

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
DEPARTMENT of AGING WORKSHOP**

**Tuesday, August 30, 2011**

**6:00 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, for the purpose of conducting a Department of Aging Workshop.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Giles E. Byrd **Chairman**  
Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice Chairman**  
James E. Prevatte  
P. Edwin Russ  
Lynwood Norris  
Ricky Bullard  
Charles T. McDowell

**APPOINTEES PRESENT:**

William S. Clark, **County Manager**  
Mike Stephens, **County Attorney**  
June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**  
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

**OTHERS in ATTENDANCE:**

Ed Worley, Aging Director  
Amanda Jernigan, Deputy Director  
Susan Shipman, In-Home Aid  
Coordinator

**Agenda Items #1 and #2: MEETING CALLED to ORDER and INVOCATION:**

At 6:00 P.M., Chairman Byrd called the August 30, 2011 Department of Aging Workshop to order. The invocation was delivered by Vice Chairman Amon E. McKenzie.

**Agenda Item #3: PURPOSE of WORKSHOPS:**

Chairman Byrd stated the following for informational purposes.  
*“Workshop Meetings are first, the meeting is to inform the Board and permit discussion – no final action is taken, and second, the procedures are less formal than at a regular meeting. But such meetings are part of the decision-making process; deliberations are going on. Therefore, they constitute ‘official meetings’.”*

**Agenda Item #4: DISCUSSION of BUDGET AMENDMENT PRESENTED at the AUGUST 15, 2011 BOARD MEETING:**

**William S. Clark, County Manager:** stated the following:

1. We reported a shortfall in the budget for the Department of Aging at the August 15, 2011 Board Meeting for the upcoming fiscal year of \$497,000.00;
2. We have now received all the money in that I think we are going to get in for this year, and the shortfall now stands at \$531,000.00;
3. We are looking at a shortfall of \$531,000.00, and I am legally required to present the Board with a balanced budget;
4. When the balanced budget was presented to the Board and approved by the Board, the adequate revenues were anticipated, but have not been received, therefore creating this shortfall;
5. A budget amendment was presented at the August 15, 2011 Board Meeting to make up for this difference; **and**
6. The Board made a decision to approve a portion and to hold this workshop for discussion.

Chairman Byrd asked if Mr. Clark had any suggestions for a remedy to this situation. Mr. Clark replied stating nothing in addition to what has been recommended.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** stated the following:

1. I greatly admire what you do at the Columbus County Aging Department;
2. What has occurred and how can we correct this situation?; **and**
3. Tell us in regular terminology, why did this loss actually occur?

**Ed Worley:** replied stating the following:

1. First, I would like to say that the Department of Aging is not really short on funds, we have experienced a loss of programs;
2. The monetary amount reported in the August 18, 2011 edition of The News Reporter is not accurate;
3. The Aging Department building is being labeled as a white elephant, and I don't appreciate that;
4. I will walk you through what has happened as follows:
  - A. In proposing a budget using state and federal funding, you base it on the track record, unknowns and the goals;
  - B. We have no control over the revenues coming to the Department of Aging;
  - C. The revenues have been significantly reduced;
  - D. The positions for the CAP Program are allocated by DMA (Division of Medical Assistance);
  - E. D.M.A. puts limits on each of our Case Managers for service, their clients, they have down graded us from five (5) hours to three (3) hours for any type of service;
  - F. Our PCS (Personal Care Service) Program is one of our in-home programs, and the recipients are selected by CCME;
  - G. Previously we had a choice of setting our own level of pay, and this has a total effect on our budget;
  - H. We went to hours set by D.M.A. for PCS reimbursement rate which was greatly reduced from \$14.88 per hour to \$14.16 per hour;
  - I. On October 1, 2011, we will be down another 2.67% which we were notified, and we have already flagged that;
  - J. Changes to the computer system at D.M.A. and CCME (Carolina Medical) where we receive our checks from, has made our collections of revenue difficult and is directly connected to the billing denials, every agency in the State is working through the same problems that we are working through on that;
  - K. Medicaid is providing much less money and expecting the same service to be delivered as before;
  - L. Our number of clients are less in our PCS Program due to the changes by the State, they have reduced us from ninety-six (96) clients to forty-eight (48) clients;
  - M. Since November, 2010, we have lost forty (48) CAP clients that have passed away, and that is a lot of money in that one division;
  - N. Carolina Medical has reduced our projected clients with service;
  - O. CAP Choice, a new program, is on the market now, you don't have to have CNA's that are certified at the college, you can pick up someone off the street or it can be a family member;
  - P. The increase in staff longevity pay added to the mix, all of my employees received this except five (5);
  - Q. The change in the number of hours and the hourly rate, but there were other unexpected changes that have come our way;
  - R. In addition to all of this, I was in the hospital eight (8) times in six (6) months;
  - S. Amanda has been in and out with Steven and his new motorized heart;
  - T. There is only a three (3) months window that we have had a chance to work together;
  - U. Our goal was to break even, and we knew it would be tough;
  - V. These changes came down in October, 2009, and we were hoping to break even and keep our employees;
  - W. This is the first time in seventeen (17) years that this has happened, and it troubles me;
  - X. In the middle of the month of June, when the statement came from Bobbie, we saw we were in trouble;
  - Y. For the Budget Year 2011 - 2012, we revised our budget to do the following:
 

