

PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA  
JUNE 6, 2006 MINUTES

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, June 6, 2006, at 7:00 PM in the Commissioners' Auditorium, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W. 5th Street, Greenville, North Carolina. The purpose of this meeting was to hear public comment on the County's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2006-2007.

Commissioners present:

Jimmy Garris, Chairman  
Beth Ward, Vice Chairman  
Melvin McLawhorn, Commissioner  
John Minges, Commissioner  
Mark Owens, Jr., Commissioner  
Glenn Bowen, Commissioner  
Tom Coulson, Commissioner  
David Hammond, Commissioner  
Eugene James, Commissioner

Staff present:

Scott Elliott, County Manager  
Trish Staton, Clerk to the Board  
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney  
Melonie Bryan, Deputy County Manager/Financial Services  
John Bulow, Deputy County Manager/Human Services  
Phil Dickerson, Deputy County Manager/Public Services

**Call to Order**

**Meeting Notes**

Chairman Garris called the meeting to order and welcome everyone.

**Roll Call**

**Invocation and Pledge**

**Meeting Notes**

The invocation was offered by Commissioner McLawhorn.  
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Coulson.

**Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:**

**Motion to Approve Agenda as Presented.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Melvin McLawhorn.**

**Motion seconded by Commissioner David Hammond.**

**Motion Passed Unanimously.**

**Public Hearings**

*Public Hearing - Fiscal Year 2006-07 Proposed Budget - Scott Elliott*

**Information Provided with the Agenda**

The Proposed Budget for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2006-07 was submitted to the Pitt County Commissioners for review on May 15. The Board of Commissioners has held three workshop meetings (May 16, 17, and 18) to discuss the Manager's proposed budget. The Commissioners' input has been incorporated into the final Recommended Budget submitted to the Board at their regular meeting on June 5.

Notice of public hearing has been duly advertised in the Daily Reflector on May 27 and June 3 and the budget documents have been available for public inspection in the office of the Clerk to the Board.

This public hearing is to receive citizen input on the Proposed 2006-07 Budget and associated tax rates and user fee increases incorporated as part of the proposal. Any person wishing to make comment may do so at this time. Speakers will be limited to three minutes.

Open Public Hearing.

Close Public Hearing.

The Board of Commissioners may consider holding additional meetings to discuss the budget, may consider adoption of the budget ordinance for FY 2006-07 at this time, or delay consideration of the ordinance until their next regularly scheduled meeting on June 19 at 6:00 p.m.

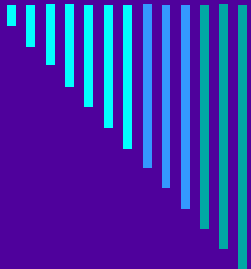
**Staff Recommendation**

To adopt the Fiscal Year 2006-07 budget ordinance as presented.

**Meeting Notes**

Mr. Elliott stated the purpose of this meeting is to hold a public hearing. He provided the following highlights of the budget:

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## FY 2006-07 Manager's Recommended Budget

Public Hearing  
June 6, 2006

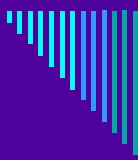
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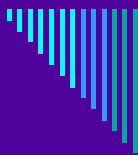
## Highlights

- Maintains Ad Valorem Tax Rate at 70 Cents
- Maintains EMS District Tax Rate at 4 Cents
- Sustains & Exceeds Top One-Third in State for Funding to Pitt County Schools



## Manager's Recommended Budget

- **Total Budget**                    **\$199,682,342** (-3.48%)
- **General Fund**                    **\$101,770,995** (+2.50%)
- Appropriates \$4.06 million in fund balance for the General Fund



## Next Steps

- Open Hearing for Public Comment
- Consider Adoption of Budget

Chairman Garris opened the public hearing.

Joe Bowman, Assistant District Attorney, spoke about the Family Violence Center which has lost their funding through the Governor's Crime Prevention Commission. He said they have a supervised visitation center and a supervised drop off where they have an undercover officer on duty to provide security to families. Mr. Bowman gave some headline news of domestic violence. He said the family

violence center is the only place he knows of where a family can be safe. We have to have place where they can go to break out the cycle or they will grow up to think this is normal or be abusers themselves.

