised the concern of Vocational Funds as the Commission has not reallocated local money to these funds. There is a good possibility that the State will fund this which will free up approximately \$200,000. Mr. Frick replied that Vocational Funds will be funded entirely by State and Federal levels. Commissioner DeMarcus asked if this takes care of the amount requested by Horizons Unlimited. Chairman Messinger replied that it only takes care of maintenance for Horizons. The County Manager reported that the \$100,000 request could be from the 1/2 cent Sales Tax that the Commission can allocate.

Mr. Russell also clarified to the Commission that the County is taking \$100,000 from the 1/2 cent Sales Tax and the two 1/2 cent Sales Tax are reserved proportionally by law for Capital Construction or Capital Outlay for Schools. As long as Horizons Unlimited is a part of this system, which is deeded to the City School system, then the Commission can legally allocate those funds to the School System. The only disadvantage to this would be allocating money to one school system disproportionately to the others. In the past, the Commission has always done this based on ADM's although it has not been required. He stated that the Commission would be making \$100,000 appropriation of the 1/2 cent Sales Tax reserved for School Construction to Horizons Unlimited for School Construction independent of any other Capital Outlay. The County Manager stated that the utilization of Horizons would be proportionately equal to the County System as well. The County Manager stated that it is his understanding that Davie County has been requested to make a special allocation to Horizons. Commissioner Swaim made a motion to take \$100,000 out of Sales Tax and allocate it to Capital Expenditure of Horizons Unlimited to the Schools and Commissioner Cohen seconded with unanimous approval.

Chairman Messinger noted that a formal vote should be made on items for discussion. Otherwise, if the Commission appears to have a good consensus on an item, then a formal vote will not be necessary. However, if any of the Commission members prefer to make a motion, then it will be recorded appropriately.

Chairman Messinger confirmed that there is no further discussion on Library Debt Service but asked where the County stood with the Ambulance Service. The County Manager stated that the location of the site has not yet been identified but the amount that has been requested for the Commission to fund is \$210,000. The total amount includes everything but making it pro rata starting October 1 and financing the ambulances which will be done for three (3) years. The funding for the site includes the following criteria--the cost of the site and renovating the site. It appears that the County may be able to provide an ambulance satellite office with the \$210,552 which will represent six (6) new staff members, ambulance, and the building. It is advisable at this point to locate a house to rent, a trailer or even an office or apartments as this will minimize the cost for the site. Commissioner Cohen asked if the \$210,000 includes one (1) ambulance for the new site as it is replacing another ambulance. The County Manager replied the other ambulance will be placed in reserve.

Chairman Messinger noted Commissioner Cohen's concern for convalescent use of the ambulance service. Commissioner Cohen discussed with Terry Barber this issue of concern, and Mr. Barber checked with Durham County and discovered they are converting their

old ambulances for convalescent use. They are using ambulances with less than 100,000 miles on them for emergency services. The convalescent ambulances are used for nursing home and doctor office calls where a patient is in need of transportation. When converting an ambulance to convalescent use, the letters on the vehicle must be at least five (5) inches high or more and the red lights must be taken off as well as the advance life support system. Therefore, this vehicle is for convalescent use only and cannot be used for backup duty. He stated that Durham is doing all of this and in this facet of their operation, they are collecting between 85% and 90% of all their fees. It is relevant that this would generate a great deal of revenue. He stated that Mr. Barber has suggested not putting "CONVALESCENT" on the ambulance and leave it as an emergency vehicle but use it for convalescent purposes. As a result, this vehicle could then be used in cases of emergency. It would also be available to give EMS more facilities and more capacity.

Commissioner Knox made a motion to approve the \$210,552 for ambulance services and Commissioner DeMarcus seconded. Commissioner DeMarcus felt that the Commission should try to find something to rent rather than to build. She feels this would give them an opportunity to assess the usefulness of their service without a major investment. The County Manager suggested having REMAC come back to the Commission with some parameters as to what their suggestions would be for location and type of structure. Chairman Messinger suggested the County Manager to pass along this feeling of the Commissioners. The Commission concurred with this recommendation.

Chairman Messinger stated that the compensation plan for the Commission met with the consensus of the Board.

