

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 18, 2008

The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in the Superior Courtroom, 1 Hillsboro Street, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 6:00 PM on February 18, 2007.

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

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Thompson delivered the invocation after which Chairman Lucier invited everyone present to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’ MATTERS

State of the County Address: Consideration of a request to present the State of the County Address

Dr. George Lucier, Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, gave the first State of the County Address. Highlights of the State of the County Address are as follows:



HIGHLIGHTS:

STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

Feb. 18, 2008
Presented by George Lucier, Chairman
Chatham County Board of Commissioners

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Economic growth has not kept pace with residential growth, with **55.3%** working outside the county, **the highest** in a 13-county region (2006)
- Chatham County has the **2nd highest** per capita income in the region, but this is skewed by a fairly small part of our population
- 55.3% of residents work outside the county, the **highest in the region** (2006 estimate).
- Unemployment has remained fairly low here compared to the state
- Nationwide recession is predicted, but it appears our part of the state will not be impacted as dramatically.
- We have experienced about the same levels of declines in new home permits as other counties in the area.

SOURCES: US Bureau of Economic Analysis, FedStats, Employment Security Commission, Homebuilders Association

Strategic Plan: The commissioners approved funds for development of a **long-term strategic plan** for economic development with major public input. Implementation will begin after the plan is finalized this spring.

	Chatham County	Statewide
Residential	84%	78%
Commercial	9%	17%
Industrial	3%	2%
Present Use	5%	2%
<i>SOURCE: NC Dept. of Revenue</i>		

Leadership: The Economic Development Commission's (EDC) Board or Directors has been revised to make it more accountable to the commissioners and includes several new members. The EDC also hired a new President, **Dianne Reid**, who came to the EDC with extensive experience in Orange County.

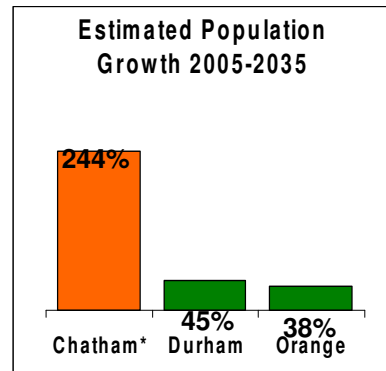
Other Priorities: Includes promoting existing businesses, small businesses & agri-business; supporting workforce training; promoting the business park in Siler City; providing water-sewer services; and collaborating with towns in the county.

LAND USE

- Rapid residential development has placed a **costly burden** on county and school facilities and has taken a toll on quality of life, natural resources, farmland and affordable housing.

One-Year Moratorium: Intended to provide time to update land use ordinances and plans to promote orderly, sustainable growth.

- Effective **June 4, 2007**, it affects only residential developments with 25+ lots and **excluded** commercial & industrial development.



Major Corridors Task Force: Intended to promote businesses in strategic areas, while preserving the rural character of other areas.

- Commissioners have approved an interim plan with 1500-foot buffers along several major highways. A proposed final plan is almost complete. See list of community meeting dates below.

*From Triangle J Council of Governments. Only includes eastern Chatham, not entire county.

Community Meetings or Summits	
Major Corridor Community Meetings	
March 11	United Methodist Church, Moncure, 7-9 pm
March 18	Silk Hope Elementary School, 7-9 pm
March 24	Chatham Central High School, 7-9 pm
Affordable Housing Summit	
April 11	Site to be determined

Other Planning Initiatives: Amendments to the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances, a joint land use plan with Cary for eastern Chatham, affordable housing, lighting ordinance, and environmental protection.

Promoting Agriculture: We do not want to lose farmland when agriculture remains a vital part of our economy

- We are the **only county** in the state that has not had a decline in the number of farms in recent years.
- We have seen growth in small farms focusing on specialty & organic products, but also rank 1st in the state in beef cows, 3rd in total cattle production and 5th in broiler chicken production.
- We will partner with the farming community on developing a **farmland preservation program** and have applied for state grant to begin the planning process.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Chatham County has three major rivers as well as Jordan Lake, one of NC's major water supplies with 100 miles of shoreline. It is possible to both attract development and protect our critical natural resources.

