

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD AT THE RUTHERFORD COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING IN THE AUDITORIUM ON JUNE 16, 2011 AT 9:00 A.M.**

**PRESENT: CHAIRMAN WILLIAM ECKLER  
VICE CHAIRMAN JULIUS OWENS  
SUSAN CROWE  
EDDIE HOLLAND  
ROGER RICHARD**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Eckler called the meeting to order.

**EDWARD BYNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) PROGRAM/SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

County Manager John Condrey told the Board that the Sheriff's Department is seeking a grant of \$13,904 through the 2011 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program. This grant is offered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs and the Bureau of Justice Assistance. No match is required. One of the stipulations of the grant is a review by the governing body not fewer than 30 days before the application is submitted.

It was requested that the Board accept the documents presented for review regarding this grant. A public hearing on the grant will be scheduled for the July 11, 2011 meeting.

**BUDGET 2011-2012**

Commissioner Richard presented a motion to request that the Ad Hoc Committee for Review of Policies and Procedures Relating to Real Property Appraisal in Rutherford County reconvene to study the tax procedures which were changed in March of 2011 in order to find a middle ground that would benefit the county and the Tax Department. He further moved that the findings of the committee should be presented at the June 23 meeting if possible, but this was not a requirement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crowe.

County Manager John Condrey told the Board that if they choose to put the procedures in place, the revenue loss to the county would be over \$500,000. Finance Director Julie Scherer also advised that the recommended budget contains \$270,000 of revenue which is an assumption that the tax procedures will be reversed.

Vice Chairman Owens said if the committee does not come forth with a recommendation by June 23, the Board of Commissioners will need to make a decision. Commissioner Richard believed that the only decision the Board would need to make would be to add back the \$270,000. If the

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committee report later shows that changes should be made to this decision, a budget amendment can be approved to do so.

Chairman of the committee, Omer Causey, who was present said a quorum would need to be able to meet.

County Manager Condrey asked that the committee talk with the Department of Revenue and the School of Government as these organizations have advised that present practices are considered best practices for tax collection. Vice Chairman Owens asked that Chairman Causey contact these agencies for their input.

The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

Chairman Eckler asked for comments from the Commissioners before beginning work on the spreadsheet which the Board had completed.

Chairman Eckler said he wished to remove his reduction to schools and Isothermal Community College. Commissioner Richard had no changes. Commissioner Holland asked that the Board consider funding an EMS station in Henrietta and upgrades at the Frank West Park. Finance Director Scherer had advised that the Board would not need to borrow funds to do this as there were sufficient funds in the Building Capital Reserve Fund. Commissioner Crowe asked that the Board consider that the schools have had increases in fuel and energy costs and they are now being charged a tipping fee at the landfill. With these increased costs she said she would like to see an increase for the schools' allocation to either \$12.2 or \$12.3 million. Vice Chairman Owens said he would agree to removing the tipping fee for schools. Mr. Condrey recommended that the Board consider funding the schools the amount of money that they would be paying at the landfill since a Board had agreed to treat everyone equally.

Finance Director Scherer provided information on the spreadsheet to the audience and to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Holland said he had chosen to go with the recommended budget of the budget officers. High ratings from rating agencies had convinced him that they were very conservative.

Commissioner Crowe said the increased fuel cost was \$70,000 and the increased energy cost was \$120,000 for a total of \$190,000 with an additional amount of \$156,000 for tipping fees.

The Board's opinion on these figures were:

Vice Chairman Owens – agreed with recommended budget with additional \$156,000

Chairman Eckler – agreed with recommended budget with additional \$156,000 and consider \$190,000 later in budget discussions

Commissioner Holland – agreed with recommended budget with additional \$156,000

Vice Chairman Owens had as a recommendation that the 401K contribution by the county for county employees which had been reduced from 5% to 3.75% for all employees other than law

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enforcement be removed from the current year's budget. Commissioner Holland remained with the recommended budget on this. Commissioner Crowe agreed to hold for one year. Commissioner Richard said he preferred to go along with the recommended budget. Chairman Eckler said he would agree to hold for one year but would want to revisit this during budget discussions.

Four of the Commissioners (excluding Commissioner Holland) had removed the furlough days for county employees from their recommended budget. Vice Chairman Owens said he believed these furlough days which meant offices were closed inconvenienced taxpayers.

Commissioner Holland said he did not ask his employees to do anything that he did not do so he had asked that he be included in the pay cut that employees are receiving due to the furlough days. The remaining Board members agreed that they would participate in the reduction in pay due to the furlough days.

Funds had been removed from the Medical Examiner line item. Finance Director Scherer told the Board that this amount is used for autopsies and death examinations. This line item has run over in the past. It has always been in the budget along with the coroner. The consensus of the Board was to add this back to the budget.

After discussion with Social Services Director John Carroll regarding a proposed reduction of \$385,000 to this budget by Vice Chairman Owens, the Board agreed to add \$123,000 of this amount back into the budget. It was explained that this department is being charged for services by Information Technology, Maintenance, and other departments because the state does reimburse 50% of these costs.

The consensus of the Board was to add \$5,500 for court facilities fees due to an increase by the state for juvenile detention.

Chairman Eckler and Commissioner Richard had reduced several department by 5%. Manager Condrey asked if the Board wished to have discussions with these departments to determine how this would impact them. The Board agreed to do this on June 23.

Vice Chairman Owens questioned whether Sheriff's Department vehicles and other vehicles recommended for lease purchase could be purchased with 911 funds. Also, he questioned the cost of computers that had been recommended. Mr. Condrey said these purchases could be included in the discussions on June 23.

Finance Director Scherer went over the reductions and possible reductions that the Board had made during the budget discussions and made some estimates as to the amount of fund balance that would be required to balance the budget. Vice Chairman Owens advised that he would recommend that no fund balance be used.

Commissioner Holland again asked about an EMS station in Henrietta and restrooms at the Frank West Park. Commissioner Crowe said she wanted to wait until a proposal was received from TransMed. Following this she could foresee that an ambulance could be placed at an existing building. Commissioners Richard and Owens echoed this thought.

Commissioner Richard said the county had provided assistance for the folks who have been working on the Frank West Project. It is now in their hands.

Commissioner Richard said discussion could continue again on this issue at the June 23 meeting.

<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>
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The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting after a motion was made by Commissioner Richard.

10:18 A.M. - Adjourned.

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Chairman, Board of Commissioners

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Vice Chairman, Board of Commissioners

Attest:

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Clerk, Board of Commissioners