Sheriff's Department--Chairman Messinger stated that the Commission needs to approve a DARE Officer, additional cooks in the jail, two (2) additional bailers, and \$50,000 in equipment and operating expenses. Chairman Messinger stated that they will address the compensation on the Sheriff in Executive Session. Commissioner Knox made a motion to approve \$157,944 for the Sheriff Department and Commissioner Cohen seconded with unanimous approval.

Data Processing Equipment--The County Manager stated that they initially anticipated about \$114,000 but reduced it to \$75,000 which would be the minimum for upgrading the system and buying additional terminals for this department.

Sloan Park Land (1/2 of \$112,900)-- The County Manager stated that the majority of these funds would come from a reserve of \$40,000, but there is only approximately \$16,000 of County funds in this reserve. Next year, the remainder would be funded by the County.

Increase in General Services Staff--The County Manager stated that this represents three (3) janitorial positions for the three (3) new buildings: Social Services, Agriculture Extension Service Building, and the Library.

Library Staff & Expenses (Prorated on the basis of a 9-month year)--The County Manager stated that they had requested initially three (3) librarians, three (3) library assistants, three (3) pages, and some part-time help and security personnel as well as an increase in expenses of \$46,000. This request is approximately \$140,000 to \$150,000. The Commission previously suggested only \$95,000 be allocated. The County Manager stated that this is an area if funds were available new books and circulation equipment could certainly be utilized. Due to Mr. Phil Barton being out of town yesterday, he spoke with Melody Moxley and gave her the figures for this allocation. She indicated that the Library is requesting that this be spread out over the line items.

Tri-County Mental Health Clinic--They are requesting \$62,000 and the County is proposing to allocate \$32,000. Chairman Messinger stated that Iredell is not raising their allocation. He then stated that Davie County has indicated that they would raise their appropriation but this is not certain.

Rowan-Cabarrus Community College--Commissioner Knox spoke in support of allocating \$10,000 to Rowan-Cabarrus Community College. Commissioner Swaim stated in discussion with Dick Brownell and Ron Bostian, each County fully supports their own facility (Rowan and Cabarrus). He stated that all professors' and instructors' salaries are paid by the State. He also stated that Administrative Expenses have not been increased from the previous budget. Commissioner Swaim stated that the County's contribution to RCCC goes to administration, plant operations, plant maintenance, and institutional expenses which takes care of repairs, telephones, and other office supplies.

This year, their request increased 12% and next year it will only increase 4.17% and the year after will be .83%. The same percentage increase has also been applied to Current Expense. He stated that a study has been made of all roofs on the campus and all are in need of repair. Therefore, this request has been stretched over five (5) years. They postponed doing some repair that should have been done last year and this repair will now be done on the basis of most critical needs. Commissioner Swaim made a motion to restore the amount granted to Rowan-Cabarrus Community College from \$35,000 to \$45,000 and Commissioner Knox seconded. Commissioner Cohen stated that he could support this but cannot support the idea of the County paying debt service off and increasing their budget every year from now on by that amount. He stated that the people of

Rowan County voted for a bond issue to build this facility and feels that they meant for the County to pay these bonds off and once these bonds were paid off, the funding process would stop. Commissioner DeMarcus concurred and stated that they have taken on the Library Bond now and does not think that the Commission should perpetuate on it. Commissioner Swaim stated that last year they presented in detail which building would have to be reroofed at which year. Commissioner Cohen feels they should request this on a year-to-year basis year rather than assume funds will be taken out of debt service from now on as this would increase in funding. Commissioner Swaim concurred that each year would have to stand alone and he is not in favor of continuing this increase. The motion was then passed unanimously.

Recycling Program--The Commission supported this request.

Planning & Zoning Officer (Prorated)--Chairman Messinger stated that they received an editorial on their Land Use Planning.

Manager - Part-time Position--The Commission supported this request.

