



Chatham County, NC

Legislation Text

File #: 17-2112, **Version:** 1

Vote on a request to approve a request by the Board of Education that the Jack Bennett site be held in reserve for public school purposes to be determined by the Chatham County Board of Education.

Action Requested: Vote on a request to approve a request by the Board of Education that the Jack Bennett site be held in reserve (land banked) for public school purposes to be determined by the Chatham County Board of Education.

Introduction and Background: In 2001, Chatham County purchased 94 acres of land on Jack Bennett Road for a new high school, at a cost of \$1,224,500. The county used school impact fees to pay for the property. The Board of Education determined that the Jack Bennett Road site was not suitable for construction of a new high school and declared the property surplus on November 3, 2014.

On December 15, 2014 the Board of Commissioners adopted an interlocal agreement that returned the site to the county. State law requires that the Board of Education receive fair market value for the property, so county administration's intent was to sell the property. However, as the Board of Education searched for school sites, the county has continued to hold this property in case it was needed.

The proceeds from the sale of the site would return to the Board of Education, but could only be used for student-capacity related growth, such as land, construction of schools, or purchase of mobile classrooms (because impact fees funded it originally). The Board of Commissioners must approve how the funds are used. If the county cannot sell the property, the agreement stipulates that the county satisfies its obligation by returning the property to the Board of Education.

Discussion & Analysis:

The Board of Education has had difficulty finding school sites in the northeastern part of the county. Given the fact that the Board of Education, which would ultimately benefit from the property's sale, has requested the land be banked, the County Manager recommends that the property be held by the county and this decision be revisited every five years to see if circumstances have changed.

Budgetary Impact: The school system would forego any proceeds from sale of the property. These proceeds could conceivably be used to offset currently planned growth-related capital projects.

Recommendation: Motion to approve request by the Board of Education that the Jack Bennett site be held in reserve for public school purposes to be determined by the Chatham County Board of Education and that this decision be reexamined every five years.

