

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
MARCH 19, 2007

The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in the Central Carolina Community College, Multipurpose Room, 764 West Street, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 2:00 PM on March 19, 2007.

Present: Chairman Carl Thompson; Vice Chair, George Lucier; Commissioners Patrick Barnes, Mike Cross, and Tom Vanderbeck; County Manager, Charlie Horne; Interim County Attorney, Jep Rose; Assistant County Manager, Renee Paschal; Finance Officer, Vicki McConnell; and Clerk to the Board, Sandra B. Sublett

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 2:08 PM.

The Chairman reviewed the Work Session agenda.

Work Session

1. TIP Follow-Up
2. Set a Public Hearing on Chatham/Cary Draft Land Plan Maps
3. Interim Tax Review Officer
4. Detention Center Presentation
5. EDC Strategic Planning Consultant Finalist Review

TIP FOLLOW UP

Jason Sullivan presented the Board of Commissioners with two resolutions for the Transportation Improvement Program from 2009-2015 for the Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization and Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization. Mr. Sullivan stated that Pat Strong with TARPO had contacted him and recommended that the language for the Corinth Road and Pea Ridge Road projects be clarified, which the Board agreed to do. It was also explained that the DCHC MPO resolution included a project for a pedestrian/bicycle/greenway plan for the joint planning area with the Town of Cary that was requested by their staff.

Commissioner Barnes moved, seconded by Commissioner Cross, to adopt the resolutions, with the changes to clarify the TARPO resolution as requested by Pat Strong, as follows:

Resolution #2007-08 in Support of Projects to be Included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 2009-2015 for Projects in Chatham County in the Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization

Resolution #2007-09 in Support of Projects to be Included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 2009-2015 for Projects in Chatham County in the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0). The resolutions are attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

CHATHAM/CARY DRAFT LAND PLAN

Keith Megginson, Planning Director, asked if the Board wished to set a public hearing on the three options of the Chatham-Cary Joint Land Use Plan maps.

Mr. Megginson also informed the Board that the Cary Council is interested in comments they may have on the revised project schedule that was e-mailed to the Board last week.

Commissioner Lucier stated that item #3 of April 18 as the time of the Board's preferences and responses to the five issues raised by staff at the February 20 joint Board/Council meeting was not accurate since the public hearing is not until April 17.

By consensus, the Board set April 17, 2007 as the date on which to hold a public hearing on the Chatham/Cary Joint Land Use Plan maps to be held in the Chatham County Superior Courthouse beginning at 7:00 PM.

INTERIM TAX ADMINISTRATOR

Commissioner Lucier moved, seconded by Commissioner Vanderbeck, to appoint Vicki McConnell as Interim Tax Administrator. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

REGIONAL JAIL PRESENTATION

Steve Allan, reported on the Regional Jail Study, stating that during October 2005, Chatham, Lee, and Moore Counties commissioned a joint study to assess the feasibility of a Regional Jail Facility to be developed and shared by the three counties. He stated that in order to adequately assess the feasibility of a regional jail, the status and dynamics of each individual county jail's current and recently experience inmate populations had to be evaluated; that the data collected was used to develop projections of future inmate populations and corresponding future jail bed requirements that would in turn contribute to a regional jail's eventual total inmate bed/space requirements and ultimately costs.

Mr. Allan, Part I, reviewed inmate projections, alternative projection scenarios, planning recommendations, jail development options, and option costs. In Part II, he reviewed regional jail options, regional jail beds, participant share and costs, summarized comparison of jail option costs, and non-financial issues. He concluded by stating that it appears that Chatham, Lee, and Moore Counties will prove better stewards of their constituents' money and interests over the long term, if they endeavor to address their individual jail development options on their own.

BREAK

The Chairman called for a short break.

SHERIFF'S PRESENTATION

Captain Roberson, Special Operations Commander, gave a presentation on responsibility for county jails. He reviewed minimum jail standards, current conditions, overcrowding considerations, notable dates of influence on jail population, gender capacity levels, and monitoring of the inmate population.

Captain Roberson stated that they are not consistently overcrowded, but even at current levels, daily operations are affected; that because the jail is so small, just a few inmates make a huge difference in the population and operational difficulties; that they have identified several factors that indicate an inmate population rise is imminent; that they will continue to keep the population as low as possible by increasing delivery of State inmates to prison and pretrial inmates to court; that they will continue to monitor the capacity and length of stay statistics and keep the Board informed of their capacity status; that the time to solve a sudden overcrowding crisis could take years; and that they suggest that plans being for a new detention facility.

The Sheriff stated that they are not interested in the regional jail; that he has always tried to keep his population as low as possible; that he believes that he has the best staff in North Carolina; and that he suggests getting a new jail on the CIP. He invited anyone to come by the Sheriff's Office for a tour of the facility.

EDC STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTANT FINALIST REVIEW

The Board heard presentations by the Leak-Goforth Company, LLC, RTI International, The Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group, and UNC Center for Competitive Economies as they presented their credentials and responded to questions from the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Barnes stated that he did not feel that a decision should be made on the hiring of a firm until after an Economic Development Commission Director is hired.

Commissioner Vanderbeck stated that he was ready to proceed with the selection and would be happy to do so at the night's Board of Commissioners' meeting.

Commissioner Lucier stated that he would have no problem moving forward with the selection; that he had spent a considerable amount of time in the review process; that the new Economic Development Corporation Director will have considerable amount of responsibility and authority to both develop and implement the plan; and that he is comfortable moving forward with it.

Commissioner Cross stated that it was his understanding that the Board had come to a consensus that they would wait until the EDC Director was hired so that they could be a part of this from the ground floor.

Commissioner Lucier stated that he didn't feel that the Board taking action would jeopardize recruitment; that he thought the candidate might be relieved; and that there were a lot of other things that the candidate needed to do.

Chairman Thompson stated that he felt the Board had some good firms from which to choose; that whomever the Board selects as an Economic Development Director is going to be a professional; that he would suspect that they would be able to work with whomever the Board contracted without any problems; that the Board had deliberated on this issue for a while; and that he thought that the Board needed to take some action at some point. The Chairman suggested, unless there was an urgency to move on the matter immediately, to take action later in the evening at the Board of Commissioners' regular meeting.

BREAK

The Chairman called for a five-minute break.

RECESS

Commissioner Lucier moved, seconded by Commissioner Barnes, to recess the meeting and reconvene in the County Manager's Conference Room. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0), and the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Carl Thompson, Chairman

ATTEST:

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