Environmental Review Board (ERB): Created early in 2007 along with an **Environmental Resources Department**. The ERB has made recommendations approved by the Board of Commissioners which:

- Increase **buffer requirements** along streams and rivers for new developments; and
- Require large developments to prepare **environmental impact assessments**, which will be peer-reviewed by the ERB.

Next steps include addressing stormwater, soil & erosion control and protection of Jordan Lake.

Energy Conservation: The **Green Buildings Task Force** was formed early in 2007 to advise the commissioners on “green building” specifications for county-funded facilities and to promote such practices in the private sector. A “**green building**” uses environment-friendly design, construction and materials and meets U.S. energy-efficiency standards.

- New or remodeled buildings (20,000+ square feet) funded by the county must meet green building standards (at least LEED Silver Level or similar third-party verification) and federal Energy Star ratings.
- An energy audit of all county buildings be performed to help save on energy costs.

Lighting Ordinance: Promotes the use of outdoor lighting which enhances public safety; promotes energy efficiency; and focuses light where it is needed.

- Most existing lighting does not have to be in compliance until replaced, but some types of facilities must meet a deadline.

OPEN GOVERNMENT

Major steps by the Board of Commissioners:

- The BOC will soon adopt a new policy related to **Closed Session Meetings**.
- In Dec. 2006, adopted a **Code of Ethics** recommended by the NC Association of County Commissioners.

Accessible Website: The complete overhaul of the county website in 2007 involved major user input and led to new citizen access features, including options to sign up to receive news items or agenda notices.

- New online **tax records database** makes it much easier to search for properties and pay bills online.
- County website address: **www.chathamnc.org**

Citizen Committees & Community Outreach: Commissioners have created several new citizen task forces or boards to study issues and make recommendations.

- All volunteer boards combined involve at least **415 members**. Applications to serve are on the county website and in the County Manager’s Office.
- The county also sponsored more community meetings around the county on various topics. See upcoming meetings on page 1.

SCHOOL FACILITIES IN COUNTY CIP	
Virginia Cross Elementary (completed)	\$17.9 million
New Middle School	\$26.1 million
New High School	\$44.5 million
Northwood High School Expansion	\$5.5 million
New Elementary School	\$28.1 million
New Gyms: Bennett, Silk Hope & Bonlee	\$6.0 million
Renovate Restrooms & Hot Water (all schools)	\$1.0 million
Bleacher Replacement (11 schools)	\$645,000
Camera Security (all schools)	\$667,336
Asbestos Tile Replacement (5 schools)	\$440,000
North Chatham Cafeteria Expansion	\$434,000
High School Science Lab Renovation	\$152,400
Renovate Wastewater System at JS Waters	\$125,000
Other	\$4,650,000
<i>Other: Includes classroom pod at Northwood, new cafeteria at Jordan-Matthews, and lighting for high school sports fields (all are completed)</i>	

Nonprofits Review Panels: The commissioners initiated **citizen panels** in 2007 to review nonprofits’ applications for county grant funding and make recommendations based their findings.

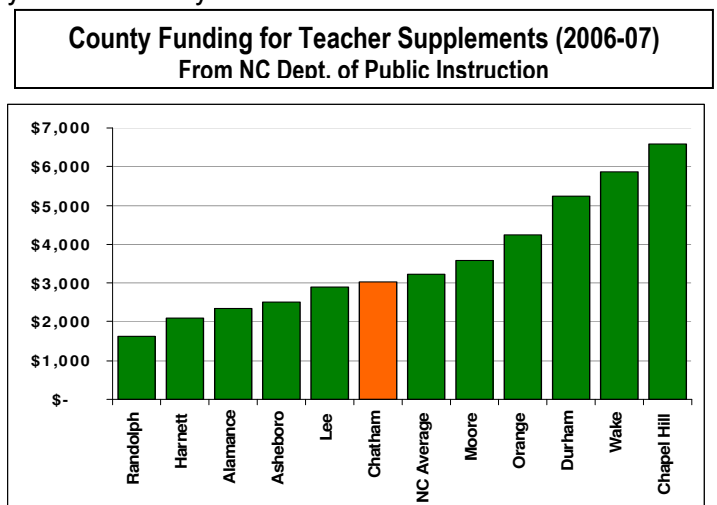
- 2008 committees will begin work in March & April. Call 542-8200 soon if interested in serving.

