



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Monday, March 19, 2018

6:00 PM

Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Rollcall

Present: 4 - Commissioner Jim Crawford, Chair Diana Hales, Vice Chair Mike Dasher and Commissioner Karen Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Walter Petty

Work Session - 3:00 PM - Historic Courthouse Courtroom

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

No one signed up to speak.

BOARD PRIORITIES

[18-2534](#)

2018 First Quarter Employee of the Quarter Award-Rachael Thorn, Land and Water Resources Supervisor

Attachments: [Rachael Thorn-Land and Water Resources](#)

Human Resources Analyst Courtney Goldston introduced Rachael Thorn.

Recently, Rachael worked with both new and surrounding property owners of the area formerly known as Range 2A in an effort to bring all parties to the table and commit to work in a collaborative and forward thinking solution regarding activity on the property.

Rachel single-handedly worked for months with the group of owners to help them reestablish trust in each other as well as county government. She navigated the situation skillfully, facilitating discussions with property owners about concerns on both sides and helping them work out an agreement about when it is ok to shoot.

Rachael went above and beyond to insure a peaceful and collaborative solution in the community for the benefits of the citizens and the county and, for this reason among many others, we are proud to name her our 2018 First Quarter Employee of the Quarter.

Chair Hales presented Ms. Thorn with the 2018 First Quarter Employee of the Quarter Award to Ms. Thorn.

[18-2538](#)

Presentation from Clean Jordan Lake

Attachments: [Clean Jordan Lake Chatham County BOC-March 2018](#)

Fran DiGiano with Clean Jordan Lake gave a presentation to the Board. (Presentation attached) He was last here in 2015 to present to the Board.

Commissioner Crawford asked if there any hotspots on the eastern side of the lake. Mr. DiGiano said the data is limited on New Hope Creek but there is definitely more trash on the western side of the lake. Commissioner Crawford asked about propane canisters. Mr. DiGiano stated the Ebenezer Church Boat Ramp has a high concentration. Chair Hales asked if canisters are found under the bridge on Highway 64. Mr. DiGiano said he doesn't see people fishing there.

Commissioner Crawford asked if the Army Corps of Engineers puts up any signs about trash. Mr. DiGiano said Clean Jordan Lake has produced signage along with the Army Corps. People don't respond to negative messages such as "don't do this or that". There has to be another way to send a positive message. Chair Hales asked if the propane tanks are recyclable. Assistant County Manager Dan LaMontagne stated most metal recyclers don't like to take the tanks because they cannot tell if they are full or empty. The County currently disposes them with household hazardous waste. Mr. DiGiano said they have thought about looking into a deposit system to encourage people to take them back.

Chair Hales thanked Mr. DiGiano for all the work he and Clean Jordan Lake are doing. She asked staff to look into possible messaging on water bills.

This Agenda Item was received and filed

[18-2537](#)

A request by the Planning Department to schedule a legislative public hearing for April 16th, 2018 to consider County-initiated rezonings of businesses in the formerly unzoned portion of Chatham County.

Attachments: [Biz Rezoning Requests - Harpers-Bennett](#)
[Biz Rezoning Requests - NW Chatham](#)
[Biz Rezoning Requests - SW Chatham](#)
[Business Rezonings Sheet](#)

Planner Dylan Paul reviewed the specifics of the request.

A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to schedule a public hearing at 6pm on April 16, 2018. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

CLOSED SESSION[18-2545](#)

Closed Session to discuss matters relating to attorney-client privilege and economic development.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Vice Chair Dasher, to approve going out of the Work Session and convening in Closed Session to discuss matters relating to attorney-client privilege and economic development. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Vice Chair Dasher, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

End of Work Session

Regular Session - 6:00 PM - Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Present: 4 - Commissioner Jim Crawford, Chair Diana Hales, Vice Chair Mike Dasher and Commissioner Karen Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Walter Petty

INVOCATION and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Dasher asked those in attendance to observe a moment of silence after which the Chair invited everyone present to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hales welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA and CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that the Agenda and Consent Agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2542](#)

Vote on a request to approve the January 26, 2018 Retreat Minutes and the February 19, 2018 Work and Regular Session Minutes.

Attachments: [Draft Minutes 01.26.2018](#)
 [Draft Minutes 02.19.2018](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that the Minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2543](#)

Vote on a request to approve appointment of Megan Key to the Community Advisory Committee for Nursing Homes and Adult Care homes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Appointment be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2476](#)

Vote on a request to accept \$25,000 Spotlight Award from Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge Funds

Attachments: [\\$25,000 Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge Interim Award - Abstract](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2524](#)

Vote on a request to accept \$220.00 Minority Diabetes Prevention Program Funds.

Attachments: [\\$220 Minority Diabetes Prevention Program Funds](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[17-2390](#)

Vote on a request to approve the tower space lease to NC Viper and approve the reciprocal letter of intent allowing the County to place equipment on VIPER's towers, and authorize the county manager to sign the proposal and final lease.

