

**MINUTES**  
**CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**  
**JUNE 01, 2010**

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The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in the Central Carolina Community College, Multi-Purpose Room, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 6:00 PM on June 01, 2010.

Present: Chair Sally Kost; Vice Chair, George Lucier; Commissioners Mike Cross, Carl Thompson, and Tom Vanderbeck

Staff Present: County Manager, Charlie Horne; Finance Officer, Vicki McConnell; Sybil Tate, Performance Manager; Human Resources Director, Carolyn Miller; and Clerk to the Board, Sandra B. Sublett

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance and called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

**BUDGET PRESENTATION**

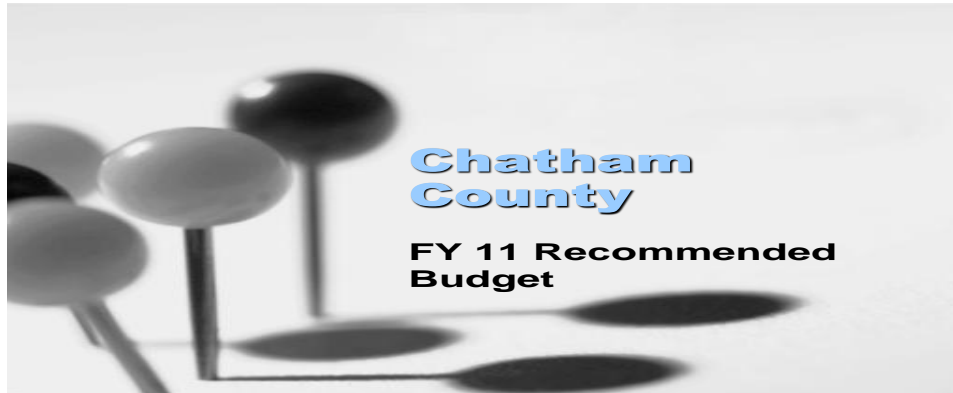
**FY 2010-2011 Recommended Budget Presentation:** Presentation of the recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011

Charlie Horne, County Manager, reviewed specifics of the budget. He explained that property values total \$8.6 billion; that staff is recommending a tax increase of 2.5 cents; that one penny generates \$836,504; that anticipated property tax revenue would be \$53,530,541; that the General Fund Fund Balance appropriated is \$3,907,708; that the Water Fund budget totals \$5,688,535; and the Waste Management Fund totals \$3,080,558.

He stated that the public hearings on the budget are scheduled for June 1, 2010 in Pittsboro and June 2, 2010 in Siler City.

Sybil Tate, Performance Manager, presented a PowerPoint of the FY 2011 Recommended Budget. She reviewed the budget process, economic conditions, new commitments, mandated services, revenue highlights, major funds, expansion, improvements to the budget document, Commissioners’ goals, fund balance, the Capital Improvements Program, Chatham County Schools, and non-profit agencies. The PowerPoint follows in its entirety:

**SUMMARY OF CHATHAM COUNTY FY 2011**  
**RECOMMENDED BUDGET**



**Budget Process (Page 10)**

- Staff is presenting the Manager's Recommended Budget—*this is just the 1<sup>st</sup> step*
- Before the budget is finalized, commissioners will:
  - Hold 2 public hearings to hear from the public
  - Hold a series of budget work sessions in early June
  - Make changes based on public input, etc.
- Goal is to have the budget finalized on June 21

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**FY 2011...A challenging year**

- Revenues continue to decline
- Local economic indicators improving, but slowly
- Several new commitments in FY 2011, including opening 6 new facilities

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**Economic Conditions (Pages 35-36)**

- The number of building permits improving slightly over FY 2009

**Residential Building Permits Issued: Including Cary & Siler City**

Fiscal Year	County	Cary	Siler City
FY 2005 Actual	~700	~100	~100
FY 2006 Actual	~700	~100	~100
FY 2007 Actual	~700	~200	~100
FY 2008 Actual	~450	~250	~100
FY 2009 Actual	~300	~100	~100
FY 2010 YTD	~300	~100	~100

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### Economic Conditions (Pages 35-36)

- Property tax base expected to grow only 2.1% in FY 2011; motor vehicle values continue to decline
- State budget shortfall may mean more cuts to counties and schools
- County estimated shortfall in FY 2010 is about \$450K (0.5%)

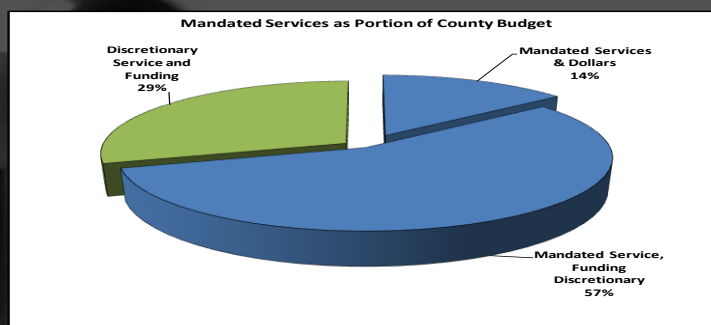
### New Commitments

- Margaret Pollard Middle School opens January 2011--\$788K
- Chatham Community Library opens fall 2010--\$362K
- Two new community college buildings open in the fall--\$91K
- Two new parks open--\$224K

