

May 19, 2003
ONSLOW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Chairman Delma Collins called the May 19, 2003, regular meeting to order in Courtroom 1 of the E. W. Summersill Building located at 109 Old Bridge Street, Jacksonville. Members present were:

Delma Collins
W. C. Jarman

Jack Bright
Fred Holt
Joe McLaughlin

Commissioner Holt gave the Invocation; the Board and the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS: The Chairman announced that the public had two opportunities to address the Board during the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Commissioner Jarman made a motion to approve the following meetings: **May 5, 2003, Regular Meeting, April 21, 2003, Regular Meeting, and April 7, 2003, Special Meeting.** No discussion, the motion carried.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Commissioner Holt made a motion to adopt the meeting agenda as presented. No discussion, the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Bright requested that Budget Amendments B-210 through B-226 be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Jarman made a motion to approve the **Consent Agenda** as amended. No discussion, the motion carried.

Approved: Budget Transfers A-335 to A-347

Approved: Tax Administrator's Report

Releases for Richlands, Swansboro, Holly Ridge, Surf City, and North Topsail Beach and **refunds** for North Topsail Beach and Swansboro.

Approved: Ratification of Rotary Club Senior Citizens' Day Proclamation

Approved: Acceptance of Bills for the period of April 26, 2003, to May 9, 2003

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING – The notice of this public hearing was properly advertised in the Classified Section of The Daily News on Friday, May 2, 2003. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive input from citizens on budgetary issues they would like to see addressed during the formulation of the Fiscal Year 2003/2004 Onslow County Budget. Comments should be limited to no more than five (5) minutes per person. Ron Lewis, County Manager, made a few opening remarks and pointed out that by NC General Statute, the County Manager is required to provide a proposed budget by June 1 of each year to the Commissioners. Mr. Lewis conducted the public hearing.

Mack McDonald, 615 Par Drive, Jacksonville – Mr. McDonald said he supports the school program. The “No Child Left Behind Program” is one of three systems in the State that has met requirements. He said in order to keep Onslow County Schools competitive with other school systems, we need to keep the local supplement and increase it for the teachers. The school system, Coastal Carolina Community College, and the public libraries are the cornerstone of the community and continue the progress that has been made in the past few years.

Kevin Hart, 221-109 Riggs Road, Hubert – Mr. Hart pointed out that Onslow County Schools received over \$4 million in scholarships. He said it was very important to increase the school budget and to retain the one-cent property tax and give it to the school systems.

Beverly Winston, 201 Hayden Place, Jacksonville – Ms. Winston urged continued financial support for the Onslow County Women’s Center. She said that sexual assault has decreased but it has been linked to domestic violence. The Onslow Women’s Center offers a safe house, support services, and counseling, among other services.

Nelda Howell, 109 Howell Road, Hubert – Ms. Howell expressed appreciation to the Board for the efforts made to reach people and goals for the Onslow County Women’s Center and the Board’s continued support of the Onslow Women’s Center.

Mary J. Thompson, 1 Warlick Street, Jacksonville – Ms. Thompson stated she was an adult user of the Onslow County Library. She asked the Board to support the Library.

Linda Murphy, PO Box 31064, New Bern – Ms. Murphy is the regional director for the NC Council of Women. She asked that the Board to continue support of the Women’s Center.

Bob Tisdale, 2231 Warrenton Way, Jacksonville – Mr. Tisdale spoke as a parent, vice chair of the Onslow County Board of Education and as a taxpayer. Mr. Tisdale shared some numbers that were used in the Board of Education’s proposed budget:

FY 00-01 – Onslow County ranked 87th for local current expense appropriations.
FY 00-01 – The per pupil allocation was \$783.00; the state average was \$1278.00.
The per pupil allocation and state average continues to widen.

Mr. Tisdale said Onslow County competes with all other school systems in North Carolina. It was important to share with the Board per pupil funding from surrounding counties:

Carteret County	7 th	\$2,087.00
New Hanover County	8 th	\$1,963.00
Pender County	48 th	
Lenoir County	74 th	
Craven County	77 th	

It is hard to recruit teachers, it is hard to retain highly qualified teachers when teachers are able to go elsewhere and not very far and can be compensated better.

As a member of the Board of Education, he represents two separate groups: the voters, and the group that cannot vote – the children served in Onslow County Schools.