Attachments: [VIPER Lease Proposal](#)
[2018 VIPER site Letter of Intent](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Contract, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2530](#)

Vote on a Request to Approve the New lease for the Chatham County Sheriff's Office beginning 6/1/2018

Attachments: [Sheriff's Office Lease for Siler City](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Contract, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2531](#)

Vote on a request to award the bid for property and liability brokerage services to Surry Insurance.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2532](#)

Vote on a request to approve an amendment to the Chatham County Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Policy

Attachments: [Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Policy-2018 DRAFT](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2533](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution to Approve an Amendment to the Chatham County Personnel Policy

Attachments: [Resolution Amending PP March 2018](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that Resolution #2018-09 to approve an amendment to the Chatham County Personnel Policy, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2535](#)

Vote on a request to approve Tax Releases and Refunds

Attachments: [February 2018 Release and Refund Report](#)
[February 2018 NCVTS Pending Refund Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that the Tax Releases and Refunds, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2539](#)

Vote on a request to approve the acceptance of the **NC Horse Council** grant funds in the amount of \$5000.00 and the subsequent increase to the Ag Center Budget by \$5000.00

Attachments: [Lowest Sand Quote](#)
[NC Horse council Award letter](#)
[NC Horse Council Grant Application](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2540](#)

Vote on a request to approve the attached loan commitment letters for

Henry Siler School affordable rental housing project.

Attachments: [Loan Commitment Letter - Chatham County 2018-02-21](#)
[18-QAPFinalAppendixE - Chatham County 2018-02-21](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2541](#)

Vote on a request to approve a fine-free day during National Library Week in April.

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

[18-2544](#)

Vote on a Request to Adopt Noise Ordinance as Amended

Attachments: [3-7-18 draft 2018 NOISE ORDINANCE](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Ordinance, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

End of Consent Agenda

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

[18-2505](#)

Present Certificate of Extended Volunteer Committee Service with County Advisory Committees to Jamie Fiocco.

Ms. Fiocco was unable to attend. Chair Hales acknowledged her service on the Library Advisory Committee from 2008 to 2017 and asked the Clerk to mail her the certificate.

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Chris Kaman submitted the following comments:

I come before you tonight as a man born and raised in the South to share my thoughts

about the continued presence of the Confederate monument just outside our courthouse. The monument was given in 1907 by the Winnie Davis Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy to "revere" the Confederate soldiers who died in what some still call the "War of Northern Aggression." Many people died fighting for the South, defending its right to enslave human beings to support its economy. One of them was my great grandfather who fought for the Mississippi Army. I will never know the reason he fought. Perhaps it was out of loyalty and obligation to his home state, rather than allegiance to white supremacy. Modern Southerners now understand that the South was not a noble cause, and that the long road for those enslaved required overturning the institution of slavery which meant the defeat of the South.

For some years after the Civil War, the South became democratic, and witnessed the inclusion of blacks in business and government. Unfortunately, when the Union Army left the South there was a resurgence of white supremacy as the law of the land. It began in North Carolina in 1896 when the Democratic Party which controlled the state government began passing what came to be known as Jim Crow laws. Two years later in 1898 a 2,000 strong white mob in Wilmington led a coup against the elected bi-racial local government which destroyed the property and businesses of blacks who lived there and killed at least 30 people, most of them black. So the purpose of this monument was not merely to honor the Confederate soldier, but equally to proclaim the complete return of white supremacy.

Today we live in a very different world, a world where we seek justice and equality for all Americans, where white supremacy is not a badge of honor, but a badge of shame. As former Governor of South Carolina Nikki Haley said, "these monuments belong in museums but not in modern public squares". Ironically, the Republican controlled North Carolina legislature has used its power to prevent the removal of these monuments by the communities which erected them. So we must seek creative ways to demonstrate our values today. Could the base of the monument be changed to honor all those who died in the Civil War, including slaves, and those who fought against slavery? Could the county establish a citizen based donation fund which would be used for that purpose, or to create a newer monument towards that purpose? Let us seek to show that our nation's values today rest with the equality of all people and their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness!

Jan Hutton submitted the following comments:

As Briar Chapel extends its reach towards Mann's Chapel Road, their expansion continues to impact established neighborhoods in its path. Their Phase 12 submittal has yet to hit your agenda, although a preliminary proposal is being circulated. This is our "heads up" that the Chatham Development, and surrounding neighbors, are in the sights of the impending proposal.

I'd like to share a bit about our neighborhood. R.B. Fitch began construction of our 136 modernistic homes in 1971, each home on approximately 1/2 acre. We are one of the first major developments in North Chatham and part of our charm includes many trees and a sense of slow-paced spaciousness. Our streets are state roads, with no sidewalks, and a constant stream of neighbors and children walking, biking, jogging, and visiting with each other on the narrow roads.

From our neighborhood website homepage: "Our neighborhood is a beautiful blend of rural living and convenience... We enjoy pastoral living with clear views of the nighttime sky and minimal traffic noise..." chathamdevelopmentnc.wordpress.com

The map shows an egress plan through our community, with 5 entrance points onto Half Dollar Rd., opening to through traffic from Briar Chapel. This would likely include construction traffic, coming from Manns Chapel Rd., for new homes, which will be built off Half Dollar. We firmly believe there are viable options that do not include opening Half Dollar Rd. We do not wish to be seen as a shortcut, or a bypass, for those in a hurry from 2,600+ Briar Chapel residences. As private citizens, we'd like to believe that we count in equal measure, considering Briar Chapel's many exemptions over the years.