- Senior Centers cut three and one-half (3 ½) hours	-	\$104,047
- R & R (explanation referral) program cut	-	\$50,496
- PCS (aides' benefits-travel, holidays, 10 days vacation/sick leave)		
- Title III (CNA benefits)	-	\$15,802
- CAP	-	\$227,866
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>\$500,313</b>

**Commissioner Bullard:** Mr. Ed, in what year were you notified about the cuts in these programs?  
**Ed Worley:** The State started telling us that they would start cutting back in October, 2009, and they

dwindle a little along the way with changes here and changes there. It is a masterpiece to keep up with.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** I would like to know how many aides do we have? The information that I have received is showing one hundred (100) in one document and fifty (50) on another document. If my math is correct, at the amount of reduction, you would be losing \$38.00 for each aid, \$1,520.00 per day, \$7,500.00 per week which would equate to \$250,000.00 per year. Exactly how many aides do we have?

**Bobbie Faircloth:** What you have in front of you are the aides that are eligible for the benefits. There may be other aides that are not eligible for the benefits. There are certain criteria that they have to meet.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** What are they?

**Bobbie Faircloth:** They have to work thirty (30) hours per week, and they have to work for six (6) months before.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** With the statistics that are being provided, there is no way they could keep up on the same level.

**William S. Clark:** Ed, how many aides do you have?

**Ed Worley:** It fluctuates from one hundred twenty-five (125) to one hundred eight (108), in that range.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** If you have only ninety some clients, why do you need that many aides?

**Ed Worley:** You have got other programs. You got Title IIIB, Family Care Giver Program.

**Commissioner Bullard:** When we were notified in 2009 that these cuts were coming, through different and various programs, and why didn't we start cutting back then instead of continuing on in full force until we lose this amount of money?

**Ed Worley:** We felt like that we had enough, we looked at it, we researched it, and we felt satisfied we had enough to make it just to break even, nothing else.

**Commissioner Bullard:** Whoever did the research did not do a good job.

**Vice Chairman McKenzie:** You felt like things would fall in place like they have in the past, but this time they didn't fall in place.

**Commissioner McDowell:** You have stated that you had lost forty-eight (48) clients, that they had cut you back from ninety-six (96) to forty-eight (48), and you stated that forty (40) had passed away. Where these clients replaced? Are we serving as many clients now as we had before?

**Ed Worley:** You have got one hundred sixty-five (165) CAP spots, forty (40) of that group passed away. We have got one hundred ninety-five (195) CAP spots open now. It has been circulated that we go back and take away from the revenues, the Medicaid Program, to make up for the budget shortfall. You are cutting your neck off if you do that. The Medicaid Program, the revenues that come from it is what supports everything in that department that is ongoing, except for the Home Care Community Care Block Grant for \$500,000.00, and a few very small grants, \$5,000.00 or \$10,000.00.

