

**BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
6:00 P.M.

**Present:** Buford Peters, Nancy Brown, Ronnie Trivett, L.C. Tester, Ross Garland, John Lewis, Sonja Culler, Robert Carroll

**Absent:** None

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Sonja Culler.

Roll was called during Nominating Committee. All present.

Quorum present.

- **Adopt Agenda:** Motion was made by Ronnie Trivett, second by John Lewis to adopt agenda. All ayes. Motion carried
- **Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by John Lewis, second by L.C. Tester to approve minutes from the October 12th, 2015 meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.
- **Public Comments:** Roy Livingston began with the question of what had become of the money once the Cloudland school had been paid off. Finance Director Byrd commented that no money was freed up once the debt was fulfilled and that the Budget is set by the Budget committee every year and is allocated accordingly. John Lewis added that he would like to see that once the next debt is paid off, that we set up an account to designate towards school funding or repairs.

• **Old Business:**

**Pay Scale Discussions:** Additional handouts were submitted by several County offices, with only a few offices still needing to compile their data. It was noted that we are looking to compare with surrounding counties, such as Greene, Unicoi, and Hawkins. Nancy Brown would like to see the County offices include background information and any criminal history on the employees. Buford Peters expressed interest in the possibility of the Salary comparisons being addressed at a workshop, after the first of the year, due to the amount of business that is covered in the regular Budget meetings. Mayor Humphrey asked if we had addressed the possibility of an outside firm conducting these comparisons. Robert Carroll again requested that we look at these comparisons on a percentage basis and per capita costs. Chairwoman Culler encouraged the committee to look at the data that has been presented, and begin to analyze these comparisons. Director Ward expressed concern for the School System Para-Professionals and for their inclusion in this salary comparison process. Ronnie Trivett commented that we would like to implement step raises based upon the salary comparisons and experience. It is the Committee's recommendation that this Pay Scale comparison be more closely analyzed after the first of the year.

• **Rescue Squad Donation:**

A letter was received from the Rescue Squad that states they would like to donate a 2003, used ambulance, to the Sheriff's Dept. for use on SWAT team operations. The value of the ambulance was estimated at \$5,000.00. The vehicle cannot be used for Rescue Squad operations and would be beneficial to the Sheriff's Dept., with only minimal funds necessary for its intended use. Motion was made by Ronnie Trivett, second by John Lewis, to approve the donation from the Rescue Squad.

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|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Buford Peters  | Aye | Ross Garland   | Aye |
| Nancy Brown    | Aye | John Lewis     | Aye |
| Ronnie Trivett | Aye | Sonja Culler   | Aye |
| L.C. Tester    | Aye | Robert Carroll | Aye |

Motion carried.

• **Elizabethton/Carter Co. Chamber of Commerce:**

Mr. Ken Markland, of the Chamber of Commerce, gave a short presentation on the Tourism side of the Chamber of Commerce. He stated that Tourism is separate program of the Chamber, and they promote the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the county. They also promote the Retirement TN program for those looking for a community to retire to. They do operate the Visitor's Center, across from the jail, and try to influence travelers of the benefits of this area. He stated that they had over 1,500 people sign their visitor book the past year. They are part of NETA (Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association) and receive benefits and discounts on fees and membership costs. He detailed some of their memberships with local and regional magazines and publications (Adventure Outdoor Magazine, Southern Trout) and expressed the importance of these marketing tools. Tourism has had a 5% increase in visitor expenditures in the past year, with a total of 2.1 million dollars for 2013-2014. The Chamber currently has one full-time employee, who acts as the director, and a part-time employee. The Tourism side is currently without any form of director, and relies on the services of the Chamber director to fulfill Tourism duties. The position was vacated in January. David Leveu, a volunteer with the Tourism dept. gave a handout of the 2016 Profit-Loss Budget of the Tourism Commission and gave details on how the money is allocated and how the Hotel/Motel Tax directly affects their budget. Mayor Humphrey then requested the reserve fund balances of the Chamber and Tourism: Chamber of Commerce balance- \$58,536.00, Tourism-\$53,000.00. Carter Co. Tomorrow was estimated at \$87,000.00. John Lewis asked if a large hotel would benefit the county. Mr. Markland answered yes and that they have worked hard on the process, but explained that it was not easy to recruit large chains due to various factors. He mentioned of discussions on potential building sites but gave no exact details. Mr. Markland stated that all three entities rely on separate funding for operation. He noted the remaining money (\$53,000.00) in the Tourism account has not been spent on expenditures or salaries, due to the hold on funding coming in. He explained the money generated from the Hotel/Motel tax is their primary funding (approx.\$100,000.00 per year). They asked what could be done to utilize the money and welcomed discussion on the appropriate ways to solve the issue. They feel their office has been successful and has the momentum to positively benefit the county. L.C. Tester asked why the money had been frozen. Mayor Humphrey stated there is a Private Act, but no contract had been signed with a necessary independent entity. It was recommended, by the Mayor, that this decision be put off until January to allow the Commission to look at other options or avenues available. It was then asked how the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism are directly tied to Carter Co. Tomorrow. It was stated that they are all separate entities. L.C. Tester, then made the motion to return funding to the Chamber of Commerce. Chairwoman Culler stated that we must have a contract due to the Private Act. Mr. Tester then rescinded his motion. Ronnie Trivett then made a motion, second by John Lewis, to wait 60 days to review all options before any decision is made on tourism money.