Special Appropriations--Commissioner Swaim stated that it may be possible to fund the Home Management Program. The Home Management Program was organized to help residents lacking the knowledge of budgeting as well as using their time wisely. Commissioner Knox stated that the Home Manager's component taught people how to obtain exactly what they needed by shopping. Commissioner DeMarcus stated that if this is approved, it would be an ongoing thing each year. Commissioner DeMarcus stated that she is not against the project but feels there should be uniting of all agencies in the County that already offer this type of service. Commissioner Knox stated that this organization continuously applies for grants and it may be that once this project gets started, then this appropriation could be seed money. Commissioner Cohen made a motion that the Commission grant this request of \$5,000 as a one-time funding to help this organization get started. and Commissioner Knox seconded with unanimous approval. This appropriation would be allocated to the Community Service Council.

Forestry Service-- Mr. Owens indicated an estimated 10% increase in salaries. He indicated that if the County could reduce their appropriation by 5% which would amount to \$900 due to the fact that the State will only give 4 1/2%. He stated that if they wanted to reduce their 40% of the total agreement for salaries they should reduce their contributions by \$900. Mr. Owens indicated that there would not be any other major expense incurred. In the last two (2) years they have had to purchase a truck at a cost of approximately \$14,000 plus approximately \$3,000 of equipment to go on the truck. Under the cooperative agreement the County has with the State

Forestry Service is funded 40% by the County and 60% by the State. Commissioner DeMarcus stated that she is not in favor of giving higher raises than what can be given to the County employees. Therefore, it was the consensus of the Board to reduce this allocation from \$3,800 to \$2,920.

Economic Development Commission--The County Manager confirmed that the Commission has reduced the EDC's allocation from \$6,835 to \$4,229, which is a salary and advertising adjustment. Commissioner DeMarcus noted that the United Arts Council's allocation was increased by \$5,000. She then asked what the City will fund for this Council. The County Manager replied that no indications have been given by the City at this point. Commissioner DeMarcus stated that the Commission could adjust this at the Public Hearing if necessary. Commissioner Swaim announced that if the City did not raise their allocation, he would like to see the County "hold the line" as well. Chairman Messinger stated that the Commission would hold on this \$5,000 until they find out what the City does.

The County Manager reported that the County funds 50% of the EDC and the City funds 30%. He then raised the question of concern that if the City funds their total share, would the County do the same. The EDC is usually funded by other municipalities at 20%.

Waterworks Visual Arts--Commissioner Cohen asked if \$12,500 was in the budget for Waterworks. The County Manager replied that this amount would come out of this year's budget as they requested the Commission's help in their present budget. No funds have been allocated to them for next year's budget due to this request.

Personnel Reclassifications--The County Manager reported that Personnel Reclassifications were approved at the last Regular Commission Meeting as proposed by the Personnel Advisory Committee. These recommendations came from Social Services, Tax Collector's Office and several other offices.

The County Manager reported that the medical insurance premiums will increase substantially next year--not necessarily for individual coverage, but for family coverage as well. In the past, the County has fallen behind on what has been recommended to charge employees as opposed to what is being charged due to the fact that the number of major claims the County has had in the last couple years have been astronomical. In order to cover what the County's total cost will be next year, Blue Cross-Blue Shield is recommending that the Commission increase premiums substantially dealing in the area of family coverage. Blue Cross-Blue Shield is also recommending that individual coverage be paid in full by the County. The family coverage would increase approximately \$50 to \$60 per month per family. At present, the benefits are high-option

benefits. They are major medical (80/20%) with no co-payments--only a \$100 major medical deduction or \$200 per family is required before Blue Cross-Blue Shield takes over expenses for a claim. At 80/20%, hospitalization and emergency is paid at 100%. Blue Cross-Blue Shield is proposing the County go to a modified plan which has a higher deductible. Blue Cross-Blue Shield will be proposing to the County some options which will cause the employees to pay slightly more to keep the premium as low as possible and the benefits as high as possible. Other options such as a second opinion and pre-admission will be included in this proposed plan. The \$23,000 represents Blue Cross-Blue Shield's request to fund the additional \$5.43 for the employees share. Chairman Messinger stated that it was the consensus of the Board to modify the present medical insurance plan.

Commissioner Cohen requested clarification of how much was to be increased in this year's budget for the 401K program. The County Manager replied that for all sworn law enforcement officers, it is required by the State to go from 2% funding to 5% effective July 1, 1988. He also suggested to funding regular employees at 3% (previously 1%). Actually, County Employees will receive three (3) different retirement benefits (401K, State Retirement, and Social Security) when they reach retirement age. The County Manager indicated that the increase in Court Fees may alleviate the pressure to fund the 5% for law enforcement officers.