SCHOOLS

Major Goals: Developing long-term school construction plan; supporting efforts to recruit & retain good teachers; and working cooperatively and efficiently with the school board.

K-12 Facilities: Several major facilities are in the current county **5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** to relieve overcrowding and replace deteriorating facilities (see chart on page 2).

- The commissioners also funded **all top priority** school renovation projects in the current budget.
- Despite these efforts, major needs are coming that are not yet funded given that school enrollment is projected to grow **4% per year on average** (according to Triangle J Council of Governments).



Good Teachers: This year, commissioners increased funding for **teacher salary supplements**, but are still below the state average and below most adjoining school systems, according to (see chart).

Community College: We recognize that CCCC is critical to preparing our workforce.

- **A new library** will be a joint venture between CCCC and the county.
- Other county-funded projects include a **sustainable technologies center** Pittsboro (\$5.5 million) and an **adult & industrial education center** (\$4 million) in Siler City.

WATER ISSUES

We have four separate systems in that county that are not well connected and in need of major work.

- Current water system **unable to meet the needs** of developments previously approved, but not yet built.
- **Existing water sources:** Jordan Lake Plant (2.5 million gallons/day), Sanford (1 million gallons/day) and smaller allocations from Siler City, Pittsboro & Goldston.

Major Water Projects:

- **Jordan Lake Plant Upgrade:** This would expand capacity to **7 million gallons/day**, but not completed until 2010 at estimated cost of \$21 million.
- **Siler City Projects:** Finished water system connection to share water and provide town with drought relief.
- **Silk Hope School:** Waterline is operational and serving others in the area.
- **Northeast Transmission Line Upgrade:** Is needed to serve growth in area. Could cost up to \$21 million.
- **Western Transmission Lines:** Should be completed this summer.
- **Southeast Transmission Lines:** Should be completed 9-12 months.

New Water Partnership: Tentative agreement with OWASA, Durham & Cary for new regional intake on Jordan Lake and new water plant, with increased allocation for Chatham County.

WASTEWATER ISSUES

The county currently has no wastewater capacity. Major developments use sprayfields, which can create environmental issues.

- Lack of adequate sewer systems is a major detriment to **economic development**.
- Pittsboro, Siler City and Goldston all have wastewater issues that need to be addressed.

Opportunity for Partnership: The county has just received state notice that we can potentially discharge **19 million gallons/day** of treated wastewater into the upper Cape Fear River. We must collaborate with towns and future developers to make the best use of this opportunity, which will aid economic development.

Water Conservation: Reducing water usage per capita is important, but we also must transition to new technologies that recycle or reuse water.

RECREATION UPDATE

The county has had a major shortage of recreational facility needs for several years.

- A long-term **Master Plan** for parks & recreation is being updated with public input. It calls for district parks in each of the county's four quadrants.
- The major phase of **Southwest District Park** in Bear Creek was completed in 2007 with the help of grant funding. New facilities include a large picnic shelter with kitchen & restrooms.
- In 2007, the commissioners approved the purchase of two properties, one that will serve as the **Northeast District Park** and one that will become **Northwest District Park**.
- The county must still find and purchase land for **Southeast District Park**.
- If grant funds approved, construction of phase one of NE District Park could begin in 2009.

BUDGET & FINANCE

We are charged with being wise stewards of county funds and securing additional funds for critical needs. A major priority is to **increase grant funding** and secure **alternative revenue sources**.