I am going to tell you where we are at and where we are going as follows:

1. **\$145,000.00 County Allocation** - we take this and pay off matching amounts for grants. I am proud to say, except for the Whiteville location, we pay for all the salaries, all the insurance, FICA, retirement, all expense for the other six (6) locations. The only thing that we do not pay is the water bill and the electric bill, and the repairs that Tony makes. We absorb this, and I feel like we should be recognized for what we do.
2. **Three (3) years ago, I had one million, four hundred fifty-nine thousand, and 00/100 (\$1,459,000.00) dollars in my Fund Balance.** The County was in trouble with their budget. Leo Hunt, Finance Officer at that time, went and **took all my Fund Balance, every bit of it, one million, four hundred fifty-nine thousand and 00/100 (\$1,459,000.00) dollars;**
3. I realize that what I have got belongs to the County, but this was money that was set aside, and if I had that money today, untouched, then I would not be standing in front of you today with a \$497,000.00 shortfall, and I had enough there to pay for my building;
4. We serve eight hundred (800) to one thousand (1,000) clients per day;
5. We are the largest Department of Aging in the State;
6. The CAP positions in 1994, we were in the 49<sup>th</sup> place, and today, we are in the 9<sup>th</sup> place;
7. We have never had a bad audit;
8. The year I came to the Department of Aging, there was a shortfall of \$63,000.00 audit that the County had to pay;
9. We have been noted as a role model;
10. Our goal is to work very hard to replace the loss of forty (40) CAP clients since November,

- 2010;
11. To stress reliable reimbursement Medicaid rates;
  12. Work harder for additional clients on PCS, CAP and DA;
  13. Start a new system with a monthly financial report with Medicaid revenues so we will have a month-to-month knowledge of what is going on and what is taking place; **and**
  14. Better communications among all of our staff.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** How many in-home aides are in the programs that are losing money?

**Ed Worley:** I have someone sitting behind me that can answer that.

**Susan Shipman, In-Home Aid Supervisor:** stated the following:

1. We have lost forty (40) clients;
2. We have put on thirty-nine (39) clients since January 01, 2011, and as soon as we put them on, they pass away; **and**
3. It takes ninety (90) days to put them on, and DSS has forty-five days to approve them.

**Vice Chairman McKenzie:** Are you talking about the CAP Program. How many do we have in the CAP Program?

**Susan Shipman:** Right. We have one hundred ninety-six (196) slots, and one hundred sixty-five (165) active, but we have put on thirty-nine (39) clients.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** How many in-home aides in this program.

**Susan Shipman:** That fluctuates like Mr. Worley said. It depends on certain factors.

**Commissioner Bullard:** Are you saying the only reason you lose patients is because of death?

**Susan Shipman:** Death and Nursing Home placement.

**Amanda Jernigan, Deputy Director:** The number of aides fluctuates anywhere from 101 - 119 each payroll. Overall, we may have 200 during the year, but out of the 200, only 40 or 50 work enough hours to get any benefits whatsoever. The number of hours is limited in the Personal Care Services Program, and in the CAP Program, it is according to the amount that is budgeted. The shortfall is not in the In-Home Aide Program. It is due to the expenses throughout all the services that we have in the Department of Aging. The money is coming in to support the PCS and CAP Program. We have problems with the other services that we have at the Department of Aging.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** So. CAP is not the culprit.

**Amanda Jernigan:** No it is not. We are providing services through all the other programs that we have, because the Home Community Care Block Grant services cost us about \$1 million per year. We only get \$500,000.00 from the Home Community Care Block Grant, \$145,000.00 from the County, and whatever donations we get, and they are usually less than \$30,000.00 per year.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** Did you inform Mr. Worley earlier this year that there would be a shortfall in this year's budget?

**Amanda Jernigan:** I did not inform him of anything on this year because I have not really had time to stay on top of the budget. During the times he was out, I was trying to keep up part of his work, but prior to when we found out that cuts would be coming in, I told him that whenever employees did leave, we did not need to replace them.

**Commissioner Bullard:** Bobbie, are you sure that the loss is \$531,000.00?

**Bobbie Faircloth:** According to the paperwork that Amanda has given me, yes.

**Commissioner Bullard:** My concern is figuring out exactly the amount of the loss and to determine what programs that we need to adjust to prevent any further loss. The Department of Aging is a good program and we need to manage it wisely to where we can continue. I would like to see a private accounting firm do a private audit on the Department of Aging where we will know, without a doubt, how much money has been lost, and what we need to do to correct the problem so we can move forward. This would be a good and fair way so we would know what the dollar figure is and that would satisfy everybody's mind.

