

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
June 15, 2015 – 6:00 PM**

**J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM**

**J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROWAN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

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Present: Greg Edds, Chairman  
Jim Greene, Vice-Chairman  
Mike Caskey, Member  
Judy Klusman, Member  
Craig Pierce, Member

County Manager Aaron Church, Clerk to the Board/Assistant to the County Manager Carolyn Barger, County Attorney Jay Dees and Assistant County Manager/Finance Director Leslie Heidrick were present.

Chairman Edds convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Chaplain Michael Taylor provided the Invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by members from Boy Scout Troop 351.

**CONSIDER ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Chairman Edds added an issue as agenda item #2a regarding a recent Salisbury Post story.

County Manager Aaron Church requested board action to consider approval of a contract for a courthouse boiler renovation. Chairman Edds added the item as #2b.

Both additions passed unanimously.

**CONSIDER DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA**

There were no deletions from the agenda.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Pierce moved, Commissioner Greene seconded and the vote to approve the agenda (as amended) passed unanimously.

## **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Commissioner Klusman moved, Commissioner Caskey seconded and the vote to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2015, May 28, 2015, and June 1, 2015 Commission Meetings passed unanimously.

## **1. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Pierce moved approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Klusman and passed unanimously.

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. State Request to Add Amesbury Drive and Hinsdale Avenue to State Secondary Road System for Maintenance
- B. RTS By-Laws update
- C. Home & Community Care Block Grant Funding Plan for 2015-16
- D. Termination of Ambulance Franchise Request
- E. Tax Refunds
- F. Approval of Contract Extension for MV Transportation
- G. Request to Utilize Space in the West End Plaza on June 23<sup>rd</sup>
- H. Approval to Purchase Fuel using the WEX Fleet Fuel Card Program
- I. Approval of Sole-Source Contract with Motorola for E911 Radio System Maintenance
- J. Exemption from the Mini-Brooks Act
- K. Approval of Contracts for Janitorial Services

## **2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Chairman Edds opened the Public Comment Period to entertain comments from any citizens wishing to address the Board. The following individuals came forward:

- Phyllis Sides requested the Commissioners vote no to allowing the sale or consumption of alcohol on county property.
- Constance Johnson provided the Board with several handouts. Ms. Johnson also presented information for a Museum of Denominations and Salisbury Rowan Concert Hall for consideration and assistance. The Salisbury Concert Hall is proposed to be 5,000 seats at the former Belk area at the Salisbury Mall. Ms. Johnson's third presentation referenced her application to serve on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC). Ms. Johnson said she had expected to be interviewed; however she instead received a letter of rejection. Ms. Johnson felt racial makeup of the JCPC was a disadvantage to the area youth in the penal system. Ms. Johnson shared the Youth Connection News (handout) as an effective program. Ms. Johnson asked the Board to please consider using her in other ways.

- Larry Wright expressed appreciation for the Board voting to appeal the issue on prayer. Mr. Wright also spoke against allowing the use of alcohol on county property.

With no one else wishing to address the Board, Chairman Edds closed the Public Comment Period.

## **ADDITIONS**

### **2a. STORY FROM THE SALISBURY POST**

Chairman Edds read an article from the Salisbury Post regarding Frances Morris and her brother, Eddie Morgan. The article reported Ms. Morris had received a call that remains of their father, whose plane had gone down in Laos forty-nine (49) years ago, had been recovered. Chief Master Sergeant Edwin Everton Morgan, Sr. had served in the United States Air Force. Having hoped for a different outcome, the brother and sister felt they finally had closure, even though Eddie Morgan never met his father.

Chairman Edds discussed the motorcycle procession that would occur on June 25, 2015 from Charlotte and would go down West Innes Street. A black horse and the War Horse Warriors will pull an 1890 replica hearse with Morgan's flag-draped casket inside and visible through the glass window. Chairman Edds recognized the fact this was an amazing story and homecoming. Chairman Edds encouraged getting the word out that a Vietnam Veteran and POW was being returned after 49 years back to Rowan County.

A moment of silence was called for by Chairman Edds.