Current County Budget: Page 5 of this handout includes a summary of the current year's budget

- One-half cent of **existing** property taxes was designated for nonprofit grants, without increasing taxes.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): The commissioners recently approved a substantially revised CIP for 2009-2013, including **\$84.5 million not previously funded**.

- Many of the new projects and expanded costs are the result of a growing population, unfunded state mandates and increased construction costs.

New or Expanded Projects in CIP: See chart on page 5 for a list of new or expanded projects.

Demand for Services: Population boom has led to the need for more services & staff support. Chatham County ranks **62nd in the state** in terms of number of employees per 1,000 population (*NC Association of County Commissioners Survey*). As of the start of the fiscal year, we had almost as many volunteer committee members (@ 415) as county employees (424).

New County Positions:

- **Public Works Director** (David Hughes) oversees water projects and related facilities.
- **Human Relations Director** (Esther Coleman) fosters positive human relations in our diverse county.
- **Environmental Resources Director** (Fred Royal) oversees environmental programs and supports the work of the ERB.
- **Full-Time Grant Writer** (Lisa West) secures outside grant funds for important facilities & programs. The position more than pays for itself in terms of funds raised.

School Budget Highlights: In 2008, we ranked **fourth** in the state in county funding for school current expenses & teacher salary supplements (non-facility funding), based on average student population (*NC Association of County Commissioners survey*)

Major 2006-07 County Revenues	
Property Tax	\$40,241,035
Sales Tax	\$12,116,870
State/Federal Restricted	\$9,769,301
Sales & Service	\$2,518,975
Permits & Fees	\$1,582,095
Interest Income	\$1,136,235
Other Taxes & Licenses	\$988,954
School Impact Fee*	\$2,833,500
Recreation Fee*	\$687,242

Property Taxes: Our property tax rate of **61.7** cents per \$1,000 is the **third lowest** of adjoining counties and is **57th** in the state, according to *NC Association of County Commissioners survey*.

- A published report of the John Locke Foundation noted that Chatham County's overall tax burden of **3.69%** of personal income is considerably lower than Johnston, Wake, Durham & Orange.

Future Revenue Options

- **Land Transfer Tax:** On the ballot last fall to approve a 0.4% land transfer tax. New revenues would have covered nearly half of the new costs in the CIP.
- **School Impact Fee:** As of Jan. 1, 2008, commissioners increased the school impact fee to the current maximum level.

MOVING FORWARD

PARTNERSHIPS: We must partner with our towns and surrounding communities to meet critical needs, such as water and economic development.

AGING POPULATION: We have a median age of **39.73** years, compared to the state average of **36.19** years (2006 State Demographer). As baby boomers transition to seniors, it will have a tremendous impact on the demand for county services and facilities for the elderly.

DIVERSITY: We live in an increasingly diverse county...diversity can and should be one of our **greatest assets**. We must seek and achieve common ground and honor the county's diversity.

CHALLENGES AHEAD: We have many challenges & opportunities in Chatham County. We can achieve **great things** by working together.