**Vice Chairman McKenzie:** I disagree with that.

**William S. Clark:** We have an annual audit. They do look at the Department of Aging. We can ask them, as part of the audit, if they could focus on the Department of Aging, and get back to you to give you some reassurance, from an outside independent organization, as to what the problem is and how to fix the problem. I think that is very appropriate.

**Commissioner Bullard:** It would ease my mind, and I think it would ease a lot of the taxpayers' mind that we have gone beyond our call of duty to make sure we know exactly where we stand at.

**Chairman Byrd:** Mr. Ed, would you like to comment on the areas where you are losing money, and the areas where you are making money?

**Ed Worley:** The Medicaid revenue is paying for everything else that the Home Care Community Care Block Grant doesn't pay for. We are talking about \$500,000, and we have over a \$3 million budget.

**William Clark:** I think what you are trying to say is the revenues from our Medicaid services have been helping us to pay for the senior services. Without these revenues, we are going to have to find other ways to pay for those services.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** I can see what Mr. Bullard is saying because I asked the question about the CAP Program, and Amanda said we were okay with it, but based on the information sent by e-mail today, (Clerk to the Board did not receive a copy) it does not reflect adequate revenue.

**Amanda Jernigan:** I can not bill Medicaid for services that have not been rendered. If you will look at the line items in the budget for Medicaid, they are all in the black.

**Commissioner McDowell:** In an e-mail that you sent out on 08-25-2011, (Clerk to the Board did not receive a copy) and it goes through various numbers, I am interested in the last part, in your estimation, in September the bleeding should stop so to speak, and then by December, we should hopefully be back in the black, and out of the red. Could you explain the process that you are going through?

**Amanda Jernigan:** If all of the proposed cuts are executed, then this would apply.

**Commissioner McDowell:** On an e-mail that you sent out today, you are stating that this company has discovered some revenue due to billing errors? Do you think that this may have been happening through the years, and you have just noticed it?

**Ed Worley:** The system we have for billing is primitive and very hard to work with. This company is directly linked to Carolina Medical who does our billing now, and can find the billing errors easily in a quick turn-around time.

**Susan Shipman:** I have been researching some billing programs for about two (2) years now. I have located a program that will meet our needs, and provide us with a quick turn-around time.

**Commissioner McDowell:** What will this company charge on the dollar for their service?

**Susan Shipman:** They only charge 20% on what they collect. If they don't collect, then we don't pay them.

**Commissioner McDowell:** Mr. Ed, that is going to be one of our goals.

**Ed Worley:** For all that we do at the Department of Aging, we are operating in the years ago with our computer system.

**Chairman Byrd:** Do you plan to turn all the billing over to them, or just the trouble billing?

**Ed Worley:** All the billing.

**William S. Clark:** We have not made that decision yet. Right now, we are just looking at the past accounts to see what we can collect. In the future, we do need to look at a new system.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** If you do let them do the billing, are they still going to charge 3% of everything?

**William S. Clark:** I don't know what they would charge if they did all of our billing for us, but that is something we need to look into.

**Ed Worley:** They charge 1% the first month, 2% the second month, and then 3% from thereon after forever.

**Commissioner McDowell:** If we were to out source our billing, would that cost employees' jobs?

**Ed Worley:** No.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** Why wouldn't it Mr. Ed? If these employees are not doing billing, they got to have something else to do. Are you just moving these employees to another position instead of billing?

**Ed Worley:** No. This is where they transmit billing. We got two (2) out there that transmit billing.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** So they would still be doing the billing.

**William S. Clark:** They would transmit it to SembraCare, if we chose SembraCare, and SembraCare would do the billing, and they would keep track of it.

**Susan Shipman:** It still requires the human eye. It has to go through two (2) approvals. You still have two (2) humans that have to look at it and approve it before it is sent to Raleigh. You still got to have these checks and balances.

**Chairman Byrd:** I think one main thing that this Board here is looking for is an answer, we did not agree with closing the Senior Centers to four (4) hours at the previous meeting. That was a savings of \$105,000.00. We are looking at other areas, the \$105,000.00 will be forgiven so to speak, so now, where can we recruit this other \$497,000.00 that we will need?