### **2b. Contract for Courthouse Boiler Renovation**

County Manager Aaron Church said the Board previously approved Falcon Engineering to design a new boiler system for the courthouse. Mr. Church said only two (2) companies bid; therefore, in accordance with state law, the design went back out to bid a second time. The bids came in and Staff's recommendation was to award the contract to MSS Solutions, LLC to renovate the courthouse boiler system at a cost not to exceed \$499,933.

In response to Chairman Edds, Finance Director Leslie Heidrick said the project had evolved from what had been approved. Ms. Heidrick explained that \$115,000 was in the Facilities Management budget to move for the project.

Commissioner Pierce asked if there were any specifications on the equipment since there was a difference in the quotes.

Facilities Management Director Don Bringle said Falcon Engineering did specify parameters for the equipment needed.

Commissioner Caskey moved to approve the contract. Commissioner Pierce seconded.

Commissioner Greene said he would love to give the business to a local company but he pointed out \$50,000 was a big difference that could not to be ignored.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

### **3. PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 3, SECTION 3-2 OF THE ROWAN COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES**

Chairman Edds opened the public hearing to receive citizen input regarding proposed text amendments to Chapter 3 Section 3-2 of Rowan Code of Ordinances.

With no one wishing to address the Board, Chairman Edds closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Pierce asked the Board to consider amending Chapter 3 of the Rowan County Code of Ordinances regarding the possession and consumption of alcohol on county property.

The exception would be for the property at the West End Plaza. Beer and wine sales for special events and gatherings must approved by the Board of Commissioners. No liquor or mixed drinks will be permitted and an application must be received thirty (30) days before the event date.

Should the text amendments be approved, Commissioner Pierce said the County Manager would be instructed to create a policy regarding the rent and use of the facility.

Commissioner Pierce said the text amendments would not relate to any other county-owned property and the exception was not applicable to county offices located at the West End Plaza. All ABC permits and requirements must be approved and in place before an application can be approved.

The proposed text amendments were presented as underlined below:

The sale, possession and/or consumption of any alcoholic beverages on property owned, leased, or occupied by the county is prohibited, with the exception to the West End Plaza located at 1935 Jake Alexander Blvd West (Rowan County Tax Parcel 331-078). Malt Beverage and wine sales, possession and/or consumption maybe allowed for special events and gatherings subject to:

- (a) In compliance with applicable NC Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission policies and permits: and,
- (b) The West End Plaza event center policy.

This exception neither extends to any other county-owned property exception nor is applicable to county offices and /or businesses located at the West End Plaza.

Commissioner Pierce stated requests were by case only and did not allow existing business to sell beer and wine at the Plaza. Commissioner Pierce went on to say this was for special events when renting the events center. Commissioner Pierce said the change was to help the County use the facility as a rental to generate income and was not designed to open the door to alcohol consumption on any other county property.

Commissioner Caskey asked if today was only for the public hearing and the Board would then instruct the County Manager to come back with a final written policy regarding the rental of the facility.

Commissioner Pierce stated today's vote would be on the text amendments and once the amendments were in place, the County Manager would write a policy regarding the rental rate and other requirements. Commissioner Pierce said ABC would need to be consulted in order to write the policy to include specific requirements.

Commissioner Caskey inquired as to whether there was a West End Plaza Policy and Chairman Edds responded the County Manager had been instructed to draft a policy. Chairman Edds went on to say in the initial draft Commissioner Pierce sent, the Board would have had to approve each request. Chairman Edds said with a new policy in place, the County Manager would have the authority to approve any application based on the policy the Board approved.

Mr. Church said he would begin working on the policy, which should be ready by the next meeting. In reference to a question from Commissioner Caskey, Mr. Church said he had spoken with the Sheriff concerning the requirement for having security officers present for events.

Commissioner Caskey said he did not feel one officer should be there by themselves and the stipulation should be included in the policy.

Commissioner Klusman questioned who would pay for the security and Mr. Church responded the draft policy was being written to state the responsibility would be with whoever rented the facility.

Chairman Edds said stakeholders and others had said there was a need for meeting space and conference space in Rowan County. In the Master Plan for the West End Plaza, Chairman Edds said the JC Penney space was probably not big enough and was only one story. Chairman Edds pointed out that Belk was 80,000 square feet and had multiple stories. Chairman Edds said the conversion of the space would be an asset for the whole County and would create a tremendous amount of business and tourism through conferences and events.

