

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA  
MAY 21, 2003 MINUTES**

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met on Wednesday, May 21, 2003, at 8:30 AM in the Commissioners' Auditorium, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W. 5th Street, Greenville, North Carolina.

**Commissioners present:**

Beth Ward, Chairman  
Eugene James, Vice Chairman  
John Minges, Commissioner  
Jimmy Garris, Commissioner  
Mark Owens, Jr., Commissioner  
Glenn Bowen, Commissioner  
David Hammond, Commissioner  
Randy Royal, Commissioner

**Commissioners Absent:**

Tom Coulson, Commissioner

**Staff present:**

Scott Elliott, County Manager  
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney  
Debra Dihoff, Mental Health Area Director  
Greg Hackett, EMS Director  
John Morrow, Director/Health Department  
Melonie Bryan, Deputy County Manager/Financial Services  
Phil Dickerson, Deputy County Manager/Facility Services  
John Bulow, Deputy County Manager/Human Services  
Loretta Lewellyn, Budget Administrator  
Susan Banks, Clerk

**Call to Order**

**Meeting Notes**

Chairman Ward called the meeting to order.

**Invocation and Pledge**

The invocation was offered by Commissioner Garris.  
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Royal.

**Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:**

**Motion to approve agenda as presented.**  
**Motion made by Vice Chairman Eugene James.**  
**Motion seconded by Commissioner Randy Royal.**

**Commissioner Hammond commented on commissioners talking informally about the budget following the Board meeting. He said he thought it was wrong for five commissioners to stay after the meeting and talk to each other and the press.**

## **Motion Passed Unanimously.**

### **Items for Report**

*Manager's Overview - Scott Elliott*

### **Meeting Notes**

Mr. Elliott stated that in light of the presentations and some information in the paper he wanted to clarify the growth in the tax base comments. He said the county is looking at about a 2.1% increase in growth revenues but that growth does not cover increases in operations. The amount is around \$820,000 and does not cover costs of utilities, employees insurance or other expenses. This increase does not cover an increase in uncontrollable expenses nor any of the expansion items.

### **Items for Decision**

*Mental Health - Budget Request - Debra Dihoff*

### **Meeting Notes**

Ms. Dihoff shared the mission of Mental Health and some accomplishments and goals. They wrote and implemented the new business plan as required by the State and implemented an orderly supportive staff transition. They will be reducing 150 staff out of about 200 employees as a result of the new business plan. They have placed services throughout the county into clinics. They are taking services to the community. They have implemented clinical "best practices", enhanced fiscal strength, continued compliance with Medicaid rules and regulations. She discussed sending people to the state hospital. She said Mental Health only paid back \$500 in the Medicaid audit and there were no audit findings by the County auditors. She reviewed their service performance. They are providing more and reaching more people with less dollars. State and Federal funds have stayed the same. Fee collections have been put back into the services. The State pays Mental Health by units of service. She said stats relate that one in five people need mental health services. She said they have added new positions without asking for additional general funds.

### **Budget Highlights**

Level County Appropriation  
Edited Budget Structure to Reflect LME Implementation  
Addition of new and needed "Best Practice" Services

Ms. Dihoff said State and Federal funds have stayed the same but no new money was requested. County funds have decreased. She said they put the funds where the need is for those services. She stated that they are in a three year transition to become a local management organization (LME) and working toward divesting clinical operations. They will be hiring staff to help with the management system.

She reviewed new services:

Assertive Community Treatment Team  
Child Substance Abuse Prevention  
Additional Respite Care (contracted care)  
Additional Case Management  
Provider Relations Chief (will help assist with housing/transportation)

As a management entity they ensure the provision of the services. It is their plan to locate qualified provider agencies in a competitive bidder situation. This would be the job of the Assertive Community Treatment Team. This team includes doctors, nurses and others with interest in mental health. They intend to reestablish the Respite program and some new management entities.