We will continue ongoing appearances before the Planning Board, Board of Commissioners, and sharing our story with local media, in service to maintaining the safety and integrity of our 47 year old neighborhood.

Terri Tyson submitted the following comments:

I am speaking about the proposed expansion of the Board of County Commissioners. Since moving to Chatham County last May after living a long time in Orange County, I have tried to learn as much as possible about my new county. To this end I started to attend County Commissioner meetings. At a meeting last fall there was discussion about forming a committee to explore the possibility of expanding the commissioners from five to seven. It piqued my interest and I inquired about how I might serve on that committee. Since then I have heard both sides of the argument. I've considered it from the perspective of having lived in Orange County. They tweaked their system due to people complaining they are not represented fairly on the board if they lived in a less populated area such as northern Orange County. They now have primaries restricted to the districts. That means they tend to get candidates that are more representative of their district. However, at the time of the general election everyone votes and since southern Orange County is more populous the majority rules again. Therefore the complaints go on and on as people continue to feel under represented. That is what I am hearing in Chatham County. People are saying that those in the west and less populated areas of Chatham County are being outvoted by those in the eastern areas. Expanding the board from five to seven does not address this problem of under representation of the western parts of the county. Everyone votes in the elections and the populated areas, once again, get their way. Whose idea was this to expand the board and what is their motivation? A newspaper article said that this was originally presented to the commissioners by the Democratic Party Committee, which to me seems highly political. What does this have to do with helping the western part of the county? I am against the expansion of the board. We all have our favorite commissioner. The one who we believe represents us best. If the board is expanded, the influence of the existing commissioners will be diminished. Why try to fix something that is not broken? Why is there a rush? Nearby Durham County with a population of 306,000 people has only five county commissioners. Mecklenburg County near Charlotte has a population of 1,054,000 has nine commissioners. Five commissioners for Chatham County with our population of 72,000 is fine even with the expected amount of growth. Don't make an unnecessary change, especially one that will diminish your influence. Please don't expand the Board of Commissioners. Don't worsen the problem you are trying to fix. It is most likely to just be two more people from the eastern part of the county who will win the seats. During an at large race the over populated northeastern parts of the county will continue to cast many more votes than those in the west. How does that help with the under representation of the west? Thank you.

Alan Ross submitted the following comments:

I am really in support of what was just said. I have spent a lot of time looking at it as well. I was looking at a proposal that had been decided upon by a group of people. The best way to put it is they had the answer and they were trying to figure out the question. It ranged from the board isn't as big as Siler City's to we don't have anyone from Pittsboro or Siler City on the board but that is just a matter of running. They also said we are growing therefore you need more people. Buried in this was a proposal. There was a problem: the under representation of the west. If you expand the board from five to seven what you are going to do is create a larger bureaucracy and exacerbate the same problem you have today. There is an answer. Only people that live in the district can run in the district and only people that live in the district can vote in the district.

Maggie Pumphrey submitted the following comments:

My name is Maggie Pumphrey, and I'm an owner on Dollar Road. My property includes the little horse barn at the corner of Dollar and Half Dollar, and I'm here tonight to add my voice to those who are speaking against any plans to open Half Dollar Road to traffic from Briar Chapel. I'd like to quickly share a little anecdote with you about our neighborhood. When the Duke Energy folks last came by on one of their inspection tours, they got out of their trucks, looked up and down Dollar Road, and said simply 'Oh wow!' – in a good way! They went on to exclaim about the beauty of the place, with its gorgeous crop of mature trees lining both sides of the street, a trademark of this kind of older, 'traditional', no-sidewalk, Chatham neighborhood. This reaction is something we see over and over again from people who come into our community for the first time. It's a serene, slow-paced walking neighborhood that would quite simply be ruined by an increased volume of traffic through its streets.

At the same time, I must confess, I do like having a few restaurants and shops within a reasonable distance. I am not here to argue against development and growth, but simply to emphasize the need to strike a balance – protecting the integrity of traditional Chatham neighborhoods on the one hand, and supporting a reasonable progress on the other. When some of my neighbors were researching the Half Dollar proposal, they learned that in 2005 the Planning Board actually recommended against channeling traffic from Briar Chapel onto Half Dollar, presumably with this same hope of finding a better balance.

The point I want to make tonight is this: It is sometimes very difficult to find a middle ground between protection and progress because there are few options for compromise. But in the case of Briar Chapel and Half Dollar Road we are extremely lucky because we do have good alternatives for routing Briar Chapel traffic without sacrificing a traditional community, such as our wonderful neighborhood that borders Dollar Road.

In conclusion, I ask that you take these points into consideration and help us preserve our neighborhood when reviewing any upcoming traffic proposals. Thank you for your time.