The economic reality of developing the facility would be the need to be able to serve alcohol and Chairman Edds felt in the end, the request was reasonable.

Mr. Church said the Board could approve the text amendments and he would bring the policy back later.

Commissioner Pierce moved to approve the text amendments to Chapter 3, Section 3-2 of the Rowan County Code of Ordinances. Commissioner Klusman seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. NEW OFFICERS FOR VETERANS COUNCIL**

Commissioner Greene said the Salisbury Post article Chairman Edds read at the beginning of the meeting had been most appropriate (regarding the return of a Vietnam Veteran and POW). Commissioner Greene then recognized William "Bill" Craddock, President of the Veterans Council. Commissioner Greene highlighted Mr. Craddock's involvement and asked Mr. Craddock to come to the podium.

Mr. Craddock recognized Ed (no last name was provided), as the Chaplain of the Council, involved with the Honor Guard, and also involved with the hospital.

In reference to a question about the Honor Guard from Commissioner Greene, Mr. Craddock said the Honor Guard provided the 21 gun salute, folding of the flag, the Bugler, etc. for funerals, in excess of 300 per year for veterans in Rowan County. Mr. Craddock said the new Commander was Charles Cauble and there were 18 or 19 members who traveled over 300,000 miles per year. Mr. Craddock said everything the Honor Guard members wore was paid for from the pocket of each member. Mr. Craddock said the Honor Guard and Veterans Council were combining and one of the goals was to help returning veterans and families resume a normal life in Rowan County. According to Mr. Craddock, there are over 14,000 veterans in Rowan County with military families providing 35 percent of the economy in Rowan County. Mr. Craddock said veterans were involved in the hospice unit and one of his goals was to find more women who have served in the military to assist in the endeavor.

Charles Cauble stated he was the Parliamentarian or Sergeant at Arms, and was Vice Commander. All volunteers participate and teach youngsters about flag history and flag etiquette. A golf tournament is held once a year to raise funds, according to Mr. Cauble. Mr. Cauble stated the group was preparing now to go to Baltimore to perform in a Color Guard competition.

Lewis Reid said he had been Vice Commander for 5 years but right now was overseeing Memorial Day and Veterans Day events.

Bill Lay introduced himself as the first vice president of the Veterans Council and also the Chaplain of the Honor Guard as opposed to Ed being Chaplain of the

Council. Mr. Lay stated he would be taking over the Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies.

Bill Anderson said he was Secretary/Treasurer of the Veteran's Council and Secretary of the Honor Guard. Mr. Anderson said he was the oldest acting member of the Honor Guard.

Rebecca Forbes said she had moved here from Colorado and had been doing the Honor Guard Drill Team for thirty (30) years. Ms. Forbes stated she was the Public Information Officer for the Veteran's Council. Ms. Forbes discussed advertising for veterans events through local companies.

One of the officers interjected at this point to announce to the Board that Ms. Forbes was a Purple Heart recipient, combat wounded.

A round of applause followed the announcement.

Mr. Craddock informed the Board there were twenty (20) different posts within Rowan County and he was trying to visit each of them and meet with the different commanders in an effort to unite them all. Mr. Craddock then discussed his desire to get into the school system to educate students on how to take down and fold flags properly. Mr. Craddock thanked the Commissioners for allowing the group to be present. In conclusion he reported there was a Facebook page for the Rowan County Veterans Honor Guard and Veterans Council Rowan County, NC.

A round of applause followed the discussion.

Chairman Edds thanked the veterans for what they were doing in the community.

## **5. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ANIMAL CONTROL TASK FORCE**

Commissioner Pierce said there had been some dedicated citizens appointed to serve on the Animal Control Task Force (Task Force). Commissioner Pierce expressed appreciation for the Task Force members and their time.

Commissioner Pierce said the Rowan County Animal Control Task Force had eleven (11) recommendations; however, he felt the Board needed to vote on each of the following recommendations independently:

1. A Volunteer Program – Commissioner Pierce said Animal Control Director Clai Martin had written a program and overall it was a good program. Commissioner Pierce said the issue was if the Board wanted to vote to have a volunteer program examined and implemented.

Commissioner Klusman moved, Commissioner Caskey seconded and the vote for the Animal Shelter to have a volunteer program passed unanimously.

