

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 15, 2017 – BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in special session on Monday, May 15, 2017 for the purpose of holding a budget workshop. The meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. in Commissioners Chambers at the County Administration Building located at 101 S. Broad Street, Brevard, NC.

Commissioners present were Chairman Larry Chapman, Jason Chappell, Mike Hawkins, Vice-Chairwoman Page Lemel and Kelvin Phillips. Also present were County Manager Jaime Laughter and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

There was no media present.

There were approximately 25 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Larry Chapman presiding declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

WELCOME

Chairman Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members of the audience for participating in their County government. He introduced Commissioners and staff in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tawny McCoy: Mrs. McCoy is the Chairwoman of the Transylvania County Board of Education. She thanked the Board of Commissioners for their support of local education. She expressed disappointment that the new budget process implemented by Commissioners does not allow opportunities for discussion between the two Boards as they have done in the past. Mrs. McCoy stated that the funding formula used to develop the current expense budget leaves the School System at a deficit of \$402,455 for mandated services. She reminded Commissioners that the State budget has yet to be passed, but she expects the Senate to pass down additional cuts too, forcing the Board of Education to come back to Commissioners to request an increase in funding. Mrs. McCoy explained their capital request for FY 2018 is made up of the normal \$1.8 million allocated by the County, plus the monies spent on debt service the County will no longer be paying because the 2008 bonds will be paid off, in an effort to cover significant needs.

Mrs. McCoy reported on the behalf of the Board of Education that the Brevard Middle School roof is in dire need of replacement. At their meeting this evening prior to the Commissioners' budget workshop, the Board of Education voted to replace the 27-year-old roof at a cost of \$475,000. If this amount is allocated from their current capital outlay budget, their ability to cover reoccurring costs would be diminished. She requested an infusion of another \$500,000 in capital funds above the recommended budget to cover the cost. She again thanked Commissioners for their support.

Joseph Skowron: Mr. Skowron wanted the Board to understand that the NCDOT widening project of Wilson Road would cause properties to be taken off the tax rolls, therefore reducing the County's tax base and revenues. He suggested that the NCDOT expand the road onto the sod farm side of the road to avoid impacting residences. He urged the Board of Commissioners to consider this proposal to avoid losing property tax revenues and inform the NCDOT.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications requested by Commissioners or staff.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

WORKSHOP

BUDGET REVIEW BY MANAGER

The Manager provided an overview of the budget since it was first presented on May 9.

Changes to Recommended Budget

- Minor corrections based on new information
- Modified block grant funds per updated numbers received
- Modified full time investigator position in the Sheriff's Office (one net new investigator position)
 - Reflected position as newly funded grant position
 - County match funds included along with new vehicle purchase
- Adding grant revenue brings total General Fund Budget to \$51,243,973
- Nonprofit and community center funding- State statute requirements
 - County Attorney was able to get clarification that each nonprofit receiving funding will require a contract detailing public service being provided on the County's behalf

Revenue Projections

- Property tax remains more than half of budget revenues (56.9%) with projected growth of 1.2%
- Sales tax growth appears inflated due to FY 17 surplus from sales tax expansion that will not be realized next year; projecting 5% above estimate for this year's sales tax receipts
 - Limited to how sales taxes are allocated/spent due to State restrictions
 - Impact of redistribution of legislation; sales tax dollars leave County, but do not come back under redistribution formula (approximately \$8,000/month)
 - Impact of expansion to include services
- Positive growth indicators in interest on investment, permitting and property transfer fees reflect economic growth
 - Product challenge- almost all spaces are full for business expansion/location
 - Ecusta Road partnership with City of Brevard and TEA; \$1 million Golden Leaf Grant

Expenditures

- Percentage of funds allocated toward each function is roughly the same as previous years
 - One difference is higher percentage relative to General Government due to Ecusta Road project and purchase of Elections equipment
- Expenditures by Natural Classification provides best picture of what expenditures look like

Summary

- Balanced budget of \$51,243,973, reflecting a 5.8% increase
 - \$1 million Golden Leaf Grant (Fund balance projection shows \$3 million going out for this project and staff estimates partial offset at end of next fiscal year, if there are no risk factors realized)
 - Fund balance reserve funds show decrease for purchase of voting equipment
 - Increases for capital expenditures to move forward on deferred maintenance (five-year projections prepared on facility needs)

