

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 11, 2023
Budget Workshop
GRANVILLE EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTER
4185 US Highway 15 South, Oxford, North Carolina

PRESENT:

Chair Russ May
Vice Chair Timothy Karan
Commissioner Zelodis Jay
Commissioner Robert Williford
Commissioner Sue Hinman
Commissioner Tony W. Cozart
Commissioner Jimmy Gooch

County Manager Drew Cummings
Deputy County Manager Korena Weichel
County Attorney James C. Wrenn, Jr.

CALL TO ORDER

At 9:01 a.m. Chair Russ May called the meeting to order. County Manager Drew Cummings had the invocation and Commissioner Zelodis Jay led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair May emphasized satisfaction with a meeting with Sheriff Robert Fountain, former Sheriff John Hardy, deputies, Commissioner Williford, County Manager Cummings, Deputy County Manager Korena Weichel, and staff, highlighting discussions about periods of pay changes and staffing challenges. He said that the Sheriff had been involved in previous conversations and that the Board wanted to maintain recruiting, staff the Sheriff's office, and value seasoned employees

County Manager Cummings highlighted efforts to contextualize discussions and prioritize issues systematically.

COUNTY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) OVERVIEW AND EXPO AUDIO VISUAL UPDATE

This item was moved up on the agenda. Information Technology Director Chris gave an overview of the IT Department initiatives and updated the Board on the pending upgrades to the audio-visual (AV) system at the Granville County Convention and Expo Center. Ongoing efforts to enhance server infrastructure through initiatives like server virtualization were discussed, showcasing a proactive approach to optimizing IT resources. Mr. Brame emphasized the importance of robust security measures against ransomware, with strategies including real-time backup solutions and email security protocols to safeguard data and ensure operational continuity. Insights into email security protocols underscored the County's comprehensive approach to mitigating cyber threats, including employee training to detect and counter phishing attempts. As for the convention center, Mr. Brame overviewed the plans to upgrade the audiovisual (AV) equipment which include the installation of cameras and microphones to improve communication and enable greater participation in meetings through the potential for live streaming.

BREAK

At 9:57 a.m., the Board took a break. The meeting resumed at 10:15 a.m.

OVERVIEW OF REVISED RECOMMENDED BUDGET WITH RECOMMENDED SERVICE EXPANSION CHANGES

County Manager Cummings said after talking with staff, he would like to hire a Management Analyst sooner than what he mentioned on Monday. He was asked where the new employees in Administration and Human Resources will be housed, and a discussion ensued about possible options. Commissioner Hinman emphasized that the 122 Williamsboro Street building needs to be taken down. County Manager Cummings talked about leases for buildings where departments are housed. He asked if there were any other questions about the budget. He answered questions about the County Health Plan budget, JCPC matching funding, and school maintenance funding. He then addressed standard practices for determining salary ranges and adjustments for new hires after mention of adding positions. He stressed the necessity for competitive salaries, particularly in law enforcement, to attract and retain qualified candidates. Mr. Cummings discussed ongoing negotiations and challenges with Fire Department contracts, highlighting the County's commitment to fair compensation and collaboration.

PRESENTATION OF ADDITIONAL STAFF ANALYSIS

County Manager Cummings discussed the challenges faced in providing growth opportunities within a small organization, particularly highlighting the Planning Department. He emphasized the importance of succession planning and creating space for talented employees to advance into higher roles. Mr. Cummings addressed reclassification requests from the Sheriff's office, ensuring fair treatment for new employees by adjusting pay in alignment with job responsibilities.

FINAL BUDGET DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION REQUESTS

County Manager Cummings outlined efforts to finalize the budget for adoption. He asked if Board members had heard any concerns that may be brought up at the public hearing and no one responded that they had heard anything. He emphasized the importance of resource allocation, especially in funding fire departments and addressing community needs. He talked about getting the fire contract finalized. Mr. Cummings also emphasized the need for flexibility and transparency in budget management and decision-making processes, demonstrating a commitment to efficient resource allocation and organizational effectiveness.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the budget workshop session at 11:27 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford and unanimously carried, the Board went into closed session as allowed by North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3) for attorney-client matters at 11:27 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT OF CLOSED SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman seconded by Commissioner Rob Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the closed session at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra A. Weary, NCMCC, CMC
Clerk to the Board

ATTEST:

Russ May, Chair