

MINUTES – MARCH 15, 2012

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners met in special session at the Historic Courthouse in Yanceyville, North Carolina at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 15, 2012. Members of Commissioners present: Nathaniel Hall, Chairman, Cathy W. Lucas, Vice-Chair, Gordon G. Satterfield, Kenneth D. Travis and N. Kent Williamson. Absent: William E. Carter and Jeremiah Jefferies. Members of Sheriff's Office present: Sheriff Michael Welch, Capt. Jerald Brown, Lt. Michael Adkins, Lt. Frank Rose, Lt. Tony Durden, Capt. Scott Halbrook, Lt. A. D. Rainey, and Lt. Eugene Riddick. Also present: Kevin B. Howard, County Manager, Butch Reynolds, Consultant and Angela Evans representing The Caswell Messenger. Paula P. Seamster, Clerk to the Board, recorded the minutes.

Vice-Chair Lucas called the meeting to order.

DETENTION CENTER TRANSITION TEAM DISCUSSION

Sheriff Michael Welch stated "It is my pleasure to introduce to the Board of Commissioners Consultant Butch Reynolds. He has been assisting us through our transitional process. Before I ask him to come forward and make the presentation for staffing I wanted to recognize everybody that is here tonight that has been working on the transitional phase for the facility: Lt. Mike Adkins, Capt. Scott Halbrook, Lt. Frank Rose, Lt. A. D. Rainey, Lt. Tony Durden, Capt. Jerald Brown and Lt. Eugene Riddick. We have still had to keep our daily duties being performed as well as working through the processes in the transition. This is one of the more important meetings in our transition and we really appreciate the Board of Commissioners meeting with us in this workshop. I would like to introduce Butch Reynolds."

Mr. Butch Reynolds stated that he had been in the law enforcement business for almost 40 years. He explained that there were certain guidelines that the state required for North Carolina jails. Staffing is an issue that needed to be addressed. Mr. Reynolds stated that he felt the facility needed more people but the Sheriff was insistent that nine people would be enough to do the job. He explained that the new facility would be about 240 feet from front to back. He explained the procedures of Intake, Central Control, the Rovers and Supervisors.

(At 5:50 p.m. Chairman Hall entered the meeting).

Vice-Chair Lucas asked "Did you say it was 240 feet from end to end? Where is the housing part of the center?" Mr. Reynolds responded that the largest majority of the center would be for housing. He also explained that Intake has the most volatile situations. The officers working in this part of the center needs to be cognitive of suicide." Vice-Chair Lucas continued "How will it be different in the new facility from the current facility on Intake? Will it be a different process?" Lt. Durden responded "The difference will be the distance. The Intake in the new facility will be approximately 240 feet from the Control Room." Vice-Chair Lucas asked "This will happen after the magistrate has dealt with the person, right?" Mr. Reynolds responded "Yes once the magistrate has done their part then the inmate will be put in the custody of the Sheriff." Vice-Chair Lucas continued "So the total in Intake would be?" Mr. Reynolds responded "One

for the day shift and one for the night shift for a total of two and then two for the other shift one for day shift and one for the night shift for a total of four. Five people for a 24 hour post is good.”

Sheriff Welch explained that the Transition Team had been working on identifying the actual projections. The potential of budget revenues are as follows:

2012 – 2013	\$375,600	January – June
2013 – 2014	\$626,400	Full Year
2014 – 2015	\$751,200	Full Year with increases

Sheriff Welch also explained that Caswell County has been participating as a pilot program with the state. He has projected that Caswell County will receive \$91,000 from this pilot program this year. Sheriff Welch stated that the Sheriff’s department would be requesting 9 new positions. He also stated that today was the deadline for the RFP proposals and that the Transition Team would be working through those. The first RFP the Transition Team will be working on will be Food Service. Sheriff Welch thanked the Board for their support on the new jail.

