

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
GREENVILLE,NORTH CAROLINA
THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2009 MINUTES**

Pitt County Board of Commissioners met on Thursday, May 21, 2009 at 8:30 AM in the Commissioner's Auditorium, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W 5th Street, Greenville, North Carolina.

Board Members Present:

Melvin McLawhorn, Chairman
Kenneth Ross, Vice Chairman
David Hammond, Commissioner
Beth Ward, Commissioner
Eugene James, Commissioner
Tom Johnson, Commissioner
Jimmy Garris, Commissioner
Ephraigm Smith, Commissioner

Board Members Absent:

Mark W. Owens, Jr., Commissioner

Staff Present:

Scott Elliott, County Manager
Patricia Staton, Clerk to The Board
Janis Gallagher, County Attorney
Melonie Bryan, Deputy County Manager/Financial Services
Phil Dickerson, County Engineer
Shelley Leach, Budget Administrator
Denise Urban, Budget & Grants Analyst
George Perry, Social Services Director
Bryan Averette, Social Services

Meeting Notes

Chairman McLawhorn called the meeting to order and stated Commissioner Mark W. Owens, Jr., would not be present and the board would need to vote to excuse him.

Motion:

Excuse Commissioner Mark W. Owens, Jr. from budget workshop on Thursday, May 21, 2009.

Motion made by Commissioner David Hammond.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Eugene James.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Meeting Notes

The invocation was given by Commissioner David Hammond. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Beth Ward.

Approval of Agenda

Motion:

Approve agenda as submitted.

Motion made by Commissioner Jimmy Garris.

Motion seconded by Commissioner David Hammond.
Motion Passed Unanimously.

Presentation

Social Services

Information Provided with the Agenda

Meeting Notes

Mr. George Perry, Director of Department of Social Services, provided the board with a PowerPoint presentation.



SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT FISCAL YEAR 2009 – 2010

BUDGET REQUEST



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INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS Accomplishments in 2008

- **Child Support Enforcement** - increased total support collection from \$12,052,610 to \$12,817,417
- **Work First Cash Assistance** - enabled 74 heads of households to enter gainful employment.
- **Medicaid** - provided health coverage to 22,809 children & adults.
- **N. C. Health Choice** – provided health coverage to 1,915 children.



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INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS Accomplishments in 2008

- **Food Stamps** - average of 8,943 households and 18,654 people receiving Food Stamps per month. The number of households receiving Food Stamps increased by 10.0%.
- **Crisis Intervention Program** – 1,449 individual recipients
- **Emergency Assistance** – 172 individual recipients
- **FEMA Emergency Assistance, CP&L Project Share, GUC Neighbor to Neighbor** – 266 individual recipients



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INCOME MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS Accomplishments in 2008

- **Low Income Energy Assistance** – 5,533 households. A total of \$785,775 was distributed.
- **General Assistance** – 1,460 individual recipients.



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SERVICES PROGRAMS Accomplishments in 2008

- **Adult Protective Services** - Provided protection for 174 frail, elderly and disabled persons.
- **Child Protective Services** - Provided Protective Services Investigations for 785 referrals.
- **Foster Care** – Began 2008 with 139 children in Foster Care. Ended 2008 with 138 children in Foster Care. Permanence was found for 33 children in 2008.



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SERVICE PROGRAMS Accomplishments in 2008

- **Work First Employment Program** - Maintained 96% retention rate for recipients who remained employed.
- **Guardianship (38) & Adult Protective Payees (58)** - Helped frail, elderly and disabled adults obtain guardianship & protective payees.
- **Child Care** - Provided subsidized Day Care to an average of 1,687 children per month.