Don Medlin submitted the following comments:

My name is Don Medlin and I live at 242 Half Dollar Road in North Chatham. At the last board meeting, you met my mother who has lived on the family farm for 86 years. We are here to continue a conversation with the Board. Briar Chapel has circulated a map with draft plans to develop Phase 12. I have provided a copy with added notes suggesting alternative options for access to the Great Ridge Parkway and no connection to Half Dollar Road. Neighbors presented the same information to the planning board on March 6th. NNP Briar Chapel, LLC is capable of extraordinary engineering to change any topography as demonstrated in the attached photographs. Briar Chapel can easily function without a connection to Half Dollar Road and provide access to the most important commuter link US highway 15-501. The Comprehensive 25 year Chatham County Plan highlights preserving the form and function of rural character. We are asking that our community be respected and preserved consistent with this stated vision while Briar Chapel contributes to the commercial tax base and generation of in-county jobs. In 2005, we attended a meeting where we were told Half Dollar Road would not be connected to Briar Chapel. We are asking for continued communication and an open forum for input.

Elizabeth Haddix submitted the following comments:

Together, Siler City and Chatham County gave Mountaire Farms, a multi-billion dollar poultry producer, a tax incentive package worth about \$2.3 million over the next six years. "Given the total economic impact, we believe that the proposed incentives are a very good investment for Chatham County," stated Kyle Touchstone, president of the Chatham Economic Development Corporation. "The impact on local sales tax revenues and property tax base also are very positive." Mountaire, a vertically integrated poultry producer and processor, had more than 2 billion dollars in sales in fiscal year 2015, and is number 214 on Forbes' list of largest private companies. Because it is a privately held company, Mountaire does not have to disclose its profits, and it does not. This past January, residents of Millsboro, DE asked Mountaire for information related to water pollution from chicken waste disposal from its plants. High levels of nitrates and fecal coliform led the state to investigate and issue a notice of violation in November 2017. Mountaire remains under investigation by Delaware's regulatory agency. Mountaire denies responsibility for the pollution. Notwithstanding that denial, the company is currently investing in corrections to its wastewater treatment system. And residents- most of whom are low-wealth people of color continue to seek information about the safety of their water. It is no surprise that Mountaire chose to locate in Siler City, where the average annual income is less than \$30,000. It is also no surprise that the residents who are losing their homes to make way from Mountaire are all people of color. Chatham County's elected leaders need to understand the legal import of that corporate choice. Besides the inevitable air and water pollution from these factories, industrial giants like Mountaire routinely externalize other social costs to the communities that live closest to them, including truck traffic, workplace injuries and damage to surrounding property values. We should not be giving them 2.3 million dollars in tax revenues that our community needs to begin to address those adverse impacts. And now, added to those impacts is the loss of these residents' homes and neighborhood. At a minimum, this Board should use its negotiations with Mountaire to produce fair compensation for those residents.

Katherine West submitted the following comments:

I live in Moncure. My concern is the proposal of going from five to seven members. I feel like my needs as a county resident are already compromised by a committee

whose members are primarily from northern Chatham County. I too feel like Terri. I want to know why you want to fix a problem that is not broken. My opinion is no. Keep it at five please. Thank you.

Vickie Russell submitted the following comments:

I was not planning to speak tonight because I have had little experience with the Chatham County Board. In some ways I feel your minds are made up before the meetings which makes the meetings seem like a waste of time. However, I hope tonight you will prove me wrong and restore my faith in our commissioners. I ask as a citizen that you do not make your decision on seven districts but leave it at five. The decision should not be made on being popular with your friends. Real friends are people who will respect you more if you perform your job in an honest way with thoughtfulness and wisdom. In the long run they are going to question your real loyalty if the occasion arises. Five commissioners are doing a good job and there is no need for more. We need to keep our government costs down and not raise them, which would require more burden to the taxpayer. I am presently reading a book and it put a burden on my heart for each one of you. I know you have a hard job but please remember you cannot please everyone. Even Jesus couldn't but he did the right things. The title of the book is "One Minute After You Die". It really has made me look at my life and my decisions in a different way. That is why I am here tonight because I had no faith in y'all. But the book made me realize I should give you a chance. So I am asking each one of you to consider one minute after you die, will you be blessed with your decision on changing it from five to seven or will you regret your decision? Thank you for your time.

Rosemary Lenten submitted the following comments:

I am from Siler City. As you consider the possibility of adding two at large seats to the Chatham County Board I urge you to approach that decision with justice, mercy, and honesty for all Chatham County citizens. Of course, I know you think that you are just. I ask you, where is justice when you attempt to add at large seats that will be backed by a very large number of voters from northeast Chatham? The net result of that is the two more at large seats will tilt the outcome of any election by using tactics that will increase the northeast control over all of Chatham County. At large seats are not representative of the will of the people. I frankly think you know that. The western part of Chatham County has very different issues than the rest of the county, including lower income and fewer jobs. We need representation from people who understand our problems. Quite frankly the people in the northeast do not. You are right about one thing, change is needed, but not the type that you are suggesting. Rather than pack the board with at large seats, we need district voting for all seats. Only district voting will ensure fair representation for all areas of the county. We want district voting that requires that each candidate for a certain district must live in that district and only residents who live in that district can vote for or against that candidate. The current proposal that you are considering does indeed require the candidate to live where he/she wishes to represent. Because the whole county can vote for that candidate he/she becomes a candidate at large and the outcome is tilted for the northeast once again. That is nothing less than a stacked deck. It smacks of dishonesty. I realize there is more growth in the northeast and I realize you are thinking we need more representation there. Really, the extra work that is created by that population could be achieved by hiring more staff rather than adding more commissioners that tilt the ballots. This so called non-partisan advisory committee to suggest how to best use at

large districts is nothing more than window dressing designed to hide the unfairness of your approach. Please, you may not realize it but it fools some of the people but not all of the people. Please be fair in your decision. Thank you.