Vice-Chair Lucas asked “We don’t have an actual breakdown on each one of those proposals yet, is that what you are saying?” Sheriff Welch responded “No ma’am. We have to work through them and then prioritize them and make a recommendation to the Board based on all proposals that have come in to us.” Vice-Chair Lucas continued “We are allowed how much per day per inmate now?” Sheriff Welch responded “That is \$40 per day under that agreement.” Vice-Chair Lucas asked “What is the \$91,000?” Sheriff Welch responded “That is what we project in revenues in the existing beds now.” Vice-Chair Lucas continued “From now until the end of the year?” Sheriff Welch responded “We started in December.” Vice-Chair Lucas asked “Do you know what you have collected?” Sheriff Welch responded “Around \$40,000. The program is set up for reimbursement after they finish their time. So it is between 90 to 180 days. We have worked with the finance director and the county manager and we have all of that set up so we can have that reflected in this year’s budget.”

Commissioner Satterfield asked “Sheriff what is your estimated expense per day per prisoner?” Sheriff Welch responded “We look at this for empty beds.” Commissioner Satterfield continued “When you are talking about \$40 you are talking about gross. There has to be some additional cost each day coming out of that \$40 if it is nothing but meals.” Sheriff Welch responded “When we did the planning we did not count on the statewide program. We also have the U.S. Marshall program that we will be participating in. We also have the opportunity to hold inmates for other sheriff offices. We will not know our operating costs until after we get started. Right now our preliminary budget will go up from \$640,000 to roughly over a million. The first year we will need half of that increase and then after that we will know the full budget.”

Vice-Lucas asked “Now that is your operating budget, is that correct?” Sheriff Welch responded “Initially. We won’t have that until we actually go through this budget process. It is around \$640,000 for the existing jail and we are looking at approximately one million sixty thousand but what we have to do is figure out and get direction from the Board of Commissioners on which route we are going to go and which vendors we are going to use. As we go through the budget

process we will know the expenses.” Vice-Chair Lucas continued “The 9 new positions, do you have an estimate on what the starting salaries will be?” Sheriff Welch responded “Roughly \$25,000.”

Commissioner Travis asked “Sheriff what is the cost per day to house a prisoner?” Sheriff Welch responded “We will have that number once we determine the operating budget for the new facility. I understand the question but we have to have an operating budget to calculate that formula. The way this was planned out was that we would have empty beds to rent out to generate revenue.” Commissioner Travis continued “Is there any way we can get that figure some way or another or a rough estimate that is pretty close?” Sheriff Welch responded “It would be toward the end of the budget process. We will try to figure that but it will be with the existing jail and not with the new facility.” Commissioner Travis stated “It will be entirely different in the new jail than what it is now in the existing jail. What it is now is not worth five cents because we are talking about the money we are going to be spending in the new jail. To me the meals should be the same.” Mr. Howard responded “Actually with the estimates we have received, the meals actually go down. The cost for 100 meals will be the same as providing 50 meals.” Vice-Chair Lucas added “So the volume decreases the cost?” Mr. Howard responded “Yes ma’am.” Commissioner Travis stated “We need to know how much this jail is going to cost the county.” Mr. Howard responded “When we did the budget we actually used Pamlico County’s budget to work from because it is the same facility, same number of beds and same operating expenses.”

Commissioner Travis asked “What will we do if we are completely full and we need room for our inmates?” Sheriff Welch responded “Our primary concern is for our inmates even if we house outside inmates.”

Chairman Hall asked “You stated that our main concern is our inmates. We are talking about a how many bed facility?” Sheriff Welch responded “180.” Chairman Hall continued “Out of that 180 we are going to reserve x number of beds for Caswell County and at any point that we start getting close we can unreserved those beds for outsiders?” Lt. Durden responded “All 180 beds are for Caswell County inmates. But we plan to rent out the beds for revenues.”

Vice-Chair Lucas asked “How many are down there currently?” Lt. Durden responded “42.” Mr. Howard asked “But how many are actually from Caswell County?” Lt. Durden responded “Around 30.” Commissioner Travis stated “It does not matter if they are from Caswell County. If they do a crime here in Caswell County and are tried in this county and they are locked up in this county. They do not go back to Alamance County because they live in Alamance. They stay here.”