### New Commitments

- Recommended increase for schools to offset state cuts--\$709K
  - Mandated increase in retirement contribution--\$274K
- Total=\$2.4 million

### Mandated Services (Page 230)





## Highlights

- Overall, revenues are expected to decline slightly in FY 2011, including:
  - Interest down 52%
  - Sales tax down 8%
- Without new commitments, the general fund budget was cut 4%



## Revenue Highlights

- A 2.5-cent tax increase is recommended—generates \$2.1 million (less than the new commitments)
- Most fire departments requesting small increases in fire tax rates
- Fund balance appropriation recommended: \$3.9 million—all earmarked for one-time items
- Budget also reflects expenditures for 6% occupancy tax rate



## Major Funds

- General Fund: \$84.6M, 2% increase
- Water Fund: \$5.7M, a 10% decrease
- Waste Management: \$3.1M, a 21% decrease



## Expansion (page 26-29)

Recommended expansion (2.09 cents on tax rate)

- 1.83 cents for new facilities (Margaret Pollard Middle, Chatham Community Library, 2 community college buildings, and 2 parks)
- 0.15 cents for new positions in Emergency Dispatch, Health, Sheriff, Sustainable Communities, and Social Services
- 0.11 for other expansion (codification of ordinances, electronic tax listing, etc.)



### **Commissioner Goals (Pages 4-7 & Appendix D)**

- Open Government
  - Improves budget document to comply with GFOA
  - Purchases sound system for commissioner meetings
- Land Use Planning
  - Funds Land Use Plan update
  - Reallocates 2 positions in Sustainable Communities to address affordable housing, green building, and resource conservation



### **Commissioner Goals (Pages 4-7 & Appendix D)**

- Fiscal Management
  - Implements recommendations of Performance Team
  - Reduces operating budget (not including new facilities)
- Conservation
  - Funds completion of energy upgrades to county buildings
  - Funds waste audit
  - Continues the Pittsboro Express
  - Funds Utility Service Worker to improve valve exercising and reduce water loss



### **Commissioner Goals (Pages 4-7 & Appendix D)**

- Public Safety
  - Funds several capital improvements to enhance public safety
  - Funds positions in dispatch and Sheriff's Office
- Personnel/Hiring/Staffing
  - Funds cultural competency survey
  - Retains all filled positions
- Economic Development
  - Funds operating costs for 2 new community college buildings



### **Commissioner Goals (Pages 4-7 & Appendix D)**

- Schools
  - Increases base funding for Chatham County Schools to offset loss in state funding
  - Increases time for school health position in Health Dept.
- Other Goals/Issues
  - Includes \$4,000 in revenue from Town of Pittsboro to partner on storm water services



### **Fund Balance (Pages 7-10)**

- Staff estimates we will use about \$450K in FY 2010
- Stated goal is 20%; should be at 26% at the end of FY 2010
- Recommending an appropriation of \$3.9 million in FY 2011; all earmarked for non-recurring expenses, including school capital outlay and CIP
- Staff estimates fund balance will drop to 23% at the end of FY 2011
- Five-year model shows fund balance will be above 20 percent




### **Capital Improvements Program (Pages 32-33 & Appendix E)**

- Recommended changes:
  - Appropriate additional \$350K from fund balance for 964 East Street renovations
  - Postpone emergency services building to FY 2013
  - Remove schools facilities condition assessment
  - Fund auditorium upgrades with Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCB's)



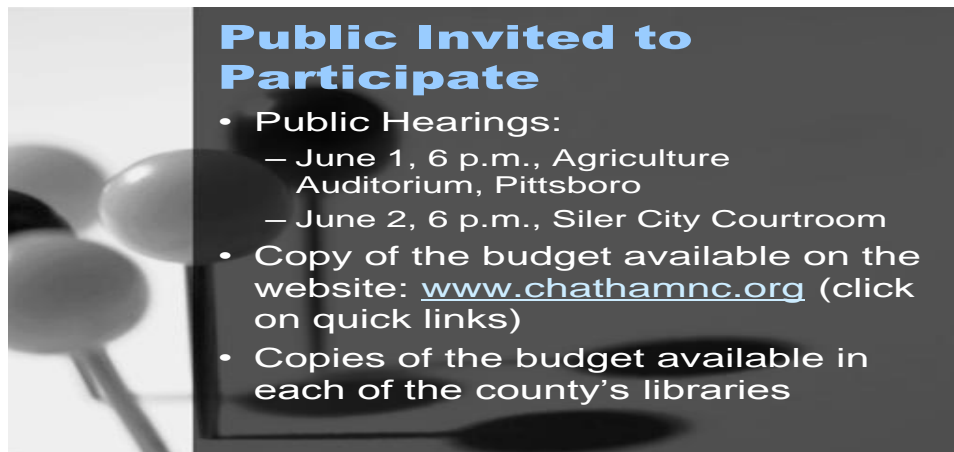
### **Chatham County Schools (Pages 78-79)**

