

PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA  
MAY 15, 2007 WORKSHOP  
MINUTES

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a budget workshop session on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at 2:00 pm in the Commissioners' Auditorium, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W. 5th Street, Greenville, North Carolina.

**Commissioners present:**

Beth Ward, Chairman  
Mark Owens, Jr., Vice Chairman  
Eugene James, Commissioner  
Tom Coulson, Commissioner  
Jimmy Garris, Commissioner  
Melvin McLawhorn, Commissioner  
Kenneth Ross, Commissioner  
Tom Johnson, Commissioner  
David Hammond, Commissioner

**Staff present:**

Scott Elliott, County Manager  
Trish Staton, Clerk to the Board  
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney  
Janis Gallagher, Assistant County Attorney  
Melonie Bryan, Deputy County Manager/Financial Services  
Phil Dickerson, Deputy County Manager/Public Services  
Michael Taylor, Chief Information Officer  
Shelley Leach, Budget Administrator  
Leslie Dixon, Budget & Grants Analyst

**Call to Order**

**Meeting Notes**

Chairman Ward called the budget workshop to order and welcomed everyone.

**Roll Call**

**Invocation and Pledge**

**Meeting Notes**

The Invocation was given by Commissioner Garris.  
The Pledge was led by Commissioner Johnson.

**Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:**

7/24/2007 2:50 PM





## Recommended Budget (May 8, 2007 Presentation)

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- This budget as presented was predicated on a 1.5-cent tax increase but...
  - While it did include \$1.6million in additional funding to the Board of Education,
  - It included no new positions in County departments
  - It included no expanded programs or services, and
  - It delayed/deferred items our departments needed to maintain current operations.



## Options to Eliminate the Tax Increase (May 9, 2007 Presentation)

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■ Reduce Bd of Ed Funding	\$687,840
■ Delay all vehicle purchases	502,000
■ Delay roof repair	44,000
■ Remove Elections Reserve	<u>144,000</u>
Total "cuts"	\$1,377,840


These cuts would offset the need for a tax increase.



## However. . .

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- After listening to presentations from our departments and the Board of Education, some additional changes appear to be warranted
- The next slides show recommendations for expenditures to consider “adding back” that would help address some of the pressing needs identified during our workshops and then possible ways to minimize the impact on our citizens



## Items to Consider “adding back”

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■ Board of Ed Funding	\$687,840
■ Modified Vehicle Replacement	224,000
■ DSS – 2 positions	45,000
■ PH – 1 position	41,000
■ Sheriff – PT funding	30,000
■ Env Health – Mosquito Control	140,000
■ Health Ins Reserve	<u>50,000</u>
Cost of “add backs”	\$1,217,840



## “Value” of Add Backs...

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- Addresses the stated priorities of the Board of Commissioners – education, public safety, public health and welfare
- Returns Board of Education funding to the original recommendation of \$1.6 million in new funds
- Helps County sustain and exceed Top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> funding status for education
- Replaces 12 of 23 “general” fund vehicles – sheriff (7), environmental health (2), social services (2) and inspections (1)



## “Value” of Add Backs...

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- Addresses critical staffing needs in Public Health (lab tech), Social Services (Medicaid division) and the Sheriff’s dept (part-time help)
- Allows County to better address mosquito issues
- Creates employee/spouse rate within our health insurance program
- Implements a Health Management Program to address long term costs and utilization of the plan to ensure plan solvency



## Potential Changes to help offset the cost of “add backs”

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Cost of “Add Backs”	\$1,217,840
Expenditure Reductions	
■ Elections Reserve	(144,000)
■ Mosquito Costs-General	(15,000)
Additional Revenues	
■ Investment Earnings	<u>-130,000</u>
New Revenue Requirement	\$ 928,840

This requires a 1-cent tax increase to fund.



## Tax Impact on Homeowners

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### 1-cent Tax Increase

\$ 75,000 home	\$ 8/year
\$100,000 home	\$10/year
\$150,000 home	\$15/year
\$200,000 home	\$20/year



## In conclusion...

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In order to best serve operating department needs and address the demands on services created by continued population growth, **a tax increase continues to be necessary.**

Looking forward into FY 08-09, the County will have additional funding pressures apart from current expense education funding and natural growth - **the opening of a new elementary school and the operating costs of the 192-bed addition at the Detention Center.**

Revaluation should help offset these costs – however, recognize that the rate may have to remain constant.

However, as acknowledged, growth has a price – especially if the growth is primarily residential.