Mr. Tisdale said the request of this year’s budget was a decrease of one cent. It bothered him that what needed to be done, as publicly elected official, to identify the true needs and figure out how to pay for them. He believes the first things have been closed, and they try and figure out what can be paid within a budget that has been artificially limited. It is almost like the chicken and egg syndrome.

According to Mr. Tisdale, there will be those persons who will say the budget is too rich, the taxes need to be lowered as well as the School Board’s budget is too rich. According to Mr. Tisdale, there are naysayers that, in his opinion, do not properly take into consideration what our children need.

The County has been very good in investing in education in the past, and he hopes that in the budget deliberations, the Board will continue to make that investment in public education in Onslow County.

Bob Gaskins, 608 Shadowwood Drive, Jacksonville – Mr. Gaskins said Onslow County is about change. He said that the county should not accept things less than progress. Progress may mean that more money needs to be spent than some people thinks is appropriate. There are approximately 22,000 students to educate. The demands on the Board and the faculties are tremendous. The “No Child Left Behind” program will present many financial needs. Onslow County has traditionally produced a Class A product on a Class D budget. Mr. Gaskins said the school board needs the help to do a job that is needed so the children and parents get the best for the children. Progress has been made, and he hopes the progress can continue.

Louis Shields, 114 Brookview Drive, Jacksonville – Mr. Shields expressed his thanks to the Board of Commissioners for their leadership. He expects this Board will continue the vision of past boards of commissions. Mr. Shields asked that the Board use all the vision and see that the County grows.

Ronnie New, 265 Belgrade-Swansboro Road, Stella – Mr. New asked that the Board support the school system. The school system needs all the support the community can give them.

Chris Almeida, 1002 Summerbrook, Jacksonville – Ms. Almeida is a friend of the Library and a strong advocate of the Library. Onslow County has a lot to offer. She requests that the Board fund the Library. Ms. Almeida says the Library is probably the most open resource in the County.

David Williams, 109 Shadowbrook, Jacksonville – Mr. Williams supports Onslow County Schools, and he would like to see the Board bring back the tapings of the Board meetings.

Julie Gearhart, 198 Denise Drive, Jacksonville – Ms. Gearhart asked that the Board take some type of action against the abandoned trailers located at 178 Denise Drive, 184 Denise Drive, and 300 Denise Court be removed and that the mobile homes located at 173 and 178 Denise Drive be cleaned and kept cleaned. Residents near the property provided the Board with a petition to this effect.

Commissioner Holt stated that education could not be laid aside. He could not vote to cut the school board's budget any less than last year's approved budget. Commissioner Holt said that most of the speakers have been for education; however, there are those who have other needs, and the Board will need to hear from all people.

Commissioner McLaughlin made a motion that, at the next work session, staff provides a history of this area and a proposal on which this issue might be approached.

Commissioner Holt concurs with Commissioner McLaughlin, but that the Chairman should direct staff to do that since the Board is receiving input during this time on the agenda.

Commissioner McLaughlin withdrew his motion, but wanted staff to know they were on the hook to provide information on this issue soon.

Chairman Collins directed staff to provide history on the Denise Drive situation and a proposal to address the issue.

Flo Thurman, President of Onslow County's Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads – Ms. Thurman expressed appreciation to the Board for their support. She pointed out that specialized training will be required as part of the new State Plan.

Jeff Hudson, Assistant Superintendent, Onslow County Schools – Mr. Hudson stated that the Board of Commissioners has an awesome responsibility in the preparation of the budget. Mr. Hudson said that education was very important. Having worked with the Board of Commissioners, but the Board of Education also has an awesome task including state mandates, certified staff, non-certified employees, and salary step increases. The Board of Commissioners' support is critical and all those who contribute to education in this county have a chance to meet their own needs. The school system needs the tools to do the jobs. Mr. Hudson asked for continued support in maintaining this vast great asset that has been put in place over time.

Ricky Hardison, Chairman of the Onslow County Fire Commission – Mr. Hardison encourages the Board to look at the proposed budget for the volunteer firemen. They have not requested an increase; however, their costs have increased.

Chairman Collins stated that a variety of areas were addressed this evening. He pointed out that when this Board was elected, taxes were raised for education. Chairman Collins said this year's budget would be extremely tough. He said the Board would do the very best with the funds that are available.

No other comments, the public hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

The Board recessed at 7:30 p.m. and reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT – There were no comments from the public.