- Staff from the county and school system worked closely to develop the recommended budget
- Keeps school CIP projects on track
- 7% increase in current expense
- Maintains teachers supplement



### **Non-profit Agencies (Pages 122-127)**

- Manager made minor changes in panel recommendations
- Written recommendations from panels were provided
- Commissioners have \$10,000 to allocate directly

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**Public Invited to Participate**

- Public Hearings:
  - June 1, 6 p.m., Agriculture Auditorium, Pittsboro
  - June 2, 6 p.m., Siler City Courtroom
- Copy of the budget available on the website: [www.chathamnc.org](http://www.chathamnc.org) (click on quick links)
- Copies of the budget available in each of the county's libraries

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**Questions?**

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Chair opened the floor for public comments. She explained the specifics of the new light timer used for public comments.

**Patricia B. Learned**, 500 Jeremiah Drive, Chapel Hill, NC, chair of the Interfaith Ministries, stated that she was awakened by rain and thunder this morning; that she is concerned for her homeless brothers and sisters in Chatham County; that they are likely seeking shelter in unorthodox places; that she enjoyed comforts of life while those homeless are not; that she ate well but wondered about the homeless; that Interfaith Ministries is concerned about this problem; that they need resources from the Board of Commissioners to help them kick start this effort.

Commissioner Thompson asked how much money the organization had raised independently on its own.

Ms. Learned stated that the organization has raised over \$6,000 from individuals and organizations; that that amount does not count \$3,000 that the Salem Presbyterian Church donated; that a Memorandum of Understanding was established with the Salvation Army; and that the Interfaith Ministries made a commitment to fund the Salvation Army for that particular service.

Commissioner Lucier thanked everyone that was involved with Interfaith Ministries and asked if they were a 501 3 (C) organization.

Ms. Learned stated that they just received this a few weeks ago and that they will continue to apply for funding.

**Kenneth Brooks**, 101 Lakeridge Drive, Cameron, NC, stated that he was born and raised in Chatham County and has been the minister at Mitchell Chapel Church for the past

twelve years; that the Interfaith Ministries is a confluent, nonprofit, 501 3 (C) corporation composed of a diverse cross-section of residents of Chatham County and others whose constituents are Chathamites; that Interfaith Ministries consists of ministers, lawyers, social workers, business owners, and educators; that they would like to include the Board of Commissioners; that in the words of Ms. Faythe Carson Clark, “What is unique about Interfaith Ministries is our willingness to stand in the gap of available services, received to promote that which is already working, create what does not exist, and supplement what works, but for whatever reason does not receive enough to assist and support every individual and family in Chatham County.”; that the Interfaith Ministries has several areas of concern such as a free health clinic, and they are in collaboration with other agencies and programs headed up by Beth Kricker and Bill Browder to make this happen; that additionally, the Interfaith Ministries gave \$3,000 to the Salvation Army to supplement their assistance to those who need it more than the Army was authorized to give; that the main issue is to seek and address funding for the homeless situation in Chatham County; that no matter what everyone thinks, homelessness does exist and the supporting evidence makes it plausible that we, as a caring people, tackle it head-on and make homelessness less of a problem in Chatham County. He stated that the Interfaith Ministries strongly encourages the Board of Commissioners to consider the request for their stated funds and support their goals and objectives as it is the moral and right thing to do.

**Susan Keesee**, 360 Luna Lane, Chapel Hill, NC, stated that she and her neighbors spent almost \$200,000 in legal fees to work through ambiguity in County ordinances to fight a proposed and potentially environmentally disastrous shopping center at the Orange-Chatham County line; that she supports the efficiencies in government and environmental improvements through the sustainable communities initiatives in Chatham County; that she wants the Board to continue to fund these initiatives so that everyone can enjoy sustainable growth in our County; and that she trusts each member of the Board to make good budget decisions so that maybe they will never have to spend that kind of money in legal fees again.

**Jeffrey Starkweather**, 590 Old Goldston Road, Pittsboro, NC, presented his comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“While I am speaking only for myself, my perspective is that of a board member of the Chatham County Economic Development Corporation, chair of the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, and member and advisor of a number of other county advisory board and task forces.

We make a huge mistake if we look at the county budget as simply document of expenditures and revenues that requires a certain property tax rate. What that limited perspective misses is that a local government budget is really an investment strategy. This is particularly true with this board. Your budget is first an investment strategy in places – infrastructure, environmental protection and natural resource preservation, park, quality of life, land use, etc. Secondly, it is an investment strategy in people – mostly through public education in grade schools and our community college.

Unlike most of the speakers here tonight, I have not come to speak on any one particular area of proposed spending. I have, instead, come to speak on the budget as a whole and to address what I consider to be misinformed objections to this board’s budget investment strategy. All of these objections come from my review of candidate and their supporters’ speeches and websites. These include the following mistaken assertions:

- We are in severe recession and households in Chatham have had to cut way back on their spending and county government should do the same thing
- The best way to promote economic development is to reduce the overall tax burden
- We can dramatically cut the county budget and have economic development and job growth at the same time
- The county budget gets bigger every years
- It has been proposed one candidate for county commissioner that we need the cut the local tax rate, and thus local budget, by 7% per year for three years (21% overall).



