

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
APRIL 6, 2010

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Goals Planning Session in the third floor conference room of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administration Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at 4:00 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 and 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 April 6, 2010 Agenda.

Commissioner Inman moved to approve the April 6, 2010 Agenda as submitted. Commissioner Smith seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Smoking in County Buildings

County Manager Bryan Steen informed the Board, as requested at the last Goals Session, that he had spoken to department heads in the Administrative Building regarding the issue of smoking in the building. Manager Steen noted that the department heads did not feel there would be any issues with asking employees not to smoke in the building and that several employees are already smoking outside.

The Board further discussed the issue of smoking in county owned facilities, making no changes, designating county owned facilities as smoke free buildings with convenient designated smoking areas, requesting only employees to smoke outside, and having a trial basis of requesting employees not to smoke in county facilities.

Commissioner Carroll confirmed with Manager Steen that only the department heads in the Administrative Building had been asked and that the employees who smoke had not been asked.

Manager Steen noted that a designated smoking area could be placed at the back of the Administrative Building similar to the one placed at the Department of Social Services.

Chairman Walker suggested the Board discuss the topic of no smoking in county owned facilities at a later meeting and continue with the Goals Planning Session as scheduled.

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion regarding 2010 Goals.

Grants

Vice Chairman Lankford requested the Board further discuss grants, which was a 2009 Goal. Vice Chairman Lankford stated that he felt the County needs to take every opportunity possible to try to obtain grants, thus saving taxpayer dollars.

Chairman Walker noted that he felt some restructuring in Economic Development could be done to include two additional positions who would report to the Economic Development Director. One position would be responsible for parks, recreation, tourism, and would also assist the Economic Development Director with grant writing. The other position would be administrative. Arts and specials events would also be a part of Economic Development in order for Economic Development and Arts to coordinate their efforts. The positions could be funded on a trial basis (possibly 2 years) using Hold Harmless dollars. The YMCA could possibly continue with some recreational programs.

Vice Chairman Lankford suggested that there needs to be a plan to get things moving regarding grants.

The Board discussed the technical and time consuming process of completing a grant application, other grants received by the County, and the lack of grants not being applied for by the County.

The Board briefly discussed the rehabilitation grant regarding the building previously occupied by Happy Hills Day Care Center.

Chairman Walker confirmed with Finance Director Julia Edwards that the County is scheduled to receive the Hold Harmless Funding for two more years.

Commissioners' Top Goals

Chairman Walker requested each member of the Board to list their top individual goals:

Commissioner Carroll listed the following:

- Schools
- Community College
- Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital – Decision
- Survival

Commissioner Carroll stated the Board needed to make very specific, concrete goals; not just schools or community college, but a goal that states what this Board is going to do such as hire an architect to design a community college in 2010.

Vice Chairman Lankford noted the expense of hiring an architect.

Vice Chairman Lankford listed the following:

- Survival
- Keep employment (number of employees) for the county at the present level
- Grants
- Job creation

The Board further discussed grants. Vice Chairman Lankford stated the lead person to start the process should be the county manager with department heads researching for their own departments.

Chairman Walker questioned Manager Steen regarding having additional time to put towards grants.

Manager Steen noted that there was time to do some initial inquiries regarding grants, but time is limited currently with the preparation of the fiscal year budget along with the daily operation of the County.

Vice Chairman Lankford requested the balance of the Dedicated Debt Service Fund.

Finance Director Julia Edwards stated the current balance of the Dedicated Debt Service Fund is \$1,211,000.00 and the current balance as of March 3rd in the Lottery Fund is \$2,596,963.00.

Finance Director Edwards also stated the current balance in the regular Capital Reserve Fund is \$441,951 which is already designated for certain projects.

Chairman Walker listed the following:

- Schools
- Community College
- Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital – Decision
- Parks and Recreation
- Economic Development – create and retain jobs

Commissioner Inman listed the following:

- Maintaining a conservative course of spending
- Schools
- Community College
- Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital

- Strategic plan for grants
- Parks & Recreation
- Grants
- Economic Development – creation of jobs

Commissioner Inman stated that one important thing regarding grants is that you must have a strategic plan for acquiring grant.

Commissioner Smith listed the following:

- Schools (new elementary school in King, Southeastern renovations, renovations at Lawsonville Elementary School)
- Keep in touch with Board of Education regarding top priorities
- Provide adequate services to the citizens of Stokes County
- Possibly add a Fraud Investigator at DSS and a daytime EMS Convalescent Truck
- Community College
- Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital
- Grants
- Parks & Recreation
- Economic Development – Job creation

The Board listed the top goals submitted by a majority of the members:

- Schools (4 members)
- Community College (4 members)
- Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital (4 members)
- Survival (5 members)
- Grants (4 members)
- Parks and Recreation (3 members)
- Economic Development – Job creation (4 members)

The Board discussed the following goal - **Schools**:

Commissioner Carroll, Chairman Walker, and Commissioner Smith agreed to begin the Board of Education's next priority school construction project in 2010.

Vice Chairman Lankford stated to look at the Board of Education's next priority project with no tax increase.

Commissioner Inman stated to take the Board of Education's next priority school construction project in 2010 subject to talking with the county's financial advisor.

