

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 06, 2010

The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in the Central Carolina Community Library, 197 Highway 87 North, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 6:00 PM on December 06, 2010.

Present: Commissioners Brian Bock, Mike Cross, Sally Kost, Walter Petty, and Pamela Stewart; County Manager, Charlie Horne; County Attorney, Jep Rose; Assistant County Manager, Renee Paschal; Finance Officer, Vicki McConnell; Clerk to the Board, Sandra B. Sublett; and Deputy Clerk to the Board, Elizabeth Plata

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Pastor Chris Gambos delivered the invocation after which the Chair invited everyone present to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kost at 6:03 PM.

Chair Kost explained that Judge Baddour, who would be swearing in the new Commissioners, had been delayed due to an accident which he came upon on his way to the ceremony. Due to that, the agenda was revised to hear the public comments prior to Judge Baddour’s arrival.

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Candace Steele, Chatham County Republican Women Member, 145 Julia Lane, Pittsboro, NC, thanked the three new Commissioners for caring enough for the community to run for office. She stated that they never imagined that this would be possible. She expressed appreciation to them for representing the people of the County. She also thanked Commissioner Cross for participating in the Christmas parades with them stating that she looked forward to the great things that the sitting Board will do with the new Commissioners in the years to come.

James P. Canterbury, 2109 Bonlee School Road, Bear Creek, NC, stated during the election he was involved with West Chatham Citizens for Change, stating that they are proud of the County-wide unity they saw during the election and are proud of the new Commissioners. He stated that he would like to see the Board do several things: 1) Bring jobs into Chatham County; 2) Cut some of the jobs that are in government such as Pittsboro-Chapel Hill Bus, asking if this was the best use of citizen money. He stated that the County does not need an Obesity Coordinator, asking if the Health Department or nutritionist could handle the program. He further stated that he wants the Board to be sure that the schools and teachers receive the County support they need; that County employees receive needed raises rather than hiring new, high-cost employees, and he is not sure are needed. We need to make Chatham County easy for the young people to build homes and new businesses to be established. This election will have a huge impact on citizens’ lives in Chatham County now and in the future. He stated that the Board has their support, prayers, and their willingness to help.

Jim Duncan, 662 Royal Sunset Drive, Durham, NC, stated that it “smells and looks” good in Chatham County on this historic evening. He stated that he represents a group of Chatham Citizens known as the Coalition for American Principles. They are hoping for effective and efficient government. That is not to say that they want less government. It means exactly those words: effective and efficient government. To that end, they are asking the Board to take a look at the services and programs that Chatham County currently provides and see if there is something that is no longer required. Let’s take a look to find out what services the citizens of the County are using and make sure it is being done effectively.

When the Board receives citizen's tax money, he wants them to remember that it is the citizen's tax money. They are looking for a return on the tax money. They are asking the Board to be really good stewards of what takes place for their children and grandchildren. Spending money on cosmetic or "feel good" programs strikes their group very, very wrong. They want a return on their tax dollars. To that end, he asked the Board to please let the good people who work for the County on a day-to-day basis do their job. If they find themselves micro-managing, they have done one of two things: 1) They are not doing their job. 2) They have the wrong person in that job. If this is the case, replace them as they owe it to the citizens. He asked that they reach out to business in the County. During the campaign, he had the honor of working the two weeks before the election. There is no question that the "other side" had some really great people. One of their core issues is the environment. There is no reason we cannot bring solid, small, and good business to Chatham County and protect the environment. Looking for efficient government doesn't mean they think things are wrong. Looking for efficiency from their Commissioners means they are coming together as citizens. They wish the Board godspeed, peace, and they hope that in a couple of years they can hold the Board accountable and say, "Great job done!"

Heather Johnson, 449 Foster Lane, Pittsboro, NC, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

"Four years ago in a meeting just like this, I remember mentioning the groups forming all over Chatham County. Groups from all corners have been actively monitoring our local government: Coalition for American Principle, Fearington Republicans, Western Chatham Citizens for Change, The Chatham Conservative Voice. They have been working very hard to educating citizens about what goes on in Chatham County Government. We asked for accountability and fiscal restraint. We wanted our property rights to be protected. We want jobs.