First, a county government budget is not like a household budget. If every resident cuts back their household spending because of the recession this only deepens and prolongs that recession by decreasing local purchasing. While this is the smart strategy for an individual family it clearly has negative impact on the overall economy. That is why government needs to step up to the plate and make fiscally sound investment expenditures, particularly on items such local schools to keep teachers employed. That is exactly what happened last year when the county made up the loss of state revenues to keep all our local teachers employed and what this year's proposed budget does as well. Think what a negative impact laying off a significant number of local teachers would have had on our local economy.

Second, there is one aspect of household budgeting that is similar to that of the county budget. When a household spends money on eating at a restaurant, going on vacation, or purchasing electronic toys it is simply spending. Yes, it helps the local economy in the short term and may give immediate pleasure but it does nothing for the long-term economic prosperity of that family. However, if a family borrows money to send their kids to college, that family's will have leveraged those expenditures for a tremendous return on investing in the long-term family financial sustainability. That is exactly what the county is doing with its investments in education. An investment in local public school and community colleges is essentially if we are going to attract good paying jobs and quality industries and business to the county. This is also best long-term strategy for reducing the local tax burden on residents by shift more of that burden on to commercial and industrial property.

Talking about increases in the county budget over the years is meaningless unless you compare them to population and tax base growth. Yet, looking at figures provided by the county manager's office concerning growth in the General Fund Amended Budget since 2000 demonstrates that the current board majority has been extremely frugal. During the previous county board majority the county budget increased 50% over four years or 12.5% per year. During the first three years of the current majority the budget only increased 12.5% or average of 4.17% per year. Moreover, the current amended budget is lower than the previous year's and the manager's proposed budget is lower than the current amended budget, according to these budget figures. Finally, from 2000 to 2010 the county budget increased 114%, but only 20% of that increase occurred during the tenure of the current board majority. Add to this the county's receiving an upgrade to the highest bond rating for any county's its size and there is overwhelming evidence that the current board has been making those needed economic development investments in a fiscally prudent fashion."

Commissioner Lucier thanked Mr. Starkweather for his comments. He stated that the tax rate of Chatham County is about average in North Carolina; that Chatham is number four out of one hundred counties in support of public schools; that this means we are extraordinarily efficient in other departments of how they are funded; and that the departments are very efficient in carrying out their duties. He asked if Mr. Starkweather was aware of the County's budget growth rate history over time.

Mr. Starkweather stated that during this administration, there has been a 12.5% growth in the budget; that the previous administration grew 50%; that during the last ten years, there has been a 114% increase in the budget; that out of the entire increase, there has only been a 20% increase in the last year; and that during the last two years, the Board's budget has decreased.

**Larry Ballas**, 139 Indian Creek Lane, Apex, NC, stated that he personally doesn't care what the budget is because the Board is going to do what they want to do; that 24% of the people in the country think government has enough money to do what they want without tax dollars; that some people think that the government actually makes money; that they don't and it comes from people who pay taxes in some shape or form; that in the County, it is paid a couple of ways: 1) taxes on housing; 2) sales tax; that it is amazing that some people think that money grows on trees; that he is concerned about how an increase in taxes affect people in the County who can't afford to pay them; that he wonders how many poor people we have in this County that, when you raise tax, won't be able to pay their tax; that what do we do about it and how many people that are just above the poverty level, when taxes are increased, now become below the poverty level and can't pay their taxes and end up

homeless who then obtain funds from the Interfaith Ministries to help those people; that we have to realize that the price of housing has gone down; that he learned from a real estate agent that the prices in the best neighborhoods are about the same as they were three years ago; that in some cases, the prices are actually lower; that we have to remember that the money the Board of Commissioners is using is the people's money; that you can't spend money that you don't have; that he would recommend a tax decrease; that when asked by a citizen last year if the Board could cut taxes any further a Commissioner told him no, that they could not cut further than the General Fund which was when a 7% decrease occurred; that this year, we are down 4%; that the actual fact is that the budget could have been cut more last year because the General Fund came down 4% this year over last year; and that he would hope that the budget could be further cut in order to give the people a chance to spend money rather than just spend it to government which is not the right way to do it.

Chair Kost stated that the County revalues property every four years and adjusts the tax rate. She asked if Mr. Ballas wanted a revaluation every year because there was also a cost associated with doing that.

Mr. Ballas stated that there is a cost to government for everything; that he thinks that a revaluation could be done every year as long as the Commissioners are willing to admit that if the cost of housing goes down, there will be less tax dollars collected or will they be committed to raising taxes to keep it neutral.

Commissioner Lucier stated that the only way to address that was to revalue every year but that it would cost approximately a half million dollars to do so every year which would equate to a penny on the tax rate every year. He stated that it was not as straight forward decision as someone might think. He asked if Mr. Ballas was aware that they had cut the budget the last two years in terms of overall expenditures.