The Board discussed the following goal - **Community College**:

Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Carroll agreed to hire an architect in 2010 with construction starting in 2011.

Commissioner Inman agreed to consider hiring an architect in 2010 with construction no later than 2012 if funding is available.

Chairman Walker agreed to hire an architect in 2010 with construction starting in 2011 (preferably no later than 2012).

Vice Chairman Lankford agreed to hire an architect in 2011 with construction starting in 2012. Vice Chairman Lankford reiterated that hiring an architect could cost as much as \$500,000.

Commissioner Carroll confirmed with Finance Director Julia Edwards that the County could fund the money up front and pay the county back as long as a Resolution was adopted before any funds were expensed.

Commissioner Inman questioned whether the County could build a “Stokes County Community College” rather than one affiliated with Forsyth Technical Community College. Commissioner Carroll confirmed the State Board of Community Colleges would have to approve, which is probably unlikely.

The Board discussed the following goal – **Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital-Decision:**

Vice Chairman Lankford stated to continue 8-9 months with the County operation, then make an assessment and a decision regarding the hospital.

Commissioner Carroll stated the Board needs to make a decision about the long term future of the hospital in 2010.

Commissioner Smith stated the need to proceed with an RFP as soon as possible, make a decision with preferably a new hospital being built, and retain ownership of the hospital property for county departments.

Commissioner Inman stated after the Public Hearing (as soon as feasible) make a decision regarding the hospital.

Chairman Walker stated to make a decision by the end of 2010 regarding the hospital, facilities in King, and the long term care facility.

After a lengthy discussion, the Board unanimously agreed that a decision regarding Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital would be made by the end of 2010.

The Board discussed the following goal - **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
 1. First, look at eliminating only the bonus with salary schedule still intact
 2. Second, eliminate longevity increases
 3. Third, impose a salary freeze
 4. 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

The Board discussed the following goal - **Grants:**

Chairman Walker stated the need to place a higher priority on grant applications and more attention to acquiring grants.

Vice Chairman Lankford agreed that more attention needed to be placed on grant writing.

Commissioner Carroll agreed with more priority on grants, but noted that department heads need to identify possible grants for their departments and submit them to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

Commissioner Inman stated the need for an action plan to bring grant information to the Board. Commissioner Inman reiterated the time involvement for preparation of a grant and the person must have some knowledge regarding grant writing.

The Board discussed the following procedure to follow regarding acquiring grants:

- Department Heads research and identify grants for their individual departments
- County manager and department head evaluate the pros and cons of each grant
- County manager submits the proposed grant to the Board of Commissioners for their authority to proceed with the application and appropriate funding if match is required

The Board discussed the following goal – **Parks and Recreation:**

Commissioner Carroll, Commissioner Inman, Chairman Walker, and Commissioner Smith agreed to evaluate options during the budget process.

Vice Chairman Lankford stated the need to see the Master Plan (Tourism & Moratock Park) recently requested by Economic Development Director and approved by the Board before making any decisions regarding Parks and Recreation.

The Board discussed the following goal- **Economic Development –Job Creation:**

Vice Chairman Lankford stated the need for job creation.

Commissioner Carroll stated the need to provide support and encouragement to the Economic Development Commission as they proceed to follow their Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Smith agreed with Commissioner Carroll, but added Economic Development Director with Economic Development Commission.

Commissioner Inman agreed with Commissioner Carroll.

Chairman Walker agreed with Commissioner Carroll.

2010 Goals

The Board agreed either unanimously or by a majority to the following as high priority Goals for 2010:

- **Schools (majority of the Board)**
 - Begin the next Board of Education's priority school construction project in 2010
- **Community College (majority of the Board)**
 - Hire an architect in 2010 with construction in 2011
- **Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital (unanimous)**
 - Make a decision regarding Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital by the end of 2010
- **Survival (unanimous)**
 - Use the following adopted 2009 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
 - Evaluate staffing levels
 - Reminder of deep recession
 - Evaluate the county's ability to bridge the gap for services with State revenue cuts
- **Grants (unanimous)**
 - Place a higher priority and more attention regarding acquiring grants by implementing the following procedures:
 - Department heads research and identify grants for their individual departments
 - County manager and department head evaluate the pros and cons of each grant

- County manager submits the proposed grant to the Board of Commissioners for their authority to proceed with the application and appropriate funding if match is required
- **Parks and Recreation (unanimous)**
 - Evaluate options during the budget process.
- **Economic Development – Job Creation (unanimous)**
 - Encourage job creation by providing support and encouragement to the Economic Development Commission as they follow their strategic plan

Legislative Assembly Day for County Commissioners

Commissioner Inman informed the Board that the Legislative Assembly Day for County Commissioners in Raleigh is May 19th.

Regional Meeting for Board of County Commissioners

Commissioner Inman also noted the NCACC Regional meeting will be held in Forsyth County on Tuesday, April 27th. Vice Chairman Lankford noted that there was a scheduled Board of Trustees meeting on the 27th.

Chairman Walker, with full consensus of the Board, directed the Clerk to see if the Board could reschedule the Board of Trustees to Thursday, April 29th.

Adjournment

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

Commissioner Smith 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