In that same meeting four years ago, I reminded the newly elected Commissioners that these groups would be watching them. Fast forward to election 2010: In a county where Elaine Marshall beat Burr and Atwater won his reelection, voters were not riding a republican tide or state and national disgust. The voters of Chatham soundly rejected the policies of the past four years. So I am reminding our three new Commissioners that we will also be watching you. We are asking that you return our County to sound fiscal responsibility, protect our property rights and restore Chatham County Government to its core functions.

I don't really understand why anyone would want this job you have all fought for. The demands on you are great and I thank you for stepping up to this challenge. It was an honor to work beside all of you this last eleven months. I look forward to being a part of the new Chatham. Thank you."

Paul Price, 645 Jay Cooke Road, Goldston, NC, stated that several of them got together several months ago because they were not happy with the way things were going in the County. They put together an organization called "Western Chatham Citizens for Change". He was surprised at the enthusiasm of the people who attended. Their first meeting was a group of people at the house. They called neighbors and said they didn't like what was going on and they wanted to try to see if they could evoke some change in the County. They had 40 people to attend. Several weeks to a month later, they decided to hold another meeting and thought they needed a larger venue. They rented the Crossroads Community Center and 150 people attended. People were interested in what was going on and wanted to try to do something to improve the quality of the County. This encouraged them to get behind candidates and support them, and he commends them, as it is a tough job, and is glad they decided to do it. He support them and told them that they would work hard to get them elected and they will work equally hard to get them "unelected" if they do not see positive change in the County. He commended each new Commissioner stating that he knows them personally and that they are great people. He stated that the County can look forward to them representing them well and that he knows for a fact that they will be accessible. If something is going on with which citizens are unhappy, he feels they can be approached to discuss the issue. There needs to be good communication. They need to continue to do whatever they can to encourage jobs in the County. As they work together, they can accomplish great things and that he is looking forward to great things from the Commissioners and looking forward to working with them whenever he can be of service.

Brad Johnson, 300 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, NC, thanked the new Board members for running for office. He stated that they put a lot on the line to run and now they have an even harder job to manage in the County which will be a huge time commitment. He knows that they are all either run businesses, are starting businesses, or work for other companies so it is even more of a time commitment. He stated that they are representing what is missing in leadership in the County and that was the other side of the equation. They have both conservatives and liberals, Democrats and Republicans, and they were missing half of the equation nationally. In the cities and County, they had a fairly major course direction. They all agreed that government is necessary. There are things as individuals they cannot do. They need help getting things done. The question isn't whether they need government; it is how much they need. He believes that they over-balanced in one direction too far. They had a fairly large course direction this year. The new Commissioners are part of the course direction. As have been stated, they will be held to making that correction. He very much appreciates that they are willing to serve.

Linda Bienvenue, 31 Cobble Ridge Drive, Pittsboro, NC, stated that she is delighted to have this opportunity to thank each new Commissioner – Brian, Pam, and Walter – for having the desire to represent all of the citizens of Chatham County stating that it was an honor and a pleasure to work with them in their campaigns to bring common sense government to Chatham County. She stated she is looking forward to their continuing relationship as they seek to make Chatham County a thriving, yet affordable community that is a place they can be proud to call “home”.