2. Installation Of A Key Card Entry System – Commissioner Pierce said the entry system would keep individuals who were volunteering out of areas where their volunteer services were not required. The recommendation would be to put the system into the existing shelter and in the new addition. To clarify, Commissioner Pierce said the system would not be on every door, just certain ones where the volunteers did not need access. The expense was estimated at \$25,000, including the new addition.

Commissioner Klusman moved approval of the key card entry system. Commissioner Caskey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Software Program For Intake – Commissioner Pierce said the program was known as Chameleon, which would allow several steps to take place that currently did not. Commissioner Pierce explained when an animal comes into the shelter, the animal would be photographed upon intake and vital information would be entered into the program where the animal would be tracked. Commissioner Pierce said by taking photos at intake, every animal would be put on the website the same day. The process was anticipated to streamline paperwork and increase the adoption rate. Commissioner Pierce said the program would provide a level of safety as the animal would not be handled a second time.

Commissioner Klusman moved approval of the software and Commissioner Greene seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Updated Credit/Debit Card Machine – Commissioner Pierce said this would allow animals to be more adoptable as the processing would be made easier.

Commissioner Klusman moved to approve the update with Commissioner Greene providing the second. The motion passed unanimously.

5. A Trap/Neuter/Return Program - Commissioner Pierce stated he was initially opposed to this program until he had been educated. Trap Neuter Return (TNR) was basically for cats and was provided by foundations in its entirety. The program does not cost the County any money. The process is to trap the cat, have it neutered and return the cat back to where it was found. The ear is clipped so it becomes known the animal has been neutered. Commissioner Pierce said the program eliminated the cycle of wild animals reproducing. Commissioner Pierce said he had not had time to discuss TNR with all board members, so the item could possibly be tabled. Commissioner Pierce said he was fully behind TNR.

Commissioner Greene said he was not sure the program could be approved without talking to the municipalities. Commissioner Greene moved that this be tabled until the program had been researched on responsibilities to the citizens of Rowan County. Commissioner Caskey seconded the motion.

Chairman Edds stated the County had a leash ordinance that applied to cats, too. Logically, Chairman Edds said there was a problem in that TNR would violate the County's own ordinance and the ordinance would have to be changed. To be fair, Chairman Edds said the Board would need to talk to the municipalities to make them aware of the program. Chairman Edds said he attended the Task Force meetings and felt the program was a good program as it would be paid for by a third party. Chairman Edds felt there was extra work to be done before the vote.

Commissioner Pierce asked to implement a timeline for the issue to come back before the Board and suggested the last meeting in August.

Commissioner Greene said he was agreeable to amend the motion to add sixty (60) days and bring the matter back at the second meeting in August. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Increasing The Adoption Fee to \$80 to Enable the Shelter to Provide Vaccinations and Microchips – Commissioner Pierce said this was one of the most important recommendations as the fee was currently \$70. Commissioner Pierce said the extra \$10 would allow for vaccinations and microchips to be inserted. The microchips would allow owners to be found. Commissioner Pierce moved approval followed by a second from Commissioner Klusman.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion on the floor carried unanimously.

7. Implement a \$15 Fee to Rescue Organizations for Microchips and Vaccinations – Commissioner Pierce explained that rescue organizations would take the animals and provide the service. Commissioner Pierce said the rescue organizations pay for spay and neutering themselves but a lot of times those services are not completed in Rowan County.

Commissioner Klusman moved to accept, Commissioner Greene seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Clarification of Spay and Neuter Contract – Commissioner Pierce said there was some confusion about housing the animals once they were taken to the veterinarian for spay and neuter. The veterinarian had expressed concerns that she did not have storage for all the animals. Commissioner Pierce said there were negotiations currently taking place

on how this would work in that animals may come back to the Animal Shelter. Commissioner Pierce said the request was for the Board to agree to clarify the contract.

Commissioner Klusman moved approval, Commissioner Greene seconded and the motion to approve the request passed unanimously.

9. A Request To Personally Talk To Individuals Submitting Excessive Public Records Requests – Commissioner Pierce said there appeared to be a lot of money being spent for the attorney to go through public records requests. Commissioner Pierce said there seemed to be a small group of people making hundreds of requests. Commissioner Pierce said the request was for approval for two (2) Commissioners to meet with those making the public records requests in an attempt to help answer their questions. Commissioner Pierce said the County had nothing to hide; however, it was a large expense to provide all the information.