Commission James spoke about not agreeing with the Manager. He spoke about a tax increase being a burden to citizens.

Commissioner Hammond spoke about citizens not recovering from the 2004 revaluation.

Commissioner Coulson spoke about an increase in taxes effecting everyone. He said the budget the Manager has presented to the Board is reasonable.

Commissioner Ross thanked Dr. Reep for the job she is doing. He said he will listen to the citizens in his district when it is time to vote on the budget.

Vice Chairman Owens spoke about the efforts county departments made in cuttings costs. He said it is the responsibility of the elected officials to use their judgment in providing the best services for the county. Vice Chairman Owens said he liked the Manager's original budget.

Commissioner Garris spoke about a letter the Board received from the ABC Board regarding compensation. He spoke about the compensation the ABC Board receives being a concern.

### **Motion:**

**Compensation for each member of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board be \$50 dollars a month. Compensation for the chairman will \$75 dollars a month.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Garris.**

**Motion seconded by Commissioner James.**

### **Discussion:**

**Commissioners Hammond spoke about some boards and committees having the resources to compensate members. He said he disagrees with the motion.**

Mr. Elliott said the ABC board increased the appropriation in the current year by \$200,000.

**Vote Record:**

Melvin McLawhorn	No
Kenneth Ross	Yes
Jimmy Garris	Yes
Mark Owens, Jr.	No
Beth Ward	Yes
Tom Coulson	Yes
Eugene James	Yes
Tom Johnson	Yes
David Hammond	No

**Total Yes Votes: 6**

**Total No Votes: 3**

**Motion Passed.**

Commissioner Garris spoke about not supporting a tax increase. He spoke about listening to the concerns of the citizens. Commissioner Garris encouraged citizens to call the members of the Board with input.

Commissioner Johnson spoke about preferring the Manager's original proposed budget with the 1.5 cent property tax increase. He spoke about fulfilling several needs with the increase. Commissioner Johnson spoke about funding the alternative school to help students who cannot learn in a traditional environment.

**Motion:**

**Add two nursing positions in Public Health.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Johnson.**

**Motion died for a lack of a second.**

Commissioner McLawhorn spoke about education being the vehicle that drives the county. He spoke about citizens who can not afford to pay for a tax increase.

Chairman Ward commended the Mr. Elliott and Ms. Bryan for all of the work they have done. She spoke about Commissioners listening to the entire county. She said the Commissioners have three options. First option is to have the manager bring back the original budget presented to the Board. The second option is to add backs that were based on discussion held in the budget workshops. The third option is the budget with no tax increase.

Mr. Elliott said the budget message will be presented at the Board's regular meeting on June 4, 2007 and the Public Hearing will be on June 5, 2007 at 7pm.

**Motion:**

**Present the original budget with the 1.5 tax increase including the add backs for the Public Hearing.**

**Motion made by Vice Chairman Owens, Jr.**

**Motion seconded by Commissioner Johnson.**

**Discussion:**

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Commissioner Garris said if the Board votes on this motion it is only for the Manager to prepare this budget for the public hearing. After the public hearing the Board will take the input and make a final decision.

Ms. Bryan said the Manager has to present the Board a balanced budget on June 4, 2007. She said the original budget does not address any of the consensus items that the Board has heard. Ms. Bryan said a balanced budget is revenue that equal expenditures regardless of the tax rate.

Chairman Ward said it is the Board's decision what the balanced budget will be.

Commissioner McLawhorn spoke about being clear so the public can understand.

Mr. Elliott said the budget presented will be for public comment. The Board will deliberate and decide whether to accept or reject the budget based on the input received. He said when the Board adopts the final budget the Board can set the tax rate at what ever they decide as a Board.

Chairman Ward stated the Board is not voting for an increase or for taxes to stay the same. The Board is voting for the type of budget the manger will bring to the public hearing.

Vote Recorded:

Melvin McLawhorn	No
Kenneth Ross	Yes
Jimmy Garris	Yes
Mark Owens, Jr.	Yes
Beth Ward	Yes
Tom Coulson	Yes
Eugene James	NO
Tom Johnson	Yes
David Hammond	Yes

Total Yes Votes: 7

Total No Votes: 2

Motion Passed.

Motion:

Eliminate the Environment Health Mosquito Control position and replace with two Public Health nurse positions.

Motion made by Commissioner Johnson.

Motion died for a lack of a second.

Adjourn

Motion:

Motion to adjourn at 3:15 pm.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Owens, Jr.

Motion seconded by Commissioner James.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Staton  
Clerk to the Board