



Chatham County, NC

Legislation Text

File #: 24-5233, **Version:** 1

Vote to approve the license agreement with the Chatham County Historical Association for the Historic Courthouse

Introduction & Background:

Following the courthouse fire, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners named a task force of interested citizens to make recommendations for the possible uses of the Courthouse upon its rebuilding. The Task Force recommended that the restored courthouse continue to have a Superior Courtroom on the second floor and that the first floor of the building be devoted to a Museum and showcase for visitors and historical education.

In late 2010, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners allocated a portion of the first floor of the to-be-renovated courthouse for a new museum and Chatham County Historical Association office. Chatham County Historical Association made a lead gift of \$35,000 from savings and promised to raise all of the additional funds needed to make the museum a reality.

The Chatham County Historical Association appointed an Exhibits Committee in November 2010 with the goal of telling the rich story of Chatham history. A core committee of nine members met for more than two years to determine the content of the museum exhibits, write the narrative and collect the artifacts and pictures to display. The professionals from Design Dimension of Raleigh, hired to design and fabricate the exhibits, were the only part of the team that received compensation for the work that was completed.

Community support for the project was enthusiastic, and many businesses and individuals contributed to the campaign. The entire \$150,000 cost of the project was provided by the Chatham County Historical Association lead gift and donated funds from the community. Volunteers contributed hundreds of hours to design and equip the museum. Fabrication began in 2012 and installation of the exhibits into the museum space began in 2013.

A panel outside of the museum entrance door lists the names of museum donors. Plaques placed on specific parts of the exhibits also honor major gifts.

Discussion & Analysis:

The Museum officially opened April 20, 2013 and Chatham County and Chatham County Historical Association entered into a license agreement. The Chatham County Historical Association has increased their service offerings by being open to the public more, which requires an updated license agreement with Chatham County.

How does this relate to the Comprehensive Plan: Having a place to honor Chatham County's rich history helps preserve the rural character of the county.

Budgetary Impact: No budgetary impact for the agreement.

Recommendation/Motion: Motion to approve the license agreement with the Chatham County Historical Association for the Historic Courthouse.