Mr. Ballas said that he was aware of that; that his argument is that if the Board said they could not cut expenditures last year why are they cutting the budget this year and from where did the Board find the funds to cut it this year.

Commissioner Lucier asked what Mr. Ballas thought the Board should cut.

Mr. Ballas stated that he was not prepared to answer that question but would be glad to sit down with them to discuss the budget in its entirety. He stated that he would feel bad if the Board had to lay off people, but that it was not government's responsibility to maintain a high level of personnel.

Further discussion ensued.

Commissioner Thompson stated that he thought the Board got Mr. Ballas' point. He stated that the fact is, the value of citizens homes is less this year than last; that the tax rate is the same therefore it is costing people more; that he is saying that the Board should take that into consideration when they look at the budget; that if they can, they should cut their rates or at least keep the taxes where they are now; and that whether they agree with him or not, he thinks his point is well-taken.

**Randy Voller**, 21 Randolph Drive, Pittsboro, NC, presented his comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“Honorable Commissioners and Gathered Citizens,

I am please to address this body in this forum regarding the fiscal year 2010/2011 budget. As the mayor of Pittsboro, I realize the difficult choices you face and the challenges you have to provide a balance of services across constituencies. As a voting board member and nonvoting member of the Advanced Energy Corp, NC Juvenile Justice Board, CCEDC, Affordable Housing, SWAC, Orange/Chatham Planning board, TARPO, Chatham County Soccer League, Citizens Grants Committee, Greater Pittsboro Community Development Corporation and the Town of Pittsboro, I commend the Board for its choices to invest in our schools and communities in Chatham County. These investments have enhanced our school

system, raised the quality of life in our County, protected public health and safety, saved jobs and helps to create jobs. Furthermore, the spirit of cooperation has been recognized by the recent award given by Secretary Dee Freeman of DEHNR, the award the Board of Commissioners received from the School Board Association and the commendations and awards Northwood Principal Chris Blice and School Superintendent Robert Logan have received. Finally, the recent symphony at Northwood High School conducted by the Durham Symphony and hosted by the Chatham County Arts Council are real world evidence of the quality of these investments...investments that have been made on behalf of those with advantage and those who are in need of food through services like CORA. Eliminating and/or cutting and eliminating investments in planning, sustainable communities, transportation, the arts and human relations would imply that as a community, we do not care about planning, quality of life, how we intend to grow, the environment, the needs of at-risk communities and a willingness to listen to a wide variety of vulnerable communities.

In fact, we are in line with the Triangle at-large as evidenced by the following:

(Information from Triangle Tomorrow)

TRANSIT:

1. Improve regional transit, matching land use decisions with transit investments.

VIBRANT CENTERS:

2. Reinvest in City and Town Centers, promote compact development, density and mixed use, and a balance of jobs and housing.

GREEN SPACE:

3. Define growth and preservation areas to protect open space, agricultural land, and natural resources, especially water supply and quality.

This Board adopted a resolution supporting it as did the Town of Pittsboro. In fact the Urban Land Institute says, 'Those regions with a clear plan for how they are going to grow, a plan that broad-based support from the private, nonprofit and public sectors, will have a key competitive advantage.'

Thirty-four towns and counties have endorsed those concepts that you have endorsed and nine regional organizations. The Town of Pittsboro is pleased to join with Chatham County, Goldston and Siler City to promote economic development and mutually invest in our County's future. The recent completion of the 3M/Pittsboro reuse water project was a great example of public/private cooperation, innovation, and implementation for the mutual benefit of Chatham County, the Town of Pittsboro and 3M. The Town of Pittsboro has adopted a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) that includes projects that are needed and will yield mutual benefit. Benefits will include: economic development, job creation, quality of life and positive impacts to public health and safety.

On behalf of the Town of Pittsboro, I respectfully request that the Chatham County Board of Commissioners consider that some of these projects are "shovel ready", others are in the planning and/or engineering stage, while some are still in the formative stages and some have already received official support from the CCEDC.

Furthermore, I respectfully request that the Board of Commissioners in their wisdom consider the following courses of action in FY 2010/2011 and beyond:

- 1) Provide a blanket resolution of support for the Town of Pittsboro's five-year Capital Improvements Plan. (Additionally, resolutions can be passed for the Towns of Goldston and Siler City.)

2) Provide specific resolutions and letters of support for projects that are seeking grant funding and support from the NC Rural Center, USDA, and other agencies with the state and federal government.

3) Where practical, reasonable and mutually beneficial provide staff support.

4) Where practical, reasonable, and mutually beneficial provide direct and/or indirect financial support.

Highlights of the CIP projects I will provide to the Board include:

CIP #1 "Downtown Water Improvements \$1,450,000.00

CIP #9 "New 3.22 MGD WWTP" \$51,045,000.00

CIP#10 "Water Treatment Plant" \$375,000.00

CIP#12 "Water Distribution/Old Graham Loop" \$1,250,000.00

CIP#13 "Sewer Collection/Credle Street Rehab" \$865,000.00 (Rural Center Grant)

CIP #29 "Greenway Improvements" \$50,000.00

Thank you for your consideration."

Commissioner Lucier asked Mr. Voller what he thinks the County can do to help Pittsboro with the wastewater issue.

