

**May 30, 2013, MB#52
Budget Public Hearing and Wrap Up**

**Minutes
Catawba County Board of Commissioners
Budget Hearing and Wrap-Up
Thursday, May 30, 2013, 7:00 p.m.**

The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met on Thursday, May 30, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the 1924 Courthouse, Robert E. Hibbitts Meeting Room, 30 North College Avenue, Newton, North Carolina. The purpose of this meeting was for a budget hearing for public comment on the proposed County budget for Fiscal Year 2013/14.

Present were Chair Katherine W. Barnes, Vice-Chair Barbara G. Beatty and Commissioners Lynn M. Lail, Dan Hunsucker and Randy Isenhower.

Also present were County Manager J. Thomas Lundy and Budget Manager Jennifer Mace.

1. Chair Katherine W. Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Barnes noted that budget hearings with County departments and outside agencies took place on Tuesday, May 28, 2013 and the purpose of this meeting was to conduct a public hearing to receive citizen comments on the proposed budget. She then opened the public hearing at 7:01 p.m. and asked for anyone who wished to speak to come forward. Joe Kerley came forward to thank the Board for its consideration in funding lighting for the girls softball field at St. Stephens High School. No one further came forward to speak and Chair Barnes closed the public hearing at 7:03 p.m..

Chair Barnes then asked Mr. Lundy to review the proposed changes to the budget based on budget hearings. Mr. Lundy recapped three requests that had been made at the budget hearings:

1. Newton-Conover Schools Asbestos Removal – A request to allocate \$24,163 from Schools Capital Project Fund Balance partially funded by closing out \$14,163 work of finished projects (Shuford Elementary School a/c units, ADA and activity buses) Dan Hunsucker made a motion to approve \$14,163.00 without the additional \$10,000 requested. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Cooperative Extension Services Farming Grant – a request to allocate \$3000 for operating expenses associated with community gardening. Vice-Chair Beatty made a motion to allocate these grant funds. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Social Services Outcomes - A request to revise Family Builders Outcome. The outcome was revised in April due to an increase of children entering foster care. Although the outcome's target percentage has fallen from 60 percent to 55 percent, the target still exceeds both the state's 36.54 percent and the large counties' 29.5 percent. The new outcome reads: to assist children in foster care with a plan of adoption to move toward permanency, 55 percent will become adopted within two years of entering agency custody compared to the state rate of 36.54 percent and Catawba's rate of 52.94 percent.

A request to delete child Support Outcome #3, intended to be a working outcome, not a Board outcome: to assist noncustodial parents struggling to meet their financial obligations, Child Support will collaborate with the Sheriff's Office to establish a jail release program that will match select parents with employment opportunities so they have the opportunity to become employed rather than incarcerated during Fiscal Year 2013/14. Commissioner Lail made a motion to approve these outcome changes. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Barnes asked if there were any other items to be considered. Commissioner Isenhower said he had three items.

1. Old Playhouse – Felt they had given good service to the community and made a motion to allocate \$7,500 to them. Chair Barnes stated she thought this would be a slippery slope as there were similar groups in Hickory and Commissioner Lail stated that once the door was open, there would be more requests. Commissioner Isenhower voted for this allocation; Chair Barnes, Vice-Chair Beatty, and Commissioners Lail and Hunsucker voted against. The motion failed.

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2. Historical Association – A motion to increase allocation for operation by \$1,500. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Solid Waste Management – He stated he was not in support of the Biodiesel Facility and discussed the payback calculations and made a motion to delete the \$42,525 allocation in the proposed budget for the facility. Chair Barnes said she thought that beyond the payback issue, the facility facilitated an important relationship with Appalachian State University and other educational institutions. Commissioner Isehower voted in favor; Commissioners Barnes, Lail, Hunsucker and Beatty voted against. The motion failed.

Mr. Lundy said the budget ordinance would be amended to reflect the above actions and would be brought to the Board at its June 3, 2013 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Board of Commissioners

Barbara E. Morris
County Clerk