Sheriff Welch asked “We respectfully request that if any revenues that we generate now, that was not anticipated, to go towards the increase in next year’s operating budget for the jail.” Commissioner Travis responded “In other words the money you make can fluctuate up and down.” Sheriff Welch stated “This program is going to be constant because if we get a number of beds committed as long as we can keep those beds full then that money is through the court costs being increased and that program is being managed through the North Carolina Sheriff’s Association. We will be a receiving county. On the federal level it depends on how that program is and it depends on the rate we are being reimbursed by the U.S. Marshalls. At that

time I think you have a point but we are going to continue to plan and process. We are going to look at it at that point. Look at the budget and try to recalculate our rate and then provide that information and make sure that it is being tracked.” Mr. Howard added “One thing the Sheriff and I discussed approaching the commissioners about is we would base the budget say on \$375,000 to bring in \$475,000. The commissioners will create a separate fund for that to go into so when it goes down we will have money to come back to replace those dollars if it fluctuates in the wrong way.”

Vice-Chair Lucas asked “So what you are saying is it will go to the general fund?” Mr. Howard responded “It is general fund revenues. You don’t have to do this but one thing to consider is if you have additional revenues is setting it aside for future use to make a debt payment. If you have additional revenues you can pull from there without affecting other general fund revenues.” Commissioner Travis added “It is like having a savings account just in case you need it.” Mr. Howard responded “Right.”

Commissioner Williamson asked “You are asking for 9 additional people. When would this start?” Sheriff Welch responded “We would need direction from the Board because we have things that we are going to have to do as far as recruiting. We have training that has to be done and not just for certification training. We train on the operations. Then we are looking at the timeline of when the facility will become operational. We are not just getting the keys but when we become operational. During the budget process again I respectfully request the sooner we can get direction from the Board the better because we have things right now we are doing with policies. We have to train each individual, new staff plus our current staff, on how all of this is going to work. I hope that helps.” Commissioner Williamson continued “It helps but we probably need some type of schedule to show us what you expect.” Mr. Howard added “You will need to hire in September to start working in January.”

Lt. Rose stated “One thing the Sheriff brought up was, under the misdemeanor confinement that is something that the state put back on the county. By us opting to get into it this can generate this revenue. The state reimburses on the medical and the transportation on misdemeanor confinement inmates so actually the housing of them is cheaper than somebody you had to pick up. If we had not opted to get into that we would be stuck behind and not have the opportunity to get into it now.” Vice-Chair Lucas asked “There is no chance of the state changing that, is there?” Lt. Rose responded “The state has found out that it is cheaper to do this than it is to put them in prisons. I worked for the prison system for 10 years and I don’t see them going back. They found a way to do it cheaper by putting it back on the county. It is cheaper for them to run it this way than for them to put them in the prisons.” Vice-Chair Lucas stated “I just hope it will stay that way and that they don’t change it.” Mr. Howard responded “They increased the court cost fees to cover this program.” Vice-Chair Lucas stated “I understand that but they could always change their mind.”

Commissioner Travis asked “What you are saying is you need 21 people when you start this jail or do you have 21 people now?” Sheriff Welch responded “We need nine. I think our goal has been to look at the operation and to find those operating increases and to look at the potential revenues to where we can cover those costs and then provide that information to the Board.”

Vice-Chair Lucas stated "We want that as well. I think the RFPs were due today?" Sheriff Welch responded "They have been received and stamped. So now the process begins. What we are trying to do is to provide the Board of Commissioners with that information and trying to schedule those meetings ahead of time. Part of what we are trying to do is that we are following the schedule so we can make a decision so we can stay on course as well. I have to commend everybody and not just the ones who are present tonight but the entire staff of the sheriff's office on their work. A lot of work has been put into this. Probably the next one will be the kitchen. That will be kitchen equipment and actually looking at the food service. There will be decisions and directions we will need from the Board." Vice-Chair Lucas continued "So you will present the RFPs one at a time, is that right?" Sheriff Welch responded "We will present our recommendations and then try to get a directive from the Board."

