

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
ROWAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
JUNE 16, 1997- 7:00 P.M.  
COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

PRESENT: James B. Neely, Chairman  
J. Newton Cohen, Vice-Chairman  
Steve Blount, Member  
Dave Rowland, Member  
Frank Tadlock, Member

The County Manager, County Attorney, Finance Director and Clerk to the Board were also present. Chairman Neely called the meeting to order and Commissioner Tadlock provided the invocation.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

- Mr. Russell asked the Board to discuss Mental Health
- Mr. Russell asked the Board to consider a request for a cash security bond.
- Commissioner Cohen stated he would like to discuss the Sydney the monkey situation.

CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA:

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Cohen seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The consent agenda consisted of the following items:

- (a) Approval of Refunds totaling \$ 147.00
- (b) Approval of Unanimous Road Name Change of *Thetford Road*
- (c) Approval to Correct *East Drive* to *East Avenue* for DOT Records
- (d) Approval of Minutes from 5/5/97 and 5/19/97

## DISCUSSION ON ROWAN/SALISBURY SCHOOLS BUDGET:

Chairman Neely read a statement noting his support for a 1 ¼ cent tax increase to increase funding for the schools. He also called on the schools to develop a long range plan showing how the money would be spent and what improvements they hoped to reach.

Commissioner Rowland stated that the Board had begun its budget process stating they wanted a no tax increase budget and he felt it was unfair to raise taxes now.

Commissioner Tadlock stated he felt investing the schools was an investment in the future and wanted to go on record supporting education and the schools. He stated that he had supported an increase in taxes for the schools based on the schools developing a long range plan. He stated that he could not support a tax increase at this time because he had not seen a plan developed yet. He added that he wanted to support the school board in their effort to develop a plan for the schools and hoped that they would work in unity with the Board of Commissioner in a collective effort to reach their goal.

Commissioner Cohen stated the Board had asked the County Manager to develop a budget with no tax increase and he had done so. He added that many important things had been cut in order to balance the budget. He stated the Board had to set priorities, decide how much they will spend, and stay with it.

Commissioner Blount stated that the community needed to realize the student growth and school needs and that funding will have to be increased. He stated that the Board had asked for a no tax increase budget for consideration and now needed to consider the needs of the school.

Chairman Neely reiterated the need for the schools to develop a long range plan adding that they were our future.

## ADOPTION OF 1997-98 BUDGET ORDINANCES:

### Fund 11

Commissioner Blount moved to adopt the 1997-98 General Fund Ordinance with a correction to section 11 to clarify that the Board will not only match ISTEAFunds for the Transportation Museum but funds from any source. Commissioner Rowland seconded and the motion carried.

Chairman Neely stated that an increase for the senior games coordinator was not in the budget. Mr. Russell explained the process necessary for employees to earn benefits and added that the Parks and Recreation Board had not supported the increase.

#### Fund 27

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the budget ordinance for Fund 27 emergency telephone assistance fund. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion carried.

#### Fund 28

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the budget ordinance for Fund 28 Special Fire and Service District Taxes fund as submitted. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion carried.

#### Fund 29

Commissioner Blount moved to adopt the budget ordinance for Fund 29 Rowan-Kannapolis Sports Consortium fund as submitted. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion carried.

#### Fund 65

Commissioner Blount moved to approve Fund 65 Solid Waste Enterprise fund as submitted. Commissioner Rowland seconded and the motion carried.

Commissioner Cohen asked about the difference in the expenditures and revenues for the recycling program. Mr. Russell stated staff would review the costs for the convenience sites and return to the Board with a report.

#### Fund 85

Commissioner Blount moved to approve Fund 85 Workers Compensation Self-Retention program as submitted. Commissioner Cohen seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### RECOMMENDATION FOR WATER/SEWER CONSULTANTS:

Mr. Russell noted that the County had received three proposals for a water/sewer study of the county. Mr. Conner reviewed the proposals and recommended Hobbs, Upchurch and Associates to complete the study. Commissioner Rowland moved to authorize staff to negotiate with Hobbs, Upchurch

and Associates for a water/sewer assessment study. Commissioner Blount seconded and the motion carried.

#### REQUEST FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY BY BELLSOUTH

Mr. Russell gave the Board a request from BellSouth for an easement on county property on Old Concord Road. He stated that the easement would be used to build a substation to serve the industrial park area.

Commissioner Cohen questions the price of \$10.00 for the easement. He stated he would like to negotiate the price as well as the landscaping around the substation.

Commissioner Blount moved to authorize staff to negotiate with BellSouth for the easement. Commissioner Cohen seconded and the motion carried.

#### RESOLUTION APPROVING STTE FUNDS FOR AIRPORT APRON EXPANSION:

Mr. Russell presented the Board with a resolution authorizing funds from North Carolina Division of Aviation to complete the apron expansion project. Commissioner Blount moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Cohen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION TO AMEND EDC BY-LAWS:

A resolution was presented to the Board amending the Economic Development Commission by-laws. The change was a clarification that the Chamber president would serve in ex-officio capacity and if the position was vacant the chamber would fill the seat. Commissioner Cohen moved to approve the amendment. Commissioner Blount seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

This item was delayed until the next meeting.

#### ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

- Commissioner Cohen asked the Board if they should consider billing the zoo owner for the cost of chasing the Sydney the monkey when it escaped. He noted that the owner refused to pay for damage that the monkey did to a neighbors vehicle. Commissioner Blount stated that the Board did not have a policy that would allow them to charge for these services. Commissioner Rowland agreed stating that the Health Board had not wanted to set precedence by billing in this situation.

- Mr. Russell gave the Board a resolution to begin the merger process with Piedmont Behavioral Healthcare for mental health services. He stated that he, Commissioner Cohen and Chairman Neely had meet with officials in Raleigh to discuss the merger to be effective October 1, 1997. Commissioner Cohen moved to adopt the resolution for merger. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Rowland asked about the Piedmont Healthcare's requirement for space. Mr. Russell stated that it was agreed the county would address the needs by 1999 and that the Board may want to consider using the Brendle's building for space in conjunction with the Health Department.

- The Planning office presented the Board with a request for a cash security bond in to guarantee construction of a road culvert to DOT standards. The request was received from Bobby Murdock and the Spring Valley subdivision. Commissioner Rowland moved to accept the cash bond. Commissioner Blount seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The following citizens addressed the Board of Commissioners:

Austin Mitchell - relayed his budget concerns to the Board.

Vic Bost - stated that the School Board would develop a plan and do whatever necessary to increase funds needed by the schools. He thanked the Board for their comments concerning better communication with the School Board.

William Washington - stated concerns as an employee of Tri-County Mental Health about how the merger will effect their jobs.

Ed Hayden - discussed the school budget. Asked the Board to consider supporting a constitutional change that would allow the schools to set their own tax rate, relieving the County of its involvement.

Jim Cohen - stated that money was not the issue with school problems but that is was a moral breakdown in the school system.

Tina Hall - encouraged the Board to take action to improve schools adding that they needed more than just adequate funding.

There being no further business, Commissioner Blount moved to enter closed session for the purpose of economic development. Commissioner Rowland seconded and the motion carried.

During the closed session, Chairman Neely and Commissioner Rowland were excused from the meeting to avoid conflict of interest concerning the project being discussed.

There being no action taken during closed session, Commissioner Tadlock moved to return to open session. Commissioner Blount seconded and the motion carried.

There being no further business, Commissioner Tadlock moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Blount seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Dickinson, CMC  
Clerk to the Board