- Moved computer expenditures to the IT budget to assure that network oversight is in place from the IT Department to protect cybersecurity
- Recommended budget includes prior year tax increase for capital needs
 - Currently Transylvania County ranks 32nd smallest in population when ranked smallest to largest in the State
 - 13th lowest tax rate and 16th lowest effective tax rate last fiscal year (many counties' rates went up last year along with Transylvania County's)
- Recommend continued policy development
 - Capital prioritization funding strategies, work with Board of Education on referendum
- Recommended funding for School System
 - Capital expense-\$1.8 million
 - Current expense-\$11.8 million
 - Current expense reflects a 5.4% increase in per student funding for a total increase of 3.6% in current spending
- Fund Balance
 - Projected fund balance at the end of FY 18 is expected to decrease
 - Decrease of almost \$4 million projected at budget, but potential small offset of surplus at the end of the year depending on risk factors experienced in FY 18
 - Ecusta Road economic development project
 - Purchases planned from designated Fund Balance, most notably Elections equipment
 - Projected % next year is 20.4% and staff may recommend designating additional funds during FY 18 to prepare for capital needs list items while balancing % necessary to maintain bond rating

Chairman Chapman asked at what level the Fund Balance percentage must be in order to impact the County's borrowing rate or bond rate. The Manager pointed out the State dictates that counties are required to keep a certain percentage of Fund Balance available. Bond rating agencies look at multiple factors. She and Finance Director Gay Poor are in the process of completing an analysis of how much the County could withdraw without impacting its bond rating and how Commissioners can communicate that the lower percentage is a result of restricting funds to accomplish the County's long term vision.

Commissioner Hawkins commented that during the Manager's budget presentation last week she reported that staffs were comfortable with recommending the \$1.8 million capital outlay budget for the School System based on last year's prioritization list. He asked if the roof for Brevard Middle School was on the prioritization list. The Manager stated without having the priority list in front of her she could not answer at this time. She pointed out that following the budget presentation last week Commissioners requested that she obtain a prioritized capital list from the Board of Education, as well as a list of items that were completed from last year's list. She received information from the School System which she forwarded to the Board of Commissioners today. She noted that they did not have a prioritized list, but they did provide information on what was spent already.

Commissioner Lemel pointed out the Brevard Middle School roof was presented for the Board of Education's FY 18 projection and also as a project to complete within the bond referendum. In response, Commissioner Hawkins stated that Commissioners may need to address the request.

The Manager said that without a prioritized list, staff has approached the capital outlay budget with first ensuring that reoccurring expenses are covered along with additional for capital. The County instituted the funding formula for current spending and the policy states the County will not instruct the School System on how to use the current expense allocation. The County has not restricted how they spend

capital outlay either. The Board of Education should determine how best to prioritize and spend those funds.

Chairman Chapman asked, based on Mrs. McCoy's comments, if funding for the School System is falling behind as a result of the funding formula. The Manager responded no and pointed out when compared to other counties Transylvania County ranks 5th in the State in current expense funding and 8th when capital is included. The total growth of current spending for the School System has been approximately 5.8% since 2003. The County's General Fund budget has not grown as aggressively. The General Fund budget has grown at an annual rate of 2-3%.

Commissioner Chappell asked what happened to make the roof replacement an immediate need. Superintendent of Transylvania County Schools Jeff McDaris reported that this particular roof section is 27 years old. It has been leaking, but has gotten progressively worse. A section of the gym roof and another part on the main building has been repaired.

The Manager asked the Finance Director to complete an analysis of the School System's reoccurring capital and the roof replacement to determine how those items impact their annual capital allocation of \$1.8 million.

BUDGET ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGETS & FIRE DISTRICT TAX RATES

The Manager explained the workshop format. She will serve as the facilitator and present prior information and any known options for each item. She will open the floor for Commissioner discussion/questions. Once it appears there are three Commissioners in agreement or when the 15 minute time limit is reached, she will note consensus or poll Commissioners for consensus, unless Commissioners express desire to continue discussions. The Manager encouraged Commissioners to be patient, kind, courteous and cordial in their discussions.

The Manager announced that the format for presenting the fire department budgets will include a staff recommendation for each, followed by Commissioner discussion and guidance.

Commissioners have expressed various concerns about fire districts. Those concerns include response time, insurance rates, variable tax rates and service levels throughout the County, and addressing the City's worry over the safety of the privately owned train trestle on Cemetery Road. Staff has thoroughly reviewed the fire departments' budget requests and identified major items for the Board's consideration, including operational improvement strategies for FY 2018.

