

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF GUILFORD COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION
2019 LEGISLATIVE GOALS UPDATE**

Greensboro, North Carolina
March 18, 2019

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed Work Session at 9:00 a.m. in the Blue Room of the Old County Courthouse, 301 W. Market St., Greensboro, NC. The purpose of the meeting was to share 2019 Legislative Goals with the Guilford County Legislative Delegation.

PRESENT: Chairman Alan Branson, Vice Chairman Jeff Phillips, Commissioners Kay Cashion, Alan Perdue, Hank Henning, Carlvena Foster, Skip Alston

ABSENT: Justin Conrad, Carolyn Coleman

ALSO PRESENT: Senator Jerry Tillman, Representative John Faircloth, Senator Michael Garrett, Senator Rick Gunn, Senator Gladys Robinson, Representative Ashton Clemmons, Representative Cecil Brockman, Legislative Aid Sebastian King, Representative Pricey Harrison; County Staff: County Manager Marty Lawing, Elections Director Charlie Collicutt, Emergency Services Jim Albright, Clerk to Board Robin Keller.

Welcome/Call to Order

Chairman Branson welcomed everyone and thanked them for their time and participation in this year's legislative goals update. Branson shared his appreciation of the local delegates and the work they have been doing for our community.

Emergency Services Director Jim Albright provided an update on the ongoing Opioid Crisis in Guilford County. Albright shared the current statistics of Opioid dependence in Guilford County. He spoke to the success of Guilford County's pilot project GCSTOP.

Gladys Robinson commented that for many years she has been working within the community on substance abuse issues; she noted that there is a lack of adequate drug treatment facilities.

Albright shared that in addition to the need for more facilities, general resources may not even be in our community. He stated as example, if you are a pregnant female with a substance abuse problem the closest treatment facility is in Chapel Hill. He noted that there is a large gap for inpatient treatment services.

He stated that there is a very well vetted medication assistance therapy process that could be used where inpatient facilities are not available. Albright stated that we do have a robust

program through ADS (Alcohol and Drug Services); however, recognized the lack of resources in the communities.

County Manager Lawing thanked the delegates for their funding over the last few years of the GCSTOP program and noted that they can see through the statistical analytics collected that we have used those dollars very well in Guilford County. He stated that the county would seek continuing funding of the project from the General Assembly.

Lawing reviewed the next Goal of the County's Ambulatory Behavioral Health Crisis Collaborative.

Jim Albright stated that one cannot talk about substance abuse without discussing the co-occurring mental health issues.

Albright noted that the current medical models which are designed to address either mental health or physical health care. He elaborated that these separate models have significant limitations for those with both mental and physical healthcare needs. He shared that Guilford county is looking at constructing a 23/hour facility, which handles crisis care and triage. He noted that 20% in crisis care can return home on the same day and that 70% need advanced care. This 70% need for a facility based crisis care is currently not available in our community. The proposed facility will include Psychiatrists and internal Medicine. This is a real opportunity to address those in need in a safe and fluid environment that is not a jail.

Vice Chairman Phillips shared that the entire Board has been engaged and extremely supportive of this project. He noted that since the divestiture of Mental Health, our citizens are very confused as to how to access services and where those services are. He noted that Commissioner Cashion with her experience in promoting substance abuse and drug treatment needs, Commissioner Alan Perdue with his prior experience as Emergency Services Director and our Chairman Alan Branson began researching options to better address the substance abuse crisis in our community.

Phillips noted that the difference in Guilford County's project, is that through partnership with Cone Hospital and Sandhills Center LME we will be able to offer true integrated healthcare. He shared that this issue of integrated health care is not being addressed anywhere across the nation. He shared that Guilford County wants to do it first and is willing to carry the banner. He shared that it is more than asking for state funding, it is about setting the pace across the country.

Senator Tillman questioned the total cost of the facility.

Lawing reported that the costs are 20M but are seeking 10M in funding from the legislature.

Senator Gunn shared that there was a great source with some optional funds using the balance of the Dorthia Dix Funding. He questioned if there was some flexibility with how the funds can be disbursed.

Lawing shared that there has been some discussion on spending over two years, he shared that if it is disbursed over 2 years the County would urge that those second year funds could be

disbursed early in the second year. He stated that if that was the only viable option that the county could certainly work with that.