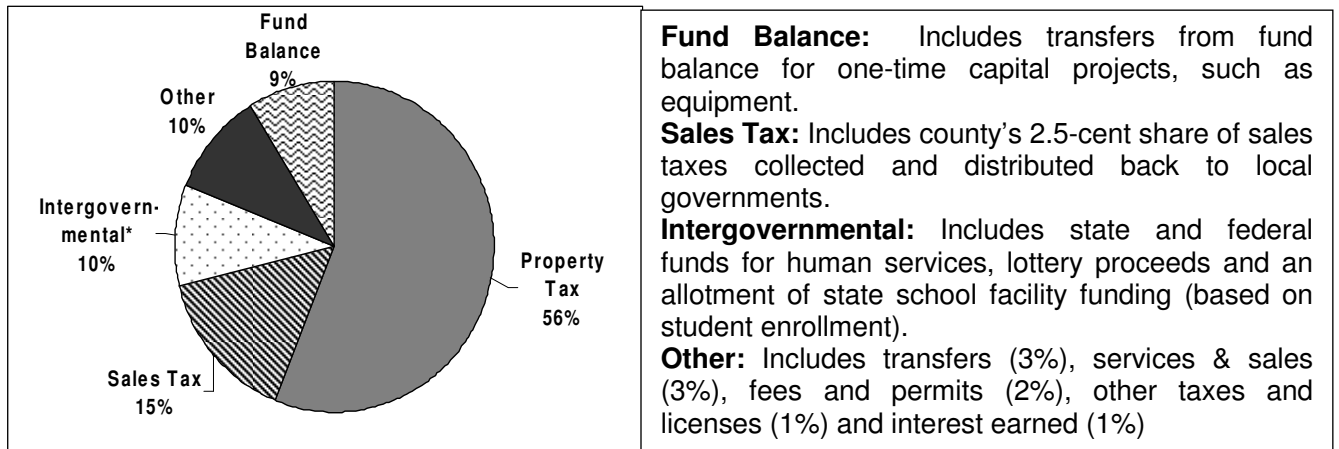
COUNTY BUDGET & FINANCE HIGHLIGHTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Extensive details on the county budget, most recent financial audit and 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan are on the county website at: <http://www.chathamnc.org/Index.aspx?page=529>

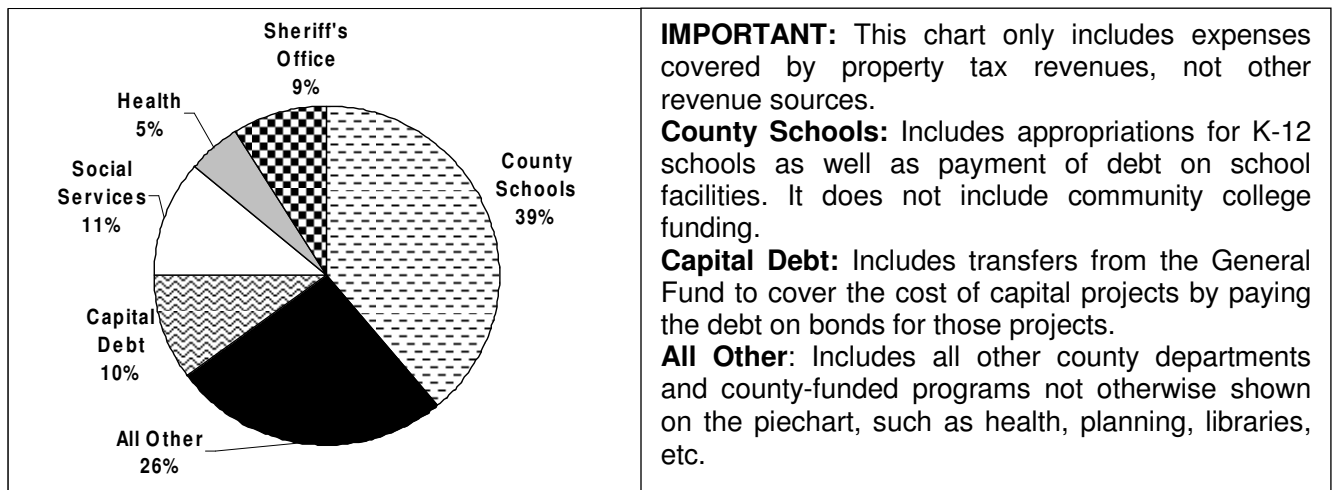
TOTAL 2007-08 COUNTY BUDGET: \$76,470,812

56% funded by property taxes	County tax rate is 61.7 cents per \$1,000 of property value
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2007-08 COUNTY BUDGET ESTIMATED REVENUES



2007-08 COUNTY BUDGET NET EXPENSES



NEW OR EXPANDED PROJECTS IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009-2013	
NEW PROJECTS IN 5-YEAR CIP	
New elementary school in NE	\$28.1 million
New gyms at Bonlee, Bennett & Silk Hope	\$6.0 million
Expansion of Northwood High School	\$5.5 million
Water system distribution line upgrades	\$21 million
EXPANDED PROJECT COSTS IN 5-YEAR CIP	
Judicial Center (increased space needs)	\$23.9 million (originally was \$7.5 million)
New middle school	\$26.1 million (originally was \$18.6 million)

End of presentation.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attention and invited citizen contact, if needed.