Sheriff Mac Manning spoke on behalf of the Family Center. He said he was disturbed to learn that funding was running out and it was in jeopardy of closing. As you may know, for over 10 years many people in Pitt County have worked diligently to stem the tide of domestic violence. The family center is for the children. It is a place where the changes and visitation can take place in a safe and controlled environment. He said of all the things we do, this one is for the children. It's very important as a county to come to the aid of this organization to keep those doors open.

Charlotte Alexander, Legal Attorney, said she handles domestic violence cases and she refers them to the Family Center and it is a great program. The kids are the ones in the middle of the violence and conflict. If we don't have the resource of the Family Center we will have to go back to the exchange at the courthouse. She stated that she hoped that Board put support behind the Family Center.

Peter Sword, Pitt County Social Services and Family Violence Board Member, said the Family Center is a resource Social Service's relies on for safe visitation. He spoke about a call he had received from a Social Worker who had a woman whose children's father was threatening her and the children. The father is entitled to visit his children but there needs to be a safe place to do it. He asked the Board to please give it every consideration.

Amy Edwards, Family Law Attorney, she said when families break up there can be conflict and this puts the children in the middle. The goal is to make the exchanges more routine and help parents work together regardless of the conflict. If the family center isn't available there is no other alternative, it is awkward to meet in a parking lot. The family center looks like a daycare in the inside, good for parents to meet with children who have not seen their children. Family members don't really supervise safety issues. It can take several months to get court dates, this time can be waited out at the family center.

Barry Bryant, North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission, he thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak. He stated that they provide funding across the State. They have provided funding to Pitt County in through many agencies. He said the Governor's Crime Commission continues to give to Pitt County because of the solid programs. He asked the Board to please think about ways the County and Governor's Crime Commission can work together.

John Guard, North Carolina Violence Commission Member, he said the Board has heard from several great groups and he's proud to be here tonight in support of the Family Center. He stated that he has had the opportunity to work with kids and help them. He thanked Barry Bryant for support.

Delane Armstrong, Volunteer with the Juvenile Court System, she stated that she works with emotional, unstable parents. The family center offers a safe place where families can visit. It also provides a sense of normalcy and the visits are video taped. She stated that she was asking for the Board's support.

Terri Zinn, Family Violence board member, violence causes tax payers of Pitt County a lot of money. She said the family violence program is about breaking the cycle. Funding the center can result in savings in years to come. You as a county are visionaries, won't you hold that vision. It is our hope that in years to come there will be no need for these types of programs.

Dr. John Morrow, Public Health, stated he was present to speak to the Board regarding the Environmental Health Specialist positions. He stated that he had requested 2 positions, the manager recommended 1. He wanted to make sure we are back to original request which was a conservative request which was one onsite and one food and lodging employee. Commissioner Minges asked could Dr. Morrow change his request.

Mr. Owens said his motion was to approve two positions.

Lynn Garrison, President Board of Greenville Museum of Art, she said the museum enriches the lives of the community. Over 900 children and adults took part in free one hour's classes, creation of photography, 400 children benefited from the art on wheels in which a bus travels to different communities. 1,033 5<sup>th</sup> graders children museum, 200 children participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade art tour. The museum partnered with the Little Willie Center to create art project. Last year they offered classes for teachers so they could continue accreditation. Its more than a museum, art is for everyone. The Art Museum is a very busy place. It brings art in lives of children who may not have this opportunity. She thanked the Board for consideration of her request.

Barbara Strickland thanked the Board for their support over the last 14 years.

Nancy Colville, citizen, after attending the budget workshops she expressed appreciation to staff and the Board. The reality is the county does not have enough money to cover everything. She stated that she cannot support the request of the Family Center. She stated that money could be used to help the Health Department. She stated that she would like to know what other counties provide this funding, we are one county who are the other two. She asked the Boys and Girls club if they would share there facility. She thought the needs of family violence was addressed under mental health. She stated that all of these needs to be taken into consideration.

Public Hearing Closed

#### **Items for Report**

*Manager's Comments - Scott Elliott*

#### **Meeting Notes**

Mr. Elliott gave an overview of the change requested by the board.

