

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
FEBRUARY 23, 2010

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Goals Session in the third floor conference room of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administration Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Tuesday February 23, 2010 at 1:30 pm with the following members present:

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

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

Chairman Jimmy Walker called the meeting to order.

Vice Chairman Lankford delivered the invocation.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to approve or amend the February 23, 2010 Agenda.

Commissioner Inman moved to approve the February 23, 2010 Agenda as presented.

Vice Chairman Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Opening Remarks

Chairman Walker requested the amount of time for today's meeting.

The Board unanimously agreed to try to end today's session by 4:00 pm.

The Board unanimously agreed that the discussion during today's goals session would be of an informal nature.

Review of 2009 Goals

County Manager Bryan Steen noted the following 2009 goals which were adopted at the March 12, 2009 meeting:

Survival

Given the current financial situation, a Strategic Plan for Stokes County. (Timeframe – immediately)

- 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)
- Provide services to the citizens of Stokes County as cost effective as possible (Quality Cost Effective services)
- Create new revenue streams – grants
- Continue expenditures and revenues review
- Minimize mileage on county vehicles (place mileage sheet in all county vehicles)
- Assess county vehicles being driven home by county employees
- Employee sharing in all departments, especially those departments associated with the current economic status
- Meet with Department Heads for suggestions for cutting cost
- Hiring freeze/selective hiring (any hiring must be approved by the BOCC)
- Control Comp. Time in all departments
- Look into imaging process to make departments more efficient
- Focus on eliminating any unnecessary spending, spending will be the key this year and next year just as the County has done during the past two years
- No funding being borrowed for recurring expenses, just capital needs
- Identify salary options
 - First, look at eliminating only the bonus with salary schedule still in tact
 - Second, eliminate longevity increases
 - Third, impose a salary freeze
 - Fourth, reduce work hours

Thrive

- ❖ Strategic Plan for Economic Development (working with the Economic Development Commission and the new Economic Development Director) (Timeframe – ongoing)
 - Business Retention and Expansion
 - Recruitment of New Businesses and Industries
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Travel and Tourism
 - Obtain 3 new businesses/industries that will create 75 new jobs; add \$2 million dollars of value for County taxes
- ❖ Schools (school construction) (Timeframe – as soon as feasibly possible)
 - Nancy Reynolds Project - Possible decision after information is received (around first of May) from the Board of Education
 - Other school projects as soon as feasible
- ❖ Community College in Stokes County (Tangible results for a community college) (Timeframe- 12/2009)
 - Feasibility study of the Meadows property
 - Developing a specific plan for a community college
 - Alternatives for water and sewer
 - Workable information by 12/2009
- ❖ Strategic Plan for the Meadows Site (Timeframe - 12/2009)
 - Property contamination Clean up and cost
 - Infrastructure needs
 - Specific plan for a community college
- ❖ More planning for health care and health care facilities – (Timeframe – ongoing)
- ❖ Update all County policies - (Timeframe - as soon as possible)
- ❖ Strive to continue to maintain and increase the fund balance, not decrease the fund balance – (Timeframe - on going)

- ❖ Technology – Promote the need for providers to make available better technology such as faster internet service, better cost effective telephone services, and other communications (Timeframe – ongoing)
- ❖ Possibly join forces with school system on making available more wide band satellite systems for county use (Timeframe - on going)
- ❖ Pursue water intake from the Dan River (Timeframe – 12/2009)
- ❖ Investigate Stimulus funding for upcoming fiscal year (Timeframe- immediately)
- ❖ Complete Danbury Water System Project in 2009 with no additional funding

Intermediate Goals/Projects

- Evaluate other school projects
- Completion of EMS Station
- PODS For Early College and FTCC
- Paving

Manager Steen spoke briefly regarding the following “survival” goals which can be considered ongoing each year:

- Items listed in the survival section that are ongoing:
 - 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)
 - Provide services to the citizens of Stokes County as cost effective as possible (Quality Cost Effective Services)
 - Create new revenue streams – grants
 - Continue expenditures and revenues review
 - Minimize mileage on county vehicles (place mileage sheet in all county vehicles)
 - Employee sharing in all departments, especially those departments associated with the current economic status
 - Meet with Department Heads for suggestions for cutting cost
 - Control Comp. Time in all departments
 - Focus on eliminating any unnecessary spending
 - Will continue to identify salary options

Manager Steen spoke briefly regarding the following “thrive” goals:

- ❖ Strategic Plan for Economic Development (working with the Economic Development Commission and the new Economic Development Director) (Timeframe – ongoing)
 - Business Retention and Expansion (**Business Extravaganza held 01-21-10 and ED Director talking with existing businesses in the County**)
 - Recruitment of New Businesses and Industries (**Continuous efforts to recruit**)
 - Entrepreneurship (**ED Director working to provide classes for new startup businesses**)
 - Travel and Tourism (**subcommittees have been created to work on these items**)
 - Obtain 3 new businesses/industries that will create 75 new jobs; add \$2 million dollars of value for County taxes (**no new businesses, no new jobs or new tax values during 2009-10 f/y**)
- ❖ Schools (school construction) (Timeframe – as soon as feasibly possible)
 - Nancy Reynolds Project - Possible decision after information is received (around first of May) from the Board of Education (**Project under construction and moving forward**)
- ❖ Community College in Stokes County (Tangible results for a community college) (Timeframe- 12/2009)
 - Feasibility study of the Meadows property Developing a specific plan for a community college (**Land purchase for community college and Early College Project underway**)

- ❖ Strategic Plan for the Meadows Site (Timeframe - 12/2009)
 - Property contamination Clean up and cost(**nearly complete – only a small portion of the site that needs some additional cleanup**) (**NCDOT is responsible for the cleanup cost**)
- ❖ More planning for health care and health care facilities – (Timeframe – ongoing) (**Working with hospital officials of Stokes-Reynolds Memorial Hospital regarding the operation of Stokes-Reynolds Memorial Hospital**) (**Health Department has been very active trying to provide H1N1 and Seasonal Flu Vaccines to as many citizens as possible**) (**Health Department currently has two middle level providers on staff providing more services to the citizens**) (**Home Health moving forward with trying to increase revenues**)
- ❖ Strive to continue to maintain and increase the fund balance, not decrease the fund balance – (Timeframe - on going) (**Successfully increased fund balance at the end of fiscal year 2008-09 in a very struggling economy**)
- ❖ Technology – Promote the need for providers to make available better technology such as faster internet service, better cost effective telephone services, and other communications (Timeframe – ongoing) (**BOCC approved funding for feasibility study to determine the need for broadband services to those unserved and underserved and the County is currently working with Rockingham County for a possible joint application for stimulus funding**)
- ❖ Possibly join forces with school system on making available more wide band satellite systems for county use (Timeframe - on going) (**Continuing to work with school system whenever possible**)
- ❖ Pursue water intake from the Dan River (Timeframe – 12/2009) (**Preliminary findings indicate the project would not be cost efficient at this time**)
- ❖ Complete Danbury Water System Project in 2009 with no additional funding (**Danbury Water System is ongoing**)

Intermediate Goals/Projects

- Evaluate other school projects – (**Nancy Reynolds Renovation Project underway**)
- Completion of EMS Station - (**Completely finished**)
- PODS For Early College and FTCC – (**Early College Project is underway with anticipation of completion for students in August 2010**) (**Well dug recently with good water supply and septic system construction permit has been received and initial approval has been given for the system design**)
- Paving (**Redirected monies for paving to fund the New EMS Station**)

Vice Chairman Lankford requested additional information regarding Business Retention/Expansion, Recruitment of New Businesses/Industries and loss of any businesses during the past year.

Manager Steen noted the loss of Stevens Roofing (Dow Chemicals) in the Westfield area, operation transferred to another state when Dow Chemicals purchased the company. Manager Steen noted that he was unaware of any expansions or new businesses in the county, but the EDC is committed to business retention and expansion along with recruitment of new businesses.

Vice Chairman Lankford confirmed with Manager Steen that steps had been made to minimize mileage on county vehicles with mileage sheets being placed in all county vehicles and

mileage sheets being monitored by department heads.

The Board discussed a stand-alone community college facility in Stokes County.

Manager Steen noted that Economic Development Director Alan Wood has been talking with representatives from the Golden Leaf Foundation about a possible grant funding for a community college with a meeting scheduled for March 5th.

Commissioner Inman, who serves on the EDC, confirmed that Golden Leaf Representatives had been contacted regarding grant funding for a community college. Commissioner Inman noted the need to challenge Forsyth Technical Community College to make a stand-alone community college a reality in Stokes County along with talking to legislators about a legislative appropriation.

Commissioner Carroll noted the need to decide if a stand-alone community college in Stokes County is a top priority and if so, make plans to do it.

Commissioner Inman, assuming the economy continues to make a turn, discussed a possible bond referendum in 2012 for a new elementary school in the Yadkin Township, renovations to Southeastern Middle School, and a stand-alone community college at the Meadows location.

