

**BUDGET WORK SESSION**  
**MAY 17, 2010**

The Pender County Board of Commissioners met in a Budget Work Session on Monday, May 17, 2010 at the Pender County Public Assembly Room, 805 South Walker Street, Burgaw, North Carolina.

Chairman Tate called the Work Session to order at 2:00 p.m. and Mr. Benton made opening remarks.

Mr. Tate said on at least four occasions he was uncomfortable about the amount of cuts the County was proposing to make to various departments in the upcoming budget year. He said he wants the board to look seriously at these issues before they vote on the budget.

Utilities Director Michael Mack delivered a Power Point presentation entitled "Pender County Utilities & Pender Solid Waste" which included: Fund Changes from FY 09-10 Budget-RPTWSD-Sewer, RPTWSD-Water, Maple Hill Water, and Solid Waste Management; Capital Budget & CIP Funding; and Capital Projects-Water Treatment Plant & Transmission Main, Scott's Hill Water Distribution System, Maple Hill Community Sewer System, RPTWSD-NC 210 Parallel Transmission Main & Pump Upgrade, RPTWSD-Phase VI Water Extensions; and other 2010-2011 Major Projects.

Social Services Director Dr. Reta Shiver said her employees will be carrying caseloads in some instances ten times the State's recommended level; some of her workers have become depressed and bipolar due to the heavy work load; the pressure would be lessened if she could receive at least half of the eleven employees she requested in this year's budget; and she needs at least six workers and one supervisor. Dr. Shiver delivered a presentation which included statistics on case loads of overall Social Services and work load in various divisions. Mr. Benton said he recommended no increase in employees. In response to questions regarding staff cuts, Mr. Benton said it would cost between \$120,000 and \$150,000 a year to add six workers and a supervisor. Mr. Rivenbark, who is on the DSS Board, said in his opinion the employees' health issues are hurting the clients. Mr. Tate said it is not realistic to keep piling on these workers. Dr. Shiver said being overworked also concerns them with accuracy issues. Mr. Tate asked Mr. Benton to work with Dr. Shiver to see if they can find an amenable solution to this problem.

Register of Deeds Faye Prevatte said she could not lose the one employee scheduled to be removed in the upcoming budget and she had given up a position in this current budget. She said her office is required by general statute to index each instrument within twenty-four hours of registration and without adequate staff, this could be a major issue. Ms. Prevatte said if she loses an employee, other items could be an issue: across the counter service will not be as fast; there will be no time for projects neither in that office or to help other departments with necessary projects; research time for finding errors in indexing or on the website will be greatly reduced, if any time at all; and returning phone calls and emails will be delayed, depending on work flow.

Superintendent of Schools Allison Sholar spoke to the Board and thanked them for keeping the funding for the school system at the same percentage as last year, even though it means less money. She said as for what the school system is considering cutting includes supplements and salaries, including hers. Mr. Blanchard thanked Ms. Sholar for recognizing the efforts the Board has put into trying to fund the school system. Mr. Williams said that maybe the Board could dip into the fund balance to help the schools. Mr. Benton said that next year the \$2 million in stimulus money in the school budget will be gone and the County will have to pay an additional \$350,000 next year on school bonds. Mr. Rivenbark suggested the Board consider funding half the request for the schools and Social Services. Mr. Tate said the Board

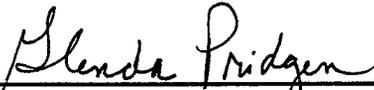
should consider Mr. Rivenbark's suggestion. Mr. Tate said our schools are what bring business into the County and we need to support them.

There was more discussion including using money from fund balance; Revaluation; Schools funding; and the State's responsibilities for Schools funding. Mr. Tate suggested the State Education Lobby should be lobbying legislators.

Mr. Benton explained there are other departments who have large cuts in their budget, but the biggest ones are the Schools, DSS, Health Department and Sheriff. He said Ms. Prevatte did a terrific job with her office but he and Mr. McCole had to look at the whole picture. He said it was difficult for them to develop a budget which didn't include tax increase, without making cuts.

The Budget Work Session ended at 4:00 p.m. The next one is scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon, following the Board's regular meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Glenda Pridgen, Deputy Clerk to the Board

Reviewed By:



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Rick Benton, Clerk to the Board