#### **Items for Decision**

*Consider Adoption of Budget Ordinance*

#### **Meeting Notes**

Mr. Elliott gave a brief overview of changes made. He said the budget was presented on May 15, 2006 and the county held budget workshops on May 16, 17, 18, 2006. As of tonight the following changes have been made. General fund additional appropriation of \$250,000 dollars in salary reserve for the Sheriff's Department and that's for the early implementation of the "Year Two Classification Study" for the Sheriff's positions. There was additional appropriation of \$63,302 on additional onsite for environmental health position that was added. Also to date for Pitt County School system which we currently appropriate \$28.8 million annually in this years budget. The Board has recommended an additional \$250,000 on top of the original recommendation of \$1.6 million. State grants \$256,499 was added to the budget. Chairman Garris stated that we have a balanced budget.

#### **Commissioners' Comments**

#### **Meeting Notes**

Commissioner Owens said in response to Dr. Morrow saying that he needs three positions, the manger approved one and the Board needed the approval of three.

Commissioner Hammond stated that he agreed with Commissioners Owens that public safety is important. He said some of the non-profits are given priority. He said we took from the school board and our children need to be educated. We don't have truant officers to help keep track of our children, we need truant officers.

Commissioner Coulson said that he wished as a board they could do more for the sheriff's department. He stated that he believes we will grow and by the end of year we would be grown. He said the budget was fair as it can be.

Commissioner Bowen said that he appreciated the Family Violence Center coming before the Board and the Board should be able to give them an answer.

Mr. Elliott said he received a request from the family violence center for \$35,695.

Vice Chairman Ward said we recognize the need of the Family Center but you may need to look at finding another place to rent. This money would have to be a one time request.

Commissioner McLawhorn stated in view of the danger we need to do something for our children.

Commissioner James asked Ms. Lucas if the center has looked at other ways of providing this service. He said we do want to help. Ms. Lucas stated she is receiving other sources of meeting the needs of the center.

Vice Chairman Ward clarified the money given to the schools was \$1.6 million dollars and that they have added to that another \$250,000.

Commissioner James stated the budget is fair. The manager recommended \$1.6 above and the Board added \$250,000 more for education. He stated that in the past every year we have to continue to add each year It's the best we can do.

Commissioner Mingos said there may have been some confusion. He stated that \$250,000 was additional increase above what the manager recommend. He stated that he was very concerned we are not funding the position Dr. Morrow needed. We come back later in the year to see if we can fund that person. He thanked the manager, finance director and everyone for there hard work.

Commissioner McLawhorn thanked the manager for a fine budget. He stated that he has always been an advocate for schools. We did the schools budget for \$250,000 more. Public safety and health of our citizens are important and he was glad that they were able to help. He stated that the family violence program is very important.

**Motion:**

**Motion to Hire a Third Person for Environmental Health**

**Motion made by Commissioner Hammond.**

**Motion seconded by Commissioner Mingos.**

**Motion Passed.**

**Motion:**

**Motion for County Staff to Look at Other Options to Help the Family Violence Center.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Glenn Bowen.**

**Motion seconded by Commissioner John Mingos.**

**Vote Record:**

<b>Melvin McLawhorn</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>John Mingos</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Jimmy Garris</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mark Owens, Jr.</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Beth Ward</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Glenn Bowen</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tom Coulson</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**David Hammond**            **No**  
**Eugene James**            **Yes**  
**Total Yes Votes: 8**  
**Total No Votes: 1**  
**Motion Passed.**

**Add mended Motion:**  
**Motion to increase half time to fulltime position for veteran's services.**  
**Motion made by Commissioner Bowen.**  
**Motion seconded by Commissioner Hammond.**

**Vote Record:**  
**Melvin McLawhorn**       **Yes**  
**John Minges**            **Yes**  
**Mark Owens, Jr.**        **Yes**  
**Glenn Bowen**            **Yes**  
**Tom Coulson**            **Yes**  
**Eugene James**           **No**  
**Jimmy Garris**            **Yes**  
**Beth Ward**               **No**  
**David Hammond**        **Yes**

**Total Yes Votes: 7**  
**Total No votes: 2**  
**Motion Passed.**

**Motion:**  
**Motion to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2006-07 Budget Ordinance as Presented with Two Amendments Regarding Environmental Health and Veteran's Services totaling \$199,794,607.**  
**Motion made by Vice Chair Ward.**  
**Motion seconded by Commissioner Minges.**  
**Motion Passed.**

**Adjourn**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia A. Staton  
Clerk to the Board