Mr. Voller stated that that the Town of Pittsboro treats less than 370,000 gallons per day; that he thinks, once they are through with the stimulus package grant, they will be able to go for the permit; that in order to go forward, he thinks that the reuse water network that they started and connected to 3M could be explored further, and it would allow them to get further capacity; that the efforts that the Board has underway in dealing with Western Wake Partners and cooperating with Pittsboro on the three million dollar plant would be a long-range goal; that they cannot do it alone and it would take joint support.

**Beverly Murdock**, Luna Lane, Pittsboro, NC, thanked the Board for the opportunity to address them. She expressed support for three items in budget: 1) Sustainable Communities Department where the Board is increasing the efficiency of government; 2) Schools as it is really important to support the schools as they are our future; 3) Environment as the Board continues to focus on ordinances that protect it; that one major problem can destroy the livelihood of thousands of people.

**Pamela Hawe**, 1976 Wade Paschal Road, Siler City, NC, stated that she was present to speak on behalf of the Rocky River Heritage Foundation; that she knows there have been presentations in the past on the importance of the Rocky River; that the environment is highlighted in the Economic Development Plan; that the group has tried to bridge gaps and open dialogue with different players; that there is an active grant for Tick Creek and are working on another; that they are focused on improving water quality; and that they are asking that the Board of Commissioners continue to support this effort and make this part of their sustainable communities.

Chair Kost stated that the Board had supported the Rocky River Foundation through the non-profit process in the past. She asked if there was a request this year. Ms. Hawe stated that she did not think so.

**Lesley Landis**, 21 Randolph Court, Pittsboro, NC, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“Thank you Commissioners for hours and service that you give our community and that this budget represents. I’m also very grateful for your support of the arts in our county and for the opportunity for the arts to be included in this public budgeting process.

To begin, I’ll quote Dept. of Cultural Resources Secretary, Linda Carlisle. She says, “There has been talk of late about setting the 'buffet table' for economic development. As we do that, we need to start thinking of creativity as meat and potatoes.” The arts and culture are not just the dessert. The arts are not a luxury. The arts are serving as the backbone of economic development in North Carolina. In evidence:

This year, the creativity sector provided more than 400,000 jobs statewide and contributed \$4 billion in revenue to our North Carolina economy. ChathamArts can help Chatham County’s economy on a local level.

Creative thinking—the kind that fuels innovation—is now the world’s most valued commodity. If Chatham County is to remain competitive in this new economic era, our 21st century job strategy must focus on encouraging the Creativity, Imagination, Invention and Artistry of our students. End of grade test scores are boosted when artists teaching to the core curricula, reach kids and provide them with different ways to view the information and the world. The artists’ residencies administered by ChathamArts in Chatham County schools are doing this. A few success stories based on facts:

FACT: Arts events draw tourism dollars and help define our county’s sense of place. In April at the 9th Annual ClydeFEST — ChathamArts’ tribute to Bynum folk artist, Clyde Jones — previous attendance numbers of 300-500 were completely shattered when more than 1,000 attendees paid to enter our gates. As with other ChathamArts events, our records proved that a solid 30-40% of attendees were from outside the county. While in Chatham, these tourists are spending their money here.

FACT: Artists and arts events attract residents who appreciate the arts and consider arts and culture as a requirement for their quality of life. ChathamArts is very proud to have recently hosted the first full symphony orchestra concert ever presented in Chatham County’s long and rich history. ChathamArts received very enthusiastic feedback from several attendees who were hopeful for future performances. Since ChathamArts utilized the new Northwood High School auditorium for the concert, concert goers also enjoyed the end of year projects by art students which were on exhibit resulting in a far greater impact for all audiences.

FACT: Studies prove that Arts in Education programs can serve as gang prevention, and help reduce dropout rates in schools. ChathamArts launched our Youth Documentary program at SAGE Academy. Last week ChathamArts hosted the premiere of the documentary films created by SAGE Academy students. More than 100 members of the public attended this powerful Tuesday night event, and the Q&A lasted longer than any of our prior screenings. I understand that certain members of the Board of Education were so favorably impressed that they asked for copies of the films.

Please consider the ways that Chatham County's economy, local services, and community benefit from the work of ChathamArts as well as the other two major Chatham County arts programs: the economic development possibilities and tourism opportunities brought by the Chatham Studio Tour administered by the Chatham Artists Guild; and the professional development and educational opportunities offered by the NC Arts Incubator. Our staffs and our volunteer armies have worked smart, hard and creatively to stretch our funding as far as possible. The manager's proposed budget allows for \$35,000 for the arts, I understand that \$45,000 was requested. Again, I want to thank you for the support this demonstrates and hope with the success stories I've shared that you can find a way to reinstate that additional \$10,000.”

**Dee Reid**, 590 Old Goldston Road, Pittsboro, NC, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“I am here simply to thank you for your vision and leadership in supporting public transportation for Chatham by including the Pittsboro Express Bus in your 2009 budget and again in the proposed 2010/11 budget. I believe this is essential for our long-term economic survival and development. I have just a few points to make:

Contrary to popular myth, the buses are very well utilized. The ones I ride regularly are crowded and every passenger I have talked to wholeheartedly supports the bus and would like to see it continue.