Sylvan Valley II

Staff recommended establishing three response districts within Sylvan Valley II with a set tax rate of \$0.55 and to fund them as follows:

- Sylvan Valley 2 / Brevard
 - Fund current share of budget request and any additional items requested that Commissioners agree to for FY 18
- Sylvan Valley 2 / North Transylvania
 - Fund additional \$15,575 from Sylvan Valley II to provide additional coverage
- Sylvan Valley 2 / Little River
 - Fund additional \$6,800 from Sylvan Valley II to provide additional coverage
- Utilize \$10,000 from Sylvan Valley II reserve for use by North Transylvania and \$5,000 for Little River for equipment needed to serve additional area

- Funds requested with quotes and reviewed by Fire Marshal's office to verify necessity
- Any excess funding from the tax rate in the Sylvan Valley II District will be put into the Sylvan Valley II Reserve Fund to be used to address future resolutions to response time issues and fire service improvements within the district

The benefits and drawbacks identified are:

- Benefits
 - Reduced mileage-per-response in new response districts
 - Reduce response times
 - Reduce insurance rates from 9E to 5 for some property owners
 - More efficient responses utilizing equipment, apparatus and stations existing
 - Eliminate need for future sub-station to serve the northeastern section within Sylvan Valley II
 - Provides reduced response times and increases safety for those impacted by train trestle identified as a top priority issue for City of Brevard
 - Improves long term sustainability
 - Standardization of services
- Drawbacks
 - Change
 - Requires staff to develop new response maps for approval by NC Department of Insurance
 - Requires staff to develop an effective response protocol for each area

The Manager reviewed the maps showing the new proposed response districts. These maps are incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

If consensus to move forward, staff will implement through the following process:

- Add approval of the maps to the next regular agenda with vote to move forward with the three response districts as presented
- Authorize staff to establish contract language with three partner agencies
- Authorize staff to take guidance based on recommendation presented and set Sylvan Valley II tax rate at \$.055/\$100 valuation
- Adopt budgets and tax rates, taking into account the change proposed, in addition to guidance on staff and resources in the requested budgets

Commissioner Lemel inquired if there has been any testing done to prove the theory of improved response times. The Manager responded that the maps indicate quicker response times will be achieved.

Chairman Chapman inquired about the overall impact to each district as a result of this change. The Manager stated the only rate impacted directly is in the Sylvan Valley II district. This change does not create separate tax districts, only different response districts.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if this proposal has been discussed with the City of Brevard. The Manager stated that staff has not discussed the proposal directly with the City. The map presented this evening was produced just today. She stated that staff has confidence that all three departments will be able to accommodate the change, which is one of the reasons the recommendation includes holding the City of Brevard harmless for the loss of those areas in terms of property tax. Staff has also evaluated the equipment needs for the North Transylvania and Little River to ensure their needs are accommodated.

Commissioner Lemel pointed out that as a resident of the Sylvan Valley II district she believes she has benefited from a low fire tax rate for a long time so she is encouraged by the increase for Sylvan Valley II to help provide assets, stabilize and make consistent services across the County. She is also excited for North Transylvania to see additional revenue because this district has struggled.

Commissioner Chappell believes this proposal is a smart decision, but requested clarification on rationale for keeping the same tax rate for the City of Brevard. He wondered how much decrease in land area and responsibility will be removed from their purview. The Manager stated the rough value on the property tax is about \$20,000. The biggest issue is making sure each department is equipped to absorb this change. The recommendation not to reduce the Sylvan Valley II tax rate and hold them harmless is because this proposal is being recommended so late in the budget process. Meetings with City officials discussed higher level issues with regards to response times and the train trestle. These issues are what prompted staff to take action this year. Assistant County Manager David McNeill added that the proposal gives us an opportunity to address some issues in the near term and allows for a full year to navigate how to budget for these departments in the future. In the future, he said staff intends to evaluate what it truly costs to serve each of the fire districts.

Commissioner Hawkins clarified the hold harmless provision is for the FY 2018 budget year only. The Manager confirmed.

Commissioner Hawkins stated this proposal makes perfect sense from the County's perspective, but he is concerned about Commissioners voting and potentially adopting the proposal prior to the City being aware of it. The Manager stated that Commissioners will not be voting on the proposal during this budget workshop. If this is the direction Commissioners agree to, then staff will meet with City officials as soon as possible.