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MONITORINGS & REVIEWS For Calendar 2008

- **Adult Protective Services Review – Successful**
- **Social Services Block Grant Review – Successful**
- **CAP-DA Monitoring – Excellent**
- **State Auditor’s Office IV-E Audit – One Exception**
- **County Audit – Computer Security Improvement**



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BUDGET REQUESTS Changes

- Four Replacement Vehicles- \$66,000
- Full Year - Foster Care Rate Increase
- Medicaid Draft Eliminated – Hospital Funds Transferred to General Fund – Net Reduction of \$5,941,297
- New Positions – Three – Salary Each, \$31,540



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GROWTH IN MEDICAID

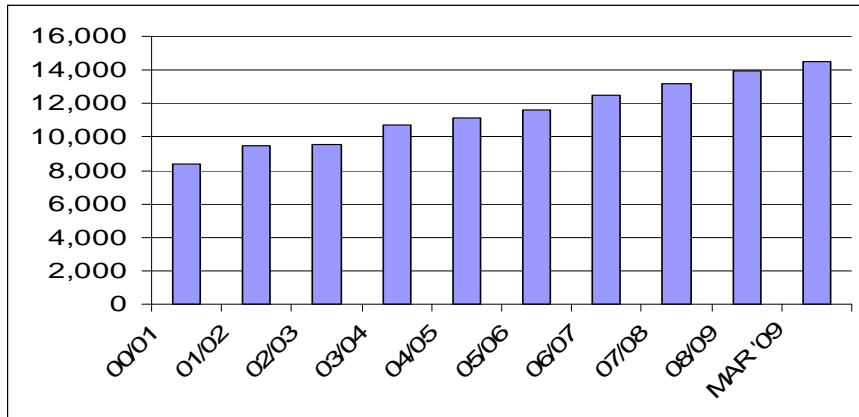
- From FY 00/01 to March 2009 the number of Medicaid Cases has increased by 6,107 from 8,365 cases to 14,472 cases – 73%
- The average number of applications has increased by 679 cases to 1,347 cases per month – 102%
- In the last 15 months, the number cases increased by 1,287 – 9.8%
- Since FY 00/01, the number of Medicaid staff has increased by 8, from 31.5 FTEs to 39.5 FTEs – a 25.4% growth in staff, while cases have grown 73%



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MEDICAID CASES



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REQUEST FOR POSITIONS

- Three IMC-II Medicaid Staff
- Salary & Fringe Benefits \$44,270
– Per Position
- County Cost – Match \$18,692
– Per Position



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CHANGE IN FUNDS REQUESTED

	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	INCREASE	PERCENT
TOTAL BUDGET	\$322,265,579	\$337,147,302	\$14,881,723	4.62%
LINE ITEM BUDGET	\$36,402,127	\$31,058,403	(\$5,343,724)	-14.68%
COUNTY FUNDS	\$15,368,822	\$9,179,418	(\$6,189,404)	-40.27%
COUNTY FUNDS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL				2.72%

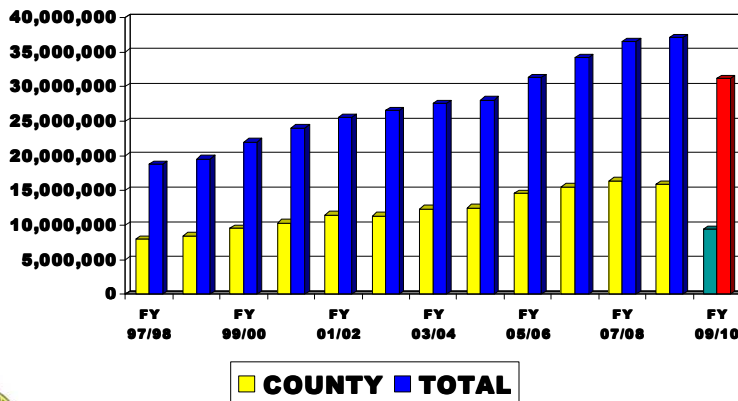
•The total County Appropriation is decreased by \$6,189,404 (40.3%) from the budget adopted July 1, 2008. Excluding Medicaid, County Funds appropriated decreased by \$248,107.



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COUNTY APPROPRIATION



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Commissioner Hammond inquired about Medicare services. He asked if there was an increase in in-home health services through Social Services. Mr. Perry stated Social Services had a contract with a company to provide those services. Commissioner Hammond spoke about filling prescriptions and the cost absorbed through Medicare and Medicaid. Commissioner Hammond asked if food stamp services had increased. Mr. Perry stated food stamps services are up to 10,000, serving 22,000 individuals.