The Mental Health Budget has grown from \$17 million to \$22 million but should decrease next year. County funding has been decreasing over the years. As they become a local management entity, they will not have fees to use and will be dependent on state and local funding. She said they do not think they will get enough State dollars to run the program. She said they need to maintain the county funds. She said Pitt County has a reputation of being one of the best county supported program in the State. She said that over a five year span, Pitt Mental Health will have fallen from the top 18% (7 out of 39) to 29% (11 out of 38) in the State. She said continued local funding reductions will hinder Pitt Mental Health's chances of becoming a successful single-county LME. She said they need county funds to cover the LME. Recovery of those funds is impossible once the services are divested. This requires no further cuts from the county appropriation. The County puts in \$1.59 million and they get back \$22.4 million.

She said they have done a lot of work to bring Medicaid dollars into the Pitt County Mental Health. She said private agencies can get grants better than county program. They will be in a more proactive monitoring role and looking at quality of services. They also do investigations and offer suggestions for improvement. Commissioner Hammond asked about privatized programs. Ms. Dihoff said one program with one full time position. She is planning to present in July to the Commissioners a change to the divestiture schedule. They will proposed reduction of substance abuse services with about 65 positions. In addition, 25 child and family workers, will be changed. They will be specializing on making sure that services meet specifications. They will investigate complaints, collect data and do plan of directions. She said as a management entity the LME will decide who to fund, who's doing a good job and who to continue to fund. There may be some conflicts through this process. Ms. Dihoff said the State will pay the LME who will pay the providers. Manager's recommendation is to cut the allocation to Pitt Mental Health by \$100,000 which follows a year where Mental Health was cut by \$350,000. She said its been a continued cut. All of those funds are necessary and its not the State that is cutting but the County is cutting their funds. Vice Chairman James said they need to stay up on keeping records, especially any losses. She said they are losing money from Pitt County. Vice Chairman James said it should not matter if we're serving Pitt County or three counties, the State should fund the program. Ms. Dihoff said the State uses a cost model of 200,000 population. Mr. Elliott said the State funding is based on the per capita. He said we might receive \$2.3 per capita. He said the State has not made any differentiation based on whether or not the County meets the 200,000 threshold. He said the 200,000 threshold should not effect the State's funding of this program. Ms. Dihoff said the LME will consist of high level management staff. Until we know what the LME will cost, we need to be prudent about cuts. She said they feel the State may scale down the per client amount that they are providing for the LME.

Mr. Elliott said the LME will manage the services at Mental Health as they are contracted out. He said he does not see this being inflated for the management structure. They will focus on high to moderate needs clients.

Vice Chairman James thanked Ms. Dihoff and her staff. He asked what comments have been received from Raleigh about their application. She said they have received temporary certification. Their first quarterly report will be due October 1 which she will provide to the County first.

Ms. Dihoff said the State is focused on the 200,000 target population but Pitt is at 78% being in the target population. As an LME, they will still be responsible for servicing all the clients through the LME. The LME functionally is very different from what they are currently doing now. It requires experience with a managed care model. Different skill sets and training are needed to be a successful LME. Mr. Garris asked about the recommended dollars being higher than the requested dollars. Mr. Elliott explained the changes that were made to the requested column were made before the system was locked down and there was a \$100,000 charge back in rent. The \$100,000 charge back for rent was in this current year and the \$100,000 in the future year for expenses of rent, utilities, and other expenses that the County provides for the Mental Health program. Commissioner Bowen asked how the employees will be compensated that have twenty

or more years in with the County. The support group plans to offer comparable salaries. They are requesting salary fee scales in the Request For Proposals. The employees will lose on the benefits. Commissioner Bowen asked if the employees have been told that their jobs may end at any time. Ms. Dihoff said they are informing the people immediately that they stand to be affected by changes. She said they have tried to manage it the best that they can. She said it is going to be a challenging year. She said the morale is not bad but staff is looking at doing the services on their own. She said they will support them as much as possible. Ms. Dihoff said that the Mental Health Advisory Committee will come back to this Board with a resolution in support of the employees. Commissioner Minges spoke about the 78% that is a target population that Ms. Dihoff discussed. Of the 22%, a number of them have Medicaid and will remain in their care. Each client will have a transition plan which spells out what they need within a 90 day plan. They are working on a partnership with Viquet for children's services. Provider Relations Chief will look ahead on needs for the clients. They area also working with the shelter. Commissioner Hammond asked if this transition would open the County up for lawsuits. All providers will look at the request for proposals and it will be an open process.

