



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Wednesday, January 16, 2019

9:00 AM

Agriculture and Conference Center

BOC Retreat

CALL TO ORDER

Present: 5 - Chair Mike Dasher, Vice Chair Diana Hales, Commissioner Walter Petty, Commissioner Jim Crawford and Commissioner Karen Howard

BOARD PRIORITIES

[19-2907](#)

Ground rules

Attachments: [Eight Behaviors for Smarter Teams](#)

Community Relations Director Debra Henzey worked with the Board on Ground Rules for the Retreat.

Ms. Henzey introduced some values proposed by the School of Government and distributed "Eight Behaviors for Smarter Teams", by Roger Schwarz. Commissioner Howard thinks they are all great values.

Ms. Henzey reviewed assumptions of mutual learning.

Ms. Henzey reviewed what behaviors look like after building on the values and assumptions.

Commissioner Howard hears hypotheticals frequently posed as examples. She asked if this is more of a goal to focus on specific examples. Ms. Henzey stated the individual needs to clarify the issue or question with the rest of the Board and make sure it is clear if something is a fear rather than a prediction.

The Board agreed to adopt this framework for the meeting.

[19-2908](#)

Overview of budget process

Attachments: [1--FY 20 BudgetCalendar](#)
[2--Budget Process](#)

Budget Analyst Darrell Butts reviewed the Budget Process. (Presentation attached)

Vice Chair Hales asked how the public could find out what agenda items related to Plan Chatham. The Clerk stated that any resident could request a report from her office to receive that information. The Clerk hopes to generate a report at the end of

each year to show how Plan Chatham is being addressed through agenda items.

[19-2909](#)

The Annual Budget Quiz

Budget Director Lisa West conducted the Annual Board of Commissioners Budget Pop Quiz.

[19-2910](#)

Review recommended change to budget and financial policies

Attachments: [4--AppendixA--FinancialandBudgetaryPolicies January 2015 modified 2019](#)

Ms. West reviewed the recommended change to the budget and financial policies.

She asked that the Commissioners approve a change to the financial policy stating funding of non-profits is no longer an allocation process and the County is not utilizing volunteers to review requests but rather the County is now utilizing the Human Relations team with assistance from the non-profit advisory board.

A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to approve the change to the financial policy. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Petty, Commissioner Crawford and Commissioner Howard

[19-2911](#)

Trends affecting next year's budget

Attachments: [5--Budget Trends](#)

Ms. West presented trends affecting next year's budget. (Presentation attached)

Ms. West reviewed her findings from the various data sets.

Commissioner Howard wanted to underline that with the projections for a growing population, the challenge might be that the same people remain in poverty.

Commissioner Crawford asked Ms. West for some insight as to why there are more SNAP recipients now when the economy is better than during the recession and if there had been a change in eligibility requirements. Ms. West's understanding is that while the economy is robust and growing, the number of ALICE or (Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed) individuals is increasing.

Commissioner Howard wanted to know about the impact of the opioid epidemic on the kind of population seeking these services.

Vice Chair Hales posited that maybe statistics about SNAP recipients might actually be more reflective of the struggling population.

Ms. West said she would follow up with Social Services Director Jennie Kristiansen and Council on Aging Director Dennis Streets to more fully respond to commissioners' inquiries.

[19-2912](#)

Report on CITs

Attachments: [6--CITs](#)
 [6A--CIT Matrix](#)

Policy Analyst Stephanie Watkins-Cruz gave an update on the Collaborative Impact Teams (CITs). (Presentation attached)

Chair Dasher asked that the Board be sent a copy of the 42 priorities.

Chair Dasher asked Ms. Watkins-Cruz to clarify that the individual CITs came up with specific things and narrowed it down and are now trying to make it more broad again. Ms. Watkins-Cruz stated in Janaury they revisited the CIT priorities and discussed how to turn these action items into actionable steps.

Commissioner Crawford wanted to know if this would feed into performance evaluations. Ms. Watkins-Cruz responded that the first wave will be the budget and decision processes but they have not worked out how it will relate to employee performance.

Commissioner Crawford stated that he thought there was publication potential and that he thinks this information should be shared through conferences and presentations.

Ms. Watkins-Cruz stated they are looking at how to make this information transparent for the public when we get to that point.

Chair Dasher said he had no idea the county was looking ahead this strategically and he believes people do not expect that from government.

Commissioner Howard believes this process has removed the political aspect out of it. Each individual department enhances other departments' work.

Vice Chair Hales appreciates the cross-collaboration.

The County Manager and commissioners commended Ms. Watkins-Cruz and Ms. Cara Russell for their work on the CITs.

Mr. LaMontagne said the goal was to push this information out to more employees and Human Resources Director Carolyn Miller informed the board that Ms. Watkins-Cruz and Ms. Russell will be teaching the CIT and Comp Plan as County Government VI in Leadership Academy.