**William S. Clark:** That was in your Board Packet as a budget amendment.

**Ed Worley:** The only thing that hinges on this is what Sembracare is to bring back to us this year, and if we can be aligned with a program with them in the future where they can save us this additional money every year, then that will take care of it. But I don't want to promise you that. I don't know what will happen.

**William S. Clark:** In your proposal, your budget amendment that they received at the last meeting, you had proposed cuts to make up the shortfall, which included the senior center cuts which were took off the table, so we are still \$400,000 in cuts. I know you mentioned benefits for the aides, some employees, travel. I think these are the things they would like to have an answer for.

**Ed Worley:** Let's start with Information and Referrals, that was \$50,496.00. The PCS (aid benefits - travel, Christmas bonuses, holidays, 10 days vacation/sick leave days), that was \$101,102.00, Tittle III, with all CNA benefits, that was \$15,802.00, the CAP Program - \$227,866.00, and that included a Social Worker, an In-Home Coordinator, a RN, and all their benefits, less the Senior Centers, that would drop it back to about \$400,000.00.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** Personally, I don't think you should pay benefits to contracted employees. I have talked to some of the private agencies, and they do not pay these. I am against paying benefits to contracted employees. That is \$101,000.00, you said, and that takes care of your satellite centers.

**Commissioner Bullard:** If Dempsey approved this, then it wasn't done the right way to start with.

**Commissioner Russ:** So you have cut the contract workers' benefits?

**William S. Clark:** No, that is being proposed.

**Chairman Byrd:** So, you're saying we can roughly come up with near \$400,000.00?

**Ed Worley:** Yes, and that is not counting the \$30,000.00 coming out of Raleigh.

**Chairman Byrd:** So whatever amount this collection agency comes up with would put us closer to the amount that we need.

**William S. Clark:** If they come up with \$130,000.00, that would put us where we need to be.

**Chairman Byrd:** How much money do you have out there that is not collected at this time, and is there is a time line on it?

**Ed Worley:** Eighteen (18) months.

**Amanda Jernigan:** You have one (1) year to bill from the original date of service, and eighteen (18) months once you bill the first time to get the money, for a total of eighteen (18) months.

**Commissioner McDowell:** Mr. Clark, if we get this down to the \$338,000.00, and then we are talking about the other cuts Mr. Worley is considering, the only problem is that in getting that number down to \$338,000.00, we are including his entire fund balance, right, and we have to have \$100,000.00 to build the building. Is that correct?

**William S. Clark:** That is correct. That is on the Agenda for discussion as well.

**Commissioner McDowell:** So we are really at \$438,000.00. Is that right?

**Commissioner Prevatte:** And that would wipe him out completely.

**Commissioner McDowell:** Ms. Jernigan, are you fairly comfortable with the synopsis of September and October, as far as things turning around?

**Amanda Jernigan:** As long as the expenses are not being excessively spent, yes.

**Chairman Byrd:** What about the additional cuts they were talking about for October that would be coming down the pipeline?

**Amanda Jernigan:** That was taken into consideration. The budget was done on the rate for October. When the original budget was done, we did not know what the Medicaid rate would be. When I had to redo the budget because of the cutbacks, then I knew what the rates would be and it was proposed on that rate.

**Chairman Byrd:** And those rates will be for a term of a year?

**Amanda Jernigan:** It will start October 01, 2011.

**Chairman Byrd:** And it is guaranteed to be for a year?

**Amanda Jernigan:** It could change in January.

**Chairman Byrd:** Anytime.

**Commissioner Bullard:** Do you think there will still be a lot of cuts being proposed in the future from the State that we got to watch for also and plan for?

**William C. Clark:** That is a State and Federal Program, 60% State, 40% Federal.

**Commissioner Bullard:** Does the Health Department have these programs also?

**William S. Clark:** The Health Department does have both Medicare and Medicaid, and our Homehealth Program is mostly Medicare.

**Kimberly Smith:** We do two (2) separate programs. Don't get confused with what we do with what the Department of Aging provides. They are two (2) totally set of rules and regulations. We are a certified homehealth agency. We bill Medicare and Medicaid. Our Medicaid is paid at a different rate than what their Medicaid rate is. We are going to take the cut like they did.