Phillips spoke to a recent House Bill filled to support the Behavioral Crisis Center and urged the delegation to support it.

Representative Gladys Robinson thanked Chairman Branson for bringing this to their attention and bringing the request to delegation. She shared that they are working in a bi-partisan manner and the input his helpful to help us all work together. Robinson questioned the support of Cone.

Lawing shared that Moses Cone will serve as the operator. He shared that with Mental Health services the payor source is very limited. He stated that the ongoing operational costs will be between 10 and 12 M per year. The County will help to supplement those costs with roughly 3M per year. He clarified that the County will own the building, with an initial 5-year contract to operate.

Representative Clemmons, questioned if this would have the same expectation and legal requirement that anyone who goes to an emergency room.

Albright stated that it would.

Clemmons questioned if there was a child component. She spoke to the desperate need for child mental health care services.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the planning efforts for adolescents. She noted that Sandhills Center is going to step up and provide the needs for adolescents.

Albright shared that the current program will be able to address the pediatric population as well.

Alston shared that time is of the essence for the County and questioned the timeline.

Tillman, shared that it would be an appropriation and would be a budget item.

Faircloth shared that we may need to look to some of our other folks with equally good projects to place those on hold in order to fund this particular project. He noted that we need additional support from outside the County.

Commissioner Cashion shared that all of the 9 Counties in the Sandhills Catchment area are in support of this project.

Robinson shared that we have placed quite a lot of funds into the operation of Sandhills over the years there would be some transfer of those funds to go there as well.

County Manager stated that Sanhills will be building the adolescent facility.

Commissioner Foster shared that the Board is very supportive of this project and the board continues to look at ensuring accessibility for all residents.

Gunn spoke to the Elections issues he spoke to the need for additional certified machine options for 21 counties also impacted by the current legislation. He shared he is uncertain if an action to defer will be considered.

County Manager shared that Guilford County and 21 other counties will have their voting equipment decertified this year by December 2019. The estimated cost is approximately 8 Million Dollars for Guilford.

Charlie Collicutt, Elections Director shared that our current system is a Direct Recording machine where the vote is tabulated electronically and produces a paper audit which scrolls as the voter is placing their votes. Collicutt spoke to timeline constraints from the November city elections to the January implement of new system rollout, leaving very little time to properly test and train on new equipment.

Gladys Robinson questioned the specific issues around UNCG and A&T not meeting the deadline for the student ID issue.

Collicutt shared that there were some very tight deadlines to get authority to create voter IDs approved. Things such as expiration dates to be added to the IDs, and affidavits that the photos were taken by an employee. Most of the UNC schools were able to get theirs approved. The County will be purchasing equipment for the elections Department in order to provide voter IDs as well.

Pricey Harrison shared that there was an assurance to consider an extension on the voter ID matter. She spoke to the cost to purchase equipment that will be de-certified very soon.

Collicutt shared that there are multiple vendors that had submitted for certification but are starting to pull out of consideration due to the selection delays by the State Board of Elections. There are current products that have been waiting since 2014 for certification. The vendors' concerns are that due to late decision making there may not be enough time to manufacture machines once certified prior to the November implementation. There are now serious concerns at this state that there won't be any inventory.

Pricey questioned if there is current HABBA funding.

Collicutt stated he was unclear if there is any funding available.

Clemmons questioned if the 21 counties have come together yet collectively.

Sebastian King shared that they are seeking Grants for Guilford County, but there was only a onetime use of HABBA funding and that was used in 2005.

Alston noted that if we could get the other 21 counties to support. He questioned who would need to take the initiative to take on the resolution. Would that be the Board of Elections, or the County Commissioners.

General consensus of the Board to include additional resolution of support for deferment of voting machine purchase.

County Attorney Payne noted that this request is to defer based on the new Federal guidelines that will be in place in 2021. He spoke to the need to ensure that what is purchased in 2019 is not immediately de-regulated by the Federal decisions in 2021 causing the counties to purchase new equipment 2 years in a row.

Chairman Branson thanked the delegates for their participation and efforts to support the citizens of Guilford County.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:44AM

J. Alan Branson, Chairman
Guilford County Board of Commissioners

Robin Keller
Clerk to Board