The Board discussed the \$300,000 being allocated each year for losses at Stokes-Reynolds Memorial Hospital which could be diverted for other uses if things go well with the recent management operational changes that takes effect on March 1, 2010.

The Board discussed the favorable progress made during the last year regarding the following:

- New EMS Station
- New ambulance remounts
- New law enforcement vehicles with new detective position added
- Video Probable Cause Hearing
- DSS – fully staffed with minor vacancies
- Health Department – adequate staff and improvements to billing procedures
- Community College Site
- Schools – capital needs
- Stokes-Reynolds Memorial Hospital
- Roofing – Government Center
- Renovations of offices
- Increasing the Fund Balance

Commissioner Inman noted the huge demands being placed on the Department of Social Services and the Health Department due to the economy.

Commissioner Inman requested Manager Steen to obtain recreational statistical data regarding the programs and number of participants from the YMCA.

Commissioner Inman noted that officials from HMC are talking with officials from Novant and Baptist regarding co-ventures which could be very beneficial to the operation of

Stokes- Reynolds Memorial Hospital.

Commissioner Smith agreed with Commissioner Inman regarding the need to take a closer look at the statistical information regarding recreational activities associated with the YMCA and the need for explore PARTF Grant Funding.

The Board unanimously agreed there had been tremendous progress made regarding the 2009 goals. Manager Steen agreed with the Board regarding the tremendous progress made regarding the 2009 goals. Manager Steen noted the implementation of the following collection services recently started by the Tax Department: use of Interstate Collection Agency, use of debt setoff, and use of lockbox for payments which eliminated a position that was currently vacant.

Manager Steen noted the continuous efforts being made regarding the community college site such water & sewer to the location and reconstruction of the intersection at 8&89.

Manager Steen noted the recent Board approval regarding longevity steps that will be given in the March payroll along with Lunch and Learn sessions being offered by Forsyth Technical Community College for employees.

The Board discussed some type of identification system for residents of Stokes County who use the Greenbox Sites, eliminating trash being deposited in the Greenbox Sites from individuals who do not live in Stokes County.

2010 Capital Needs

Manager Bryan Steen presented the following 2010 capital needs: (preliminary list)

- Building and grounds – paving estimated at \$400,000
- Generator at the new EMS Station
- Upgrade to Emergency Communications –FCC mandates by 01-01-2013
- Facility to store salt for inclement weather
- Replacement of Booth Mountain generator
- Investigate the possibility of the County taking over the C&D operation instead of contracting the service
- Normal change out of vehicles and computers
- Possible capital equipment at Stokes Reynolds Memorial
- Generators for emergency shelters

Commissioner Carroll noted the immediate need for gravel at the Pinnacle site.

2010 Planning Goals

Chairman Walker requested Board members to bring their list of goals for 2010 to the March 11th Goals Session.

Upcoming 2010-2011 Fiscal Year Budget Discussion

The Board discussed the following:

- Budgets from departments are due March 15th
- Increase in health and dental premiums
- Increase in employer contributions for retirement
- Estimated \$96,000 tax revenue from in new growth within the county
- Look at every opportunity to keep costs down
- Possible grant funding from the State for “going green”

The Board discussed the request from Stokes Rockingham Vol. Fire Department regarding a new fire district for their area. Manager Steen noted information received from various sources regarding the topic has been sent to the Fire Chief at Stokes Rockingham Vol. Fire Department. Commissioner Carroll requested the information be sent to the Stokes Rockingham Vol. Fire Department – Board of Directors.

The Board discussed a possible tax rate for 2010-11.

Chairman Walker polled the Board regarding a possible tax rate for 2010-11:

Chairman Walker responded: keep the same

Commissioner Inman responded: keep the same – “not etched in stone”

Vice Chairman Lankford responded: keep the same

Commissioner Carroll responded: same philosophy- “Expect the county manager to present the Board with a realistic budget to meet the needs of the county with a corresponding tax rate to fund the budget and evaluate it when it is presented”

Commissioner Smith responded: keep the same – “not etched in stone”

Requests for Additional Information from Manager/Staff for March 11th Goals Session

The Board requested the following information for the March 11th goals session:

- Current Financial Report
- Current Debt Service Schedule
- Updated Sales Tax Revenue
- Information from EMS Director regarding convalescent transports/revenues/sixth truck

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Walker entertained a motion to adjourn the goals session.

Commissioner Smith moved to adjourn the goals session. Vice Chairman Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

Jimmy Walker
Chairman