

Pitt County Board of Commissioners
Legislative Delegation Breakfast
January 18, 2019
8:00 AM
The Barn, 400 St. Andrews

Commissioners present:

Beth B. Ward, Chair
Melvin McLawhorn, Vice-Chair
Alex Albright, Commissioner
Mike Fitzpatrick, Commissioner
Ann Floyd Huggins, Commissioner
Chris W. Nunnally, Commissioner
Mary Perkins-Williams, Commissioner

Commissioners absent:

Tom Coulson, Commissioner
Glen Webb, Commissioner

Legislators present:

Chris Humphrey, House of Representatives
Dr. Greg Murphy, House of Representatives
Kandie D. Smith, House of Representatives

Legislators absent:

Don Davis, State Senator

Staff present:

Scott Elliott, County Manager
Kimberly W. Hines, Clerk to the Board
Brian Barnett, Deputy County Manger/Chief Financial Officer
Janis Gallagher, County Attorney
Nancy Wilson, Paralegal
Jan Elliott, Social Services Director

Chairman Ward opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

The Invocation was offered by County Manager Elliott.

County Manager Scott Elliott & County Attorney Janis Gallagher provided an overview of Pitt County's adopted Legislative Goals and Objectives. It is noted that Ms. Elliott, Social Services Director spoke in regard to the adequate funding for county administered Social Services Programs and distributed the following handout (Attachment 1).

- ❖ **General Revenue Protection:** Support efforts to preserve the existing local revenue base of counties, including lottery funds for education, and oppose efforts to divert fees or taxes currently allocated to the counties to the State; and oppose efforts to erode the tax base by providing exemptions, exclusions or deferments on real or personal property.

- ❖ **Oppose Unfunded Mandates:** Oppose unfunded mandates and shifts of State responsibilities to counties.
- ❖ **Authorize Maintenance Bonds for Subdivision Streets:** Seek legislation to authorize counties to require developers to post maintenance bonds for publicly dedicated subdivision roads. This will assure that sufficient funds are available to maintain the roads to North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) standards so that the roads may be accepted into the NCDOT state maintenance system.
- ❖ **Fully Fund State Responsibilities for Public Education:** Adequately and fully fund public school current operating expenses to minimize the burden on counties to fill in the gaps necessary to provide a basic and sound education for all students. Issue bonds for unmet school capital needs, and dedicate lottery revenues for education as originally intended.
- ❖ **Assure Adequate Funding for County Administered Social Services Programs:** Assure adequate funding for mandated county administered social services programs, including child protection, adult protection, and guardianship. Oppose efforts to divert state funds to fill gaps in federal block grant cuts, and oppose shifts to county governments of unfunded workload mandates.
- ❖ **Preserve Confidentiality of Animal Surrender and Adoption Records:** Adopt a local act for Pitt County exempting from North Carolina public records law the personal information of individuals surrendering or adopting pets at the Pitt County Animal Shelter.
- ❖ **Repeal the “Cow Share Unpasteurized Milk” Law:** This law, adopted as part of Session Law 2018-113, which allows the sharing of unpasteurized milk, is likely to lead to outbreaks of disease and possible death, particularly among young children.
- ❖ **Airport Funding:** Seek legislation to provide for recurring State funding for North Carolina’s ten commercial airports from tax revenue generated by on-airport rental car transactions. Such funding was provided in the form of non-recurring funds for 2017 and 2018. Pitt County supports increasing the level of funding to \$125 million with a distribution formula favorable to the eight smaller airports.

The Representatives thanked the Commissioners for hosting the breakfast and stated they will do what they can to help support Pitt County. Chairman Ward stated County Attorney Gallagher is the main legislative contact for Pitt County and welcomes an open line of communication.

Commissioner Albright spoke of his region wide concern with broadband. Representative Murphy stated there is good movement to implement broadband statewide. Mrs. Gallagher stated the number one priority goal for the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners is to seek legislation, funding, and other efforts to expand digital infrastructure/broadband capability to the unserved and under-served areas and residents of the state.