*Public Health - Budget Request - John H. Morrow*

### **Meeting Notes**

Dr. John Morrow, Public Health Director, introduced Mr. A.C. Turnage, Chairman of the Board of Health. He noted the new board member for the Board of Health, Dr. Tom Johnson was also present and introduced John Reed, new employee. He reviewed their mission and explained their functions. He noted that a new area they have responsibility for and that is bioterrorism. He reviewed the accomplishments of the Health Department.

#### Challenges and Opportunities for 2003-2004

- Emergency preparedness for bioterrorism (an natural outbreaks or disasters) (funding is going to the State)
- Addressing the needs of a growing population (seeing growing numbers of uninsured and increases in Hispanic population)
- Providing quality care/services with static or decreasing funding support

Fund Balance accumulated over several years - \$2,232,712 and represents Medicaid earnings which are restricted funds.

Proposed Budget 2003-2004  
Revenues - \$7,132,000  
Expenses - \$7,132,000

These figures include a Communicable Diseases Nurse, which is requested above the Manager's recommended budget.

In summary, there is a \$329,585 decrease in this budget with a net reduction of 1.7 positions.

He discussed grants for bioterrorism. There are funds from the federal government for the bioterrorism team. They discussed the homeland security and how the roles are being defined. They are recruiting for the industrial hygienist and epidemiologist positions. Some of the teams training and development was delayed because of the outbreak of smallpox. The plan is for the bioterrorism lab to be completed in August.

*Pitt Community College - Budget Request*

## Meeting Notes

Chairman Ward thanked Dr. Russell for coming, noting that this is the last time he will come before this Board due to his imminent retirement scheduled for June 30, 2003.

Dr. Charlie Russell, President of Pitt Community College, said he was addressing a budget increase and the capital improvement plan. He noted that Pitt Community College served over 17,000 students this year and is growing about 3% each year.

\$238,976 - Total Original Requested Increase

\$ 53,000 - Salaries

\$ 15,000 - N.C. Health Plan

\$ 56,000 - New Building Operation

\$ 25,000 - Insurance

\$149,000 – Total Revised Request

\$ 76,000 - Recommended by County Manager

\$ 73,000 - Additional requests over Manager's recommendation – needed and now requested by Pitt Community College

Dr. Russell said he would be happy to get the \$149,000. The Manager recommended \$76,000 which leaves a difference of \$73,000.

Commissioner Bowen asked about the salary of the new president. Dr. Russell said the Board of Trustees is asking to increase the County's supplement by \$20,000.

Commissioner Bowen said that if the Board of Trustees does this without the County Board of Commissioners approval, he will be highly upset and will not vote for anyone on that Board who supported this effort in the future. Vice Chairman James said he supported Commissioner Bowen's comments. Mr. Raymond Reddrick, Chairman of the Pitt Community College Board of Trustees, said that Pitt Community College is a Tier 4 college on a scale of Tiers 1-5. Supplements in this tier usually run from \$15,000 to \$30,000. Pitt Community College has paid the \$7,000 for supplement which for years which means Dr. Russell has been way behind in the tier system. Mr. Reddrick said that it became so controversial that they quit coming to the Board of Commissioners and asking for the increase in the supplement. Mr. Reddrick said all around the Pitt County area, the supplement is higher, which is an insult for Pitt County. He said when the State Board talked to them they noted the low supplement. He said the State people told them that they would not get a good president with this low supplement. The individual has been hired and is a high caliber person. He said they graduated over 500 students last Friday and the majority of those students will remain in Pitt County. He said they did not mean to go over the County's head with the supplement but they were trying to get the kind of leadership that was needed for the community college. The \$27,000 supplement was requested.