PRESENTATION ON THE WHITE OAK RIVER AND THE NEW RIVER – Mr. Elmer Eddy, Trashman of the White Oak River, has been spearheading a river clean up effort on the White Oak River through the involvement of the local paddling club and other citizens. Having worked hard to remove trash from the White Oak River, this group is now ready to take on the New River.

Mr. Eddy addressed four main areas of concern: 1) making New River accessible for paddlers; 2) access points are being lost; 3) access to the water; and 4) an organization of volunteers called the Stewards of the White Oak River Basin who have taken the challenge of removing litter from the White Oak River Basin. This basin not only includes the White Oak River but also the New River.

Commissioner Holt made a motion that the Onslow County Board of Commissioners will fight litter and join Mr. Eddy in fighting litter. No discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

The Board received Mr. Eddy's report.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

Health Department Write-Offs of Bad Debts – The Onslow County Health Department requests to write off client accounts (\$57,761.76) deemed uncollectible in order to facilitate agency accounting and records' requirements. These accounts date back to November 2000, and collection efforts have repeatedly been made on these accounts to no avail. The Onslow County Board of Health has voted in support of recommending to the Board of Commissioners that these owed accounts be written off as uncollectible. George O'Daniel, Onslow County Health Department Director, was available to answer questions.

Mr. O’Daniel said there was a broad variety of reasons why these funds could not be collected. He said the Health Department is currently collecting 93% of debts. Mr. O’Daniel also pointed out that the amount involves two and one-half year’s worth of bad debts.

Commissioner Jarman made a motion to approve the write-off of the Health Department bad debts totaling \$57,761.76. No discussion, the motion carried.

Airport Improvement Program 23 (AIP-23) Project Ordinance – Airport AIP 23 Project Ordinance establishes projects to be funded and executed under the Federal Airport Improvement Program for federal fiscal year 2003. These projects will be funded by a combination of Federal AIP funds (90%), state funds (5%), and Passenger Facility Charges (5%).

Projects planned for execution under this project ordinance include:

- ARFF Safety Equipment
- Rescue Utility Vehicle
- Rehabilitation of ARFF Vehicle
- Communications Upgrade
- Security System Improvements
- Snow Removal Equipment
- Airfield Electrical Improvements
- Commute-A-Walk Rehabilitation

Jerry Vickers, Airport Director, and Alvin Barrett, Finance Director, were available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Jarman made a motion to approve Airport Improvement Program (AIP) 23 Project Ordinance and authorize the Chairman to sign it on behalf of the County. No discussion, the motion carried.

AIP 23 Professional Services - Work Authorization 18 with The LPA Group authorizes professional services associated with planning, design and engineering for rehabilitation of airport airfield lighting. The cost of these services will be funded with FAA Funds (AIP-23), NCDOT Division of Aviation funds, and Passenger Facility Charges as follows:

Federal Grant	\$ 45,717.30
State Grant	2,539.85
Passenger Facility Charges (PFC)	<u>2,539.85</u>
Total	\$ 50,797.00

Commissioner Jarman made a motion to approve Work Authorization 18 and authorize the Chairman to sign it on behalf of the County and approve the request to purchase #401 in the amount of \$50,797.00. No discussion, the motion carried.

Airport Improvement Program 23 (AIP 23) Professional Services – DBE Program - This Planning Services Agreement authorizes Ken Widen & Associates, Inc., to update the Albert J. Ellis Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program for Federal FY 2004. The US

Department of Transportation and the FAA require a DBE Program for airport sponsors that receive federal funds under the Airport Improvement Program. The cost is \$5,200.00 and will be funded with FAA Funds (AIP-23), NCDOT Division of Aviation funds, and Passenger Facility Charges.

Commissioner Jarman made a motion to approve the Planning Services Agreement and authorize the Chairman to sign it on behalf of the County and approve request to purchase #400 in the amount of \$5,200.00. No discussion, the motion carried.

Child Support Enforcement Contract for 2003-2008 - CSE contract with DynTek expires June 30, 2003. Bids were requested for a five-year contract from July 1, 2003, to June 30, 2008. Bids were received from DynTek, our current contractor, and Policy Studies, Inc. (PSI), both with extensive experience and similar performance in full-service Child Support Enforcement (CSE) operations management in North Carolina. Bids were to be based upon payment to the bidder a percentage of total CSE collections. PSI was the low bidder with a proposed rate of 10.06% in the first year, incrementally decreasing to 7.08% in the fifth year. DynTek proposed a fixed rate of 12.2% for each of the five years of the contract. Over the term of the contract, PSI will save almost \$2.4 million in costs based upon this year's estimated collections.

