

**IREDELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BRIEFING MINUTES
AUGUST 21, 2001**

The Iredell County Board of Commissioners met in Briefing Session on Tuesday, August 21, 2001, at 5:00 p.m., in the Iredell County Government Center, 200 South Center Street, Statesville, NC.

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

Staff Present: County Manager Joel Mashburn, Finance Director Susan Blumenstein, Purchasing Agent Evie Caldwell, County Assessor Brent Weisner, Social Services Director Don Wall, Social Services Income Maintenance Administrator Lynn Deal, Health Director Ray Rabe, Public Health Nurse Supervisor Donna Ricciardi, Health Services Coordinator Norma Rife, Solid Waste Director Ron Weatherman, Solid Waste Administrative Officer Susan Cornell, and Clerk to the Board Jean Moore.

CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Tice.

INFORMATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT) REGARDING A REQUEST FROM THE MOORESVILLE TOWN MAYOR TO RENAME NC 136 TO NC 3: The county manager said he had received a telephone call from a DOT official asking if Iredell County was in agreement with a road name change regarding NC 136. County Manager Mashburn said the Mooresville Mayor wanted the name change to honor NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt, now deceased. The numerical change would reflect the number three (3) used on Earnhardt's racing vehicle.

It was the consensus of the board members to place this request on the September 4 agenda for review and/or action.

RECOGNITION OF ATTORNEY THOMAS R. YOUNG, WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, FOR AN EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION: Mr. Mashburn said Social Services Attorney Thomas Young had submitted an idea to the Employee Suggestion Committee pertaining to the negotiation of a bulk publication rate with the Statesville *Record & Landmark*. Mashburn said Young's suggestion was reviewed by the committee in the last fiscal year and found it to be worthy of a \$500 award. Mr. Mashburn said the \$500 was transferred into this year's budget; however, due to the program being discontinued, no other funds were budgeted. Mashburn said that if employees came up with cost-saving suggestions, the information would be submitted to the board on a case-by-case basis.

Purchasing Agent Evie Caldwell said she had met with the newspaper staff about a rate reduction. Caldwell said she had to commit to 100 inches of publication in a year's time, but she said this wouldn't be a problem since the tax collector's office, alone, would need this much space. Mrs. Caldwell negotiated a rate decrease from \$9.65 to \$6.58 per inch, and she said the county should realize about a \$2,500 savings per year. (The rate decrease does not apply to legal notices or help-wanted advertisements.)

Request from the West Iredell Water Corporation for the County to Purchase 15 Water Hydrants at a Cost of \$19,500 (\$1,300 ea.) in Conjunction with the Corporation's Water Line Extension into the Wood Bridge/Cannon Road Area: The county manager said the fire tax budget had \$100,000.00, and this could cover the cost of the water hydrants needed by the West Iredell Water Corporation.

Commissioner Williams said there were three water corporations operating in the county, and he was glad to see their services expanding.

Request from the County Assessor's Office for Approval of the July Refunds & Releases: County Assessor Weisner explained the refunds and releases. He then announced

that his office planned to send out over 73,000 tax bills in the next few days. Mr. Weisner said the City of Statesville's bills (13,500) would be retained, due to this municipality still functioning under an interim budget with no firm tax rate.

Request from the Social Services Department to Retain a Carolina Access Position & a Fraud Investigator Position (50% County Funds to Supplant the Loss of State Funding): Social Services Director Don Wall and Income Maintenance Administrator Lynn Deal were present to describe this request. Mr. Wall said the North Carolina General Assembly had been making "cuts" and two state programs/positions had been affected.

Fraud Position (Income Maintenance Investigator II): Wall said his department would lose \$25,000 (50%) from the state that was previously used for an income maintenance investigator's salary. He said the position's responsibility was to find welfare fraud. Wall said the federal government would still be funding 50% of the position. He asked for the county to fund the remaining 50%.

Carolinas Access Position or Managed Care Representative (Income Maintenance Worker II): Wall said this position helped to save in Medicaid costs. He said the position served as a liaison between physicians and the clients which prevented "physician hopping" and abuse of the emergency rooms. Wall said the state was curtailing its funding for this position and his department needed \$18,152 to retain the position for FY 01-02.

Commissioner Johnson asked Wall if any funds could be found within the existing budget to cover the state cuts.

Wall said possibly. He said the department had five or six vacancies and it was possible there might be enough in lapsed salaries. He said he would have to review his budget.

Commissioner Johnson said the county was just barely into the new budget, and the board was being asked for additional money.

Commissioner Ray said she felt that all requests should be reviewed on an individual basis. She said the commissioners could not eliminate their responsibilities just because the state had stopped fulfilling its duties.

It was the consensus of the board to approve the retention of the two positions, but not to approve additional funding. The approval was contingent upon the DSS Director reviewing his budget and determining the availability of any lapsed salary funds that could cover the costs associated with the two positions.

Request from the Health Dept. for Approval of the Fee Schedule for FY 2001-2002: Health Director Ray Rabe explained the various fee changes for the new fiscal year.

Commissioner Johnson asked about the permit costs for the different types of septic systems.

Commissioner Bowles said the environmental health supervisor had explained that the fees were based on the labor intensity associated with the various septic systems.

Additional discussion occurred about the septic system costs, and Mr. Rabe said he felt the environmental committee should be reactivated to study the permit costs. He mentioned that if there were any citizens or developers that had concerns, they probably needed to appear before the committee and express their thoughts on the fees.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Tice adjourned the briefing at 6:40 p.m.

Approved: _____

Clerk to the Board