Commissioner James asked for the new guidelines of Medicaid. Mr. Perry stated there are different programs which include Medicaid for Intact Families, Medicaid for Intellect Children and the North Carolina Health Choice program. He stated each program has a different income level. He stated there was a \$50-\$100 application fee for individuals to apply. Commissioner James asked about low-income families. Mr. Perry stated the case worker looks at the family's income. He stated if the family is not eligible for Medicaid, then maybe the child would qualify. Bryan Averette with Social Services stated the poverty level is \$895 per person or \$3,600 for a family of four.

Commissioner Ward thanked Mr. Perry and his department for all the hard work they do. She said they do a great job with the funds they receive. She said most citizens do not realize that Social Service Board meetings are televised and a lot of information is given during those meetings.

Commissioner Ross asked Mr. Perry if he utilized retired employees. Mr. Perry stated he does hire retirees to help with the case loads until someone can be hired full-time.

Commissioner Garris said it overwhelms him to realize the county budget is \$206M and the Department of Social Services budget is \$337M. He said many of the programs offered are not conceived at the county level. He stated there are programs that are conceived at the Federal and State level and the County implements them.

Commissioner Johnson spoke about the legal needs being handled in-house. Mr. Perry stated the Department of Social Services has a good working relationship with legal staff. Commissioner Johnson said he appreciated Mr. Perry working with Pitt County Public Schools. He spoke about the Work First program and the difficulty with the program. Mr. Perry said they also work with the STRIVE program. Commissioner Johnson thanked Mr. Perry for the work of his department.

Commissioner Smith thanked Mr. Perry for the presentation. He stated Greenville Utilities works with people on delinquent bills. Mr. Perry stated they have the Neighbor to Neighbor program. He stated anyone that receives utility service from Greenville Utilities could benefit from the program.

Commission Hammond asked how many arrests have been made for non-payment of child support. Mr. Perry said he did not know, but he could get the information. Mr. Perry stated if someone loses their job, they will not go to jail for non-payment of child support as long as they contact Social Services of the job lose. He stated if an individual qualifies for unemployment, part of the unemployment pay would be used for child support.

Chairman McLawhorn thanked Mr. Perry for all he does for Pitt County. He asked if Pitt County was experiencing larger amounts of child abuse due to the economic times. Mr. Perry said Pitt County has not seen many problems in the rise of child abuse cases. He stated his employees are working with people within the community to teach child abuse prevention. He stated they are networking with the school system and the hospital. Chairman McLawhorn spoke about the rise in Medicaid services.

Commissioner Johnson asked about Greenville Utilities assistance. He stated Carolina Power services the southern part of the county and the northwest part of the county is serviced by Tri-City Electric Cooperative. Commissioner Johnson said there needs to be assistance from the other utility companies as the County seeks to cover the needs of the citizens.

Items for Discussion

Meeting Notes

Mr. Elliott reviewed the budget summary he presented on Tuesday. He reviewed the general fund summary. He stated the tax rate was proposed to stay the same at 66.5 cents. He stated the total budget is just over \$206 million and maintains staffing and service levels. He spoke about federal stimulus dollars. He spoke of the inter local agreement between Pitt County and Greenville Utilities Commission. He stated the funding for the project was sealed. He spoke of grant projects and the \$25,000 for Community & Schools.

Commissioner James spoke about Community & Schools being under the authority of the Board of Education. He stated the County Commissioners got involved with Community & Schools because of the amount of money they contributed. Commissioner James stated things have changed a great deal. He spoke of the sports complex on County Home Road.

Commissioner Ward asked about the \$25,000 for Community & Schools. She said all the money goes out into the local schools throughout the County. She said many times it is the only source communities have to access funding to build recreational facilities. She said the board should not lose sight. She stated Community & Schools has done so much and been a wonderful partner.

Motion:

Motion to reinstate \$25,000 to Community & Schools by reducing the contingency.

Motion made by Commissioner Beth Ward.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Tom Johnson.

Commissioner Hammond spoke of the walking trails, parks and other activities at Community & Schools. He spoke about transportation being provided to these complexes. He spoke about grant money being provided for recreation.