Mrs. Gallagher reviewed the top five priority goals of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.

- ❖ Seek legislation, funding, and other efforts to expand digital infrastructure/broadband capability to the unserved and under-served areas and residents of the state.
- ❖ Seek additional revenue sources, including a statewide bond and lottery proceeds, to equitably address statewide public school and community college capital challenges.

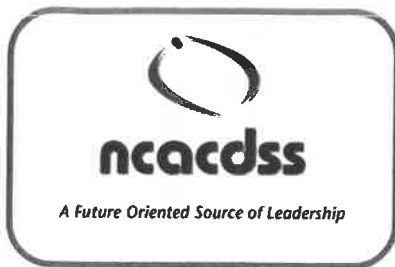
- ❖ Support efforts to preserve and expand the existing local revenue base of counties and authorize local option revenue sources already given to any other jurisdiction to all counties. Oppose efforts to divert to the state, fees or taxes currently allocated to the counties or to erode existing county revenue streams.
- ❖ Support provision of state resources to ensure county ability to provide essential public health, behavioral health and social services, with specific consideration to the challenges of incarcerated persons, the continued county role in behavioral health governance, and programs addressing substance use disorder, throughout Medicaid transformation.
- ❖ Seek legislation to repeal the statutory authority under N.C. Gen. Stat. 115C-431(c) that allows a local school board to file suit against a county board of commissioners over appropriations to the local board of education's capital outlay fund.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly W. Hines, CMC
Clerk to the Board

DM # 216911



2019-2020 – N.C. General Assembly Social Services Consortium Legislative Priorities

1. Provide adequate funding at the local departments of social services for adult protective services and guardianship. Ensure greater protection of this population by evaluating current state laws while also improving behavioral health services for vulnerable, older and disabled adults.

- North Carolina's elderly and disabled adult populations deserve a system where they are guaranteed the most basic necessities of life and where they can be safe.
- In SFY 2018, \$26.2M was expended on Adult Protective Services and of that amount, 0% was state funds (\$1474), 81.5% county and 18.5% federal.
- In SFY 2018, \$26.3M was expended on Public Guardianship and of that amount 0.3% was state funds, 56.6% county and 43.1% federal. Caseload statewide has increased 50%.
- Commission a comprehensive study of APS and Guardianship by nationally recognized organization to determine statute changes needed, practice model, performance standards driven by a CQI system, in depth assessment of funding and assessment of mental health services needed to ensure adequate services available.

2. Amend applicable General Statutes regarding Medicaid Eligibility Determination and apply a cap for claim against county departments of social services. Ensure a state level appeals process prior to an assessment for reimbursement.

- Apply federal accuracy rate threshold as baseline for counties.
- Implement appeals process for counties prior to implementing claim for reimbursement.
- Place cap on claim amount at 5% or \$5,000 whichever is less.
- Allow for waiver if county can demonstrate financial hardship.

3. Preserve Federal and State Block Grants for county administered programs (TANF, SSBG, CSBG, CCDBG, HCCBG), oppose unfunded mandates, and prevent unnecessary workload increases to counties (including shifting state responsibilities to counties).

Federal DHHS Block Grants should be used to support the programs and services for which the grants were originally established. The existing state funds appropriated for the related programs should not be reduced and replaced with any additional block grants the State receives.

4. Support the recommendation of the Social Services Working Group (established per SL 2017-41, Section 1) regarding NC FAST.

- Recommendations:
 - Immediately reexamine the plan to use NC FAST for the aspects of the child welfare and adult services programs that require case management functionality. Success of social services system reform requires an information system that adequately supports county administration, allows counties to share information with one another, enables the state to support and monitor program administration at the county level, and provides clear and reliable information to the public. Reevaluation of the use of NC FAST is critical and time-sensitive (Rec. 4.a).
 - Continually improve all NC FAST modules (Rec. 4.b). • Clarify policies related to inter-county assistance (Rec.4.b)