Commissioners were in agreement to proceed.

Brevard Fire

- Request \$2,035,640
 - Loan proceeds-\$1,239,250
 - City share of FY 2018 Budget-\$422,087
 - County share of FY 2018 Budget-\$374,303
- Items for Board of Commissioners' direction (Staff requested additional information from City; City sent additional information over weekend that still needs resolution.)
 - Evening personnel coverage-\$51,240 (County's portion is 47% of this figure)
 - Air Pack replacement total cost-\$389,250
 - Annual budget impact beginning in FY 18-\$43,500

Staff recommends leaving in the budget, but with the caveat that if the grant is not received, the item is presented to Commissioners before moving forward with debt service.

- Purchase of rescue truck and equipment-total cost-\$850,000
- Annual impact of \$95,004 beginning in FY 19 for 10 years

Staff recommends Commissioners make it clear that County funds are not committed for this purchase due to insufficient justification of the need for replacement of the vehicle and equipment.

In response to a question from Commissioner Lemel, Mr. McNeill reported the department has paid daytime staff through the weekend, but no evening staff. The Brevard Fire Chief was in attendance and interjected that 33% of their calls occur between the hours of 5pm-11pm.

Commissioner Chappell appreciated the statistics from the Brevard Fire Chief, but stressed that this is the information Commissioners need upfront in the budget process in order for them to make informed

decisions. Commissioner Lemel agreed and said she finds it difficult to make such decisions without having supporting data. She pointed out she understands the nature of volunteerism is changing and there should be paid staffing at every station.

Commissioner Hawkins said of utmost importance is getting the truck out of the building once a call is received. It appeared to him that having an evening paid staff person would alleviate the wait time for someone to arrive to the station. Mr. McNeill pointed out this is an issue in all departments. In addition to other departments also experiencing high call volumes, some departments are called out on more medical related calls which are difficult to compare to fire calls. He also pointed out that two of the departments requesting additional paid staffing have substations where they have paid staffing at one, but not the other.

Chairman Chapman asked if other departments are requesting paid staffing as well. The Manager reported that three other departments are requesting additional staffing, but the levels and justification vary for each. Chairman Chapman preferred to handle the personnel requests in totality.

Mr. McNeill reported the personnel requests as follows:

Rosman Fire

- Requesting \$28,000 in addition to current budget
- Currently using part-time staff
- Desire to have additional hours to cover weekends and evenings

Connestee Fire

- Requesting two additional people at a cost of \$80,000
- Comprised to two stations
- Fairly high call volume related to medical calls
- Significant response time for EMS to arrive in this district

Lake Toxaway

- Requesting an additional paid staff person
- Already hired the position through departmental savings
- Department has two stations

Total request for these positions is \$153,000, in addition to the request from Brevard Fire.

Commissioner Phillips expressed concern about the ability of emergency vehicles to access residences and wondered if something could be done to educate homeowners with regards to the width of their driveways. The Manager responded that development regulations are written for this purpose, but there is no enforcement for maintaining access. This is something Commissioners can explore in the future if they so choose.

Chairman Chapman assumed the driving force behind the personnel requests was to reduce response time. Mr. McNeill confirmed, but added that it also includes getting an EMT to a medical call and two-in two-out on fire calls. In general, the purpose is to improve the level of service to citizens.

Commissioner Hawkins stated that staff appeared to be skeptical about the Brevard Fire request. Mr. McNeill clarified that Brevard Fire's request is not unreasonable and they did a fairly good job of providing justification. The question before Commissioners is what level of service they want to provide

in the Sylvan Valley II district. Mr. McNeill informed that if the goal is to lower response time, paid staffing is a solution to achieve that goal.

Commissioner Hawkins inquired about potential short-term and long-term approaches and asked if this should become part of the annual work plan as opposed to individual requests from various departments. The Manager stressed this is the reason Commissioners should define their priorities in terms of level of service that is provided throughout the County. With the current system in place, departments will continue to request what they need and each request is going to be different. A huge concern is how to assist those departments that are still lagging behind the standard. The Manager believes this is a step to move them forward.

Commissioner Chappell asked for confirmation about which departments do not currently have paid staffing. Staff confirmed that Balsam Grove is the only department that does not have paid staffing. It was pointed out that Little River has two stations, but they are not requesting additional staff in their budget request.

