

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
MARCH 5, 2009

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a recessed Goals Planning Session (recessed from the February 26, 2009 session) in the Conference Room of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administration Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Thursday, March 5, 2009 at 1:30 pm 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
Finance Director Julia Edwards

Chairman J. Leon Inman called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Smith delivered the invocation.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Inman opened the meeting by inviting the citizens in attendance to join the Board with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Budget Work Session – Continuation

The Board discussed “fine tuning” the recent short and long term goals discussed at the February 26th meeting.

Vice Chairman Walker noted the need to set “realistic goals” that the County could achieve

and to prepare for the future.

Commissioner Lankford noted the need to focus on the upcoming goals for fiscal year 2009-10 due to the uncertainty of the economy.

Commissioner Smith noted the need for an updated scenario from the County's Financial Advisor Doug Carter due to the recent financial news from Raleigh.

County Manager Steen noted that the last payment of \$660,000 for the Administrative Building's debt service was paid March 1, 2009.

Commissioner Carroll noted the need to strive to maintain the current level of services in light of the current economic climate. Commissioner Carroll reiterated the need to make sure the County has a safety net in place for the most vulnerable citizens in the County (first and foremost priority as far as programs).

Commissioner Lankford reiterated one of his goals stated on February 26th which was to try to keep jobs for Stokes County employees at today's present level and to look at a hiring freeze.

The Board discussed the following goals and strategies:

- **Given the current financial situation, a Strategic Plan for Stokes County Long Term Strategic Plan for the County**
 - Short Term Goals and Strategies
 - Continue to review expenditures and revenues on a quarterly basis
 - Inventory of county vehicles
 - Review use of county vehicles – vehicles driven home daily by county staff
 - Minimize mileage for county vehicles
 - Mileage book in all county vehicles
 - Vehicle sharing between departments
 - Employee sharing in all departments
 - Look at all departments who might have employees who are not busy due to the current economic status
 - Monitor comp. time for all departments
 - Request non-exempt employees use comp. time as soon as possible
 - Hiring freeze/Selective hiring freeze – all positions will be looked at on an individual basis with exceptions being approved by the Board
 - Request department heads to look at ways to cut unnecessary spending
 - No funding being borrowed for recurring expenses, just capital needs

- Focus on eliminating any unnecessary spending
- Make sure the County has a safety net in place for the most vulnerable citizens in the County
 - Prioritize the current services to include mandated services such as CPS, Foods Stamps, Public Assistance Programs, Health Services, 24/7 operations (Jail, EMS, Communications, Sheriff's Department)
- Provide services to the citizens of Stokes County as most cost effective as possible
- Create new revenue streams – grants
- Look at imaging services which will reduce staffing needs for the future
- Look at current salary plan for the upcoming fiscal year 2009-10
- Making sure billing in departments is up to date
- Long Term Goals and Strategies
 - Need for a Strategic Plan for Stokes County
 - Infrastructure needs – water/sewer
 - Need for a Comprehensive Land Use Plan
 - More planning for health care and health care facilities

➤ **Economic Development**

A Strategic Plan for Economic Development (working with the Economic Development Commission and the new Economic Development Director)

- Economic Development Commission has already started putting things together to develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan
- New Economic Development Director Alan Wood has identified the following four primary areas for the EDC to concentrate on:
 - Business Retention/Expansion
 - Business Recruitment
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Travel and Tourism
 - These four areas will be molded to Stokes County
- Retain and promote growth for all the present business/industries in the County; obtain 3 new businesses/industries that will create 75 new jobs; add \$2 million dollars of value for County taxes

➤ **Schools (school construction)**

- Nancy Reynolds Project – PODS
- Discuss new elementary school in Yadkin Township when the State adopts a budget
- Southeastern Middle School – need for redirection of traffic coming into the school
- Financial arrangements for the school projects – COPS, private financing, Bond Referendum, etc.

➤ **Community College in Stokes County**

Tangible results for a community college

- Need for a specific plan to be in place
- Need for water and sewer plans

- **Update personnel policies along with a salary market study if possible**
 - Review all county policies for updates
 - Long term goal
 - Need to be done as soon as possible

- **Complete EMS Station**
 - Need for a target date
 - To be occupied by the end of calendar year 2009

- **Strive to continue to increase the fund balance, not decrease the fund balance**
 - Must always be a long and short term goal
 - Must continue to maintain and increase the fund balance

- **Keep property taxes at the present rate of \$.60 or less**

- **Technology – Promote the need for providers to make available better technology such as faster internet service, better cost effective telephone services, and other communications**
 - Long Term Goal
 - Need to investigate all possible options to provide high speed internet to as many citizens as possible

- **Possibly join forces with school system on making available more wide band satellite systems for county use**
 - On going – long and short term goal

- **Complete Danbury Water System Project in 2009 with no additional funding**
 - Should be completed in 2009

- **Pursue water intake from the Dan River**
 - Goal should be ongoing
 - Public Works Director currently looking into the issue
 - Seek stimulus funding for the project

County Manager Bryan Steen stated that he had received information from CEO Betty Taylor that CenterPoint would not be funding the Mental Health position after Ms. Grubb's resignation in March due to funding issues. Manager Steen noted that he is currently working with Health Director Josh Swift regarding the possibility that the duties could be covered by the Public Health Educator on a temporary basis. Manager Steen noted that the item would be placed on the March 9th Agenda for further discussion by the Board. Manager Steen noted the County is currently

pursing a Kate B. Reynolds Grant to fund the position.

Vice Chairman Walker expressed concerns with CenterPoint not honoring their commitment to fund the Mental Health position for the entire fiscal year 2008-09.

Manager Steen noted current grant positions: Sheriff's Department and Communications.

Chairman Inman requested Board members to review the Goals for further discussion.

The Board discussed the Volunteer Recognition Reception being on April 27th at 4:30 pm.

The Board had no issues with having the reception being on April 27th at 4:30 pm.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman recessed the Goals Planning Session until Thursday, March 12, 2009 at 1:00 pm.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

J. Leon Inman
Chairman