Mr. Elliott stated the current contingency fund is \$100,000 in order to balance the budget, and if the \$25,000 was backed out, the contingency fund would be at \$75,000 with a \$2M budget. He suggested finding the \$25,000 within cell phone allowances and identify other areas as well. Mr. Elliott stated several things were taken out of the budget to make it balance.

Commissioner Ward changed her motion to include staff will find the money to reinstate the \$25,000 to Community & Schools and Commissioner Johnson agreed.

Commissioner Johnson said Alice Keene has done a great job establishing an excellent relationship with State and Federal programs. He said the facilities are used to capacity. He stated there are a lot of children and youth who are anxious to participate in sports.

Commissioner Garris stated he was in support of funding the \$25,000 to Community & Schools. He asked about the proposed contingency of \$100,000.

Mr. Elliott stated hearing the Commissioners desire to put the \$25,000 back, he recommends finding \$25,000 elsewhere within the budget, trimming other places and not taking it from the contingency fund.

Commissioner James spoke about being a coach. He asked how many of the schools in Pitt County have a walking trail. He stated he was going to support the Manager's budget.

Commissioner Hammond spoke about the Boys & Girls Club. He asked if there was any way activities at Boys & Girls Club across the river could be as active as the one located on Firetower Road. Mr. Elliott stated the groundbreaking for the Boys & Girls Club in Ayden was under way.

Chairman McLawhorn said the board needs to do more for the children in the inner-city. He stated the \$25,000 should be used in areas of transportation.

Motion:

Motion to reinstate \$25,000 to Community & Schools from any other fund in the proposed budget.

Motion made by Commissioner Beth Ward.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Tom Johnson.

Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mark W. Owens, Jr. was not present.

Commissioner Johnson stated the board is treading on dangerous grounds having televised meetings and using terms such as finding money. He stated Alice Keene was no longer the Director of Community & Schools. He stated Rita Roy was now the Director. Commissioner Johnson stated the Community & Schools complex be named after Alice Keene.

Commissioner Hammond motioned for the Community & Schools complex to be named after Alice Keene. Motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Ward asked about 2 line items within the EMS budget regarding one-time funding requests. Mr. Elliott stated a recommendation from the EMS- Oversight Committee would be brought to the Commissioners at the June 1st, 2009 meeting. He stated each squad has a line of credit that they are asking the County to pay off within the EMS contingency funds. Commissioner Ward spoke about new credit card regulations within Federal Government.

Commissioner Johnson said the cost of EMS continues to rise and it takes money to operate the programs. He stated nothing about EMS is going to be cheaper in the future. He spoke of George & Nancy Bell volunteering their time to Fountain EMS.

Motion to excuse Commissioner Eugene James from the meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mark W. Owens, Jr. was not present.

Commissioner Ward motioned for the County Manager and staff to move forward on the budget.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Garris.

Ross Yes

Smith Yes

Garris Yes

Hammond Yes

James not present
Johnson No
Owens not present
McLawhorn Yes
Ward Yes
Motion passed.

Commissioner Johnson stated he was against adjourning the meeting until all matters on the agenda have been discussed. Commissioner Johnson stated the Board was not taking the proper action in terms of appropriations to Pitt County Schools as compared to Pitt Community College. He stated the same percentage of money should be appropriated for both Pitt County Schools and Pitt Community College.

Commissioner Hammond stated Pitt Community College does not have the same needs as Pitt County Schools.

Mr. Elliott stated in terms of the total amount of money recommended for Pitt County Schools there is a 1.2 percent increase compared to Pitt Community College's 5.3 percent increase.

Commissioner Garris thanked Tom Marine, Daily Reflector Reporter for his dedication to Pitt County and wished him well as he relocates to Atlanta.

Commissioner Hammond recognized James Enos-Edu with Virtual Technology Systems, Inc. Mr. Enos-Edu stated he hoped to present a compressive report on his program at the June 1st meeting.

Questions/Answers/Discussion/Directives

Information Provided with the Agenda

Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn made by Commissioner David Hammond.

Seconded by Commissioner Kenneth Ross.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly W. Hines
Deputy Clerk to the Board