

MINUTES – JUNE 8, 2011

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners met in special session at the Historic Courthouse in Yanceyville, North Carolina at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 8, 2011. Members present: Nathaniel Hall, Chairman, Kenneth D. Travis, Vice-Chairman, William E. Carter, Cathy W. Lucas and Gordon G. Satterfield. Absent: Erik D. Battle and Jeremiah Jefferies. Also present: Kevin B. Howard, County Manager, and Gwen Vaughn, Finance Director and Angela Evans representing The Caswell Messenger. Paula P. Seamster, Clerk to the Board, recorded the minutes.

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

Chairman Hall opened the meeting with a Moment of Silent Prayer.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2011 – 2012

Chairman Hall stated “I do not have an agenda but I do know that we started the last time with the Tax Department. We invited the Sheriff to be here this morning so I guess we could start with the Sheriff’s budget. As before at the prior meeting we had asked the commissioners if they had specific questions that they would like for the staff to address or to get the department to address to get them to them. We will start with the specific questions that you may have for the Sheriff’s office and then go from there. Since you don’t have any specific questions we can start to look at the Sheriff’s budget.”

Commissioner Lucas stated “Chairman Hall just for clarification on the budget. I know we have the basic Sheriff’s department’s budget and the Sheriff/Police that is considered the Town, is that correct? And then the Detention Center which is done separately.” Sheriff Welch responded “Then the revenue, you have the SOR, Jail, Town contract, the Sheriff’s Department.”

Chairman Hall stated “I know before we ended the last session there was some discussion about the Town so I guess we could start, Sheriff, with you giving us an overview of your budget, your regular budget, your budget as it relates to the Town, if any, and the sources of funding.” Sheriff Welch responded “Mr. Chairman, looking back at it three years ago when the contract was entered in by the Sheriff’s Office with the Town of Yanceyville, the Town of Yanceyville Town Council had decided to go away with the police department, which was a six man department. Looking at that, the contract, there were certain liabilities to the county that we needed assurance if we were to continue to provide services, meaning deputies assigned to the Town for 4.1 square miles. Things such as their evidence room, their investigations, their record keeping system, any kind of surplus property program that they may have been involved in. The contract was basically protecting Caswell County in the Caswell County’s Sheriff’s Office and then also assuring us that funding would be provided whether it was for four deputies assigned twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week or if the Town elected to say provide two deputies assigned to the Town and then that assurance that the funding would be provided for three years outside of the ninety day option to get out of the contract. Their funding was crucial, at that point in time, the Board of Commissioners and the Sheriff’s office were working towards dividing the county into four patrol zones. The purpose of that was to provide a faster response time to the outer parts of the county and to provide more presence of law enforcement. So in essence what we have been doing for the last three years, in the Town of Yanceyville and the county, is there have

been five patrol zones. Through time analysis we were able to show the majority of the calls that come in through dispatch are double between 2:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. Then we were able to measure Yanceyville, being the fifth zone and the number of calls in each area. One thing that is very important to realize was that the entire response time on the calls for the Sheriff's office had decreased. We were able to promote more presence throughout the county and the savings that were realized. Contingent on the contract and I understand that the Town is opting not to provide. So in essence what they did by providing the funding was they provided a deputy to be assigned to the Town and that funding is not going to be there. The contract allowed for the funding to be paid in quarterly payments to the county for these services. The majority of the contract was for personnel and the fringe benefits and lapse funding was put into this."

