



## Union County Public Information Office

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### News Release

## 2012-2013 Recommended Budget Presented to Commissioners

**May 22, 2012, Monroe, NC** –Union County Manager Cindy Coto on Monday presented the 2012-2013 Manager’s Recommended Budget to the Union County Board of Commissioners.

The recommended budget contains \$226,691,371 in general fund expenditures for FY2013, representing an increase of \$7.5 million or 3.44 percent over the current year’s original budget of \$219,156,357. The current year’s original budget has been amended during the course of the fiscal year and presently totals \$224.1 million.

The county manager has recommended \$85.5 million in funding for Union County Public Schools, an increase of \$2.2 million from the previous year. This increase will provide \$1.7 million to pay for an increase in local teacher supplements and benefits, as well as an additional \$0.5 million increase in operating costs. The budget also recommends \$5.267 million for capital funding to be paid with \$4 million from the County’s capital fund and \$1.271 million from bond savings and bond savings from sales tax refunds. The capital funds will pay for technology and technology infrastructure (\$1.7 million), maintenance capital (\$3.3 million) and new school buses (\$267,000).

“We are not able to fund UCPS at their requested levels given the realities of our current economic situation,” Coto explained. “Because UCPS lost \$9.8 million in state and federal funding, which is one time monies used to fund teacher salaries, the Board of Education asked the County for an additional \$16,378,739. We have made every effort to work with UCPS to provide sufficient funding for next fiscal year, and I feel this budget does that.

“Union County continues to support our schools as evidenced by our funding trend. Since 2003 student enrollment has increased 58 percent but Union County’s funding level of school operations has increased 260 percent and our overall support, inclusive of debt service, has increased 292 percent although our revenues have only grown over the same period 276 percent.

“It has recently been cited that Union County Public Schools is one of lowest in funding in the state. That is an accurate statement with respect to state and federal dollars, of which we have no control; as these monies are typically allocated to lower performing schools. However, it is an inaccurate statement when you look at local funding. Union County taxpayers provide the schools funding at the rate of \$2,100 per student or \$198 more than state average.”



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Additional budget highlights include:

- A decrease in the county tax rate from 66.5 cents to 66.0 cents per \$100 valuation.
- Two percent of Personnel Services line has been allocated to fund County employee pay increases as well as increased costs in benefits. This would be the first pay increase for County staff in four years.
- Additional personnel added to Sheriff's Office, Building Inspections, Planning, Information Systems and Register of Deeds.
- Reduction or elimination of some Health Department and Department of Social Services non-mandated programs.
- Limited funding increases for outside agencies

“The recommended budget is balanced with a \$1,012,349 contribution from our fund balance,” said Coto. “This is a departure from our FY2012 budget that required no fund balance appropriation. Our goal continues to be to build a sustainable budget without the use of fund balance to balance our annual appropriations.”

The Union County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing to receive comments from citizens on the proposed budget at 7 p.m. on Monday, June 4 at the Union County Government Center in Monroe. A copy of the recommended budget can be viewed online at [www.unioncountync.us](http://www.unioncountync.us).

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