Vice Chairman James said if the State wants to pay a decent salary then they should pay it and not put it back on the County. He said its not a supplement but a bonus. He said money is scarce right now and he would not support this increase in the supplement funds. Commissioner Owens said he respected others opinion but felt Pitt Community College Board of Trustees should set the salary for the President.

Commissioner Hammond spoke of the growth of Pitt Community College under the direction of Dr. Russell. He said the new president should be in the ballpark of comparable schools. The curriculum is attracting students from other areas.

Commissioner Royal agreed with Commissioner Hammond's comments. He said this means valuable partnerships for the future. This college has an impressive track record and hopefully this new president will lead us to the next level. He said he looks forward to working with this individual. He said the Board has done a commendable job.

Commissioner Garris asked if the \$20,000 for the supplement was included in the \$149,000. Mr. Reddrick said the \$20,000 was included in the \$149,000.

### **Capital Improvement Program**

Dr. Russell said they need \$4.4 million in matching local funds to receive State funds for the capital projects in Phase III.

\$1.622 million in renovations

\$27,353,266 for capital plan

3% growth per year of 150 students increase.

3.1% growth including economic development headcount

Dr. Russell said Pitt Community College has an allocation of 53 square feet per full time equivalent in 2001-2002. He said as enrollment goes up, there is an increased need for in space. He said they have presented their needs for the next ten years. He requested the Board's help on \$4.4 million on matching funds and Phase III (\$21,314,230), and part of renovations funds (\$1,632,443).

*Emergency Service, EMS District, Fire Districts - Budget Request - Greg P. Hackett*

### **Meeting Notes**

Mr. Greg Hackett, Director of Emergency Services, updated the Board on the units that responded to the West Pharmaceuticals Explosion including:

Ayden EMS

Winterville Fire Department

Grifton Fire and EMS

Randy Skinner - Deputy Director & Fire Marshall

He personally thanked them for their efforts.

### **Departmental Budgets**

Emergency Services

General Fund \$538,358

Fire District

Fire District Tax Levy - \$822,079

EMS District

EMS District Tax Levy - \$2,962,084

He reviewed purpose, goals, and departmental functions. The Fire Inspector position is in the budget and much needed. He said one new full-time position was denied for this fiscal year. He reported departmental accomplishments. He requested \$579,812 but the Manager's recommendation is for \$538,358 from the general fund.

General Fund Appropriation	579,812	538,358
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>579,812</b>	<b>538,358</b>

**EXPENDITURES**

Personal Services	206,172	184,318
Operating Expenses	373,640	354,040
Capital Outlay	0	0
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>579,812</b>	<b>538,358</b>

The requested increase in the budget was for safety training. This also included the full-time position that was denied by the Manager. Mr. Hackett reviewed the Performance Indicators and Objectives. They have a goal to increase fire inspections to 700 (from 658), add fire permitting to the Coordinated Permitting System, improve tracking of fire inspections and implement a tracking system for business startup to ensure required fire inspections are completed. They will maintain the Special Medical Needs Disaster Plan, implement and empower a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), implement and train "Community Emergency Response Teams" (CERTS), complete revision and approval of the Safety Manual, and implement an OSHA safety program.

- Fire Districts
- 3 new fire stations
- Black Jack
- Winterville
- Fountain
  
- 2 new fire engines
- Clarks Neck
- Bethel

	<b>REQUEST FY 2003- 04</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED FY 2003-04</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Ad Valorem Tax	822,079	822,079
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>822,079</b>	<b>822,079</b>
<b>STAFFING – Full Time Equivalent Positions</b>	NA	NA

Fire District Expenditures

<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>REQUEST</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED</b>
	<b>FY 2003-04</b>	<b>FY 2003-04</b>
Ayden	42,060	42,060
Bel Arthur	58,218	58,218
Black Jack	21,957	21,957
Clark's Neck	19,485	19,485
Eastern Pines	96,001	96,001
Falkland	54,350	54,350
Farmville	31,176	31,176
Fountain	13,735	13,735
Gardnerville	35,644	35,644
Grifton	48,309	48,309
Grimesland	23,382	23,382
Paddus	38,010	38,010
Red Oak	69,862	69,862
Simpson	59,834	59,834
Sharp Point	1,944	1,944
Station House	117,268	117,268
Stokes	24,808	24,808
Winterville	66,036	66,036
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>822,079</b>	<b>822,079</b>