Commissioner Travis asked "What is going to happen to these deputies when this end with the Town?" Sheriff Welch responded "The plan as you recall Commissioner Travis, we discussed that early on in the planning process between the Sheriff's office and the Board of Commissioners, in lieu of the Town opting not to provide those services those positions would be looked at attrition, through retirement. There was also a contingency fund put in place and basically two positions have already been processed through attrition and also through retirement." Commissioner Travis added "I understand that you have some money to take care of this but that will be through the next fiscal year, right?" Sheriff Welch responded "Right." Commissioner Travis asked "What happens after that that is what I need to know? The County is either going to have to pick them up or let them go home, right?" Sheriff Welch responded "That is the reality of the situation however..." Commissioner Travis asked "Do you remember when you went into this contract with the Town of Yanceyville?" Sheriff Welch acknowledged. Commissioner Travis continued "What did this Board say at that time?" Sheriff Welch responded "Refresh my memory." Commissioner Travis responded "What this Board said, if I am wrong please correct me, when the contract between the Town and the Sheriff's Department ended the county would not pick up the help, I am not saying putting them in a position that is empty, I am talking about extra help. This Board made a decision then that they would not pick up any extra help. Am I right?" Chairman Hall responded "That is generally what was said and I think that was understood by the Sheriff's Department." Sheriff Welch responded "That was correct." Commissioner Travis stated "What I am getting at is I understand that you have the money to pay for this deputy through the end of the year. If there is no opening in the Sheriff's Department then they will have to go home. That is the way I understood it." Sheriff Welch responded "Basically the contingency was to allow for at least two of the positions to continue and the funding would be there for that for the next fiscal year. What I mean by attrition is if a position comes open then I will not be able to fill it unless the Board changes their stance and I come back in front of the Board so that was part of the plan. I need the assurance of the transition, as Sheriff, the Town of Yanceyville has had a law enforcement presence for over a decade. That presence was funded by the Town Council and by removing that fund it does not allow for a transition. Crime is going to increase and our response times are going to increase for the Town. Over the last three years the response time has been amazingly less than four minutes for the Town and it has been greatly improved in the county. Also in that planning process, Commissioner Travis, we had to address the miles that were driven on the patrol cars and the amount of operating expenses that would increase and with the fuel costs and what we realized was that patrol zone, implementation of that program, has shown a savings. We were able to show a savings last year and the year before. Now we have got to see how it is going to

affect this next fiscal year.” Commissioner Travis stated “What is going to happen now is your fuel bill is going to go up. Your mileage is going to go up and your overhead is going to go up.” Sheriff Welch responded “That is very possible.” Chairman Hall stated “Not necessarily unless he changes the system. Up until this point I think that you and the Sheriff both agreed by saying the same thing. I am going to cut to the bottom line with your question to the Sheriff. What happens after this year when all of the dollars are gone? Will there be a reduction in force for the Sheriff’s Department to compensate for that loss in dollars?” Sheriff Welch responded “I think it would be my duty as Sheriff to come back in front of the Board to give the Board informed information of where we are at, at that time. This contingency was properly planned. This was done three years ago to get to this point we have been good stewards of the funding that has been provided to the Sheriff’s office. We have a lot of things going on. We are based and surrounded by budget cuts, budget restraints on the national state and surrounding areas. Right now we operate on five zones, Yanceyville being the central. As to the options, we are budget driven. Whatever contingency, whatever plan, for law enforcement services countywide is going to depend on the outcome of the budget process.”

Commissioner Travis asked “Mike, are you saying as of July 1st you will go back to four districts instead of five. Is that correct? Am I understanding it right or wrong?” Sheriff Welch responded “One option would be that. That fifth zone will still be maintained for reporting purposes so we can measure the crime that is occurring within that 4.1 square mile zone. That area for patrol will be incorporated into the four zones that are within the county.” Commissioner Travis stated “The way I see that is you are going from five back to four. There will be four people taking care of five districts instead of five people taking care five districts.” Sheriff Welch responded “One thing that is very important to realize is that our calls are doubled between 2:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. compared to 2:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. that is when we need to allocate your personnel to handle that. There is also an issue of officer safety. Basically when we go to calls we need two deputies to respond to domestic situations. That is one of the main calls that we go on.” Commissioner Travis stated “What I am saying is July 1st instead of having five people looking after five districts you will have four people looking after five districts. Am I right or wrong?” Sheriff Welch responded “Yes that is what we are leaning towards.” Commissioner Travis continued “That is the reason I said what I did a while ago, that the overhead and expense of running these cars all over the county and the mileage is going up. There is no way that it can’t.” Sheriff Welch responded “It is going to be 911 driven.” Commissioner Travis continued “You are going to have to drive four cars more on a shift than when you were driving five.” Sheriff Welch responded “That is correct. That is the reason for the increase in the fuel and the increase of the car.” Commissioner Travis added “Oil change and everything else.” Sheriff Welch stated “Where we have seen savings, we are going to have to measure for the next year what this is actually going to cost to continue to provide these services.”