Paul Powell submitted the following comments:

I live in Siler City and I appreciate the opportunity to address the commissioners. I am asking you not to increase the number of commissioners. My experience has been if you get past three people you have a hard time getting consensus and getting things done in a common sense fashion. You have five already so you are beyond that. I think it is a real challenge to get people to agree on something the more people that are involved. The larger a committee gets the more difficult it is. I feel that we are fairly well represented. I think things could be improved but right now things are such that from time to time people shift their support so one group has a majority on the board and then later on another political view point will have a majority. I think that is good. The extreme right and the extreme left never is where we need to be. Somewhere in the middle is where we need to be. The only way you get that is with a change and a shift of who is in control. If you truly want to have good representation, and I assume that is what you are claiming, then you need to go to districts where only people who live in those districts vote for the representative of that district. That way you get true representation. Again, I say keep the number of commissioners where you've got it. Don't add to it because the more people you get the more complicated it gets.

Terry Schmidt submitted the following comments:

My name is Terry Schmidt. I live at 128 Serenity Ln, Pittsboro- between Pittsboro and Siler City. I am here to speak against expanding the number of Chatham County Board of Commissioners. First, let's look at the numbers. Comparing the Chatham County Board representation against our neighboring counties, only three of the eight- Wake, Lee, and Orange - have more than five commissioners. Perhaps that makes sense for Wake, a county with almost 15 times the population of Chatham County. Across the state of North Carolina, the average number of commissioners is five. Some have six, some have seven, but mostly five.

Comparing how many citizens are represented by each commissioner in neighboring counties with Chatham County, one finds that:

- Chatham's five commissioners each represent about 12,800 persons in the county*
- Orange County's seven commissioners each represent about 19,800 persons*
- Wake's seven commissioners each represent about 133,000 persons*
- The average representation per commissioner across the state is about 15,572 persons, which means that Chatham commissioners currently have 18 percent fewer persons per commissioner than North Carolina averages.*

So, the argument that more commissioners are needed to represent our county's population is wrong based on numbers. These numbers do not justify an expansion of the Board of Commissioners. Second, let's look at how this proposal would support the county's long-range plan, as recently adopted by you, the current Commissioners. Over the last two years, Chatham County undertook a large effort to understand what the county should look like for the next few decades. Preserving rural character was identified as the most important goal during the planning process. Expanding the number of commissioners as is currently under discussion does nothing to assist in

preserving rural character; in fact, it contributes to its decline.

Here is why County commissioners, while required to reside in one of five geographic districts, are voted on by the entire county. That means the larger urban population in the northeast elects commissioners who reside in more rural areas. Votes of those in the rural south and west are not worth as much as those in the northeast when voting for Commissioners. Instead of adding Commissioners, a better approach for organizing our County Commission would be to have Commissioners voted on only by those in their district. That would bring increased representation to the southern and western portions of the county, prevent their voices from being overwhelmed by the more populous areas of the northeast County, and would support the long-range plan which this Commission approved.

Jeffrey Starkweather submitted the following comments:

I have been in this county covering, participating, running campaigns for forty-six years. I have pretty good experience of what the pros and cons of the various ways are. I have no dog in this fight. I am leaving to go back home to California in July. I will not be here for another election so it has no effect on me. I think to approach the issue the people in the west have raised, I think it is important to remind ourselves that we actually had a referendum on district voting back in 2006. It was overwhelmingly defeated. At that time, I was against it because I felt it was important that every commissioner who ran for office had to campaign in the whole county. But I understand the concerns people are raising. Myself and a lot of other people came up with the idea that maybe we need a mixed system. Maybe five elected by districts and two at large or four by districts and three at large. In fact, Brian Bock, who was a Republican candidate ran on that platform. A lot of commissioners run on that but they have never implemented it. I think the way to address this is to select a non-partisan commission that will look at all the alternatives. Both the size of the board, how they get selected and the election. I think the biggest problem we have had is actually the opposite of what has been said, which was we kept switching back and forth every off year election between a majority of one group and a majority of the other. That majority could vote entirely their way without listening to anybody else. I think we take our time with this. In the 2020 census, these districts will be dramatically changed. The best way is to look at all the approaches, encourage people speaking tonight to get on the committee and come back not necessarily with one recommendation but with the pros and cons of each system. I am not saying we need to change but I think it is time with our county growing so much that we look at the alternatives. Thank you.