This is not a small elite group. The PX buses are full of local commuters from all walks of life. They work at the hospitals, in clinics and, on campus, in secretarial, administrative, laboratory, automotive and maintenance jobs.

They come from: Pittsboro, Moncure, Bear Creek, Silk Hope, Siler City and Sanford.

We have had many discussions on the bus about how lucky we are to have public transit -- especially in these economically challenging times.

Several riders have told me they would not have a job without the bus -- their only transportation option for work.

In all cases, the bus provides an enormous savings over driving, parking and car maintenance costs. This is a significant benefit to most of our riders who, like me, are state employees, who have not had a salary increase since July 2008, who have received a pay cut furlough a year ago and who are not likely to see any wage increase until at least 2011.

Many riders have told me they are shopping locally even more now, since they don't have a car in Chapel Hill during the work day. At the end of the day, we get off the bus in Pittsboro and continue on to do our grocery, dry cleaning, and other shopping errands locally on the way home, spending our money in Chatham where it belongs.

We are all glad to have a job, a bus to get us to work each day, and public officials who understand the importance of investing in public transit for economic development, environmental protection and the greater good of our community.

We also realize that all transportation options are publicly subsidized, including the highways that our cars, trucks and buses must use. We're glad that you are willing to support options that make it more affordable for workers from all walks of life to reach their jobs.

We hope that you will keep the Pittsboro Express running so that even more local residents may benefit directly from using it and indirectly from decreased traffic, carbon emissions and air pollution. And, most of all, and so that Chatham will survive the economic downturn and thrive, instead of getting left behind as the rest of the Triangle moves ahead.

I also hope that you will continue to support the transportation planner and transportation advisory board, which are essential to promote public transportation and attract supplemental federal and state dollars to support it for the long term.

Thank you again for your leadership and service to our community.”

**Kathleen Dulaney**, 3959 Pittsboro-Goldston Road, Pittsboro, NC, stated that she was also in support of the PX bus; that for twelve years she drove a commuter van; that it has been a blessing to ride the bus; that there are eight people present that ride the bus; that she finds people that ride the bus have no form of alternate transportation; that some commute to Chapel Hill and then commute to Raleigh; and that she wanted to say thank you for funding and continuing the bus service.

**Laurie Holst**, 559 Millbrook Drive, Pittsboro, NC, stated that she made the headlines by boarding the first bus; that some that ride the bus are looking for work; and that she thanks the Board of Commissioners and hopes they continue funding.

**Kim Caraganis**, 285 River Bend Road, Siler City, NC, executive director of Chatham County Together thanked the Board of Commissioners for the support they gave as they moved to Siler City; that they cut their overhead by moving; that they cut staff salaries; that they took a 16% salary cut; that they are requesting the same funding the same as last year; that they do a lot of fundraising and have brought in over \$80,000 this year and are serving lots of kids; that they have 13% overhead; and that she appreciates their support.

**Tim Cunnup**, 175 Rosemary Street, PO Box 415, Goldston, NC, on behalf of the Town of Goldston and as a citizen of Chatham County, expressed thanks for the Board of Commissioners' for their support in helping the town with the sewer project; that the Board of Commissioners has been understanding and helpful with their insight and vision toward the future; that it will make a huge difference for Goldston economically and environmentally; and that they are very excited about this as it has been a long time in coming. He also thanked the County Manager and staff for their help in this matter.

Chair Kost stated that this had been a collaborative effort not only with the County and Town but with the federal government and the state. She stated that Speaker Hackney had been a partner in this as well as Congressman Etheridge. She stated that the entire community needs to thank Mr. Cunnup for his efforts having worked on the project since 1994 and that they all are pulling for the referendum to be successful on June 22.

Commissioner Lucier stated that he appreciates Mr. Cunnup's relentless efforts to make this happen. He stated that this was a great thing for the Town of Goldston and Chatham County.

**Bob Murdock**, 288 Luna Lane, Chapel Hill, NC, stated that he thought the Board of Commissioners would be badgered tonight by the people who wanted to say, "Let's cut taxes."; that these are important times and cutting taxes is not the answer; that we must rally around so that we can get through these difficult times; and that he wanted to thank the Board stating that he felt they had looked at the budget very carefully and it looks like they have examined ways to cut where they could and yet maintain the schools.

Commissioner Vanderbeck stated that the Board actually starts with the first budget meetings this week; and that they will do all they can to bring down the budget and cover all the bases.

**Kathy Hodges**, 101 Stonestrow, Chapel Hill, NC, Co-Executive Director of Family Violence and Rape Crisis Services, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

"I have come here tonight to support the current level of funding for Family Violence and Rape Crisis Services instead of the drastically reduced funding—a cut of more than 33%—that is recommended in the manager's budget. It is my belief that the committee did not fully understand the nature and importance of the funding and how this cut would have a direct impact on the services we are able to provide the community. We asked for partial funding of our development coordinator and volunteer coordinator positions. These may sound like extras, but they are not

While this funding is not for direct services, our ability to provide direct services is directly related to raise the +/- \$1M each year required for services, such as shelter, counseling, support groups and prevention projects, and to recruit and train the volunteers required to provide direct services, such as the crisis line, and other support—that was more than 5000 volunteer hours last year.