Jonathan Binanay, 1669 Buckner Clark Road, Pittsboro, NC, congratulated the newly elected Commissioners and thanked them for the opportunity to speak. He stated that he found out approximately one week ago about a potential siting of a 400-acre landfill across from his home. He asked, on behalf on other Chatham County residents, to say “no” to the landfill—not in their backyard. It would be the destruction of their land, the pollution of their air and wells, condemning the value of their property for up to sixty years, and the loss of 400 acres of wildlife. He said that they were pleading to preserve the sanctity of Chatham County, stating that their land is the heart and soul of this County; that if they proceed with the landfill, they will be selling out for a perceived profit which is not guaranteed. The Chatham County Solid Waste Disposal Feasibility Study has already out-of-date. Randolph County has plans to have a multi-county landfill up and running within two years. Durham and Orange Counties, and Asheboro are going to be delivering their trash there. The study was conducted when gas prices were at \$4.00 per gallon. In the study, it states that there are drawbacks to a county-owned landfill which include public resistance, and liability of any issues that may occur. They want to offer some solutions that will save time and money as follows: 1) Offerings of incentives to businesses to locate in Chatham County which will increase revenue. 2) Investing in infrastructure which the County needs, i.e. better water treatment plant center so that UNC Hospital can come to Pittsboro. 3) Signing up our own transfer station for which the costs can be managed. 4) Looking into recycling, composting, and waste reduction initiatives. He stated that he finds it ironic that the night's meeting is in a sustainable building and Chatham is planning on taking other counties trash. Composting help reduce 50% of the waste streams. Recycling can add 10-50 times more jobs than a landfill which are more sustainable initiatives. The culture of Chatham County is a culture of sustainability. We already produce half the tonnage of a state resident. They ask that the Board slow down the process, look at the other initiatives such as infrastructure, a transfer station, recycling composting and waste reduction initiatives, and to preserve rural Chatham County.

Randy Dye, 173 Old Farm Road, Pittsboro, NC, requested a complete dismissal of the ICE Resolution that was passed by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners last year. He stated that this resulted in the front page headline of the *Que Pasa* Newspaper which placed a picture of Sheriff Webster on the front page announcing to the world that Chatham County was a safe haven for illegal immigration. He stated that Mayor Voller, along with the past Commissioners, endorsed and passed this resolution without proper public input.

Gayle Ruedi, 1386 Bradford Place, Pittsboro, NC, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“We have had an invocation tonight from a pastor from the area and in the course of this evening we will have two additional messages of prayer, which is fine, but they are following and representing the Christian tradition. Since not everyone in Chatham County follows a Christian faith path, I would like to offer a meditation that included other faith traditions and spiritual paths...Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Bahai’s, humanists and all people of goodwill. This meditation was delivered as an invocation to the US House of Representatives by a Unitarian Universalist Minister.

Remembering Our Virtues

May we this day be grateful for the gift of life which is ours...remembering today and always that the life we have is to us a mystery and is precious.

May we this day be reminded of the responsibilities we carry...not so that we are overwhelmed...but so that we may be faithful in carrying them forward.

May we this day maintain a sense of perspective, remembering who we are...engaging the tasks at hand, but understanding our own limitations...and forgiving ourselves and others when we fall short of perfection.

May we this day be inspired...be filled with new breath...be filled with new enthusiasm, be ready to see fresh opportunity...new perspectives...unnoticed avenues for action and resolution.

And may we this day remember those virtues that bless our lives and bless the lives of others...the virtues of caring and concern...the virtues of honesty and respect...the virtues of charity...and industry...and patience.

And may the members of this Board of Commissioners maintain a high sense of their calling...remember that they are invested here with honor and called to a wider vision of the world...a world made more fair...more just...more equitable...by their efforts.

May it be so.”

Philip Bienvenue, 31 Cobble Ridge Drive, Pittsboro, NC, stated that he hopes that the new and old Commissioners will stay fully engaged with the public, be out in the community, one-on-one with people and be engaged with the County employees, as well. He hopes that the Board will consider an amnesty program where people who work with stuff all day long and see things and don’t really know what to say to somebody, will come forward and feel comfortable to talk with them about these things, look at our finances and have that type of relationship with the public as well as the employees. He stated that he is concerned as he has two friends that run small businesses and some of it is city/municipal where they have to jump through all kinds of hoops which may also be true of the County. We are tying the hands of businesses who provide jobs and with all the uncertainty now within the world, they do not want to invest or hire people. We have a crown jewel in the state in Fort Bragg. He asked if the County should not be involved in the eleven-county BRAC commission. He stated that there are 40,000 relocating to the state. There is no reason why people cannot commute from here to there. There has to be a relationship and on-going talk between the Commissioners and that area. He wished the new Board good luck.

Theresa Alston, 45 Alvis Alston, Pittsboro, NC, stated that they have already had one landfill. She stated that she has seen neighbors homes taken and condemned the wells/water. There is a fresh spring that runs past her house. The section that they are now trying to acquire is directly in her back yard within walking distance. She stated that she cares about everybody, but she doesn’t want to live anywhere else. She asked if they had not suffered enough stating that there must be somewhere else the landfill can be placed. She stated that she had her own little world back there and did not want to move.