Commissioner Greene asked why the attorney had to review the requests. Mr. Dees responded that a lot of the requests were innocuous but some requests involved personnel matters, complaints that had been filed, and information contained in complaints that need to be redacted before it could be released. Mr. Dees said he did not review all requests but said staff was careful to review them and make sure confidential information was not released. Mr. Dees said the County was inundated with public requests and the issue has reached a point that it had become pragmatic for staff to handle.

In response to a question from Commissioner Caskey, Commissioner Pierce said the attempt was to let folks know the Commissioners do care about their concerns and wanted to answer their questions. Commissioner Pierce said a face-to-face meeting might help more than an attorney. The goal, according to Commissioner Pierce, was to educate those making excessive requests that there were some things that could not be released and there was some information that cannot be compiled because those records/reports do not already exist.

Commissioner Klusman asked Mr. Dees how many hours he had spent on these issues. Mr. Dees responded that although hard to calculate, the average would be five (5) to ten (10) hours a month.

Commissioner Klusman moved to pursue the issue with Commissioner Greene providing the second. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Extending The Hours Of Operation – Commissioner Pierce discussed extending hours at the Animal Shelter on Saturday, possibly from three (3) to five (5) hours, and having staff come in shifts to improve adoption rates.

Commissioner Klusman move approval. Commissioner Caskey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Extending The Number Of Photographs Taken Between The Hours Of 3:00 P.M. And 4:00 P.M.

Commissioner Pierce said the recommendation was from one (1) individual on Task Force and did not receive any other votes. Commissioner Pierce explained that the Animal Control Director limited the number of photographs to eight (8) because a staff member had to go with the photographing individual to take the dog out of the cage, put on a leash, position the dog for the photograph, etc. and at the same time getting all the information about the dog. Commissioner Pierce said the problem was that if unlimited photographs were allowed it would then take extra time and expense for the employee that was supposed to get off at 4:30 p.m. According to Commissioner Pierce the software should eliminate this need, as the photographs would be taken at intake. Commissioner Pierce pointed out the software should also eliminate the additional risks. Commissioner Pierce said he would yield to the Director of Animal Control, Clai Martin, who had been with the County for 23 years and had the experience to know what works.

Chairman Edds said although he was not on the Task Force he attended all the meetings. Chairman Edds said while the item was suggested but had not been voted to go forward, he wanted to put the matter before the Board since it had seemed to be a contentious issue. In response to questions from folks about having an hour to take photos, Chairman Edds said he felt it to be reasonable. Chairman Edds stated he had asked Mr. Martin if this would help get over the hump with Mr. Martin saying he felt it would. Chairman Edds apologized to the Commissioners and Commissioner Pierce for "sticking his nose in". Chairman Edds reiterated what Commissioner Pierce had said in that once the software was installed, the issue would go away.

Chairman Edds moved the number of pictures not be limited but only limited in time for an hour. The motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Pierce moved to use the formula in place for now for eight (8) photos per hour which would expire when new software is up and running.

Commissioner Klusman asked how long before the software could be implemented. Commissioner Pierce responded that in talking with the County Manager, he was told within sixty (60) to ninety (90) days.

Commissioner Klusman moved to table the motion. The motion failed for lack of a second.

At this time, Commissioner Pierce's motion to keep the policy as is was seconded by Commissioner Caskey and passed 4-1 with Chairman Edds dissenting.

Chairman Edds called for a recess at 7:27 p.m.

Chairman Edds reconvened the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

## **6. PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL REPORT**

Finance Director Leslie Heidrick used graphs as she discussed the financial state of Rowan County. Ms. Heidrick discussed the annual cumulative revenue, expenditures, and sales tax comparisons from 2012 until 2015.

Ms. Heidrick stated the County had received in revenues \$115.4 million. In this year, Ms. Heidrick said there was a 2.75 cent tax rate increase. According to Ms. Heidrick, property tax collections had increased and there was the sale of the industrial property for \$2.1 million.

Ms. Heidrick said there was \$115.7 million on the expenditure side, which was trending where expected.