Larry Mortimer submitted the following comments:

My input today on the expansion on the county commissioners is really pretty simplistic. Having lived Douglas County in Colorado and in Illinois, I come from the school that less is actually more. In this particular situation, patience might be the better way to go. A lot is going to happen in the next couple of years. The county commissioners have a lot of responsibility. A lot is going to happen in the next two or three years. Five commissioners can get a lot more done and be a lot more efficient than seven. There might be a point in time when expansion is necessary but at least in the other counties I have lived in, you are not going to go back. If you go too quick to seven commissioners I think you might regret it. My point of view is just to be a little patient. Maybe revisit it in two to three years and you will find the way to do it and

how to do it. I think in this particular situation and with everything that the county is going through, there really shouldn't be an immediate need for expansion. Patience might be the better way to go. I think five commissioners can really lead this county and accomplish what needs to be done over the next couple of years.

Lee Pollard submitted the following comments:

I have lived in Chatham County twenty-one years and own a small business. I am not going to say anything that hasn't been said already. I actually have my hat in a few of these rings. I used to live over here in a Chatham subdivision and I agree with them whole-heartedly. The answer is not to let Briar Chapel to make a cut through there. They already have a road going from Mann's Chapel into Briar Chapel. It is a gravel road. Pave it. The answer is no to that. As for the expansion of the Board of Commissioners than answer is not more government. It should be more effective and more efficient government. Right now, with the northeast over population, all that is going to do is further lower the effect and the results for the western part of the county. I don't even live in the western part of the county but I go there frequently. The over population here is going to tend to alienate those folks who are, for the most part, lower income and more blue collar than this area. Their ideals are not the ideals of the northeast.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

[18-2536](#)

A Legislative Public Hearing request by Richard Broedell, Sr. to rezone Parcel No. 5576, being 5.92 acres, Cape Fear Township, located on New Elam Church Road, from R-1 Residential to Light Industrial.

Attachments: [More Information from Planning Board Website](#)

Planning Director Jason Sullivan reviewed the specifics of the request.

Patrick Bradshaw, attorney for applicant, reviewed the details of the rezoning.

This Agenda Item was referred to the Planning Board.

BOARD PRIORITIES

[18-2520](#)

Presentation by Johnson Mobile Home Park Residents.

Attachments: [Chatham Commissioners statement 03.19.18 HANDOUT](#)

Ilana Dubester, founder and Executive Director of the Hispanic Liaison, read a statement to the Board. (Statement attached) Ms. Dubester invited residents of Johnson's Mobile Home Park to address the Board.

Good evening, my name is Bricel Rangel. My family and I live at Johnson's Mobile Home Park, in lot 10. We have been there for four years and my family owns their trailer. There are 28 mobile homes at Johnson's Mobile Home Park, with over 50 children and 60 adults. I have grown up with many of the children there. Mountaire buying the property on which our mobile homes sit is affecting every family, including

my own.

For me, this means potentially having to move school systems, as I'm currently in 8th grade. I'm currently in a program called AVID, also known as Advancement Via Individual Determination. This program is very important to me because it's helping me be prepared to be able to go to college in the future. I'm currently taking 9th grade honors classes in AVID but other school systems might not accept those same classes.

Just as importantly, all of this is affecting my family. The cost of moving is expensive, and it's not easy. Moving is a stressful situation. It's not fair because we're going from home owners to renting and renting is very expensive. My family is not the only one going through this - everyone at Johnson's Mobile Home Park is also facing the same harsh reality. We need you to work with the Hispanic Liaison to help us find a solution to help our families. You have it in your power to help me, my family, and everyone being affected right now. We are counting on you to support the Liaison's proposal to help our community. Thank you.

Good evening. My name is Natalia Franco Lopez. I live in lot one in Johnson's Mobile Home Park. My husband and I have lived in the Johnson park for over twenty-five years. We are owners of our mobile home. We are almost at the point of losing our home due to the Mountaire company. They are evicting us. Unfortunately we do not have a place to go live because we don't have the means to be able to move somewhere else. We have not found a mobile home park that will accept our mobile home which was built in 1981. My husband and I do not work and the rent is very expensive. We are retired and my husband is sick. For us it is very hard for us to leave our home. We need to find something that is close to the hospital, close to the clinic because he needs medical attention at the drop of a hat. It is not fair that my husband and I have to start all over again because we are not able to work anymore. We work very hard to achieve everything that we have and now it seems that we are going to lose everything. Mountaire says that they are a good neighbor but we don't see it that way. A good neighbor does not evict over 100 people. Mountaire should help us, they need to help us. You, as our county commissioners and our representatives, also have an obligation to help us with these negotiations. Please help us. The proposal by the Hispanic Liaison is very reasonable and would help us a lot. We ask you to work with the Hispanic Liaison to provide ways that you can help us. Thank you for listening.

My name is Mirian Herrera and I live at Johnson's Mobile Home Park with my family, in lot five. I'm a senior at Jordan Matthews High school and this fall I'll be attending Guilford College. My mother is a single mom who has supported my sister and me ever since my father passed away. She has put all her savings in buying our trailer and fixing it up little by little. Now she doesn't know what to do. She doesn't want to lose what she has worked hard for, especially now, knowing that one of her daughters is going to college and she's worried of our financial status. So we're here to ask for your help to help us and support us in our new change. We support the Hispanic Liaison's proposal and hope that you will work with them to help us out.