Supplements to Fire Department with Certified First Responders--Commissioner Cohen stated that last year the Commission increased supplements to the fire departments and at the present time they are not supplementing the fire departments for their First Responder programs throughout the County. Commissioner Cohen has discussed this issue with Terry Barber and Mr. Barber has indicated that EMS relies heavily on the First Responders. At present, the policy is that when a department is certified, the County pays them \$400 in supplies, oxygen, etc. With this in mind, Commissioner Cohen recommended the Commission fund a monthly supplement of \$75 for each department that has a Certified First Responder and Commissioner Swaim seconded. The County Manager suggested budgeting twenty (20) departments and anticipate others being added during the year. The County Manager suggested that this motion include municipalities as well. Commissioner Cohen concurred that anyone who answers calls in the County should probably be funded. This allocation totals \$22,500 per year

Strategic Planning--Commissioner Cohen feels the Commission should consider funding the Strategic Planning Process to some extent. In reply to Commissioner Knox's concern, Commissioner Swaim stated that the Strategic Planning Process is a joint effort by the City, Chamber of Commerce and the County to hire an independent organization along with a large committee of people from the County

to make a study of planning for the next twenty-five (25) years or more. Commissioner DeMarcus stated that the City has its own planning and the County has their own ideas for land-use planning, hiring, and starting an office, as well as plans for recycling. She strongly feels there is a difference between County Government and Chamber of Commerce projects. Chairman Messinger concurred that he, too, is in support of this project. Chairman Messinger feels the County needs all the input it can get to make this a good place to live. Commissioner DeMarcus raised the concern that it was her understanding that the Commission agreed not to divide on this issue. Chairman Messinger then clarified that it was meant that the Commission should remain unanimous when this vote took place in public. Commissioner Cohen stated that if the Commission undertakes this project, they would be a very active participant, well informed, and offer input as well as review evaluations continuously. Commissioner Cohen recommended having a member of this Board participate or appoint someone. Commissioner Knox's concern is that this project may be "another volume of material on the shelf" if funded and not implemented. He stated that with the water situation of Rowan County occurring in various areas, this is something the County Commission will need to address alone. Chairman Messinger stated that he does not know how good this project will be, but through the Chamber, he sees a lot of potential in the City and the County which will be directed towards projects to improve the quality of life and point a direction for the County to follow. Commissioner Swaim noted that with such a large represented committee in place, land-use planning and county-wide zoning will be much easier. Commissioner DeMarcus stated that the County Commission has advisory committees on everything they do and many of these people participating are on these committees. Commissioner Knox felt that this Board should direct these kinds of issues with the cooperation of the Chamber and other business ventures in Rowan County as this is part of what makes Rowan County a good place to live. Commissioner DeMarcus stated that she is not against Strategic Planning but feels it needs to be done at a time more suitable for this Board which is elected and responsible to all the citizens in Rowan County to provide leadership.

Chairman Messinger stated that another part of this proposal is the use of COG Free Time. The County Manager then stated that Emergency Services utilizes some of this time as it is non-transferable. The County Manager stated that if the County does not include total free time then the \$9,000 allocation would increase. A commitment for a three-year cycle would cost approximately \$27,000 and if the Commission entered into a contract, the County cost would be \$27,000 in addition to free time. The same holds true for the City. Commissioner Cohen made a motion to fund the Strategic Planning Process on a three-year cycle at \$9,000 per year plus forty (40) hours of free time each year through COG time and Commissioner Swaim seconded. The County Manager noted that it was his

understanding that they get two (2) blocks annually of forty (40) free hours and if the Commission put a cap on it this would be a negotiated tool but it could cause the \$9,000 to be increased if the other part decreased. This was approved and passed by Chairman Messenger and Commissioner Cohen and Swaim and opposed by Commissioners Knox and DeMarcus.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Chairman Messenger asked Commissioner Knox and Mr. R. O. Everett to serve on a special Transportation Task Force for the Metrolina area.