**Commissioner Bullard:** So, why haven't you lost money?

**Kimberly Smith:** Well, we lost about 2%, but we still made money.

**William S. Clark:** She had cuts, but they still made money.

**Kimberly Smith:** We took a 2% cut in the Health Department and in the Homehealth Program. In fact, we took a Medicare cut as well in Homehealth.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** So, you took the same cuts as he did and you made money, and he lost

money.

**William S. Clark:** You have got to realize that he has got the whole Department of Aging.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** He is subsidizing the satellites, and that \$105,000.00.

**William S. Clark:** That's right.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** And that is \$105,000.00. That is what you said.

**William S. Clark:** Well, the \$105,000.00 is part of the \$500,000.00 cuts.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** So, the \$105,000.00 is not what the \$532,000.00. I don't understand why one department loses and one gains.

**Vice Chairman McKenzie:** I believe we are at a crossroads here where we need to decide where do we go from here. I think we have pretty well found the situation. Seventeen (17) years he has been there, and in those years, this is the first year this has transpired if I remember correctly. If it had not been for the Department of Aging and the Health Department, we would not have been able to have a balanced budget. It is the money they make for us, here in the County, they have over produced and had in their fund balance to help us get over the hump and have to balance this County's budget and to keep some County employees in place. What we need to do is to find a fix for this area where we have fell short in and with these proposed adjustments, we don't agree with all of them, we are not going to touch the centers. We need to find out where we go from here. We need to recognize the problem, make an estimate of the situation and then take action. Now is the time we take some action, and what action do we take from here?

**Commissioner Prevatte:** That is the exact words that I used when I started tonight.

**Chairman Byrd:** Mr. Worley has laid out where we were going. He has laid out a plan of certain different cuts to reach the point we need to be at. We are looking for \$531,000.00, as of today's figures.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** Does that include the \$101,000.00 if you cut the benefits out?

**William S. Clark:** When this started out, we had a \$500,000.00 shortfall. Mr. Worley and his department came up with a recommendation of making adjustments that would lower his budget by \$500,000.00. Of that \$500,000.00, \$105,000.00 was in the Senior Centers, and the rest of that \$400,000.00 was in these other cuts that he is recommending. The Board reached the decision at the last meeting not to cut the Senior Centers, and that took about \$100,000.00 off the table. Now we are looking at \$400,000.00. The Department of Aging has recommended to us those \$400,000.00, and Mr. Worley has explained these to us tonight, and it does include staff reductions, and benefit reductions.

**Commissioner Bullard:** How many personnel does this include?

**Ed Worley:** Three (3).

**Chairman Byrd:** With the cuts that you have proposed, do you feel like you can maintain those cuts, and run the Department of Aging as usual?

**Ed Worley:** Yes, if we don't get hit with some unknown circumstance.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** You are looking at \$600,000.00. You are looking at \$531,000.00. You are looking at another \$105,000.00 this year because we decided to keep the satellite centers open.

**Commissioner Bullard:** I am still a little bit concerned about the fact that you have now received all the paperwork, and that is why I am still concerned about having an auditor to come in and audit the books. I want to know exactly what we got and what we are looking at.

**William S. Clark:** Our present auditors will do that.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** Mr. Clark, I think we need to trim some more.

**Chairman Byrd:** Do you have other recommendations?

**Commissioner Prevatte:** I still see some travel there, and I have asked about that travel.

**Amanda Jernigan:** The travel that is left in there does not involve in-home aides. It is for the following:

-Senior Centers' Coordinators

-Social Workers go out and visit clients which is state mandated;

-RN's have to go out and visit the clients;

-Pat Harrelson has to go out and do assessments on her home-delivered clients;

-We have volunteer travel that delivers the home-delivered meals that they have to be reimbursed for; **and**

-Judy Ward has to go out and visit clients that are being assessed for, related to home improvement, plus I and R.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** What is the \$9,300.00 Travel in the CAP Program for?