Good evening. My name is Ana Monter. We are one of the twenty-seven families that have to abandon our homes. I arrived here when I was very little and because of very low resources I didn't go to school very long. I was one of the poultry workers in Siler City. I started working there when I was fifteen years old to help my family. I know what it is like to work in those poultry factories. Five years ago I became an owner of

my own mobile home. I live with my three children and am a single mom. Now we need to move. I ask you, how do you tell your children that we are going to lose everything we have? I've worked very hard to buy this home for my children. We are twenty-seven families all in different situations. There are other single mothers like me. There are people who have retired who are no longer able to work. There are parents who don't have jobs due to different circumstances. We are here to ask for your support and I would like all twenty-seven families to stand up. It is not fair that the Mountaire company is not a good neighbor. We are not asking for a lot. We are simply asking what is fair to be able to move and find a new home. Mountaire knows that there are a lot of hispanics in Siler City and that is why they went. Without the hispanics they wouldn't have the workforce. Many hispanics have experience working at these poultry factories. The Hispanic Liaison is helping us but they also need your support to be able to negotiate. We ask on my behalf and on behalf of the twenty-seven families, that you help us negotiate with Mountaire to find a new home because our rents are very expensive. The owners of the other places that we are looking into are taking advantage of our situation and are wanting to charge us more than what they normally charge. So the only thing we ask is your support. You have the power and we need your support. Thank you.

Good evening. My name is Jorge and I live in lot three of the Johnson Mobile Home Park. I've lived in Siler City for fifteen years and in Johnson's for ten years. I am an owner of my mobile home and I am a father. I live in the Johnson Mobile Home Park with my wife and our four kids and our pet. My son Jonathan was a member of the Jordan Matthews Los Jets soccer team. He was part of a documentary in which the Los Jets won the championship at the statewide level. Most of the players on the team are hispanic and they face many obstacles because of racism. Even with all those obstacles they were able to achieve the championship and that is a great example for our community and a pride for Siler City. My daughter Jocelyn, who is in eighth grade, wants to go to Jordan Matthews and follow in the footsteps of her brother. She wants to be a veterinarian and a writer. She has received several prizes because of her books and her artwork. In my family I am the only one who works.

Several years ago we bought the mobile home we were renting and we invested several thousand dollars to fix it up. Even though it is a humble home it is our home. We want to remain in Siler City and in Chatham County. We have made our life here. We want our children to grow up here. We want our children to go to school here and we don't want them to have to start over again in a new school. I feel desperate to find a new home for my family. The rent is very expensive and it is also expensive to buy a new home. There are a lot of houses in very bad condition and I don't want to take my children to live in a place where they are going to suffer for not having heating, having water leaks or worse. This is a very serious issue in Siler City. The issue is that there are people paying rent for these homes that are in terrible condition and they are not supervised by the city. It is also very hard to find places that accept our pets and when they do they charge a lot of money. We don't want to abandon our pets. There are also homeowners increasing their prices day after day because they know the crisis we are in and they are taking advantage of that situation. They are taking advantage of our despair and this is not fair.

We came here to ask for your help. We have been good residents of Siler City and Chatham and we need you to support us in these difficult moments. If Mountaire does not have respect and consideration for its fellow human beings and for our children who are the future of Siler City and the country what are we going to expect from the treatment they give to the thousands of birds that they are going to sacrifice and

expect us to consume? What guarantees are there that they will not be mistreated just as the residents of the Johnson Mobile Home Park? We want to be clear about one thing. If we don't arrive to a just agreement, we are not going to abandon our homes and we are also not going to pay anything. We are the example we are going to set for our children. We have to show them that they can't have their civil rights walked all over because of being Hispanic. It doesn't matter how big our rival can be, they can also be defeated. In a few months we have to abandon our homes because Mountaire bought this property. We are not people with a lot of means. We need help to be able to find a healthy place and a reasonably priced place for our families. That is why we are here today, to ask for your help with this grave situation. I implore that you approve this proposal of the Hispanic Liaison to help our families. Our future is in your hands. We trust in the Hispanic Liaison. They have helped us a lot but they also need your help to resolve this situation. We are desperate to solve this situation. Thank you for your attention.

Ms. Dubester asked if anyone in the audience would like to speak. Several people spoke in support of the residents of Johnson Mobile Home Park and in support of the Hispanic Liaison's proposal. There was concern about the incentive package given to Mountaire Farms as well as the lack of affordable housing in the county. People expressed their faith and trust in the Board of Commissioners to do whatever it can to help these residents.

Chair Hales gave the Mountaire Farms representative an opportunity to speak, which he declined.

Commissioner Howard stated Mountaire needs to work with the County to right this situation.

Commissioner Crawford stated he voted for the tax incentives and he stands behind that decision but he does want to see these residents helped. He asked staff to look into whether or not the Johnson Mobile Home Park property is part of the county incentive package.

