

where we are at, and to know if we have succeeded.

Chairman Inman spoke to the Board regarding a recent meeting he attended entitled “Leading County Boards Effectively”.

Chairman Inman noted that he felt that he had not been an effective Chairman and requested each Board member to express their expectations regarding an effective Chairman and an effective Board.

Chairman Inman noted the following:

- Try to stick with the new agenda format
- Be prepared for the meeting
- Get the most questions answered possible before the meeting
- Make sure the Board is taking the necessary time to perform the county’s business
- Until there is a consensus or a direction given to the county manager, there is no Board action

Commissioner Smith noted the following:

- Feels that Goal Sessions are very important for the Board to plan for the County’s future
- Meetings may be long, but need to take the amount of time needed to perform the County’s business
- Feels that this Board has accomplished a lot, with much more to accomplish in the near future

Commissioner Carroll noted the following:

- One thing to remember is that a Board is not “They”, a Board is an “It”
- No issues with the new agenda format, but the purpose of an agenda is to facilitate the flow of business, it can be changed if necessary

Commissioner Lankford noted the following:

- Always be prepared for the meeting
- Try to get questions answered before the meeting if possible
- Answered questions can make the discussion session of each item shorter
- If a member knows that they would like to add an item, contact the Chairman before the meeting so that the Chairman can make other Board members aware of the addition

- Stay with the agenda format, discussion at one meeting and action at the next meeting allows members to process all the information received about the agenda item and obtain additional information if necessary

Vice Chairman Walker noted the following:

- There are always improvements to be made
- The Board serves the public and we as a “Board” need to do the best job possible
- Involve the public if possible
- Follow the same agenda format
- Come prepared for the meeting
- Need to always make sure the item is finished, never leave an item hanging and always make sure the action needed has been taken
- Always make sure the manager understands what the Board’s intentions are
- Have mutual courteous, respect, and support for each Board member
- Chairman steps in if the topic gets personal
- Listen to each other
- Treat each other as you would want to be treated
- Share information, ideas, and concerns with Board members
- Five equal Board members with each one having an opinion

Chairman Inman noted that one point strongly expressed at the leadership session was that a county manager must listen to all Board members, but must not assume that one member’s wishes and ideas are that of the entire Board.

The Board discussed the manager/board relationship.

Commissioner Carroll noted that the Board has no authority except in a legally, constituted meeting, but the substantive, actionable discussion needs to take place around the table in a public meeting where the public is there to observe.

Vice Chairman Walker noted that the manager always needs to make sure that he is clear about the direction the Board is requesting him to carry out.

Chairman Inman requested Manager Steen to express what he (as a manager) expects of a Board.

County Manager Steen stated that he would be happy to get additional information or questions answered about an agenda item before the meeting in order to expedite the meeting.

County Manager Steen noted that he was trying to put new items, if possible, on the Discussion Agenda for the first meeting of the month with possible action at the second meeting.

Manager Steen noted that he tries to make the Board aware of items that he feels the Board needs to know and that he can be reached by cell phone at anytime.

Vice Chairman Walker noted that as a Board member, he doesn't like surprises and suggested that if the county manager has any doubt about informing the Board of issues, go ahead and notify the Board.

Chairman Inman agreed with Vice Chairman Walker if there is any doubt about informing the Board about issues, go ahead and notify the Board.

Chairman Inman noted that all members should receive the same information.

Vice Chairman Walker stated that any information that he requests, will go to the entire Board.

Review of NCACC Legislative Goal for 2009-2010

Chairman Inman briefly reviewed the 2009-10 Legislative Goals adopted by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.

Chairman Inman informed Board members that he did not vote for the Legislative Goal that would distribute lottery funding on an ADM basis; this would have caused Stokes County to lose approximately \$100,000 in appropriations with larger counties receiving more appropriation. The goal was not adopted.

Chairman Inman noted the following information:

- The State's sales tax collections in the first quarter of 2008 were down \$300 million dollars
- State sales tax collections in December 2008 were down \$200 million dollars
- The \$1.5 billion dollar shortfall predicted by Governor Easley is now looking like about a \$3 billion dollar shortfall

Review of County's Current Revenue and Expenditures

Finance Director Julia Edwards discussed the following review of the County's

2008-09 budget revenues and expenditures:

- Discussed the Revenue and Expenditure Financial Reports as of 12-31-2008
- Sales tax are 33% collected instead of 50% due to the State reimbursement of sales tax to counties is two month's behind
- Currently on target with sales tax collections
- Ad Valorem Taxes are 89% collected as of 01-26-2009
- As of December 2008, 53% of the total budget revenues have been collected
- Fuel contingency has not been touched
- Regular contingency balance as of 12-08 is \$129,305
- Leave cost contingency is almost exhausted due to resignations, retirements, etc.

Manager Steen noted the quarterly reviews are being done to look at all revenue and expenditure accounts and departments are trying to keep expenditures down.

Finance Director Edwards noted that departmental supplies and training were cut across all departments before submission of the budget to the Board.

Vice Chairman Walker noted the increased amount of clients seeking services from the Department of Social Services during this economic situation.

Manager Steen discussed the increased volume of EMS calls and that in the near future if calls continue to increase, an analysis will need to be performed to determine if an additional unit is needed or possible franchise for routine medical calls. The Board discussed the increased EMS call volume.

The Board discussed comp. time, holiday, and vacation accruals.

Review of 2007 and 2008 Goals

The Board discussed the following goals:

User Friendly Departments

- Board very pleased with positive comments from citizens
- County planning in-service training for employees
- User Friendly is always an ongoing goal

- Vice Chairman Walker requested that the departments receive the positive comments from citizens and the Board of Commissioners
- Department head meetings can be used to keep the department heads well informed about directives from the Board
- Report to the People provides the citizens information about the county

Legal

- Contract with an attorney is cost effective
- Chairman Inman noted that at the recent leadership work session, the point was stressed that the county attorney should be at every meeting if possible and in every Closed Session
- Continue as is – county attorney scheduled for meetings when necessary

Economic Development

- New Economic Development Director to be on board in February
- Economic Development Commission has been established
- Discussed the need to further investigate water intake from the Dan River
- Need to explore the infrastructure needs of Stokes County
- Work with the Economic Development Commission on an Economic Development Strategic Plan for Stokes County
- Discussed the importance of an Economic Development Strategic Plan for Stokes County

Solid Waste

- Continue to monitor and evaluate solid waste needs for the county
- Explore possible uses of Methane gas from the old landfill
- Discussed future waste disposal

Chairman Inman noted the next goals planning session is scheduled for February 4th at

1:00 pm.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman entertained a motion to adjourn the planning meeting.

Commissioner Smith moved to adjourn the planning session. Commissioner Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

J. Leon Inman
Chairman