

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 15, 2010

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a recessed Goals Planning Session (recessed from the March 11th Goals Planning Session) in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administration Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, March 15, 2010 at 3:00 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 Ernest 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

The Board unanimously agreed to continue with the Agenda that was approved for the March 11th Goals Planning Session.

Commissioners' Individual Goals

Chairman Walker requested to add paving to the goals discussed at the March 11th

meeting.

Chairman Walker requested each member of the Board to add their individual goals to the current list for discussion.

Commissioner Carroll noted the following:

- Use Hold Harmless, if received, to put a large portion into the dedicated school fund and major projects that have been postponed such as paving, etc.

Commissioner Smith noted the following:

- Several topics that need to be discussed:
 - Revenues streams
 - EMS convalescent care (possible sixth truck)
 - Jail – Federal inmate housing
 - Grants
 - Some type of user identification system for solid waste to eliminate trash being brought into Stokes County from other counties
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Salary Study for employees

Commissioner Smith discussed the information provided by Emergency Services Director Monty Stevens regarding convalescent transports in Stokes County.

Commissioner Inman noted the following:

- Hospital transition
- Ongoing – Keep a watchful eye on fund balance especially with the hospital transition
- Urgency - School capital needs/community college
- Need to develop a specific timeline in 2010 for specific activities and completion dates for next phase of capital school projects and community college
- Land Use Master Plan

Chairman Walker noted the following:

- Continue to have low taxes
- Review of contingencies for early college/community college
- Health Department (King Clinic)
- County Services – How to continue providing services with revenue cuts from the State?
- County assisting with emergency funding for agencies who have or will receive decreases in funding
- Better communication within the County
- Communication with Novant and Baptist during the hospital transition/liaison

Vice Chairman Lankford noted the following:

- Remember – “deep recession”
- Keep Stokes County employment at the present level
- Review safety programs - be involved with NCACC Risk Management which has incentives for counties who have safety programs
- Grants for specific capital programs
- Finish capital projects that were identified in 2009 – “Courtroom C”, Early College, paving, etc.
- Keep property tax rates at \$.60
- Improve county fund balance from 22% to 24%
- Continue salary longevity step program

The Board unanimously agreed to the following categories for later discussion:

- Survival
- Economic Development
- Schools/Community College
- Health
- Revenues
- Capital Projects other than schools
- Technology
- Miscellaneous

The Board discussed each category and agreed to tentatively place the following items under each category for further discussion:

Survival

The Board agreed to carry forward the following 2009 Survival Goals:

- 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)
- 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 intact

- Second, eliminate longevity increases
- Third, impose a salary freeze
- Fourth, reduce work hours

The Board added the following to the 2009 Survival Goals:

- Evaluate staffing levels
- Reminder of deep recession
- Evaluate the county's ability to bridge the gap for services with State revenue cuts
- Less State Appropriation for upcoming fiscal year 2010-11

Economic Development

- Continue with current Strategic Plan:
 - Business Retention and Expansion
 - Recruitment of New Businesses and Industries
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Travel and Tourism
- Evaluate Land Use Master Plan
- Evaluate Parks and Recreation

Schools/Community College

- Items discussed at the March 11th Goals Session
 - Hire an architect to design a community college in fiscal year 2010-11
 - Start looking at Southeastern Middle School Project in 2010-11
 - Get off the "lottery bubble" to receive 100% return from the lottery funds and tie it to school and community college construction
 - Consider raising the taxes for school and community college construction as to the "needs only" maybe labeling "school tax" which could be taken off when projects that were identified are done
 - Consider school and community college construction even if it means raising taxes and forget this is an "election year"
- Develop a timeline for specific activities and completion dates for community college and the next phase of school capital projects
- Contingency Plan for Early College

Health Care

- Items discussed at the March 11th meeting
 - BOCC make a decision in 2010 on the future of Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital
 - Review the status of the King Clinic
 - Review the status of Home Health
 - Review of Health Department Services in light of pending changes such as FQHC's and other appropriate options

Revenues

- Create new revenue streams (EMS, Greenbox Sites, Federal Inmates)
- Grants
- Fund Balance
- Hold Harmless

- Tax Rate
- Lottery
- Financial Plan
- Continue to budget revenues conservatively

Capital Projects

- Danbury Water System
- Courtroom “C”
- Paving
- Day Care Building
- Generators for emergency shelters/communications
- Communications – upgrade system

Technology

- Continue with plans and progress already made with technology (Broadband)
- County’s infrastructure technology needs
- Energy efficiency improvement programs

Miscellaneous

- County policies
- Safety program
- Salary Study
- Better communication within the County
- Smoking issues

The Board further discussed each category and the following items were narrowed down for continued discussion.

