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Tyrrell County  
August 12, 2015  
NC 4H Youth Summit

### Report of Interview with County Manager

On Wednesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, I met with our Tyrrell County Manager, Mr. David Clegg. We went into his office and discussed topics and issues in our county. We also focused a lot on budgeting.

We first talked about Mr. Clegg's role as a County Manager. He is the chair executive for our county, which basically means he does everything the commissioners do not. The county commissioners serve as a managing board. Mr. Clegg described this to me as a policy making board who focuses on the big picture. Tyrrell County was the last county in North Carolina to hire a county manager. This was a difficult decision for the board to make, due to the amount of power they would have to give up. However, a county manager takes a lot of responsibilities off the commissioners. Whereas past county commissioners meetings ran from four to six hours, meetings now last one to two hours.

We also talked about budgeting in our county. The budgeting process usually runs from January to June, with the fiscal year beginning on June 31<sup>st</sup>. The County Manager and Finance Officer begin talking to department heads in January and February. In Tyrrell County we have sixty five departments. Each department head will submit a report of what capital needs (new equipment, personal, etc.) they will have in the upcoming fiscal year. The County Manager and Finance Officer review and draft the requests, and have a solid draft ready for review by the county commissioners in May or June. The budget will then be passed or revised before June 31<sup>st</sup>.

Tyrrell County currently has the lowest value of all North Carolina counties (\$470 million). This was determined in 2008 during the time in which land value had increased drastically. Mr. Clegg predicts at least a 10% increase in taxes by 2016 due to the eight year reevaluation plan. We currently operate on a 6.5 million dollar budget. Some counties would see that as unthinkable, but we just manage our money wisely. We share a jail with Washington County. We also have a three county (Martin Washington Tyrrell) health system. Our county has been in contact with Dare to discuss having a central 911 call center.

Tyrrell County's Department Heads also play a big part saving money wherever possible with our small budget. At the end of the fiscal year money left over generally goes back into general funds for next year, instead of being used at the last minute for unnecessary items.

When deciding on county budgeting, North Carolina looks at Tyrrell County (being the smallest in the state) the same way as it does Mecklenburg County (being the largest in the county). We are expected to provide the same basic services, even though we have only a small percentage of their budget.

In conclusion, Tyrrell County proves that size does not matter, especially when we are able to manage our budget so well. I am looking forward to learning more about this process and how other counties manage their budget.