

**May 31, 2012, MB#52  
Budget Public Hearing and Wrap Up**

**Minutes  
Catawba County Board of Commissioners  
Special Session  
Thursday, May 31, 2012, 7:00 p.m.**

**Budget**

Budget Public Hearing and Wrap Up

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The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in Special Session on Thursday, May 31, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the 1924 Courthouse, Robert E. Hibbitts Meeting Room, 30 North College Avenue, Newton, North Carolina. The purpose of the special meeting was for a budget hearing for public comment on the proposed County budget for Fiscal Year 2012/13.

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

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

1. Chair Katherine W. Barnes called the special 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 29, 2012 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 and asked for anyone who wished to speak to come forward. No one came forward to speak and Chair Barnes closed the public hearing.

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. Hickory City Schools - Estimates to repair the sinkhole on school property had come in above estimates; estimates for the track repairs came in below estimates. It was requested that the additional \$49,752 needed for the sinkhole repairs be made up from a combination of funds from the decreased track repair, a decrease in dollars allocated to repair vents at Grandview Middle School and some fund balance from a roofing project at Long View Elementary School. No new tax dollars were being requested for this project. Commissioner Dan Hunsucker made a motion to approve these fund transfers. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Newton-Conover Schools – In March 2012, the Board authorized a project to replace heating and air conditioning units at Shuford Elementary School. Estimates came in \$56,000 over original anticipated costs. It was requested that \$56,210 in funds from existing projects be shifted to cover this expense. No new tax dollars were being requested for this project. Commissioner Randy Isenhower made a motion to approve these fund transfers. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Board of Elections – Additional funds were requested to cover the expense of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary scheduled for July 17, 2012. This expense is borne locally. \$25,000 in existing funds in the Elections office had already been spent to order ballots. An additional \$48,600 was requested to be added to the proposed budget to conduct the election. Vice-Chair Lail Lynn made a motion to approve this funding. The motion carried unanimously.

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

1. Solid Waste Management – He stated he was not in support of the Biodiesel Facility and made a motion to delete the \$47,633 allocation in the proposed budget for the facility. Chair Barnes said she recalled this was a portion of what the Board had committed to do in support of the Biodiesel operations at the EcoComplex. In response to a question from Commissioner Beatty as to the purpose of the funds, Mr. Lundy indicated it was the County's share of operating expenses of the facility and covered such costs as crop costs,

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planning and processing to the point that Appalachian State University took over to produce the biodiesel. Chair Barnes asked for a vote on the motion. Commissioner Isenhower voted in favor; Commissioners Barnes, Lail, Hunsucker and Beatty voted against. The motion failed.

2. Outside Agencies –

a. Commissioner Isenhower stated he wanted to address inconsistencies in allocations to the Salt Block, Newton-Conover Auditorium, Patrick Beaver Library and the Old Playhouse. He made a motion to increase Newton-Conover Auditorium's funding by \$600. These funds would come from the General Fund. After a discussion regarding this motion, the motion carried unanimously.

b. Commissioner Isenhower questioned the proposed funding to the Patrick Beaver Library and made a motion to reduce funding to Patrick Beaver Library by \$10,000. Mr. Lundy explained that the City of Hickory had always requested that the County contribute to the operation of the Patrick Beaver Library since the County was in the library business and would have to have a branch at least the size of the St. Stephens branch (with an operating budget of \$382,000) to serve the people that the Patrick Beaver Library served. The funding provided by the County represented about half the cost of running the Patrick Beaver Library. Commissioner Isenhower amended his motion to reduce the funding to the Patrick Beaver Library by \$10,000 and allocate those funds to the Post Office Playhouse – thus being revenue neutral. Commissioners Isenhower and Beatty voted in favor; Commissioners Barnes, Lail and Hunsucker 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 4, 2012 meeting. He went on to thank Budget Manager Jennifer Mace, Budget Analyst Paul Murray and Assistant County Manager Mary Furtado for their hard work on the budget. This praise was echoed by all the Commissioners.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

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Katherine W. Barnes, Chair  
Board of Commissioners

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Barbara E. Morris  
County Clerk