Ms. Heidrick said the last graph was sales tax, with collections through February being up a little over 8% from the prior year. Ms. Heidrick said the County was exceeding the budget at this time.

## **7. BUDGET WORK SESSION**

Chairman Edds said the Board had held a budget work session and each Commissioner had met with the County Manager to discuss items they felt needed to be changed. The total changes came to an additional \$211,000, and included software for the Animal Shelter, extended hours at the Animal Shelter, updating the credit/debit system at the Animal Shelter, a contribution to East Spencer for the Royal Giants Park, a Parks Senior Games Coordinator, a custodial position at the Landfill, some reclassifications for EMS and Sheriff's Office, the Crosby Scholars, Rescue Squad, stab proof vests for the Sheriff's Office, a grant writer position, phone reimbursement, and a reduction to NC Central Park.

Chairman Edds opened the floor for last minute changes prior to moving ahead to adopt the Budget Ordinances.

Commissioner Pierce said he would like to add a new position to the Parks system for an Assistant Senior Games Coordinator (Coordinator). Commissioner Pierce also recommended a \$5,000 pay increase for the current Senior Games

Coordinator. Commissioner Pierce explained that the current Coordinator, Ms. Phyllis Lofflin-Kluttz, ran the games by herself and had been at the same pay grade for a long time. Rowan County reported that the County was rated number two (2) in the State in the number of participants (over 2,000 seniors) per year participating in the games. Commissioner Pierce said if Ms. Kluttz decided to leave the County, there was no one on staff with the knowledge to run the games. Commissioner Pierce said he would like to have the Coordinator in place to learn the procedures in the event Ms. Kluttz left, and at which time the Coordinator position would go away. Commissioner Pierce said he was requesting the \$39,679 to be added to the budget for the request.

Chairman Edds said adding the position increased the total requested changes to \$247,738.

Commissioner Greene stated that the company he had worked with for many years had a financial relationship with Rowan Cabarrus Community College (RCCC). Commissioner Greene went on to say that every member of his family had attended RCCC at one time or another. Due to the work RCCC did in touching every family in the County, Commissioner Greene moved to add \$50,000 to the RCCC budget currently allocated. Commissioner Caskey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Edds said the total additions were now at \$297,738.

Commissioner Caskey discussed the resource officers in the schools and said the grants were scheduled to run out after next year. Commissioner Caskey said next year, the Board might need to talk about hiring seven (7) additional resource officers if the Board wanted to continue to have the officers in the middle schools. Commissioner Caskey said he wanted to make the Commissioners aware.

## **8. BUDGET ORDINANCES**

### **FUND 101 – GENERAL FUND**

Commissioner Greene moved to approve Fund 101 General Fund as amended above with Commissioner Pierce providing a second. The motion passed unanimously.

### **FUND 201 – FIRE DISTRICT FUND**

Commissioner Caskey moved to set all volunteer fire departments (VFD) that did not ask for an increase to revenue neutral. Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion.

Chairman Edds explained that there was a 1 to 1 ½ percent drop due to revaluation and some departments had kept the same rate; thereby, giving them fewer dollars to work with. Chairman Edds said the motion would raise those departments to revenue neutral for them to have the same dollars as last year.

The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Edds then talked about various requests and decisions the Commissioners must make. Chairman Edds said since VFD's have their own boards and fire commissioners, the Commissioners preferred to stay out of the business of setting the rates. Chairman Edds said some of the proposed rates were significant enough this year that it worried the Commissioners from an economic development standpoint. Chairman Edds said after meeting with some of the fire chiefs, they were willing to lower their requests. Chairman Edds expressed appreciation to those departments and to the VFD's for suiting up to take care of the families in Rowan County. Chairman Edds pointed out most department volunteers did not get paid. Chairman Edds said he felt good about those leading our community and he personally wanted to thank Mike Zimmerman and Rusty Alexander for working for the betterment of the County.

Commissioner Caskey moved to set a cap at a 2.25 percent increase for all departments that requested an increase. Commissioner Klusman seconded the motion.

Commissioner Caskey explained that each VFD that requested 2.25 percent or lower would receive their increase and the departments requesting above would stay at 2.25 percent.