We have used this funding and our volunteer hours to match state and federal money, providing match for more than \$300,000 last year. Without this money we may have a hard time matching these funds.

Our development office has written collaborative grants to fund two positions in the Sheriff's Office over each of the past several years, as well as officers in the two police

departments, and assistance in funding for Family Visitation Services. We want to continue to support the county's efforts to build a strong response and this funding helps us do that.

Most of our other funders will not provide funding for our development and PR coordinator. Chatham County's funding has been essential for stability in this position. This is a big part of why we have been recognized across the state and nation as an outstanding domestic violence program winning the following awards:

- 2005 Mary Byron Award (National award)
- 2006 NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence Excellence Award (given to 1 program in the state every 2 years)
- 2009 GSK Impact Award (Triangle regional award)

In closing, the county was who originally suggested that we use our request for funding from you in this way, more than 10 years ago. They saw it as an investment then. We still see it as an investment, one that leverages additional community resources, both for our agency and the county. You have been getting an excellent return on your investment with us. Thank you."

**Claire Kane**, 151 Womack Lane, Pittsboro, NC, stated that she wanted to thank the Board of Commissioners for the PX bus; that she works in the UNC Department of Public Safety that works with alternative transportation programs; that performance measures used to assess urban transit are not valid when assessing rural transit; that it is best to look at whether rural transit impacts regional goals; that wise planning can demonstrate a better way to go and determine how we are going into the future; and that for the first time those living in Siler City do not have to drive all the way to Chapel Hill.

**Doug Sedlak**, 1955 Old Graham Road, Pittsboro, NC, stated that from what he can tell the Board of Commissioners and staff are doing a great job; that they are being careful stewards of taxpayer money; that his request is that materials be better organized so that taxpayers can see the historical data, the "now", and especially future projections are shown as well; and that it would enlightening to see the usage of new programs and parks.

Commissioner Lucier stated that he frequently asks for history and background; that the parks are a particularly interesting issue; that most of the money spent on the parks has not come from property taxes; and that there is a Recreational Exaction Fee so that when a developer develops the property at so much per acre, the money goes into a special fund which is used to buy the land for the parks. He stated that the Board is always looking for ways to simplify the budget and that if he has any particular issues as he goes through it, they would like to have the input.

Chair Kost stated that the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has criteria for making the budget a strong communication document; that this budget provides much more information than they have seen in past years because staff has applied the criteria and tried to make it user friendly; and that Mr. Sedlak's feedback is very valuable having just looked at it for the first time.

Commissioner Vanderbeck thanked Mr. Sedlak for his comments stating that they are striving for a more community, budget-friendly document so that everyone can understand it. He stated that in mentioning the historical basis for this budget, where it came from, what has happened in the past, and the projections; that there has been a recent press release regarding the County's upgraded bond ratings for the taxpayers; that the County has been upgraded two positions by Standard & Poor and Moody's; and that he thinks we are the only ones in our population range that have those ratings. He thanked the staff and everyone for making it possible by saying that we are fiscally responsible and being prudent with the taxpayers' money.

**Robert L. Logan**, 73 Nuthatch Drive, Pittsboro, NC, Superintendent of Chatham County Schools, thanked the Board of Commissioners on behalf of the Board of Education, 1,121 employees, and 7,666 students of the Chatham County Schools. He stated that the state will cut education last year and will cut it again; that they feel they are in pretty good



shape because of the partnership that they have with the County and the supported by the Board of Commissioners for public education; that the County funds education at the level of fourth best in the state, but the investment is being made and returns are being received from the students; that they are 10 points above graduation rate; that end-of-the-grade tests are higher than average; that two of the three high schools have been received national awards and recognition this year for academic excellence; that the alternative to education is also expensive; that unemployment is also costly in economic slowdowns; that good things are happening with community relationships; and that he thanks the Board of Commissioners for their courageous and tough decisions.

Commissioner Thompson stated that as a Commissioner, he has been quite happy to support funding for the schools; that it takes two to “tango”; that while the Board of Commissioners has done their part, having one of the finest school superintendents in the State of North Carolina has not hurt us; and that they are proud of Mr. Logan, his staff, and the Board of Education and what they have done. He urged Mr. Logan to get the word out to the citizens of Chatham County regarding their accomplishments and extolling the virtues and benefits of funding.

Mr. Logan stated that the Board of Education has directed staff, when at all possible, to spend the money local, look for local vendors, contractors, and service providers so that the money can be kept in the community.

Commissioner Lucier also thanked Deb McManus, Susan Little, and Assistant Superintendent Moody for their help as they work together for the common purpose and good will in working together to reach a solution and benefits the children of Chatham County.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:48 PM.

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Sally Kost, Chair

ATTEST:

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Sandra B. Sublett, CMC, NCCCC Clerk to the Board  
Chatham County Board of Commissioners