**Amanda Jernigan:** That is for the Social Workers and the CAP Nurse to go visit clients all over the county.

**Commissioner Bullard:** How many full-time employees are at the Department of Aging?

**Amanda Jernigan:** Thirty-six (36). We have seven (7) part-time employees and three (3) contract workers.

**William S. Clark:** Are there any other places that you feel like you could make reductions?

**Amanda Jernigan:** Not without cutting services.

**Chairman Byrd:** Are there any services that you feel like you could justifiably cut?

**Amanda Jernigan:** If we cut any services, we will be hurting the senior citizens.

**Agenda Item #5: DISCUSSION of NEW ADDITION to DEPARTMENT of AGING:**

**William S. Clark:** stated the following:

- We did put the proposed addition out to bid, and we submitted the bid tabulations to you;
- We had four (4) bids, with the low bid at \$484,000.00, and the high bid at \$675,000.00;
- The group working on this did ask for an alternate;
- One of the issues we were running into was storage;
- We are not recommending this alternate for a 1,370 square foot storage building;
- The alternate includes a brick storage building, we know that is too expensive, we know we can't afford that;
- We received a \$450,000.00 grant, and they have taken \$5,000.00 out of that, leaving \$445,000.00;
- We were going to use \$100,000.00 of the Aging Department Fund Balance, and that is gone; **and**
- You gave us \$50,000.00 Contingency Fund, giving us a \$600,000.00 budget that we were working with.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** How much was spent for the consultant?

**William S. Clark:** \$45,000.00.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** So you ended up with about \$400,000.00 if you just use the grant money?

**William S. Clark:** That is correct.

**Commissioner McDowell:** So we actually need about \$150,000.00?

**William S. Clark:** If you do a non-brick, just a metal storage building, that would cost about \$43,000.00. If you took the \$484,000.00 and the \$43,000.00, that would be \$527,000.00.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** Are you talking about the alternate?

**William S. Clark:** No sir. I am saying if you did a storage building, non-brick metal building, the cost would be about \$43,000.00.

**Commissioner Bullard:** I am personally not in favor of doing a storage building.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** You said you were not recommending a storage building.

**William S. Clark:** I said that I am not recommending a brick storage building.

**Commissioner Bullard:** I think right now we need to focus and see if we can build the building with using most of the grant money \$400,000.00, and just work with that. I don't see any money coming except out of the General Fund.

**Chairman Byrd:** If we can't see the storage building right now, we need to go ahead and build the facility and come back later and add to it. The metal building is the best way to go, even the brick would look better, but the metal building would serve the purpose.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** If we don't consider the alternate, we got \$400,000.00 left. Will that build the building?

**Vice Chairman McKenzie:** If we add to it, it will.

**Chairman Byrd:** Does the \$484,000.00 include the storage building or not include the storage building?

**William S. Clark:** It does not include the storage building.

**Chairman Byrd:** Is the other building brick or metal?

**Armond Carter:** It is brick.

**Chairman Byrd:** What would be the savings if we went to metal?

**Armond Carter:** I have not run those numbers.

**Chairman Byrd:** I think we could get twice the building if we use metal.

**Ed Worley:** Please remember that we will have to get any change approved in Washington, D.C.

**Commissioner Bullard:** I am concerned about all those offices in that building. Can they be taken out?

**Ed Worley:** There are not but two (2) offices in there that could be eliminated. The Conference Room, the File Cabinet Room, and the photocopier room were taken out.

**William S. Clark:** If the Commissioners want to do a metal building, if they are satisfied with a metal building, they think the public will be satisfied with a metal building, do you think there will be a big deal in changing?

**Armond Carter:** You will have to change the structure.

**Commissioner McDowell:** Do you have a time constraint?

**Ed Worley:** At one time, they said August 31<sup>st</sup>. McIntyre stated five (5) years.

**Chairman Byrd:** At one time, it was stated that we were not getting enough space for the money.



If you take this amount of money, you would build a large metal building.

**Ed Worley:** I have no problem with a metal building.

**Commissioner McDowell:** What is the maximum length of time it would take to make this change to the drawings?

**Armond Carter:** Approximately one (1) month. We got two (2) ways to go here. We have already bid the project. The best thing to do is to negotiate with the low bidder. We are putting out an addendum to change these drawings. Putting it back out on the bid market would take a lot longer.

