

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF
ROWAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 7, 1995 - 6:00 P.M.
RED ROOM - COMMUNITY BUILDING

PRESENT: Todd Arey, Chairman
Thomas M. Webb, Vice-Chairman
J. Newton Cohen, Member
Steve Blount, Member
Jim Neely, Member

The County Manager, Finance Director, and Clerk to the Board were also present. Chairman Arey called the meeting to order and read a quote by Russell Palmer. The Board decided to review the list of items that had received a 2/3,3/2 (maybe) vote from the previous meeting.

Industrial Park - Commissioner Webb stated he had given this item a lot of thought. He stated the county had approximately \$147,000 in escrow from the sale of the county home. He moved to use this money plus \$100,000 from fund balance to have \$250,000 for this year. Chairman Arey seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Neely added that he felt an industrial park and controlled economic development was the way of the future for the county and was a necessity to make the county affordable for citizens.

Economic Development Budget - Commissioner Neely asked about the plans for the Carolinas Partnership. Commissioner Cohen stated he felt the partnership is only a benefit for the EDC and the membership should be paid from their budget. He added that he was not in favor of giving \$120,000 for the EDC budget and asked about the possibility of bringing the two EDC staff persons under the county's insurance plan to save money. After some discussion, it was decided that the concept of adding the two staff members to the insurance plan would be explored further.

Commissioner Neely asked if the \$120,000 figure was a solid figure. Harry Whalen responded that the figure was an exact number.

Chairman Arey moved to fund the EDC Budget request and to put their staff on the county insurance plan. There was discussion on the true savings of the insurance benefits and it was decided that Ken Deal should work with Harry Whalen and Bill Wagoner to determine the

feasibility. Commissioner Blount seconded the motion and the motion passed by a vote of 4/1 with Commissioner Cohen voting “no”.

Market Adjustment and COLA - Chairman Arey discussed combining a market adjustment and COLA because he felt if salaries were brought to market then a COLA would not be justified. Commissioner Neely stated he felt the adjustments were essential because the County could not afford to lose employees. Mr. Russell explained the market, COLA, longevity and merit plans. Commissioner Cohen stated he could not vote for the market and COLA, adding it would have to be one or the other. Chairman Arey asked for the consensus of the Board and the Board was in agreement 4/1 with Commissioner Cohen voting “no”.

New Positions - Chairman Arey stated he would like the Board not to fund any new positions in this budget. The Board agreed unanimously.

Rescue Squad Rescue - The Board discussed the tentatively approved nomex equipment for the Rescue Squad. Coyt Karriker brought a pair of the nomex coveralls to display to the Board and explain their benefit. Commissioner Cohen stated the Rescue Squad would have enough money in their budget to buy the coveralls, after the payment for their truck was made. Chairman Arey stated he would like to have the County purchasing agent write bids for the suits in order to obtain the best price. He added that after the truck payment was made the money was to be held in the fund balance. The Board agreed to use the surplus funds to purchase the coveralls by a vote of 4/1 with Commissioner Cohen voting “no”.

NC Transportation Museum - Commissioner Cohen stated after studying the sales tax generated by the museum he was willing to support the increase for their budget. Chairman Arey called for the vote on the increase and it passed by a vote of 3/2 with Commissioners Blount and Cohen voting against.

Carolinas Partnership - Chairman Arey called for the vote on increasing the Carolinas Partnership membership by \$425. The increase passed by a vote of 4/1 with Commissioner Cohen voting “no”.

Software for Account - Chairman Arey stated that perhaps this was not a dire need this year and should be considered a top priority for next year. The software failed by a vote 2/3 with Commissioners Webb and Cohen voting in favor.

Road Paving Policy - There was discussion among the Board about the amount of money that would be needed for the policy to help Kannapolis Country Estates. Commissioner Blount asked about the possibility of borrowing the money. The Board agreed to proceed with the policy through bank financing.

Parking Plan - Chairman Arey asked if the Board could agree to appropriate \$125,000 for the parking plan. Commissioner Cohen stated he wanted to increase the appropriation to \$150,000. The Board agreed by unanimous vote.

Increase for Senior Services - Chairman Arey called for the vote for the support of funding the moneys lost by grant for Senior Services. The increase passed by a vote of 3/2 with Chairman Arey and Commissioner Cohen voting against.

Rowan/Salisbury Schools - There was lengthy discussion among the Board about the direction the schools was taking and how money was being spent. Commissioner Blount stated he did not want to micromanage the school board, but felt the Board of Commissioners were entitled to have input in how the Board's investment in the schools was spent. Each Commissioner stated what they could support for the school appropriation. It was agreed that the majority of the Board would support approximately a \$900,000 increase and \$150,000 for the school of advanced technology.

There being no further business, Commissioner Webb moved to adjourn the meeting until June 12, 1995 for the public hearing on the budget at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Cohen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Dickinson,
Clerk to the Board