Commissioner Lemel pointed out that the small incremental tax increase being requested is sufficient to provide the necessary funding for paid personnel, which to her shows the need to have a more even tax rate across the board in order for funds to be distributed in a manner that achieves standard goals for all the departments. Mr. McNeill agreed and pointed out that paid staffers also provide services to the departments to help them meet NFPA and insurance requirements, perform necessary equipment testing, and complete many other day-to-day operations. This impacts volunteer recruitment efforts because volunteers do not have to be responsible for this work.

Chairman Chapman wondered why additional staffing was not requested by all departments if the workload is the same. The Manager said one of the issues is their ability to fund additional positions. North Transylvania and Balsam Grove, for instance, are struggling departments with high tax rates and they do not want to further burden the citizens of their districts. A request for no additional staffing does not diminish the need.

Commissioner Chappell asked if the recommendation to include a paid EMT at Balsam Grove was incorporated into the staffing plan. The Manager responded that staff views this position as being a firefighter in the future. Currently Balsam Grove cannot afford paid staffing. They operate on less than a \$100,000 budget; a several hundred dollar change to their budget would warrant a significant tax increase.

Commissioner Phillips pointed out there is a limit to the tax rate that can be imposed upon citizens in a district. Mr. McNeill said this was understood in the past, but UNC School of Government officials have clarified that counties can apply any rate within a service district as long as the cumulative countywide tax rate does not exceed \$1.50. Commissioner Phillips pointed out there is a limit the citizens in a particular district can afford to pay. Staff agreed.

There was no further discussion on the requests for paid staffing. Commissioners were in consensus to include all of the additional staffing requests as presented. Mr. McNeill informed that Commissioners should expect to continue receiving staffing requests each year,

Brevard Fire, continued

- Annual budget impact beginning in FY 18-\$43,500

Staff recommends leaving in the budget, but with the caveat that if the grant is not received, the item is presented to Commissioners before moving forward with debt service.

Commissioners were in consensus with staffs' recommendations.

- Purchase of rescue truck and equipment-total cost-\$850,000
- Annual impact of \$95,004 beginning in FY 19 for 10 years

Staff recommends Commissioners make it clear that County funds are not committed for this purchase due to insufficient justification for need of replacement of the vehicle and equipment.

Commissioners were in consensus with staffs' recommendations.

Rosman Fire

- Current fire tax rate-\$0.1091
- Requested-\$524,904
 - Requested fire tax rate-\$0.1159
- Items for Board of Commissioners' direction
 - Paid staffing-annual increase of \$28,000
 - Fire tax rate without additional personnel \$0.1097

Commissioners were in consensus with the requests.

Little River Fire

- Current fire tax rate-\$0.0877
- Requested-\$451,994
- Requested fire tax rate-\$0.0911

Commissioners were in consensus with the requests.

Connestee Fire

- Current fire tax rate-\$0.0673
- Requested-\$707,212
- Requested fire tax rate-\$0.0767
- Items for Board of Commissioners' discussion
 - Additional paid staffing-annual increase \$80,000 to add two staff
 - Fire tax rate without additional personnel-\$0.0681
 - Fire tax rate with addition of one staff person-\$0.0724

Commissioners were in consensus with the requests.

Cedar Mountain Fire

- Current fire tax rate-\$0.1331
- Requested-\$297,057
- Requested fire tax rate-\$0.1378*
- Non-county proceeds-\$103,057
- County share of FY 2018 Budget-\$194,000 (same as 2017)

*Cedar Mountain Fire District property valuation decreased \$5 million from FY 17-FY 18.

Commissioners were in consensus with the requests.

Lake Toxaway

- Current tax rate-\$0.0459
- Requested-\$780,343
- Requested fire tax rate-\$0.0479

- Items for Board of Commissioners' direction
 - Additional paid staffing-annual increase of \$45,000 to add one staff
 - Fire tax rate without additional personnel-\$0.0451
 - Fire tax rate without three-bay building request-\$0.0457
 - Fire tax rate without personnel or three-bay building-\$0.0430

Staff noted that the need for a three bay building is to provide for much needed additional storage space. The requested funds would be set aside and added to the same request next year to pay for the construction of the building.

Commissioners were in consensus with the requests.