The Onslow County Board of Social Services met on May 1, 2003, and unanimously recommended the award of the contract to PSI based upon their stronger bid. The contract will be based on percentage of collections: i.e. the County would pay PSI 10.06% of all collections, with the total amount paid to PSI capped at \$1.79 million (as proposed in the FY 03-04 budget).

Mr. Bob Swindell, Chairman of the Onslow County Department of Social Services Board, stated that the DSS Board strongly supports the lowest responsible bidder, Policy Studies, Inc. (PSI). Mr. Swindell stated that the persons doing the job would most likely continue with PSI if they choose to do so. This contract, over a period of five years, decreases in cost based on collections in that given year. Mr. Swindell pointed out that this was the second time the DSS Board had recommended PSI; however, the Board of Commissioners, at that time, chose to continue with Dyntek, the current child support enforcement contractor.

Mr. Roger Penrod, DSS Director, provided the Board with the proposal evaluations. At the conclusion of the presentation, the DSS Board recommended that the Child Support Enforcement Support be awarded to PSI, Inc.

Commissioner Jarman asked that this contract be tabled until additional answers can be obtained from both companies. The Board scheduled a special work session for Tuesday, May 27. This will allow questions to be presented to the two companies involved with answers provided to the Board prior to the meeting on May 27.

APPOINTMENTS

Water and Sewer Advisory Commission

Commissioner Holt made a motion to appoint the following persons to the Water and Sewer Advisory Commission: Greg Ketchum, Donald R. Shipley, and Anthony P. Snodgrass, Jr. The motion carried four to one with Commissioner Bright casting the one dissenting vote.

Commissioner Holt made a motion for the terms of the newly appointed members to be as follows:

Greg Ketchum	3 years	November 30, 2004
(fills unexpired position vacated by Kenneth Kellum, deceased)		
Donald R. Shipley	3 years	November 30, 2005
(fills vacant position by Steve Sortino, ineligible for another term)		
Anthony P. Snodgrass, Jr.	3 years	November 30, 2005
(fills vacant position vacated by H. E. Bozarth, deceased)		

No discussion, the motion carried.

PULLED CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – Commissioner Bright asked that budget amendment B-215 be pulled for additional clarification.

After clarification, Commissioner Jarman made a motion to approve budget amendments B-210 to B-226. No further discussion, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

W. D. Brindley, 2609 Dawson Cabin Road, Jacksonville – Mr. Brindley expressed concern about a ditch full of debris. The ditch adjoins his property and the Jacksonville Police Department range. He also discussed a septic tank violation.

Commissioner Jarman suggested he pursue the legal advice of an attorney. Commissioner Bright suggested that Mr. Brindley contact the Health Department Director, George O’Daniel.

Sherri Gabel, 3006 Derby Run Road, Jacksonville – Ms. Gabel requested that the Child Support Enforcement Contract include some type of stipulations and accountability. She also requested that a Grievance Committee be in place.

Linda Byrd, DynTek Representative, stated that there is a Grievance Policy, and the guidelines were followed in Ms. Gabel’s case.

Pauline Joos – Ms. Joos said the Paddling Signs need to be re-visited. They need to be bigger and brighter colors.

David Williams said he had the same type problems Mr. Brindley had several years ago when he purchased his property.

Mr. Williams again requested that the Board consider adding the tapings the Commissioners' meetings.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner McLaughlin said it appears the Board of Commissioners is the first resort instead of going through the appropriate advisory board or commission.

Commissioner Holt agreed with Commissioner McLaughlin. He also said that the comments need to be held to five minutes. Public comments are not held for adversarial comments. The public should be directed to the appropriate board or commission.

Commissioner Bright stated that the old White Oak Bridge would be abandoned, and the new bridge will be built on stilts.

Chairman Collins requested that the County Manager work closely with the NC Department of Transportation and report back to the Board on this issue.

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Lewis introduced Glenn Ertel, Onslow County's Website Master. Mr. Ertel was taking new photos of the Commissioners for the web site.

No other business, Chairman Collins made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

ONSLow COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Delma G. Collins, Chairman

ATTEST:

Letitia M. Black, Clerk to the Board