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|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Buford Peters  | Aye | Ross Garland   | Nay |
| Nancy Brown    | Aye | John Lewis     | Aye |
| Ronnie Trivett | Aye | Sonja Culler   | Nay |
| L.C. Tester    | Nay | Robert Carroll | Aye |

Motion carried.

- **Building and Grounds Request:** Chairman Ray Lyons stated that the B & G Committee had re-visited the "old" jail building and it was the committee's recommendation to initiate contact with Reedy & Sykes to determine what plan needs to be put into place regarding the old building. Chief Deputy Parrish also mentioned that other departments had been contacted to see if there was any interest in occupying the additional space. Motion was made by Ronnie Trivett, second by L.C. Tester, to take \$10,000.00 from the Litigation Fund, and have Reedy & Sykes develop a plan for the old jail building. Motion is dependent on Finance Director Byrd's approval of appropriate funding line.

- **School Department Request:** School Director Ward approached the committee about the Para-Professionals, full and part-time (Bus drivers, Cafeteria workers, Secretaries, Custodial staff, etc.), receiving a one-time bonus of \$450.00 and totaling \$405,000.00; which would come from their General Purpose School Fund. The School Board has already voted unanimously in favor of this decision. Motion was made by Nancy Brown, second by John Lewis, to allow this one-time bonus for all full and part-time Para-Professionals.

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|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Buford Peters  | Aye | Ross Garland   | Aye |
| Nancy Brown    | Aye | John Lewis     | Aye |
| Ronnie Trivett | Aye | Sonja Culler   | Aye |
| L.C. Tester    | Aye | Robert Carroll | Aye |

Motion carried.

- **Animal Shelter Donations:** Motion was made by Ronnie Trivett, second by Nancy Brown, to accept donations to the Animal Shelter and Sheriff's Dept. Total: \$1,026.00

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| Buford Peters  | Aye | Ross Garland   | Aye |
| Nancy Brown    | Aye | John Lewis     | Aye |
| Ronnie Trivett | Aye | Sonja Culler   | Aye |
| L.C. Tester    | Aye | Robert Carroll | Aye |

Motion carried.

- **General Fund 101 Amendment #4:** Multiple line items. Motion was made by Ronnie Trivett, second by Buford Peters, to approve General Fund 101 Amendment #4. Total: \$74,152.88

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|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Buford Peters  | Aye | Ross Garland   | Aye |
| Nancy Brown    | Aye | John Lewis     | Aye |
| Ronnie Trivett | Aye | Sonja Culler   | Aye |
| L.C. Tester    | Aye | Robert Carroll | Aye |

Motion carried.

- **Highway Fund 131 Amendment #2:** Reallocate within the Hwy. Dept. to stripe roads. Motion made by John Lewis, second by Nancy Brown, to approve Highway Fund 131 Amendment #2. Total: \$21,184.15

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| Buford Peters  | Aye | Ross Garland   | Aye |
| Nancy Brown    | Aye | John Lewis     | Aye |
| Ronnie Trivett | Aye | Sonja Culler   | Aye |
| L.C. Tester    | Aye | Robert Carroll | Aye |

Motion carried.

- **General Purpose School Fund 141 Amendment #4:** Motion made by Ronnie Trivett, second by L.C. Tester, to approve School Fund 141 Amendment #3. Total: \$2,500.00

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|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Buford Peters  | Aye | Ross Garland   | Aye |
| Nancy Brown    | Aye | John Lewis     | Aye |
| Ronnie Trivett | Aye | Sonja Culler   | Aye |
| L.C. Tester    | Aye | Robert Carroll | Aye |

Motion carried.

- **Commission Comments: None.**
- **Motion to adjourn made by Ronnie Trivett. All ayes. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ross Garland

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Sonja Culler,

Approved for File