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May 16th, 2011

Commissioners,

The proposed budget for Haywood County for the next fiscal year is hereby presented for your review and consideration. This proposed budget sets forth a plan of operation for all county departments, programs, and projects for the coming year.

As you are aware, this has been one of the more difficult budget preparation years in recent history. In April, I reported to you that the "new norm" for government is Doing More with Less. While this may be a "new norm" at other levels of government, the truth is that Haywood County Government has been doing more with less for the last three years.

This budget continues a trend of belt tightening and reassessment of how we provide services that began in earnest in 2008 and has continued each year since. This proposed budget of \$65.3 million is at one of the lowest levels in many years. It is \$600 thousand less than the FY2006-07 budget. Our current work force is at its lowest level prior to 2005.

Thanks to the prudent leadership of the Board of Commissioners over the last few years, and the diligent efforts of our County staff over the course of this difficult year, Haywood County is ending the FY2010-11 in much better shape than many other North Carolina counties that are facing multi-million dollar deficits. This is due directly to good leadership and exceptional teamwork.

It is imperative that I extend my sincere appreciation to our dedicated County staff. Since 2008, as economic difficulties have increased and budgets declined, we have asked our employees to shoulder more responsibilities even as we have reduced their benefits. While this proposed budget does not reverse that trend, and imposes some new restrictions for hiring, I have attempted to do what I could to recognize their dedication by continuing the one percent Merit allocation per department and reinstating the Christmas Bonus.

In spite of the difficulties associated with preparing the budget this year, FY2011-12 promises to be an exciting and historic year, with significant improvements in service delivery in areas that affect our citizens the most. The highlight, of course, will be the relocation of the Departments of Social Services, Health and Central Permitting to Paragon Parkway in November. Not only will this relocation make these essential services more centrally located for our citizens, but it will greatly improve our ability to provide these services in an efficient and technologically advanced manner.

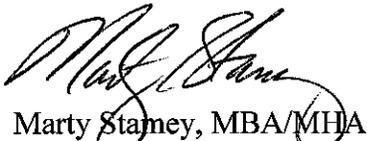
In addition, we will complete the installation of our integrated computer aided dispatch (CAD) and mobile data information system (MDIS), which will improve the communications abilities of all public safety functions – emergency and non-emergency fire, medical and law enforcement services.

Senior Services is one of the top priorities identified for this coming year. The County is committed to provide local funds and facilities to accommodate a one stop senior facility to meet and address the needs of the aging population of Haywood County. The one stop facility has a potential to allow over fifteen direct service programs to co-locate to serve this population.

Haywood County has a larger number of senior residents compared to the state and federal averages. In addition to expanding services a special focus will be given to allowing seniors to maintain their independence and self sufficiency and avoid premature placement in long term care facilities. The budget reflects the Commissioners ongoing commitment to provide the necessary Senior Services for those who we all admire and respect.

This proposed budget is the primary plan for spending for FY2011-12. This budget takes care of County facilities, provides for County employees, provides the services needed by the citizens and guests of Haywood County and prepares us as best as we can to accept new responsibilities that may be shifting to local government.

Respectfully submitted,



Marty Stamey, MBA/MHA
County Manager