

IREDELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BRIEFING MINUTES
APRIL 2, 2002

The Iredell County Board of Commissioners met in Briefing Session on Tuesday, April 2, 2002, at 5:00 p.m., in the South Wing Conference Room, of the Iredell County Government Center, 200 South Center Street, Statesville, NC.

Present: Chairman Sara Haire Tice
Vice Chairman Karen B. Ray
Tommy E. Bowles
Steve D. Johnson
R. Godfrey Williams

Staff Present: County Manager Joel Mashburn, Finance Director Susan Blumenstein, Planning Supervisor Ron Smith, EMS Director Tracy Jackson, and Clerk to the Board Jean Moore.

Also attending: Planner Nadine Bennett with the Centralina Council of Governments.

Request from the Mount Mourne Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) for Approval of a Letter to United Financial of North Carolina, Inc., in Reference to a Lease Purchase Agreement for a New Building: Chief Steve Knox with the Mount Mourne VFD shared a diagram of the proposed new building. He said it was a simple structure with 14,000 sq. ft. of space, and it could accommodate 140 people for community meetings and functions. Knox said the proposal was for \$1.5 million, but the actual amount needed would be closer to \$1.3. He said the building's site had eleven acres. Knox said a structure built in the 1700s was located on the property and a local historical group was assisting in its removal. Chief Knox said the VFD owned land across the road from the new building's site, and the department was hoping to sell an acre to someone interested in moving the older structure to it.

Commissioner Bowles asked if a bay could be leased to Mooresville.

Knox said yes.

Commissioner Johnson asked Knox if the Mt. Mourne officials were comfortable with the loan amount.

Knox said yes. He said the building was not elaborate, and the department had budgeted enough to prevent coming up "short." Chief Knox said the fire district's tax rate would be increased.

Request for Approval of Revised Iredell County EMS Fees Effective April 8, 2002: EMS Director Tracy Jackson said that due to a new Medicare Fee Schedule, he was recommending changes to the amounts being charged by the county for various services. He said the fees would have a rate for the mileage associated with the different type of service. Jackson said that in the past, the county had charged for only out of county mileage. He said that some of the new fees were lower and some were higher. Jackson said that most of the county's transports were for Advanced Life Support-Emergency.

Commissioner Ray said Medicare would only pay what was reasonable and customary.

Commissioner Johnson asked how the new fees would impact the revenues.

Jackson said he didn't have any historical data to review for an answer.

County Manager Mashburn said the North Carolina County Commissioners Association (NCACC) had been trying for years to get Congress to balance the amounts being paid to the states. He said that last year, Iredell County, along with other counties in the state, joined in a lawsuit against the United States Health Care Financing Administration to compel it to implement a national ambulance fee schedule. Mashburn said North Carolina's EMS

reimbursement rates were near the bottom nationally, and this was why the NCACC had instigated the lawsuit.

Johnson asked how much maneuverability the county had if the revenues decreased.

Jackson said the rates could be adjusted as needed.

Finance Director Blumenstein said a new software system was being implemented, and it would provide better statistics.

(Note: A chart showing the recommended/approved fees may be found in the regular minutes.)

Request for Approval of a Budget Amendment Regarding Budgetary Reductions: County Manager Mashburn and Finance Director Blumenstein explained the need to approve Budget Amendment #38 in the amount of \$4,502,159. Mashburn said the county department heads had been asked to reduce their budgets by what was anticipated to be remaining at June 30.

Blumenstein said the amounts were based on historical data. She said \$789,496 had been cut from the schools due to the reduction in restricted sales taxes and from Public School Building Capital Funds. Mrs. Blumenstein said the Public School Building funds were from the state and were raised from corporate income taxes.

(Note: A copy of the budget amendment and the reductions for each department/line item may be found in the regular minutes.)

Approved: _____

Clerk to the Board