Balsam Grove

- Current fire tax rate-\$0.1089
- Requested-\$98,227
- Requested fire tax rate-\$0.1098
 - Department does not want fire tax rate increase
 - Increase due to small operational increase

Commissioners were in consensus with the requests.

North Transylvania

- Current fire tax rate-\$0.1279
- Requested-\$208,050
- Requested fire tax rate-\$0.1669
 - Department does not want fire tax rate increase
 - With no fire tax rate increase, the department will have to cut \$47,850 from budget request
 - Department expressed serious concern that a long range strategy be explored

Commissioners were in consensus with the requests.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will meet with the three fire departments that will comprise the Sylvan Valley II Response District and share with them the proposed maps. Staff will share that the proposal will address response time issues and the City's concern over the train trestle, and also takes into consideration the City Manager's recommendation of contracting with response districts. Staff will ensure that both Little River and North Transylvania departments are prepared to move forward with the recommendation. The new maps will be placed on the Board's agenda for May 22 for approval. In the meantime, staff will continue to explore alternatives to ensure services are provided efficiently countywide.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

Commissioner Hawkins requested future discussion regarding the grant funded investigator position in the Sheriff's Office. He supported the position based on it being an opportunity to alleviate caseloads problems, but since then he has learned that might not be the case. He requested to see data about how this position will be of value to the department. He wanted to know how many domestic violence and sexual assault cases are investigated and, if available, the staffing and caseload levels in 1998 compared

to now. These figures might determine that the investigations division is understaffed. He also wanted to know how caseloads compare with our peer counties.

Commissioner Lemel commented that it is very difficult dealing with unique departmental issues, so she was very much appreciative that department heads provide the necessary data to help Commissioners make these decisions.

Chairman Chapman pointed out the demands on County services are tremendous. He wanted everyone to be aware of the total impact on the budget going forward. He stated the County has been able to keep the tax rate low, but has paid a price in terms not being able to provide additional services or build new schools. He said Commissioners have difficult decisions ahead of them.

Commissioner Chappell asked staff to continue looking at the possibility of including with the tax bills a breakdown of how taxpayer dollars are spent. Other counties are doing this and he feels it is important. The Manager suggested including the pie chart that shows the percentages spent on education, public safety, etc.

Staff reported that the reoccurring capital plus the cost of a roof replacement for Brevard Middle School total \$1,580,769, leaving \$219,231 remaining to pay for other needs, based on \$1.8 million capital outlay allocated to the School System.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Donnie Kilpatrick: Mr. Kilpatrick is the Chief of North Transylvania Fire Department. He thanked Commissioners and staff for the amount of time they put in to the budget process. He said the department is continually looking at ways to provide better services and protect citizens. He applauded the efforts put into the proposal for the new response districts.

Craig Budzinski: Mr. Budzinski is the Chief of Brevard Fire Department. He responded to the new proposed fire response districts and expressed disappointment that the proposals were not put forth to the impacted departments or the City of Brevard prior to being presented to Commissioners. Chief Budzinski also addressed the purchase of a new fire truck that was denied from their budget request. He pointed out that the ladder truck the department purchased 10 years ago will be paid off soon and the department intended for the same amount of money to go toward payment of a new truck. The truck they want to replace is nearly 22 years old and has suffered extensive fire damage with insufficient repairs. With the amount of call outs the truck makes, he said the department deserves to have a replacement truck that is dependable. He emphasized the purchase would have no change in the tax rate.

Jimmy Jones: Mr. Jones is the President of Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue. He brought up the fact that Cedar Mountain is a unique district in that one-third of it consists of State forestland and another one third of their South Carolina district is in Caesars Head State Park. The district receives \$725 annually from the State of North Carolina and no funds from the State of South Carolina to service this district. For this reason, the district's tax rate is much higher compared to other districts. Mr. Jones extended an invitation to Commissioners to tour the Cedar Mountain fire district and to receive a presentation from the department on the challenges they face.

At the request of Chairman Chapman, the Manager responded to Chief Budzinski. She explained it is the responsibility of the Board of Commissioners to define the services that are provided within a service district. Therefore it is critical and appropriate that any recommendations first go before the Board of Commissioners and then they should guide staff on how to move forward. Staff acted appropriately and will continue this course in the future.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

There were no comments from Commissioners.

The next meeting is a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners and will be held on Monday, May 22, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments, **Commissioner Lemel moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously carried.**

Larry Chapman, Chair
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board