**Commissioner Bullard:** I think we should keep the building within the grant money amount.

**Chairman Byrd:** If we change these plans totally, would we have to re-bid?

**Mike Stephens:** You have two (2) ways. You can re-bid or negotiate with the low bidder.

**Vice Chairman McKenzie:** I know you want to stay with the grant amount, and I agree. But if it happens to go over this amount, I am going to be in favor of spending those funds because our seniors are going to have their center. This Board voted to do the center. Staying within the grant amount, and us not contributing a dime to it, I can't go along with that.

**Chairman Byrd:** By doing the metal building, we will get more building.

### COMMENT:

**Debra Hollingsworth:** stated the following:

1. I have worked for the Department of Aging for many years, and I have enjoyed every minute of it;
2. I have always been a good employee at the Department of Aging;
3. I see that he decided that he wanted to take our benefits from us at the Department of Aging;
4. First of all, I am not a contract worker, and have I never been a contract worker;
5. Under what rule does he classify us as contract workers?
6. You are saying that we are not entitled to our benefits;
7. I am a County employee and I feel that I am entitled to my benefits as much as any other worker that works for the County;
8. I work thirty-nine (39) hours a week, CAP client and another program, and I feel that I am entitled to my holiday and vacation pay, we don't get any sick pay;
9. Whatever we get, I feel like we are entitled to it;
10. I feel like if you work that many hours, and some of the other employees are not working that many hours, and they are getting paid;
11. They are using that contract mess to keep from giving us health insurance, which is wrong also;
12. We have said nothing about our health insurance which we are entitled to;
13. We are entitled to pension, everybody works for that, and we have said nothing about that;
14. He insists on taking our vacation, holiday pay;
15. We need time away from those clients also;
16. We are the ones that get out there and go into those clients' homes and whatever goes in the clients' homes, we have to take it, we can't say anything, we have to take it with a smile on our face;
17. They're in the office and they are subject to do whatever they please;
18. If we were a contract worker, we don't have to work under these circumstances, we could work under our own circumstances;
19. The IRS does not include us to be a contract worker, and how the Department of Aging can call us a contract worker, and the reason why is to keep from giving us benefits;
20. You County people know this, how can you all just sit there and know that we are not contract workers, and not give us what we are entitled to?;
21. The Good Lord has brought us too far to turn around now; **and**
22. There will be a day of reckoning, and somebody has got to have a heart.

**Ed Worley:** I would like to share with you the following contract that is in place now, and has always been in place, and was in place when I went there.

To: **All CNA's and Aides who are under contract with the Department of Aging**  
 From: Ed Worley, Executive Director  
 Susan Shipman  
 Supervisor, In-Home Service  
 Subject: **Agreement of Awareness**

In association with the chore service providers and the state personnel act, it is understood that being a CNA or an Aide has agreed to work with the Columbus County Department of Aging as a Contract Worker and not as a County employee staff member. There are no other benefits paid by the county to a contract worker the following: ten (10) vacation days or can be used as sick days, seven (7) holidays (Martin Luther King, Easter, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day). A Contract Worker must be employed at least six (6) months without a break in schedule to attain vacation/sick days or holidays. A Christmas bonus will be scheduled for the six (6) month Contract Worker. It is also understood that the job performance will be only as assigned to the Contract Worker. There are no guarantees of hours per week, per month or per year. Contract Workers, known as all CNA's and Aides will answer to their Director, Assistant Director, or Supervisor of In-Home Service, the assigned RN or the In-Home Aide Coordinators.

Your signature on this letter confirms that you understand that you are a Contract Worker with County of Columbus and not a staff County employee, and at a pay rate of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per hours assigned. \_\_\_\_\_ Aide \_\_\_\_\_ CNA, check one.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Commissioner Bullard:** Mr. Attorney, can you end a contract like that at anytime the employer decides to do so?

**Mike Stephens:** Yes sir. Commissioners have full discretion as to what benefits they give and what benefits they take away.

**Commissioner Prevatte:** We were informed directly of that by Mr. Worley and Mr. Clark.

**Commissioner Bullard:** So, you will just draw up the new contract for Mr. Worley to use in the future.

**Mike Stephens:** I would like to reserve any comments until we go into Closed Session, possibly next Tuesday.

**Agenda Item #6: ADJOURNMENT:**

At 7:51 P.M., Commissioner Prevatte made a motion to adjourn, second by Commissioner Bullard. The motion u0nanimously passed.

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**GILES E. BYRD, Chairman**