**Fire District Tax Changes**

	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED</b>	<b>Comparative Tax Rates</b>	
	<b>FY 2002-03</b>	<b>FY 2003-04</b>	<b>FY 2002-03</b>	<b>FY 2003-04</b>
Ayden	42,219	42,060	0.040	0.0375
Grifton	45,784	48,309	0.040	0.0475
Red Oak	38,897	69,862	0.045	0.0700
Sharp Point	0	1,944	No tax	0.0600

Mr. Hackett said the previous chart was the approved Fire District Tax Changes which were reviewed and approved by the Fire Chiefs.

EMS Districts  
 Requested - \$2,962,084  
 Manager Recommended - \$2,962,084

Mr. Hackett stated he requested funding for a 1/2 FTE but the Manager did not fund this position. He said they have advocated an increase of 1¢ EMS tax for a total EMS tax of 4¢ per \$100 valuation.

	<b>REQUEST</b> <b>FY 2003-04</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED</b> <b>FY 2003-04</b>
Ad Valorem Tax	1,429,552	1,429,552
Transport Fees	1,140,469	1,140,469
General Fund Appropriation	392,063	392,063
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>2,962,084</b>	<b>2,962,084</b>

Full Time Equivalent Positions	12.0	11.5
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EMS Budget	<b>BUDGET</b> <b>FY 2002-03</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED</b> <b>FY 2003-04</b>
Ad Valorem Tax	1,074,147	1,429,552
Transport Fees	886,500	1,140,469
General Fund Appropriation	711,391	392,063
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>2,672,038</b>	<b>2,962,084</b>

Mr. Hackett said this is a 45% decrease in reliance in general funds due to recommendations of EMS Advisory Commission. He said \$355,000 would be generated from increase in tax.

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Revenue Projections reflect:  
 Increased EMS tax  
 Redistricting effort revenues  
 New transport fee schedule  
 Enhanced collections  
 Total New Revenues

The EMS District Expenditures do not reflect \$500K for new squad locations. He reviewed the telephone survey results again that he had previously provided to the Board. He said that people expect and are willing to pay for this service based on the survey results.

The EMS Advisory Commission requests the Board approve the following:

- Redistricting the County areas currently within Greenville EMS response to be under County squad jurisdiction as outlined 5/5/03.
- Adopting a new fee schedule to be more consistent with Medicare fee schedule and allow diligent and enhanced collection for unpaid fees as outlined 5/5/03
- Adopting an additional 1 cent per \$100 valuation to the EMS Special District Tax (0.04 per \$100) as outlined 5/5/03.

Chairman Ward asked if the telephone survey on EMS services could be put on the county's website. Mr. Hackett stated he would see that the survey runs on the County website. Mr. Hackett thanked Ms. Bryan for her help with his budget information.

Commissioner Hammond asked about Ayden's tax being reduced. Ms. Bryan reported that Ayden had more money than what they needed so they reduced their tax. He asked if property insurance was jeopardized when the fire inspections were not done. Mr. Hackett stated that they would use the coordinated permitting system and Greenville Utilities Commission with electrical hook up but he needs additional fire inspector to implement this program.

Commissioner Bowen said that a change of occupancy requires that an fire inspection be done. Vice Chairman James asked Ms. Burgdorff to get to the Board the law on what is required of the County on emergency services. Vice Chairman James said taxing the people is general fund.

Commissioner Garris said he identified 380 EMS volunteers and 729 fire fighters who 98-99% are paid volunteers. Mr. Hackett said that volunteer effort equates to a \$6 million benefit to the County. He spoke about the need to run this program as a business.

**Adjourn**

**Motion:**

**Motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Mark Owens, Jr.**

**Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Eugene James.**

**Motion Passed Unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan J. Banks, CMC  
Clerk to the Board