

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Budget Work Session Meeting
May 15, 2023 - 1:00 PM
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice - Womack Building Columbus, NC
Columbus, NC
MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Melton, Commissioner Beiler, Commissioner Moore, and Commissioner Overholt. Also in attendance were County Manager Pittman, Clerk to the Board Tipton, media, and citizens. Absent: Vice-Chairman Yoder and Attorney Berg.

1. Call to Order - Chairman Melton.
2. Scheduled Departments (Tab # 10 , Manager Recommended Budget Detail)

A. Public Schools - Aaron Greene, Superintendent Polk County Schools.

PG 45 Education Public Schools (10 - 5910)

Aaron Greene, Superintendent of Polk County Schools addressed the Board of Commissioners and gave a brief description of the increased operation expenses. Unfunded state mandates, the minimum wage increase, child nutrition operating expenses, and transportation costs were just a few of the areas increased. He said 87% of the schools budget goes to salaries and benefits. Polk County Schools requested an increase to their budget of \$1,105,000 to cover the total net operations increases. Mr. Greens said they have not requested an operation increase in years. They will be conducting a facility needs plan and may come back to the Board for capital expenses. Commissioner Overholt requested regular updates from the schools throughout the year.

B. Isothermal Community College - Margaret H. Annunziata, Ed.D.
President, Isothermal Community College

PG 47 Education - College (10 - 5920)

Dr. Annunziata was unable to attend. Manager Pittman said they have requested \$34,109, \$27,959 of which is for a NC Career Coach position. The plan to use excess in line items for capital expenses at the Polk Campus. It was the consensus of the Board to approve this request.

C. Sheriff's Department - Sheriff Wright.

PG 19 Sheriff (10 - 4310)

PG 20 School Resource Officers (10 - 4311)

PG 21 Jail (10 - 4320)

PG 22 911 Communications (10 - 4325)

PG 24 Animal Control (10 - 4340)

Sheriff Wright said that he has eliminated three positions and plans to use those

funds for current staff for the purpose of retention. He said that are currently seven deputies short on patrol, but have 3-4 coming out of BLET soon.

D. Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) - Joshua Kennedy, HHS Director.

PG 59 Transportation Operations (20 - 4520)

PG 60 Transportation Administration (20 - 4521)

PG 61 Health Department (20 - 5110)

PG 63 Senior Services (20 - 5169)

PG 64-65 Department of Social Services (DSS) (20 - 5300)

PG 66 Veterans Services (20 - 5820)

Josh Kennedy, HHS Director, said they are not seeking a budget increase this fiscal year. He said due to Medicaid Expansion there will be 3 new positions, however these positions are grant funded and no county dollars will be needed.

3. Requested Fee Changes (Tab #9)

A. Transportation

Josh Kennedy, HHS Director, said that the fares have not been reviewed since 2019. They would like to increase fees to match the operation costs, without going over.

B. Solid Waste

Travis Ballard, Solid Waste Director stated that due to significant increases in contracts in 2024 and monthly fuel surcharges he recommended increasing the annual permit fee from \$80 to \$90, and charge a minimum single trip charge of \$10 per trip/visit.

4. Other Departments or Agencies.

A. Fire and Rescue Advisory Committee (FRAC) - Bobby Arledge, Emergency Management Director.

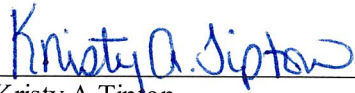
Bobby Arledge, Emergency Management Director presented the recommendations made by the FRAC Committee which include a 0.015 increase for Columbus Fire Department, a 0.01 increase for Saluda, and a 0.01 increase for Tryon Fire Department. He said the FRAC Committee recommends a 0.035 cent increase for Mill Spring Fire Department. After a detailed discussion it was the consensus of the Board to approve the recommendations as presented with the exception of Mill Spring and Columbus. They agreed to an increase of 0.03 for Mill Spring Fire Department due to their exigent circumstances. They also agreed that Mill Spring should pursue lowering their ISO rating before requesting another increase. For Columbus Fire Department the Board has requested answers to several questions be brought back before them by Mr. Arledge at the June 5, 2023 Budget Work Session.

5. Adjournment

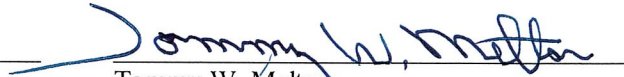
Commissioner Moore moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Overholt
and the motion carried unanimously.
Absent: Yoder

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS



Kristy A Tipton
Clerk to the Board


Tommy W. Melton
Chairman