Chairman Walker reiterated that the items under each category could be changed, deleted, or new items added before the final adoption of 2010 Goals.

Survival

A majority of the Board agreed to list the following under Survival:

- 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)
- 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
- Evaluate staffing levels
- Reminder of deep recession
- Evaluate the county's ability to bridge the gap for services with State revenue cuts

Chairman Walker noted the need to further discuss the following:

- Evaluate the county's ability to bridge the gap for services with State revenue cuts

Economic Development

The Board unanimously agreed to list the following under Economic Development:

- Continue with current Strategic Plan:
 - Business Retention and Expansion
 - Recruitment of New Businesses and Industries
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Travel and Tourism
- Evaluate Land Use Master Plan
- Evaluate Parks and Recreation

Schools

Finance Director Julia Edwards presented the following information received from the County's Financial Advisor as requested by the Board at the March 11th meeting:

- Tax increase if the following debt was incurred for the upcoming 2011-12 fiscal year:
 - New elementary school project in Yadkin Township = \$14 M
 - Community College project = \$6 M
 - Southeastern Middle School Renovation Project = \$8 M
 - Other needed renovations = \$3M
- Tax increase would be 4 cents
- If waited until 2011-12, it could increase to 4.5 cents

The Board discussed the information presented by Finance Director Edwards.

Director Edwards also noted the following correction to information provided at the March 11th meeting:

- IRS regulations will allow the County to borrow \$30 million instead of \$10 million for tax exempt counties/cities for capital expenditures

The Board unanimously agreed that Schools and Community College should be a separate category.

A majority of the Board agreed to list the following under Schools:

- Develop a timeline for specific future school construction projects
 - School Board's first priority for 2010
 - School Board's second priority for 2011

Community College

The Board unanimously agreed to list the following under Community College:

- Hire an architect in 2010 and develop a timeline for future events
- Contingency Plan for Early College

Health Care

The Board unanimously agreed to list the following under Health Care:

- Items discussed at the March 11th meeting
 - BOCC make a decision in 2010 on the future of Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital
 - Review the status of the King Clinic
 - Review the status of Home Health
 - Review of Health Department Services in light of pending changes such as FQHC's and other appropriate options

Revenues

The Board unanimously agreed to further discuss these items during the budget process:

- Create new revenue streams
 - EMS convalescent care (possible sixth truck)
 - Jail – Federal inmate housing
 - Some type of user identification system for solid waste to eliminate trash being brought from other counties
- Grants
- Fund Balance
- Hold Harmless
- Tax Rate
- Lottery
- Financial Plan
- Continue to budget revenues conservatively

Capital Projects

The Board unanimously agreed to list the following under Capital Projects:

- Danbury Water System Rehab. Project to be completed in 2010
- Courtroom “C” Renovation Project to be completed in 2010
- Paving to be considered in 2010-11 budget
- Day Care Building – need to decide if grant application for funding will be submitted – to be further discussed at the April 12th regular meeting
- Generators for emergency shelters/communications – need to decide if this should be a budget item
- Communications – upgrade system – need to also decide if this should be a budget item

Technology

The Board unanimously agreed to list the following under Technology:

- Continue with plans and progress already made with technology (Broadband)
- County’s infrastructure technology needs
- Energy efficiency improvement programs

Miscellaneous

The Board unanimously agreed to list the following under Miscellaneous:

- County policies
- Safety program
- Salary Study
- Better communication within the County
- Smoking issues

The Board discussed “Smoking in County Facilities”. The Board discussed banning smoking, posting no smoking signs comparable to the Courthouse, smoke free buildings, designate smoking areas, and leave county policies regarding smoking as is.

The Board unanimously agreed to request the County Manager take the views expressed by the Board, investigate the possibilities, talk to employees, and return information back to the Board regarding “Smoking in County Facilities”.

The Board unanimously agreed to discuss a date for the next Goals Planning Session at the March 22nd meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Walker entertained a motion to adjourn the Goals Planning Session.

Vice Chairman Lankford moved to adjourn the Goals Planning Session. Commissioner Inman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

Jimmy Walker
Chairman