Commissioner Travis asked "Is the starting pay now in the jail \$25,000?" Sheriff Welch responded "Yes sir."

Chairman Hall stated "Let me go back to Kent's question again about the hiring of the employees. You said you are looking for a direction from the Board. It would be helpful to me and I know you have this information but because you have committees and groups working on this thing if you lay out the new staff based on the completion date then you know about how long the training is going to take, certifications is going to take and then just put it to us that way. Then I will not be giving you any direction in the blank. Give us a timeline. This is the completion date. These are the dates for the BLET academy. These are recruitment dates. That way we can look at it and make some kind of informed decision. At least I could."

Lt. Adkins stated "The school is about 4 weeks. The background for the hiring process takes about another month." Chairman Hall responded "Put that on a piece of paper that I can see and then when you come before the Board you can say this is why we are asking for this."

Mr. Reynolds stated that the county may want to stagger the hiring process but at least have all the hiring done 30 days prior to opening. He stated that the inmates will know the layout of the jail better than the people who work there. The EMS and fire departments need to be trained. "Plan for the best but prepare for the worse." All the people have to be trained.

Commissioner Satterfield asked "I am kind of fuzzy on this expense thing but I am not going to bring it back up again. You made a remark that you hope to anticipate \$91,000 in additional revenue this fiscal year, is that correct?" Sheriff Welch responded "That is correct."

Commissioner Satterfield continued "Well let me ask just one question and I know you can answer this, are we going to stay within our budget in expenses for the jail this fiscal year?" Sheriff Welch responded "Yes sir." Commissioner Satterfield stated "Thank you."

Vice-Chair Lucas asked "Where are we with the timeline of the construction of the jail, are we on schedule?" Mr. Howard responded "I think we have mentioned 30 days of rain. That has affected the project. We may very well be in the jail portion before the administration. We are looking at the end of November and opening and using the jail by January 1." Vice-Chair Lucas continued "Do you have the issue with the pump station settled?" Mr. Howard responded "We

are actually pushing that today. We should have something pretty soon on that. The engineers are talking to each other.”

Lt. Rose stated “I have lived here a long time and a lot of you know me. This has been a work in progress. Many times projects like this have come before the board of commissioners and they have pretty much said this is what we need done and this is what we need and never any how can we work together to see that this is done. We have done a lot of work to try to maximize this facility for the county and for the best for the county and to use that facility to the best we can. I appreciate the Board’s help and like I said if it were not for the Board’s help we would not be where we are at right now. I thank ya’ll for that as a taxpayer of the county.”

Lt. Durden stated “I would like to thank everyone for coming out and everyone who has had some concerns about the county this project. Thank you.”

Chairman Hall stated “Before we adjourn there is one thing I would like to bring up that is not related to this. The next Monday night’s meeting if you have received the agenda you should have noticed it is relatively short. One of the things we are going to do is to participate in North Carolina’s Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans. We worked with the local commander and local post here and there is a pretty sizeable program planned and we wanted to let the commissioners know so you will know in advance kind of what to expect. The post commander will be giving certificates to families that lost sons in the Vietnam War. I think there will be six of them. We also plan to acknowledge all Vietnam era veterans. We are not quite sure how many will come but we could have close to a full house. We will have a short recess and Commander Smith will do the presentation. He just asked me to let the Board know so there would not be any big surprises. If you know any Vietnam era veterans encourage them to come out. They never really got that welcome home and that is what we are trying to do. That is what the state of North Carolina is trying to do and we are just participating in it.”

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:45 p.m. Vice-Chair Lucas adjourned the meeting.

Paula P. Seamster
Clerk to the Board

Cathy W. Lucas
Vice-Chair