Commissioner Satterfield stated “You are going to have one less car out there running to though Commissioner Travis, so that is going to cut down on your expenses.” Commissioner Travis responded “You will have one less car but the Town is going to take away that car now so the County will have to pay the whole bill, right?” Commissioner Satterfield stated “He has the funds from this year to pay for that.” Sheriff Welch responded “As far as the request for that does the Board have any questions for that?”

Commissioner Lucas stated "We have heard that, and I don't know what the contract says because I have not seen the contract with the Town, but they are going to be requesting their equipment back as well. Is that what the contract states?" Sheriff Welch responded "I made a formal request with the Town Council to retain the patrol cars that were given three years ago and it is my understanding that they voted to have them retained by the county by the Sheriff Department. There were actually three drafts of that contract and that was added toward the end. The other part was any equipment that was purchased during the three years is retained ownership by the county."

Chairman Hall asked "What equipment that came with the contract will be returned to the Town?" Sheriff Welch responded "Nothing."

Commissioner Lucas asked "When was the vote?" Sheriff Welch responded "Yesterday. I actually had heard. The contract would call for that property to be returned at the end of the contract." Commissioner Lucas continued "And that would include any vehicles that were purchased during." Mr. Howard responded "That was the vehicles that were given to begin with." Sheriff Welch added "There were four vehicles given in the contract."

Commissioner Lucas asked "If we used any of the money to purchase vehicles with, those vehicles are still ours, right?" Sheriff Welch responded "That is correct."

Chairman Hall stated "So I guess to kind of summarize this. The current set up of the Sheriff's office is five zones, four being in the county and one being the central Yanceyville area. The current plan for the next fiscal year is to continue those five zones." Sheriff Welch responded "Mr. Hall it is all going to be dependent on the outcome of the budget process. I would have to look at things like structure. I would have to figure out with my staff how to do more with less so there are going to be some changes of course." Chairman Hall stated "I was just trying to get the general feel."

Commissioner Lucas asked "As far as staffing right now, Mike, where are you with your staffing?" Sheriff Welch responded "We are full. We have two positions that we have lost in this fiscal year." Chairman Hall asked "How many officers do you have?" Sheriff Welch responded "Thirty-four (34) sworn."

Commissioner Satterfield stated "Sheriff I would like to say that I think that you are doing a great job with what little help you have. I wish the county could afford to give you more help because I know you need it. Whenever I talk to the citizens out here, one of the three big concerns is Sheriff's protection and response time. I hear that, I hear schools and I hear EMS. Those are the three things I hear all the time when I talk to the general public. Sheriff I look at your travel budget and I have some concerns about that. Fourteen thousand (\$14,000.00) in tough economic times and some of these things and I understand that all county employees have to keep their certifications. They have to go to training and they have to keep up to date but I am hoping that somewhere down the line that some of these conferences can be webinars or whatever to reduce some of these costs. I look at some of these things like seventeen hundred dollar trips and two thousand dollar trips, I would hope that you would go back and study these

things real carefully because you are the man that knows who is going where and absolutely if they need to go in tough economic times. I am going to ask the same thing from every department head, not just the Sheriff. It is an area that I think that there are some savings that can be had. We are looking at a budget with no capital things in it and I know you can't continue to operate vehicles forever. They have to be replaced so we have to look at other areas where we can make some reductions to try to be able to give you some vehicles and things like that if you need them. I am not going to pick out any particular travel item or anything like that. I would just like to see you and I know you have probably already done this but I would like for you to go back and see if there is some kind of way that you can look at this and be a little bit more frugal in travel especially this coming year." Sheriff Welch responded "If that is the pleasure of this Board I will schedule a meeting with the county manager and we can take a look at that. One thing I would like to share with you though is just in the last year we have had changes in the statutes of law that require certain things from the Sheriff's office. To give you an example, the North Carolina Secured Communities Initiative, that requires travel for training. CJ Leagues through AOC Information Sharing that is another initiative that we have changes in the immigration laws where we have to train our staff to run IAQs, Illegal Alien Queries. One thing we can do Commissioner Satterfield, we also recognize the travel and training, there are more demands every year. We are trying to find a way to meet those requirements and those certifications. Our training directly reflects the services that we provide so if we give our deputies the tools we will be able to provide a better service. When there is savings that is at hand we try to find that and we try to look at it. I will definitely follow up." Commissioner Satterfield stated "I am sure that you have already looked at it." Sheriff Welch continued "We try to be consistent. We try to hold the line, but with travel and training, it gets more difficult with the demands that are put on us with the new laws."

