

**IREDELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET SESSION AND AGENDA BRIEFING MINUTES
JUNE 1, 2004**

The Iredell County Board of Commissioners met for a Fiscal Year 2004-2005 Budget Session on Tuesday, June 1, 2004, at 4:00 p.m., in the Iredell County Government Center (South Wing Conference Room), 200 South Center Street, Statesville, NC. Immediately following the budget session (5:00 p.m.) the board held an agenda briefing (same location).

Present were:

Chairman Steve D. Johnson
Vice Chairman Godfrey Williams
Doug Madison
Marvin Norman
Sara Haire Tice

Staff present: County Manager Joel Mashburn, Finance Director Susan Blumenstein, and Clerk to the Board Jean Moore.

CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Johnson.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE BUDGET REQUEST OF THE SHEPHERDS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT (VFD): Joining the commissioners to discuss the VFD's budget request were the Shepherds VFD Chief Kelly Robinson and Jamie Barrier.

County Manager Mashburn said the tax rate for the Shepherds district was recommended at \$.0425, but the VFD officials requested \$.06.

Robinson said the department's current \$416,450 budget included a \$50,000 transfer from fund balance. He said the \$50,000 was being used for operating expenses. Chief Robinson said the biggest issue this year was for part-time employees, and a total of \$137,320 had been budgeted for all personnel. He said the VFD had two stations and adequate staffing was needed. Robinson said it was especially important to have staff at the NC 150 west station due to this area having the largest tax base.

Chairman Johnson asked how much in funding was needed for two employees.

Blumenstein said, based on Chief Robinson's figures, approximately \$62,320. She said one cent in the Shepherds district brought in \$87,874. She also said the Shepherds fund balance at June 30, 2004 was estimated to be \$29,095.

Barrier said the VFD's calls were evenly split between the two stations. He said subcommittees had helped in the department's budget request, and cuts had already been made.

Robinson said the firemen had reviewed the possibility of having one person at each station, but found this would be unworkable. He said the department was trying to obtain a six insurance rating, and if this occurred, the taxpayers would experience a substantial tax decrease. Robinson asked the commissioners about their opinions on the VFDs responding to every medical dispatch.

Commissioner Williams said he knew First Responder calls were expensive, but it was his understanding that if VFD supplies were used, the EMS replenished the materials.

Barrier said the First Responder Program was a good service, but it was expensive.

Robinson said he wanted to make a point about the medical dispatches because many people did not understand why a \$300,000 fire truck was responding to a medical call. He said it probably took \$10,000 a year to run the program.

Commissioner Madison asked if the VFD had ever approached the Town of Mooresville about contracting out for some of the calls

Robinson said no.

Barrier said that eventually through annexation, the district would be lost to the Town of Mooresville. He also pointed out that the Gabriel Estates Subdivision was situated directly across from the Shepherds VFD, but the development was not within the station's fire protection district.

MOTION by Chairman Johnson to set the Shepherds fire tax rate at \$.05 per \$100 valuation.

AMENDMENT by Commissioner Madison stipulating that in addition to the tax rate increase, a meeting would be scheduled involving the county manager, the county fire marshal, the Mooresville Town Manager, the Mooresville Town Fire Chief, the Shepherds VFD Chief, and the Mount Mourne VFD Chief for the purpose of pursuing an agreement that would eliminate double coverage and incompatibility of services.

Johnson accepted the amendment.

VOTING: Ayes – 5; Nays – 0.

**5:00 P.M.
AGENDA BRIEFING**

All commissioners were present.

Staff attending were: County Manager Joel Mashburn, Finance Director Susan Blumenstein, Planning and Code Enforcement Director Lynn Niblock, Planning Supervisor Ron Smith, Emergency Services Director Tracy Jackson, Purchasing Agent Evie Caldwell, Health Director Ray Rabe, and Clerk to the Board Jean Moore.

REQUEST FROM THE IREDELL-STATESVILLE SCHOOLS FOR APPROVAL OF A 2003-2004 CAPITAL OUTLAY AMENDMENT: Iredell-Statesville Superintendent Dr. Terry Holliday, Maintenance Services Director Dr. Kenny Miller, and Deputy Superintendent Dr. Steve Lane requested approval of a 2003-04 capital outlay amendment. Superintendent Holliday said the amendment was being requested to provide for year-end maintenance projects, and the funding would come from savings realized from wastewater projects. He said that in addition, the system had received funding of \$116,000 (\$25,000 from the Mooresville Graded Schools for the bus garage addition, \$30,000 from the state for right-of-ways, and \$61,000 in sales tax refunds).

Dr. Miller shared a Capital Outlay Five Year Plan. (The system had previously submitted detailed information regarding the FY 03-04 capital outlay budget amendment.) In regards to Celeste Henkel Elementary, Miller said boiler repair funds were in this year's budget. He said the boiler would basically be overhauled and all piping would be cleaned. Pertaining to Scotts Elementary, he said a new septic field had been constructed and some savings were realized from this project. Dr. Miller said he hoped the City of Statesville would move forward on the pump station near Ebenezer Elementary.

Finance Director Blumenstein said the amendment involved no new money, and it was basically being used to transfer funds from one source to another.

(Following the presentation from the school officials, the county staff explained their June 1 agenda requests, and a summary of these comments may be found in the regular minutes.)

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Johnson adjourned the briefing at 5:55 p.m.

Approved: _____

Clerk to the Board