LUNCH

[19-2913](#)

Heads Up requests from departments

Attachments: [7--Heads Up](#)

Ms. West reviewed the Heads Up requests from departments. (Presentation attached)

Chair Dasher informed the Board that the college is offering a building inspections class.

Vice Chair wanted to know where we are with the hydrant valve replacements. Mr. LaMontagne responded that it is an ongoing process.

The Commissioners had questions as to why the DOT grant for transportation given to Council on Aging in past years was reduced and changed to districts. Staff will look into this.

Commissioner Petty said that if grant funds are reduced, then that department (for example, DOT) should lower its revenue and the county should be able to pick up that revenue and that is what the NCACC should argue.

Vice Chair Hales would like to have another presentation from Chatham Transit about what they are doing.

Vice Chair Hales mentioned that at the legislative goals conference, one proposed goal was medicaid expansion and it failed by two votes.

Chair Dasher asked if could you fund the parks capital reserve through a fee. He is interested in having a permanent funding mechanism. Finance Director Vicki McConnell said there is already a fee charged for land aquisition of parks and there is a fund for that. The fee comes from new lots in subdivisions. Vice Chair Hales stated there is a discrepancy between the east and the west. Mr. LaMontagne said it is demand driven. Ms. McConnell stated each district has its own pot of money. Chair Dasher thinks it would be good to have a master funding plan along with the parks master plan. Mr. LaMontagne responded that part of the parks master plan will include funding options. Chair Dasher expressed that he does not understand how it works currently and what funds can be used for what purposes. He is concerned that it seems more complicated than it needs to be.

Commissioner Petty inquired about the Sheriff's use of the funds from confiscations, busts, etc. Ms. McConnell said that money goes towards the drug dog and his care and they also bought a boat. Such funds may be used for any purpose that enhances law enforcement. Ms. McConnell will find more examples of ways they have used the money. Ms. McConnell stated \$257,000 is the balance of that fund. A lot of the money is used for undercover operations. Commissioner Petty would like to see the budget requests for the Sheriff lined up next to all the requests from all the other departments.

Mr. LaMontagne said the victims coordinator for the Sheriff will be for all victims, not just domestic violence.

Mr. LaMontagne informed the Board that they have restructured the agriculture and conference center staff. Brian Stevens is no longer supervising the staff so that he can focus solely on facility and construction management. Carolyn Miller is now the supervisor of the Ag Center staff. Mr. LaMontagne feels very positive about this change.

[19-2914](#)

CIP Reminder

Attachments: [8--CIP Reminder](#)

Mr. Butts gave a recap of how the CIP will impact the operating budget. (Presentation attached)

[19-2915](#)

Article 46

Attachments: [9--Article 46](#)

Mr. Butts gave a presentation on Article 46. (Presentation attached)

Vice Chair Hales wanted to know if surrounding counties that passed the sales tax have an intended use. Mr. Butts said that Moore passed it specifically for school capital and that Orange has dedicated half to education and half to economic development.

Commissioner Petty submitted that it would be more palatable to the public if it was done at a time when there was not already a tax increase and the Board knew how it would be used.

Commissioner Crawford said this Board cannot bind a future Board.

The Board had a lot of discussion about how the money could be used.

Commissioner Howard asked if there is a statute of limitations on when it becomes effective, staff will look into this.

The Board agreed to have this presentation at the Feb. 18th regular session at 6pm.

Vice Chair Hales would like to know what other counties are using the tax for. Commissioner Howard would like to know surrounding counties' sales tax rates.

[19-2916](#)

Affordable Housing update

Attachments: [10--Affordable Housing Update](#)

Ms. Watkins-Cruz gave a presentation on Affordable Housing. (Presentation attached)

Vice Chair Hales asked how people know to go to Stephanie for housing advice. Ms. Watkins-Cruz explained that the website directs people to her.

Vice Chair Hales would like to know if mobile homes can be section 8 housing; Ms. Watkins-Cruz will check on that.

Ms. Watkins-Cruz does not think a minimal housing code is the only solution.

Vice Chair Hales asked about the location policy. Ms. Watkins-Cruz informed Vice Chair Hales that it is a policy that incentivizes affordable housing near schools, grocery stores, health facilities, etc.

Chair Dasher asked if county and towns had the same policy. Ms. Watkins-Cruz stated that was the original idea but now is morphing into having the same policy or policies that don't conflict.

Commissioner Howard asked why the Point in Time Count in January. Ms. Watkins-Cruz said it might be because after the holidays there seem to be a lot of evictions but this is actually questioned frequently.

The Board agreed they would like to be able to add to the Housing Trust Fund.

Ms. Watkins-Cruz will have a one on one with the commissioners to further discuss this topic at a later date.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Petty, Commissioner Crawford and Commissioner Howard