Commissioner Lucas asked "With your staff and employees have you heard concerns about the increase in the health care coverage and how that affects their pay situation without getting a raise?" Sheriff Welch responded "Yes. Looking at a cost of living adjustment and looking at the employees with the Sheriff's office that were affected by the change, they are very appreciative of the county providing the benefit for employee health insurance coverage but any concern that was brought to me was if that was going to continue with the county."

Commissioner Lucas asked "Equipment rental on your main budget, Sheriff Welch, what is that for specifically?" Sheriff Welch responded "Equipment rental is for the leases that we have." Commissioner Lucas asked "Leases on?" Sheriff Welch responded "Like the copy machine." Commissioner Lucas continued "The armored vests?" Sheriff Welch responded "We generally apply for grant funding through the BGA but I still have to include the funding in the budget and then we usually look at that. Usually we are successful..." Commissioner Lucas added "When you get the grant you pull that out." Sheriff Welch responded "Well with the changes on the national level and with the funding we know that it is the Board's stance as far as grant funding. We don't look at grants toward positions because of the continuing cost situation but we do look at grant funding for equipment and we have been successful in BGA block grants for bullet proof vests."

Commissioner Lucas asked "I just had one other question on the Detention Center budget on the maintenance and repair of the building. There was not any expenditure this year. The year

before it was nineteen thousand expended and this year you are budgeting five is that for something specific or?" Sheriff Welch responded "In the past that was actually budgeted through the maintenance department but the county commissioners set up a contingency fund and that was going to track through detention center."

Commissioner Travis asked "This special pay for K9, what is that for? Is that for the people that handle the dogs?" Sheriff Welch responded "That is correct." Commissioner Travis continued "The only people that have these dogs are the people that handle the dogs, right?" Sheriff Welch responded "That is correct. The K9s are assigned to the handler. This program started back in 2003. We use the K9s for mainly drug detection." Commissioner Travis asked "How many dogs do you have?" Sheriff Welch responded "4." Commissioner Travis asked "So you have four individuals with the dogs?" Sheriff Welch responded "When the DOC moved their bloodhound unit from Dan River, it was housed there, to the outside of the county and we have had numerous situations when we have had to use the bloodhounds for man tracking. That service was provided by the Sheriff's Office in conjunction with the DOC to provide that service in the county."

Chairman Hall asked "Does the DOC maintain the bloodhounds?" Sheriff Welch responded "They have a bloodhound unit but they are not housed in Yanceyville." Chairman Hall continued "So they maintain that unit so when we need to use them what happens then?" Sheriff Welch responded "We can actually call them in too. Sometimes we work jointly and sometimes we handle situations ourselves as a Sheriff's office. The last situation would have been with the escape from the Dan River Work Farm. The DOC unit came out and we assisted the DOC officers."