Commissioner Pierce said some of the departments were seeking almost a 50% increase over what some of the districts were already receiving. Commissioner Pierce went on to say he felt the public needed to know the VFD's were gradually going to become full time and they would be taxing citizens to provide the service.

Commissioner Caskey said when looking at setting the County tax rate, a lot of people wondered where the tax monies go. Commissioner Caskey went on to state the fire stations were a professional department that was there for the benefit of everyone. According to Commissioner Caskey, VFD's have the same standards and policies as paid departments and the government was always adding more regulations. Commissioner Caskey said VFD's understand that times change and they work with the community the best they can. Commissioner Klusman said she had spent time with two (2) of the largest departments on Friday and was amazed at the cost to outfit a firefighter. Commissioner Klusman mentioned the China Grove department had been written up for not having enough people to respond for one fire call. According to Commissioner Klusman, having the proper equipment and the training affects how much home owners or businesses pay for insurance. Commissioner Klusman said times were different and her hope was to continue to support the firefighters.

Commissioner Greene said he had always been a supporter of the VFD and he felt the services the VFD performed were important to all. Commissioner Greene said the Board had been asked for a lot of increases this year. According to Commissioner Greene, one municipality had cut their budget and not participated in some county activities, but their VFD asked for a 25-30 percent rate increase. Commissioner Greene said if a community could not afford a rate or tax increase, they should not try to come through the Board for all the increases. Commissioner Greene said it upset him that through the municipality's budget they would not have any increase but expect the Commissioners to grant it all. Commissioner Greene said he wanted to be fair.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion on the floor carried unanimously.

#### **FUND 202 – EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SYSTEM FUND**

Commissioner Pierce moved, Commissioner Caskey seconded and the vote to approve Fund 202 Emergency Telephone System carried unanimously.

#### **FUND 501 – RISK MANAGEMENT FUND**

Commissioner Pierce moved to approve Fund 501 Risk Management Fund. Commissioner Greene seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **FUND 601 – LANDFILL FUND**

Commissioner Caskey moved to approve Fund 601 Landfill Fund with the addition of a custodial position of \$35,846. Commissioner Pierce seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **FUND 603 AIRPORT FUND**

Commissioner Pierce moved to approve Fund 603 Airport Fund. Commissioner Klusman provided a second. The motion carried unanimously.

### **9. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

Finance Director Leslie Heidrick presented the following budget amendments for the Board's consideration:

- Finance – To budget revenue and expenditures for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Grant approved by the Board of Commissioners on June 1, 2015 - \$1,104
- Emergency Services – Approve and allocate additional FY 2014 Emergency Management Performance Grant funding above budget amount for this fiscal year - \$2,595
- Finance – To budget for anticipated increase in restricted sales tax and payments to Rowan-Salisbury Schools (RSS) and Kannapolis City Schools (KCS) - \$543,000
- Sheriff – Recognize funds received via donation from private groups to be used for the RCSO G.R.E.A.T. camps this summer - \$500

- Social Services – Request to increase expenditure and revenue line items for Child Day Care Subsidy payments based on funding authorizations received from the Division of Child Development for FY 2015 - \$108,428
- Social Services – Request to increase expenditure and revenue line items for donations received in order to provide goods and services to clients - \$7,473
- Finance – To budget for the construction of the Rockwell EMS Station in the General Fund. The project is relatively small and is expected to be completed in one year (FY 2016). Also to budget for participation in the Dragon Boat Race on High Rock Lake - \$500,000
- Finance – To recognize the receipt and disbursement of Fire District Tax Revenues in excess of original budget amounts and to provide for appropriate budget values through the end of the year – \$70,100
- Finance – To close the Communications Capital Projects Fund and transfer remaining funds to the General Fund - \$144,194

Commissioner Pierce moved approval of the budget amendments as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Caskey and passed unanimously.

#### **10. CLOSED SESSION**

Commissioner Klusman moved at 8:10 p.m. for the Board to enter Closed Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Greene and passed unanimously. The Closed Session was held pursuant to North Carolina General Statute §143.318.11(a)(3) for attorney-client privileged communication regarding a possible legal matter.

#### **11. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Klusman moved to adjourn at 8:37 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Barger, MMC, NCCCC  
 Clerk to the Board/  
 Assistant to the County Manager