Rita Spina, 12 Matchwood, Pittsboro, NC, did not speak at the Public Input Session, but asked that her written comments be included in the official record as follows:

December 6, 2010

“Good evening. My name is Rita K. Spina and I live at 12 Matchwood in Pittsboro.

As the spokesperson tonight for CCEC (Chatham Citizens for Effective Communities) we congratulate and welcome the 3 new Commissioners – Brian Bock, Pamela Stewart, and Walter Perry.

I will be quite brief.

CCEC was born some 7 years ago as the citizens’ reactions to a government that had little concern for the views of their citizens as they opened the doors to “Bigger is Better” when speaking of development anywhere, anyhow and in any form and often behind the scene. Citizens came together to work on protective ways to keep Chatham as the beautiful county it has been and at the same time make it possible to create development within reasonable guidelines for the protection of its waterways, our water supply, our farms, protection from sprawl, etc. We have followed the growth of Chatham – some of its travesties and some of its successes. We have often been behind this microphone to express many citizens views on a multitude of different issues. We have experienced working with those who like the status quo, those who put their interests before those of the citizens, those who are innovative in their ideas...and we have visited the “changes” that always come when the new government group take their seats and there are different philosophies that come to the surface.

Change is one of the most difficult issues that any of us deal with in our own lives on every level. When change comes from the direction of our leaders in government, it is also difficult to adjust and move forward into different paths. We believe strongly that citizens must speak out – that controversy can be expressed without anger and denegration of the other view. We have seen the growth of more and more citizens respect their governments as they learn how they operate, and hear them debate on the record, openly, and without hidden agendas.

CCEC’s view is that citizens are entitled to an approachable government. Our hope is that all of you will honor your promises and maintain an open and transparent government. This may take more of your time and effort, but in the long run, it builds trust, effective change and success. We wish you well.

Rita K. Spina, PhD”

OATHS OF OFFICE

Chatham County Commissioners:

The County Attorney introduced the Honorable Superior Court Judge Allen Baddour for the purpose of swearing in the new Commissioners.

Judge Baddour stated that it was great to see so many people in attendance. He apologized for the tardiness in his arrival which was beyond his control.

Judge Baddour administered the oaths of office to Brian Bock, Walter Petty, and Pamela Stewart as Chatham County Commissioners. Judge Baddour congratulated the new Board members stating may you perform your duties with wisdom, grace, and with honor. The oaths are attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Chairman:

County Attorney, Jep Rose, presided over the organization of the Board. He opened the floor for nominations for Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Petty nominated Commissioner Brian Bock for Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Kost nominated Commissioner Cross for Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners stating that Commissioner Cross has served on the Board for six years bringing an incredible amount of talent and knowledge and that because of his longevity and the need for continuity, she was nominating Commissioner Cross for Chairman.

Hearing no other nominations for Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, the presiding officer closed the floor for nomination. He called for a vote for Commissioner Cross as Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners. Commissioners Kost and Cross voted in favor of the motion.

The presiding officer called for a vote for Commissioner Bock for Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners. The motion carried with Commissioners Petty, Stewart, and Bock voting in favor of the motion.

The County Attorney declared Commissioner Bock Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners with three votes.

Chairman Bock stated that it is an honor to serve as Chairman of this Board. He thanked his fellow Commissioners for the confidence they have placed in him. He thanked the Staff for their help, enthusiasm, and professionalism in making the transition as seamless as possible. He stated that he looked forward in working with the Staff over the next several years. Since the election, he stated that he had been asked by several what his priorities would be and what he planned to do once they were sworn in and that he had had the same answer every time. His priorities and his plan is what he said he would do during the campaign, stating that he knew he would be unable to address every single issue right away; that there would need to be some prioritization. The question of what he would like to see done first, he said is a fair question. He stated that at the top of their priority list is jobs. Everyone knows there is a need for more jobs in Chatham County. We also know that it is a tough environment. If they are going to create jobs in the County, they have to attract new businesses which mean that adjustments have to be made. He stated that he had asked the Chatham County Economic Development Corporation to prepare and present to the Board of Commissioners within the next 45 days, a comprehensive list of specific recommendations that they can implement that will make it easier to do business in Chatham County. At the same time, he has asked staff to make a list of recommendations to make it more streamlined to get through the process. He has asked them to present to the Board in January specific items where they can change what is being done to make it easier and less time consuming to get through the process to actually create a job. Their goal is to cut several months off of the time that it takes from the time someone wants to create a job to the time that the job is up and running. That will be their top priority and that he wants to make sure there is no ambiguity. If someone wants to create a job and/or expand their business or relocate to anywhere in this part of North Carolina, he wants them to know that the Board is there to work with them and to show them why Chatham County is where they need to be. He wants everyone to know that Chatham County is open for business.

