

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)
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COUNTY OF STOKES)
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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA
JANUARY 23, 2008

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a special session for a joint meeting with the Stokes County Board of Education at Germanton Elementary School-Professional Learning Center located in Germanton, North Carolina on Wednesday, January 23, 2008 at 12:00 noon with the following members present:

Chairman J. Leon Inman
Vice-Chairman Jimmy Walker
Commissioner Ron Carroll
Commissioner Ernest Lankford
Commissioner Stanley Smith

County Personnel in Attendance:
County Manager K. Bryan Steen
Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins

Board of Education/Stokes School System
Chairperson Steve Shelton
Vice Chairperson Yvonne M. Rutledge
Member Rebecca P. Boles
Member Sonya M. Cox
Member William F. Hart
Dr. Stewart Hobbs – Superintendent
Donna Boyles – Executive Director
Administrative Assistant Ann Robertson
David Burge –Director of Operations

Chairman J. Leon Inman called the special meeting with the Board of Education to order.

Commissioner Carroll delivered the invocation.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Hobbs invited those in attendance for the meeting to join both Boards with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Hobbs welcomed those in attendance and expressed the Board of Education's appreciation to the Board of Commissioners for participating in the joint meeting.

Dr. Hobbs presented the Board of Commissioners the following Stokes County Schools' Long Range Facility Goals:

STOKES COUNTY SCHOOLS **LONG RANGE FACILITY GOALS**

Guiding Principles

The Stokes County Board of Education will seek to authorize within available funds the construction and renovations of a sufficient number of school buildings to meet the demands of present and future student enrollments and, in doing so, provide the highest quality educational environment possible for students and employees at the lowest proportionate expenditure of tax dollars.

Decisions pertaining to the actual construction of educational facilities shall be made only after sufficient research and studies have been completed to insure that all aspects have been considered. This shall include but not limited to demographic, instructional, structural, operational, life-cycle costs, effectiveness, efficiency, age, physical condition, historical perspective, community viewpoints, available funding, etc.

Architects employed by the Board are expected to plan for high educational utility, simplicity of design, sound economics, including low long-range maintenance costs, low insurance rates, energy efficiency, and flexibility. Aesthetic aspects shall also be important considerations.

The Stokes County Superintendent of Schools shall annually review the need for and keep current a plan for site acquisition, new facility construction, facility renovation, additions, modification, disposals and facility equipment, to insure adequate facilities to meet all Stokes County School System needs. The implementation of this plan shall be done in such a manner so as to ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and Stokes County codes, rules, regulations and laws.

Goals

- Stokes County Schools will provide educational facilities that will provide a safe and nurturing environment that are conducive to learning.
- Stokes County Schools will provide educational facilities that allow for the most efficient and effective operations, including energy efficient, insurance, life-cycle costs, etc.
- Stokes County will consider the age and physical condition of existing schools in order to make sound educational facility decisions, keeping in perspective the historical and community viewpoints.
- Stokes County Schools will provide for quality instructional space in all educational facilities that will prepare our students with the skills needed for success in the 21st century.

Dr. Hobbs also presented the Board of Commissioners information regarding Qualified Zone Academy Bonds program (0% interest) which is a tax code provision (Internal Revenue Code 1397E) created under the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 (Public Law 105.34 – August 5, 1997) and designed to assist eligible local education agencies and schools to establish qualified zone academies in partnership with local businesses.

Dr. Hobbs spoke briefly regarding the following topics:

- Educational facilities that provide a safe and nurturing environment that are conducive to learning
- Structural issues at Nancy Reynolds Elementary School
- Updated Facility Needs Report which currently projects approximately \$54 million needed for new facilities and renovations
- Need to have an additional feasibility study to analyze the entire school system in order to develop a long range plan – a minimum of 10 years
- Feasibility study will provide information detailing what we have and what we need – information needed to make sound decisions which could result in saving tax dollars
- Feasibility study looks at the whole picture at each facility – not just adding on the needed classrooms
- Retaining an architectural firm to develop a long range plan based on factual data (minimum of ten years)
- Long range plan can develop prioritized projects in phases

- Board of Education has given the go ahead to retain an architectural firm to start the planning process in order for the School System to be ready when funding is available
- Possible state bond referendum for schools
- Operational costs for new and renovated facilities
- Constant increase of construction cost

Dr. Hobbs concluded the Board of Education would like to know if possible an estimated time frame from the County when funding might be available. At the present time, the top two pressing issues are a new elementary school in the Yadkin Township and renovations or new construction at Nancy Reynolds Elementary School.

Chairman Inman noted the following:

- Board Retreat in 2007 – School Facilities needs was at the top of the list of priorities
- County in the process of contracting with a financial advisor – Request for Proposals will be reviewed at the January 28th meeting
- Significant debt going off by 2010

Chairman Inman stated that Board would not be available to give a definite date when funding would be available, how much funding would be available, and what type of funding until the financial status of the County has been analyzed by a financial advisor.

Chairman Inman concluded the time is right to start planning to build schools in Stokes County.

Vice Chairman Walker noted the following:

- Look at top priorities such as the needed elementary school and start to move on those projects while working on other phases

Commissioner Lankford noted the following:

- Reiterated the need to examine the financial status of the county before determining how much the County can afford

Commissioner Carroll noted the following:

- Ready now to build schools in Stokes County

Commissioner Smith noted the following:

- Echoed Dr. Carroll’s statement – Ready to build schools in Stokes County

Chairperson Steve Shelton reiterated the need for the comprehensive study to know what we have, what we need, and what is the best for Stokes County. Chairperson Shelton concluded the Board of Education is ready to work with the Board of Commissioners to provide the best educational facilities possible for the Stokes County students.

Vice Chairperson Yvonne Rutledge reiterated the need for a long-range plan.

Member Sonya Cox stated the architectural study would provide structural information on all facilities that will specify the exact needs, but agreed with Dr. Carroll that it is time to build schools in Stokes County.

Member Rebecca Boles commented on the need for the architectural study in order to make the best use of the tax dollars with prioritizing projects.

Member Bill Hart stated the need to get started to get something done and make sure if projects are done in phases that all phases are done.

Vice Chairman Walker requested information regarding the engineering report at Nancy Reynolds Elementary School.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman entertained a motion to adjourn the joint meeting with the Board of Education.

Commissioner Lankford moved to adjourn the joint meeting with the Board of Education. Commissioner Smith seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

J. Leon Inman
Chairman