BREAK

The Chairman called for short break.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:24 PM.

AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

The Chairman asked if there were additions, deletions, or corrections to the Agenda and Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Vanderbeck asked that Item #11, Consideration of a request to approve a Buffer Site Visit Fee with an administrative fee of \$50.00 plus \$50.00 per lot for a minimum fee of \$100.00 be deferred until the March 03, 2008 Board of Commissioners' meeting.

Commissioner Vanderbeck moved, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda with the noted request as follows:

1. **Minutes:** Consideration of a request for approval of Board Minutes for regular meeting held February 04, 2008 and work session held February 04, 2008

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

2. **Tax Releases and Refunds:** Consideration of a request to approve tax releases and refunds, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

3. **Funds Acceptance by Chatham County Health Department:** Consideration of a request to accept reimbursement funds in the amount of \$400.00 to the Health Department from the Division of Public Health, Public Health Nursing & Professional Development

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

4. **Contract for Foreclosure Actions:** Consideration of a request to award a two-year contract to Zacchaeus Legal Services to assist with foreclosure actions, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

5. **Grant Application for Library Services:** Consideration of a request to approve a Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) grant application with funds to be administered through the State Library in the amount of \$59,124.00, application attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

6. **Library Advisory Board Appointment:** Consideration of a request to appoint Jamie Fiocco to the Library Advisory Board, term to expire June 30, 2009 by Commissioner Vanderbeck

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

7. **Board of Equalization and Review Reappointment:** Consideration of a request to reappoint Ralph Klevenow to the Board of Equalization and Review by Commissioner Barnes

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

8. **Board of Equalization and Review Reappointment:** Consideration of a request to reappoint member-at-large, Herbert Gaines, to the Board of Equalization and Review by the full Board

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

9. **Request to Equip Sheriff's Vehicles:** Consideration of a request to equip eleven new vehicles for the Sheriff's Office in the amount of \$49,745.00

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

10. **Final Plat Approval of "Mann's Crossing":** Consideration of a request by Mann's Chapel Properties, LLC for subdivision final plat approval of "Mann's Crossing", consisting of 41 lots on 60.5 acres, located off SR #1532, Mann's Chapel Road and SR #1537, Tobacco Road, Baldwin Township

As per the Planning Department and Planning Board recommendation (by a vote of 8 for, 1 against, and 1 abstention), final plat approval was granted with the following conditions:

1. The roadways shall be graveled prior to final plat recordation allowing the lots to be accessible to emergency vehicles.
2. The septic supply lines to the off-site waste water systems shall be installed prior to final plat recordation or provisions for the installation shall be included in the financial guarantee.
3. The Certificate of General Approval for Installation of Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems shall be removed from the final plat.
4. Flood elevations along Wilkinson Creek, as shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps, dated February 02, 2007, shall be shown on the final plat.
5. A note shall be placed on the final plat designating the maintenance responsibility until acceptance of said roads by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

11. ~~**Buffer Site Visit Fee:** Consideration of a request to approve a Buffer Site Visit Fee with an administrative fee of \$50.00 plus \$50.00 per lot for a minimum fee of \$100.00. This fee will only apply to subdivisions of 25 or fewer lots~~

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered at the March 03, 2008 Board of Commissioners' meeting.