Chairman Messenger stated that they have received a request from the Department of Human Resources regarding the Child Support Incentive Appropriation Request. The County Manager stated that a couple of years ago, the General Assembly passed a statute indicating the transfer of the Child Support Collection Process from DSS into the Clerk of Superior Court. For every dollar collected, they receive a certain percentage of the funds as an incentive for collection. Since the Clerk of Court has taken over this process, they also took over some of the funds in this incentive program. DSS suffered a loss of \$10,000.56 and this local bill for this special appropriation is to help the Clerk of Court so DSS will not lose funds. He stated that since this has been transferred to the Clerk of Court, DSS is in the position of losing incentive funds which is \$10,000. The purpose of the Bill is the State is asking for a \$1.1 Million appropriation to offset the negative impact on these incentive payments that will result in the Administrative Offices of the Courts receiving the funds as of January 1, 1988.

Commissioner Knox made a motion that Chairman Messenger become the official delegation of the National Meeting at Anaheim, California and Commissioner DeMarcus seconded with unanimous approval.

Chairman Messenger stated that he received a letter from Bill Hefner stating that the funding for the airport is being discussed and he would keep in touch. The County Manager stated that there is a general appropriation for the airport or the Aviation Trust Fund. In discussion with the FAA in Atlanta, this fund holds approximately \$5 Billion or \$6 Billion; however, Congress has not appropriated the money. Congress will appropriate about half of these funds which leaves the other half to remain in the Trust Fund. Congress is using it to help offset the federal deficit. Since this money has been allocated and earmarked for airport improvements, as it is an aviation tax on tickets, gas, and repairs, the County Manager stated that they are requesting from Congress this money be released so airports like ours could benefit from the new money. If they do not

release these funds, then utility-size airports lose because larger airports will receive their share of the appropriation. The County Manager stated that they would like Congress to release these funds to the FAA District Offices and in turn the District Offices would look upon projects like ours with favorable consideration. The County Manager then stated that our project will be considered among other projects based upon the amount of funds available. Letters have been written to our congressman, senators, and representatives to support the County's concern.

The County Manager reported that they received notification yesterday from the State Division or Aeronautics Council of the County receiving another grant of \$1,300 applied to upgrading the taxi-way lights. Mr. Jerry Helms of Food Lion made the request that the Airport's navigational (runway) lights need to be upgraded. Mr. Hugh Bost, Rockwell Radio and Electric, gave a proposal of \$2,600 and the State Aeronautics Council will fund \$1,300 which is a 50% grant.

Commissioner Knox suggested the Department of Transportation install a better sign on the Interstate particularly at the Peach Orchard Road Exit indicating the direction of the Rowan County Airport be shown in both directions. Chairman Messinger suggested surveying what is there and have a letter drafted for their consideration.

Chairman Messinger received a letter from the Governor regarding the landfill situation expressing his concern of the problems that local governments are experiencing when dealing with Solid Waste issues. In order to assist counties and municipalities in solving these problems, Governor Martin has included in his budget a request for funds to provide additional staff for the Solid Waste Branch. Over a three-year period, this proposal will insure adequate State resources to deal with Solid Waste issues and provide timely response to local government needs. The element of this plan is to make \$700,000 available for Planning Use/Solid Waste Technologies. Chairman Messinger stated that they have written the legislative requesting support of this issue as well as anyone that might have any input. Chairman Messinger noted to the officials in Raleigh that the Commission is willing to testify if necessary to help the Solid Waste Branch.

The County Manager reported that in reading the Greensboro paper of Sunday, June 12, 1988, Governor Martin made two (2) requests: 1) \$2 Million for a Revolving Fund and 2) \$1 Million for Staffing and \$1 Million for Technologies in the Solid Waste Branch. He stated that the revolving fund is supported by the Association of County Commissioners but the \$2 Million for the Solid Waste Branch has been cut out of appropriation fees.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL MATTERS:

Commissioner DeMarcus made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters and Commissioner Swaim seconded with unanimous approval. Commissioner Cohen made a motion to come out of Executive Session and Commissioner Knox seconded with unanimous approval. This Session was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. No further action was reported in Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy S. Powell
Clerk to the Board