

Minutes
Catawba County Board of Commissioners
Budget Hearing and Wrap-Up
Thursday, June 2nd, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met on Thursday, June 2, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Catawba County Justice Center, 100 Government Drive, North Carolina. The purpose of this meeting was for a public hearing to receive public comments on the County Budget for Fiscal Year 2022/23.

Present were Chair Randy Isenhower, Vice-Chair Barbara G. Beatty and Commissioners Katherine W. Barnes, Sherry E. Butler, and Austin Allran.

Also present were County Manager Mick Berry, Deputy County Manager Mary Furtado, County Attorney Jodi Stewart, Assistant County Attorney Joshua Teague, Budget and Management Analyst Ian Bumgarner, Budget and Management Director Jennifer Mace, and County Clerk Dale Stiles. Assistant County Manager Alison Alexander was not present.

1. Chair Randy Isenhower called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., noting a quorum was present.
2. Commissioner Sherry Butler led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Chair Randy Isenhower offered the invocation.
4. County Manager Mick Berry gave an overview of the FY23 Budget process and an overview of the proposed FY23 Budget that is being recommended for adoption which is scheduled for Monday, June 6, 2022. Mr. Berry noted that budget presentations with County departments and outside agencies took place on Wednesday, May 25, 2022 and stated the purpose of this meeting was to conduct a public hearing to receive citizen comments on the proposed budget.
5. Public Hearing
Chair Randy Isenhower asked Commissioners if they had any questions. With no questions being raised, Chair Isenhower opened the public hearing for the proposed FY23 Budget. Robert C. Abernethy, Jr., came forward to propose a 5% salary increase for employees, stating inflation should level off over time, and preferred compensating employees through bonuses instead of base salary adjustments for that reason. After asking if anyone else present wished to make any comments before the Board and hearing none, Chair Isenhower closed the public hearing.

Chair Isenhower then drew the Board's attention to the wrap-up sheet that detailed seven items which the Board would need to consider individually:

1. Pay Plan Adjustment – \$660,000. Increase pay plan adjustment by 1% (to 7%), effective July 1st. Commissioner Kitty Barnes suggested to move forward with the proposed 6% pay adjustment, the 3 to 3 ½ % performance increase, and the quarterly \$500 retention bonus. Commissioner Sherry Butler agreed. Chair Isenhower made a motion to approve a 5% pay plan adjustment, the 3 to 3 ½ % performance increase, and the quarterly \$500 retention bonus. Chair Isenhower added that 5% is at market level, adding 3 to 3 ½ % performance increase would equal 8%. A 5% pay plan adjustment would make it possible for the County to restrain from utilizing Fund Balance. Chair Isenhower and Commissioner Allran voted in favor of the motion. Vice-Chair Beatty and Commissioners Barnes and Butler opposed the motion. The motion failed to pass by a 2-3 vote. The Pay Plan Adjustment will remain at 6%.
2. Sheriff Road Patrol Night Shift Differential – \$100,000 to implement \$2 per hour shift differential pay for Sheriff Road Patrol Deputies, as requested by the Sheriff. Commissioner Butler stated shift differential pay should be consistent in all areas. Commissioner Butler made a motion to provide an


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EMS shift differential pay of \$1 per hour. The motion carried unanimously. No action was taken on the Sheriff Road Patrol Night Shift Differential.

3. EMS Base Fencing – \$100,000 to add fencing to EMS bases at Newton and St. Stephens. After determining there was not an imminent need, the Board agreed that fencing was not needed at this time.
 4. Newton Conover City Schools – \$50,000 to Systemwide School Safety Security Enhancements for all sites, including installation of cameras and blinds. Commissioner Butler suggested all schools be updated with two-door Sally Ports first, then move to installing cameras. Commissioner Butler made a motion to set aside \$50,000 for the Systemwide School Safety Security Enhancements for all sites. The motion carried unanimously.
 5. Soil & Water Grant – Appropriation of Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP) grant of \$282,400 in non-local funds plus required 10% match of \$28,240 for stream debris and blockage removal. Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve the Appropriation of Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP) grant of \$282,400 in non-local funds plus the required 10% match of \$28,240 for stream debris and blockage removal. The motion passed unanimously.
 6. Catawba County Schools – Repurpose CREC renovation funding for other projects requested by the school system, based on alternative possibilities regarding CREC relocation, with no additional cost. Funds for this purpose already exist in the budget. Commissioner Butler made a motion to repurpose CREC renovation funding, based on alternative possibilities regarding CREC relocation. The motion passed unanimously.
 7. Elections – The recommended budget included costs for a potential countywide 2nd primary, which did not end up being necessary. Only the City of Hickory will have an election in July, which it will fully fund. Commissioner Butler made a motion to approve the reduction of planned expenditures of \$119,471. The motion carried unanimously.
6. No other items were discussed. Budget Adoption is scheduled for Monday, June 6, 2022, at the Board's Regular scheduled meeting.
7. Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Barbara G. Beatty, which unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.



Randy Isenhower, Chair
Board of Commissioners



Dale R. Stiles
County Clerk