Vice Chairman:

Chairman Bock opened the floor for nominations for the Vice Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Stewart nominated Commissioner Petty for the office of Vice Chair of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners.

Hearing no other nominations for Vice Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, the Chairman closed the floor for nominations.

The Chairman called for a vote for Commissioner Petty for Vice Chairman. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

COMMENTS FROM NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Petty thanked those in attendance for the confidence they placed in the newly elected Board members to look after the affairs of the County government. He stated that it wouldn't be an easy task, as there is a lot of work to be done. Some things will happen quickly, others will take some time. With the citizens continued support and prayers, they will get it done. He stated that as a business owner, he understands that expenditures cannot exceed the income on the balance sheet, and it something that they are going to work on. He stated that he knows that the past Commissioners have worked hard on their budgets, but they will try to work a little harder. They are going to ask for help from the Staff, help from the departments to find ways to help reduce spending, become more efficient, work on any redundancies, and anything that will help them to lower the tax burden that they share. They do not know the outcome from what the State shortfall will be and how much of that will fall back on them. There will be a lot of work and they will have to work together, and they will get through it. There is a lot of things that need attention, some of which will happen fast and some that will take longer, and some will be touchy subjects. He asks that the citizens trust them to do what is best for the County as they promise to work for the good of the whole County. They will not work on special projects or pet projects but will work on what works for the good of the whole County. He thanked everyone for their confidence stating that they would try hard not to let them down and do their best to honor their commitments.

Commissioner Stewart thanked everyone for being in attendance. She thanked the Staff stating that they had been "super" through the transition in trying to bring the new Board members up-to-speed and recognized their extra effort and time. She thanked everyone for their emails and telephone calls, those who left congratulatory messages and messages of support. She stated that they set a lot of expectations during the campaign. They stated that they would spend conservatively, focus on industry, jobs, and economics, continue to improve the governments open and honest transparencies, streamline and simplify and improve their government processes. Citizens stated that they wanted an "ear and a voice", and they will have it. They have also said that they will be watching, and she thanked them for the reminder. She stated that they also set an expectation in that they could count on their support and participation and the Board will be holding them to that as well. She stated that they are open for constructive criticism, but that they would also like to have their prayers as they pray for their wisdom and discernment to make the right choices so that they will go down the right road. She thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve.

SHERIFF'S BOND

Chairman Bock asked for re-approval of the Sheriff's bond.

Commissioner Stewart moved, seconded by Commissioner Cross, to approve the "Public Official Position Schedule Bond" as required. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The Chairman stated that Commissioner Petty would have additional comments after the adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Petty moved, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0), and the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Petty invited those present to attend the reception honoring the new Commissioners which is set-up outside the meeting room. He also invited those interested to attend a short meeting to pray for the awesome responsibility of governing a body of people, both individually and as a group.

Commissioner Cross stated that he had been spending quite a bit of time during the last week with the three new Commissioners who invited him to join them on their float with

the hard work of the Republican Women; that he was treated very kindly as a Democrat; that during the first evening in Siler City there was a lot of ribbing and teasing; that the second time there was a live donkey on the float with him; that in the Pittsboro Parade they added a sign on the chimney that said, "And Mike Cross" plus they brought the donkey a second time; that he appreciates the warm reception that he received during the Christmas parades; and that the Bennett Christmas Parade is yet to come.

Brian Bock, Chairman

ATTEST:

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