12. **Resolution Celebrating 100 Years of County Unity in Recognition of the NCACC's Centennial:** Consideration of a request to adopt **Joint Resolution #2008-06 Celebrating 100 Years of County Unity in Recognition of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Association Centennial**, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

13. **NC Arts Incubator Redirection of Funds:** Consideration of a request by the NC Arts Incubator to redirect \$20,000 in grant funds to convert a basement area into a pottery facility

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

14. **Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Funding Resolution:** Consideration of a request to adopt a **Resolution #2008-07 in Support of Continuation of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Funding**

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Larry Ballas, 139 Indian Creek Lane, Apex, NC, asked how much Chatham County received from lottery proceeds, if it is added to the budget, and what happens to it. He stated that he felt it was important because, over time, it was a potentially significant resource of funding. He also praised the "State of the County" address stating that he felt the County was in pretty good shape; that it is in good shape due to the five Board of Commissioners and they are listening to the people; that it is a great system and he is proud to be a part of it; that one of the things mentioned in the speech was the diversity of the County; that diversity means many different things; that diversity, in the way that it is now approached, usually means black, white, Hispanic, Indian, etc.; that no one ever speaks of intellectual diversity; that he feels that they need to bring that to the surface; that intellectual diversity is talking about the success of the County; that different opinions are needed; that he believes that diversity means to be redefined; and that when that is done, all other issues are eliminated that are associated with non-intellectual things.

Chairman Lucier stated that he agreed with Mr. Ballas' diversity comment and that is how he intended it in its very broadest sense; that there is intellectual, cultural diversity in the County; that he appreciates his kind comments with regard to what the Board is doing; that with regard to the lottery funds, the County received approximately \$900,000.00 last year; that this is the Education Lottery which is used for educational purposes; that it all goes back into the school fund; that the Board of Commissioners has approved every capital improvement request that the school board has made; and that some of those have been renovations for which the lottery funds have been used.

PLANNING AND ZONING

Request to Rezone Properties on Old US #1 at Moncure: Consideration of a request by Chatham County to rezone properties located at 1334 and 1352 Old US #1, Moncure, NC, Parcel #11554 (.25 acres), a portion of 11531 (2 acres), and a portion of 11557 (.49 acres), Haw River Township, owned by James & Rachel Brady, from Business (B-1) to Residential/Agricultural (RA-40)

Commissioner Barnes moved, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, to adopt **An Ordinance Amending the Zoning Ordinance of Chatham County**, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

Request to Rezone Acreage on Lassiter Homestead Road: Consideration of a request by New City Design on behalf of CRCED Treatment, Inc. to rezone approximately 10.14 acres from Residential/Agricultural (RA-40) and 1.41 acres from Conditional Use B-1 to Conditional Use Office & Institutional (O&I), Parcel #73288, located at 176 Lassiter Homestead Road, Williams Township

Commissioner Vanderbeck moved, seconded by Commissioner Barnes, to adopt **An Ordinance Amending the Zoning Ordinance of Chatham County**, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

Request for a Conditional Use Permit: Consideration of a request by New City Design on behalf of CRCED Treatment, Inc. for a Conditional Use Permit to accommodate congregate care facilities, family care homes, hospital, health and welfare centers, and nursing homes and/or convalescent homes located on 10.14 acres, Parcel #73288 at 176 Lassiter Homestead Road, Williams Township and to remove a previously approved Conditional Use Permit on 1.41 acres of this tract

Commissioner Thompson moved, seconded by Commissioner Vanderbeck, to adopt **Resolution #2008-08 Approving An Application For A Conditional Use Permit Requested by New City Design on behalf of CRCED Treatment, Inc.**, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

MANAGER' S REPORTS

The County Manager had no reports.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

State of the County Address:

Commissioner Thompson praised the efforts of the Chairman's State of the County address. He stated that he thought the Chairman did an outstanding job, represented the Board well, and that he was proud of him.

Orange County Meeting:

The Chairman stated that Commissioner Cross, the County Manager, and he are attending a meeting with the Orange County officials on Thursday night, February 21, 2008 and that one of the issues will be water. He asked if David Hughes, Public Works Director should attend the meeting.

The County Manager stated that he thought Mr. Hughes had a conflict, but that he would represent the County if that was the case.

The Chairman stated that another issue to be discussed is the Agricultural Processing Center. Commissioner Vanderbeck stated that they have their meeting tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Barnes moved, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0), and the meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.

George Lucier, Chairman

ATTEST:

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