

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met on June 21, 2004, at 6:30pm in the Conference Room of the County Office Building, 90 South Main Street, Sparta, NC. The purpose of this meeting is to hold a public hearing regarding the proposed FY 2004/2005 budget.

Present: Chair Eldon Edwards, Vice-Chair Warren Taylor, Commissioner Graylen Blevins, Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon, Commissioner Patrick Woodie, County Manager Don Adams and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Chair Eldon Edwards opened the public hearing at 6:30pm.

County Manager Don Adams explained the handouts that the Board had received; proposed FY 04/05 budget and budget ordinance, changes made to the budget and solid waste fee schedule.

County Manager Don Adams read the 2004-2005 budget ordinance.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked for public comments.

William Bottomley asked why the tax levy is increasing and about the operation of the transfer facility.

Chair Eldon Edwards stated that the Transfer Facility has been set up to be self-sufficient fund.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the Transfer Facility is a separate budget from the General Fund and receives revenues according to the solid waste fee schedule. He further explained that the Town of Sparta contracts with a private company to provide garbage pickup service, and Alleghany County citizens can hire Alleghany Garbage Service to pickup their garbage. He talked about the solid waste fee schedule.

William Bottomley asked why taxes are being raised.

County Manager Don Adams explained that during the budget meetings, he gave the Board explanations that show why the tax increase is necessary. He stated that he would get this information for Mr. Bottomley.

William Bottomley asked how much the deficit amount is.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that with the tax increase, the deficit is \$261,961.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie talked about mandated items increasing over the last five years that the County has no control over; such as insurance and Medicaid.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon stated that if the Board does not raise taxes 5¢, the fund balance would be reduced too much.

Chair Eldon Edwards further discussed the amount of mandated programs.

William Bottomley asked if the new ½¢ sales tax has helped.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie explained how the sales tax has definitely helped.

William Bottomley talked about other counties with bigger deficits and how a tax rate increase affects the unemployed people and the tax collection rate.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie stated that our tax collection rate has remained solid through the plant closings.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins explained that our tax collection rate is 95.87%.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon stated that the proposed tax rate increase would be \$50 for property valued at \$100,000. She further stated that a 7¢ to 9¢ tax rate increase would have been necessary if every request had been granted.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie stated his appreciation to William Bottomley for asking these questions.

Chair Eldon Edwards explained the amount of fund balance monies that the Local Government Commission requires the County have for emergency situations.

Karen Leys asked how much money Alleghany County Schools will receive.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie and County Manager Don Adams stated that the proposed budget includes a 4% increase plus \$30,000 for the school system.

Commissioner Warren Taylor explained that the school system is the last request the Board looked at during the budget process. He further explained that the Board decided to raise taxes from 4¢ to 5¢ to be able to give the schools an additional \$30,000.

Duane Davis stated his appreciation to the Board of Commissioners for their support in providing good schools and good school programs.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon commended Mr. Davis and his staff for the accomplishments in the education system.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins stated the parents need to be applauded as well for their trust in the Commissioners and School Board to make the right decisions concerning their children's education.

Chair Eldon Edwards talked about the accomplishments of the school system.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked for further public comment. None were received.

Chair Eldon Edwards declared the public hearing over at 7:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Eldon Edwards
Chairman