

MINUTES

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF HENDERSON**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 13, 2005**

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a special called meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Henderson County Office Building.

Those present were: Chairman Bill Moyer, Vice-Chairman Charlie Messer, Commissioner Larry Young, Commissioner Shannon Baldwin, Commissioner Chuck McGrady, County Manager David E. Nicholson, Assistant County Manager Justin Hembree, County Attorney Russell Burrell, and Clerk to the Board Elizabeth Corn.

Also present were: Budget and Management Director Selena Coffey, Finance Director J. Carey McLelland, Fire Marshal Rocky Hyder and Public Information Officer Chris S. Coulson.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENTS

LeRoy Nicholson, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Advisory Committee, presented the Fire and Rescue Department budgets. He reminded the Board that there are 13 Fire Departments in the County, plus the Rescue Squad. Two Departments, Edneyville and Etowah-Horse Shoe had requested increase in their tax rate. The Committee was in support of those requests, and recommended the rate increase.

There was some discussion about the split insurance rates for Mountain Home and Fletcher. It was explained that the lower ratings were considered fire hydrant districts, while the higher ratings used portable water. Properties within 1,000 feet of a hydrant had an ISO rating of 5 in Mountain Home and a 4 in Fletcher. Properties farther than 1,000 feet from a hydrant had an ISO rating of 9 in both districts.

The Board will take formal action on the fire tax rates at a future meeting. *Chairman Moyer made the motion to approve the recommended tax rates as recommended by the Fire and Rescue Advisory Committee. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

SHERIFF AND DETENTION CENTER

Sheriff George Erwin introduced the following Staff: Major Varnadore – Support Services, Captain Davis – Administrative Services, Captain McDonald – Detention, Captain Edney – Criminal Investigations, Captain Baker – Patrol, Lieutenant Carter – Drug Enforcement. Sheriff Erwin stated that last year the Patrol Division handled 20,427 more calls than in the previous year. In the past five years they had written 9,372 citations. The Patrol Division served 4,888 warrants in the past year, 1,639 more than in the previous year. The jump in calls invariably trickles down, affecting workloads in each division. The Sheriff continued to discuss specific concerns due to personnel shortages, particularly with respect to Courthouse Security, Criminal Investigations, 911 Communications, Professional Standards, Data Information and Middle School Resource Officers.

Chairman Moyer commended Sheriff Erwin on the initiative being taken in the mental health arena. There was discussion about possible positive impacts that might come from a proactive approach to mental health. There was also additional discussion about the need for personnel in the detention center and 911 Center, and the amount of time patrol officers spend out on calls. There was discussion about the vehicle fleet. The consensus of the Sheriff's Staff was that the primary concern was ensuring safe vehicles were out on the roads, and the vehicle leasing program worked very well in that regard. There followed much additional discussion on finding a balance between the need for additional personnel versus the need to better

DATE APPROVED: _____

compensate existing personnel, the County's commitment to maintaining vehicles, the role of the Sheriff with respect to illegal immigrants, the rise in methamphetamine use and the tracking of sex offenders.

RECREATION

Corum Smith, Chairman of the Recreation Advisory Committee, introduced the following members of the Committee: Ralph King, Gary Eblen, Virgil McClure, Roy Huntley and Wally Sneed. Gary Eblen stated that in the Sheriff's budget presentation, there was discussion of mental health. He noted that recreation is a big part of mental health, and thanked the Board for the addition of four tennis courts in Jackson Park.

Mr. Smith then discussed the Committee's priority list. One item on that list was the Tuxedo Community Park. There was some discussion about whether the Tuxedo Elementary School property would be feasible, given the cost of the property and the additional cost of renovations to the site. There was also discussion about what would be necessary to complete the East Flat Rock Park, the possibility of a gymnasium building at Jackson Park, the need to add and renovate soccer fields at Jackson Park, a grant that had been received for additional tennis courts at the Etowah Park and the income generated in the County when events such as youth baseball tournaments are held.

Adjourn

Commissioner McGrady made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Attest:

Elizabeth Corn, Clerk to the Board

William L. Moyer, Chairman