Chair Hales stated it is a dire situation. She asked that the County Manager work with Mountaire to continue the negotiations.

The Board directed staff to work with the Hispanic Liaison to find out what the County can do to help in the form of housing assistance.

[18-2503](#)

Discussion on the expansion of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners.

Attachments: [Commissioner Petty Comments for 03.19.2018](#)

Commissioner Crawford expressed his support for the expansion of the Board. He stated expanding the Board will allow for smaller districts which means there would be responsive representation for all of Chatham County. He believes it would be a smoother transition to add the seats now instead of after the 2020 Census. He believes expanding the Board could also accommodate growth. He also believes more hands make better work.

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to expand the Chatham County Board of Commissioners and set up a task force of nine members made up of residents of

Chatham County to explore all options available to the citizens of Chatham County regarding new county commissioner districts and methods of their election, which would include, but not be limited to, district only voting, at large representation, continuation of the current method of election and/or some combination thereof.

Chair Hales asked if she could make a friendly amendment to the motion to include a task force of nine registered voters.

Commissioner Crawford stated he had another motion about the makeup of the committee. The motion was to request that the new task force related to Chatham County Board expansion be filled as follows, the Chatham County Democratic Party and the Chatham County Republican Party shall elect two members at their next convention and/or executive committee meeting to serve on the committee with the remaining five slots on the task for to be filled by appointment by each County Commissioner.

Commissioner Howard requested to make a friendly amendment to Commissioner Crawford's first motion. Instead of a motion to expand the County Board she asked he make a motion to establish a task force to consider the expansion of the County Board. She suggested the task force be managed by the School of Government or the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners to help arrive at a recommendation.

Commissioner Crawford accepted Commissioner Howard's friendly amendment. Commissioner Howard seconded the motion.

The Clerk read the comments of Commissioner Walter Petty in regards to the expansion of the board in his absence. (Comments attached)

Vice Chair Dasher expressed his skepticism of expanding the Board and his equal level of skepticism in regards to district voting. He likes that he can get an email or a phone call from someone outside of his district and their concerns are just as important as the people of his own district. He supports the idea of forming a task force to explore the different possibilities.

Chair Hales also supports the formation of a task force with the caveat that members be registered Chatham County voters.

Commissioner Howard too expressed doubts about district voting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to set up a task force of nine members made up of residents of Chatham County to explore all options available to the citizens of Chatham County regarding potentially new County Commissioner districts and methods of their election, which would include, but not be limited to, district only voting; at-large representation; a continuation of the current method of election; and/or some combination thereof. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

Commissioner Crawford read again his second motion. Motion to request that the new task force related to County Board expansion be filled as follows: the Chatham County

Democratic Party and the Chatham County Republican Party shall each select two members at their next convention and/or executive committee meeting to serve on the committee with the remaining five slots on the task force to be filled by appointment by each County Commissioner.

Commissioner Crawford stated the Board could add Chair Hales' request for members to be registered voters.

Commissioner Howard requested that there be some requirements for political and geographic diversity within the task force.

Commissioner Howard seconded the motion.

Chair Hales asked to modify the motion to state that the two members from each party are not members of the executive committee. Commissioner Crawford would not accept that friendly amendment.

Vice Chair Dasher stated he does not support the makeup of the task force in the current motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to request that the new task force related to County Board expansion be filled as follows: the Chatham County Democratic Party and the Chatham County Republican Party shall each select two members at their next convention and/or executive committee meeting to serve on the committee with the remaining five slots on the task force to be filled by appointment by each County Commissioner. Each member shall be a registered voter in Chatham County and there should be political and geographic diversity within the task force. The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye: 1 - Commissioner Crawford

No: 3 - Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

The commissioners discussed the possible methodology for appointments to the task force.

Chair Hales suggested the Board appoint three Democrats, three Republicans and three Unaffiliated voters.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Dasher, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to appoint nine registered voters in Chatham County through a public application process consisting of three Democrats, three Republicans and three Unaffiliated voters in consultation with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to request that the task force make its first report to the County Board of Commissioners at the first Board of Commissioners meeting in July of 2018. Vice Chair Dasher seconded the motion.

Vice Chair Hales expressed her concern with the timeline. The Clerk stated the Board

could appoint the task force at the May 7, 2018 Board of Commissioners meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Vice Chair Dasher, to request that the task force make its first report to the County Board of Commissioners at the first Board of Commissioners meeting in July of 2018. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Commissioner Crawford, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

No: 1 - Chair Hales

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty

MANAGER' S REPORTS

The Manager had nothing to report.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Crawford stated the Siler City Planning Board approved the Henry Siler School rezoning.

Commissioner Howard thanked Community Relations Director Debra Henzey for helping the Library Advisory Committee establish goals.

Chair Hales attended a meeting on the Census. The Census will be held on one day and through the internet only. She also attended the initial meeting of the Oil and Gas Commission. Appointments from the Governor have not been seated.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chair Dasher, seconded by Commissioner Howard, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Commissioner Crawford, Chair Hales, Vice Chair Dasher and Commissioner Howard

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Petty