Sheriff Welch stated "I did put in the budget for six vehicles, we did not discuss that. Generally in the past we use six or eight vehicles as a rotation. I just want to thank the Board and if there could be any consideration for a cost of living for employees that would be appreciated." Chairman Hall responded "Let's discuss this for a second. We had six in for last year?" Sheriff Welch responded "Yes but what happened was we tried to meet ends meet, the Board approved four highway patrol vehicles. We had skipped, if we ever skip a year it put us behind. That is where we were at last year. We need to get back on track." Chairman Hall stated "One year we bought those Dodge Intrepids and we are not particular happy with those." Sheriff Welch responded "That was a great decision at the time." Commissioner Lucas added "But the process at the time was the key there. It was the way it was done. It was not so much the actual vehicle but the process by which he needs to get those." Sheriff Welch stated "If I could share this. When we went to the Dodge Intrepids was to allow time to actually get back on the rotation. The Dodge Intrepids will not last as long as the Crown Victoria but it allowed us time to get in the position where we could start the rotation. When we missed that window we ended up in the position where we had to get the Dodge Intrepids off the fleet." Commissioner Lucas added "It was a lease purchase arrangement." Sheriff Welch stated "A lease purchase to own. That was twelve at that time. We purchased Chargers which were two thousand less than the Crown Vics. Ford is talking about not producing the Crown Vic any longer and to go to another version of a patrol car. Basically when we ask for patrol cars we are asking for what we need. We are not looking for more." Chairman Hall asked "What did we do last year?" Sheriff Welch responded "The Chargers. They have proven to be a good patrol car." Chairman Hall asked "How many

did we get?" Sheriff Welch responded "Three." Chairman Hall stated "This year you have a request for six vehicles. I am assuming we are looking at either Chargers or Crown Vics or does it matter?" Sheriff Welch responded "Or we could look at the new version put out by Ford."

Commissioner Satterfield asked "Do you know what platform that is going to be on?" Sheriff Welch responded "It usually comes out of the Michigan Study for Law Enforcement Pursuit Vehicles. We usually do our research on that, through the reviews and talk with other agencies." Commissioner Satterfield continued "Will it be under the 500 series Ford Platform or?" Sheriff Welch responded "I will try to find out and get that information back to you."

Commissioner Lucas asked "As far as the mileage on the vehicles that you currently have for the patrol officers are you in a situation there where it could become an issue because of the high mileage on the vehicles?" Sheriff Welch responded "Yes." Commissioner Lucas asked "How many?" Sheriff Welch responded "I can get a list to you. We keep track of this and that is part of our preparation for the budget. We keep track of each vehicle on mileage."

Commissioner Travis stated "The only thing I would like to say about these cars is we need to consider not buying any more front wheel drive cars because they do not hold up. The Intrepids we had paid for them we got out money out of them. Those cars were perfect for around town but when you get on the other side of the county these cars are not cut out for that." Commissioner Lucas asked "What year was it that this was put into place?" Sheriff Welch responded "Probably when I first took office in 2003. Originally I asked for eight (8) then I came back in front of the Board and asked for four (4) more to by three years. We did not have a replacement for three years. We needed a window for us to start that rotation." Commissioner Travis asked "That was 2003 – 2004 right?" Commissioner Lucas responded "I know it was when I was on the Board." Sheriff Welch added "It was 2003 when we implemented that. Basically it proved to be a good initiative."

Chairman Hall asked "What is the next budget item we need to take a look at this morning?" Mr. Howard responded "We got to page 7 for Revenues for the Sheriff. That is where we stopped at the last meeting."

Commissioner Lucas asked "On the impound fees for the vehicles. It dropped from six thousand two hundred from the year before?" It may have been because you had a sale on vehicles." Sheriff Welch responded "We see vehicles every year in the summer time." Commissioner Lucas continued "It went from six thousand dollars down to two fifty-five. The only reason I could see that would be because of the sale of vehicles." Sheriff Welch responded "Last year we had the sale on vehicles and we have not scheduled that for this fiscal year."

Commissioner Travis asked "What do you charge on that per day?" Sheriff Welch responded "Fifteen (\$15.00) dollars a day plus the tow bill." Commissioner Travis stated "You should at least go up to thirty (\$30.00) dollars per day." Chairman Hall responded "This Board sets the fee." Commissioner Travis stated "We need to change that because most places are getting forty-five (\$45.00) dollars per day." Sheriff Welch stated "One thing that works great with the Finance Director is when

ADJOURNMENT

At p.m. Commissioner moved, seconded by Commissioner to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Paula P. Seamster
Clerk to the Board

Nathaniel Hall
Chairman
