

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF GUILFORD COUNTY
WORK SESSION**

Greensboro, North Carolina
May 5, 2016

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed Work Session at 2:00 PM in the Blue Room of the Old County Courthouse, 301 West Market Street, Greensboro NC.

PRESENT: Chairman Jeff Phillips, presiding; Vice Chairman Alan Branson (arrived at 2:31PM); Commissioners Kay Cashion; Alan Perdue; Hank Henning; J. Carlvena Foster (arrived at 2:15); Ray Trapp (arrived at 2.13); Justin Conrad; Carolyn Q. Coleman.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Marty Lawing; Sheriff, B.J. Barnes, County Attorney Mark Payne; Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier; Robin Keller, Clerk to Board; Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board; Michael Halford, Budget Director; Reid Baker, Finance Director; Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director; Human Resources Director John Dean, Facilities, Parks and Property Management Director Robert McNiece; members of the community and media.

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Phillips called the meeting to order at 2:10 PM

County Manager Marty Lawing stated that the primary purpose of the work session is to discuss major capital projects that would impact the county's budget in the upcoming year and gather input from the Board as to some decision points on some of the projects.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. GUILFORD COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER SITE INFORMATION

Lawing reported that he had spoken to the potential developer who expressed interest in site next to the County's AG Center, as requested in a previous board meeting. He shared that the developer indicated his ongoing interest in the property should the County decide to relocate the Animal Shelter next door. Lawing shared the developer's request of 10 acres, but indicated that they may be able to utilize 8.5 acres; allowing enough remaining acreage for the potential relocation of the shelter.

Commissioner Trapp arrived at 2:13

Lawing advised the Board that there would be a zoning hurdle that the County would need to address with the City of Greensboro prior to development.

Facilities, Parks and Property Management Director, Robert McNiece stated that the County would require a special use permit from the City of Greensboro in order to relocate the Animal Shelter to the Ag Extension site. McNiece reviewed the current zoning information with the Board. He stated that the estimated time for the rezoning process would be a few months. McNiece stated that upon speaking with the Greensboro Planning staff, they were amenable to the County's request.

Conrad asked staff to discuss the size options of the proposed new shelter.

McNiece reviewed the proposed size of the new shelter based on the number of animals that are currently received and held at the shelter and showed site locations that would accommodate some growth. He reviewed some proposed site options. McNiece stated that the total site is approximately 10.5 acres. With 5 acres needed for the Animal Shelter. McNiece reviewed some of the topography and elevation issues located with the site.

Phillips questioned the amount of acreage the developer has requested.

McNiece stated that the developer would be interested in outparcels.

Foster in at 2:19

Cashion questioned if there are additional placements of the shelter that could be used on the same site to allow for maximum usage of the remaining land.

Coleman questioned if staff had completed design options for renovations of the shelter on the existing site.

McNiece stated that the existing site is small and has large elevation changes creating development challenges. He noted that there would be additional costs with a phased implementation required to build while maintaining operations on the same site and that costs would be more than 1M greater than looking at building new at a new site.

Coleman questioned if the County reviewed other existing county properties.

McNiece stated that staff plotted the utilization of calls and citizen usage of the Animal Shelter which identified a primary core for the ideal location of a shelter to allow for ease of access for the citizens. He stated that the existing AG property was at the center of the core.

Cashion questioned if the wooded area on the proposed site was undevelopable.

McNiece stated that the wooded area on the proposed site, would be more usable if we owned some of the adjoining property which would allow for better access to the back of the lot.

Phillips asked what the property acreage needs would be to accommodate a new shelter.

McNiece shared the proposed lot lines and indicated that 5 acres would be needed.

Phillips stated that he had conversations with the potential developer and noted that if the County could parcel out 6 or more acres for future development that would be beneficial.

Coleman questioned which direction to take regarding parceling out the lot and what road the proposed site would front.

Perdue asked if there was anything that would preclude the county from selling out parcels on Huffine Mill road. He stated that he would hate to sell a piece of land when there is an existing need in that location and then try to find similar land in the same area.

Coleman asked for specific information as to what the minimum acreage the developer would need.

McNiece stated that the developer does not yet have a client, or a definitive need.

Phillips reiterated that the developer was not opposed to being next to a shelter and that they would be open minded to continuing to pursue development of the adjoining property.

Branson in at 2:31

Commissioner Cashion noted that the developer is currently seeking a buyer.

Trapp asked if the County has spoken to the City officials. He shared that he was aware that the official who represents the area would not be interested in a Shelter relocation. He suggested staff also consider potential land swap options with the City of Greensboro.

Coleman spoke to the need for a community meeting.

Branson questioned what the recommended perimeter would be for the community meeting.

Coleman stated that she would suggest what is normally used for a re-zoning request.

Perdue questioned the properties distance to the closest residential area.

McNiece stated that they did not review the residential properties, but they did locate several food distributors within a 2-mile radius.

Phillips noted that a public hearing would be a part of a rezoning notice.

Commissioner Trapp spoke to his experience on the Greensboro Zoning board. He advised that it is better to have public input prior to brining the matter to the zoning commission.

Cashion asked if there was a community meeting held on the front end, what would be the process look like.

Coleman advised that based on information shared by Mr. Trapp, the zoning board would look more favorably on our zoning request with a public consultation prior to moving forward with a project request.

Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier noted that the County owns the landfill property nearby and leases it to the City.

The board discussed options on how to proceed with the site.

Commissioner Henning made motion to direct staff to move forward in pursuing a special use permit through the City of Greensboro, for potential placement of an Animal Shelter at the County's existing available property located at 3307 Burlington Road. Motion seconded by Commissioner Branson.

Perdue asked what the current zoning was for the site.

McNiece shared that the site was currently zoned as PI – Public Usage.

Perdue asked it would be more valuable to parcel the property or have it zoned all at once.

Staff recommended having it zoned all at once.

AYES: Phillips, Henning, Branson, Conrad, Perdue, Cashion

NOES – Trapp, Coleman, Foster

Lawing clarified that the permit request would be for the entire property.

The board concurred.

B. LAW ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION FACILITY OPTIONS

McNiece reviewed three options for location of operations of the Sheriff's office in Greensboro.

McNiece stated that if Option 1 is used, simply relocating various sheriff's functions to existing spaces in other facilities such as the BB&T building and space in the Independence Building there would be challenges with space usage of BB&T building as well dividing up services provided by the Sheriff's office.

McNiece reviewed Option 2, utilizing the existing Old Jail facility and renovate the 100K square feet including removal of the kitchen, holding cells etc. to create more office and training space. He stated that this option would create a large amount of secured storage. He stated that this option would allow the County to retain utilization of the existing tunnel connecting the jails to the courthouse.

Coleman questioned the design layouts submitted in the handouts.

Sheriff Barnes noted that the schematics are general renderings of a renovation and that the offices could be relocated to meet specific needs.

McNiece shared some temporary relocation options if Option 2 was selected.

Branson asked if a parking area was to be created where the Otto Zenke Building currently stands, would the county recover parking that was lost from sale of Bellemede parking lot.

McNiece stated that yes a surface lot would replace the lost county spaces and be more convenient for staff, but would not be enough spaces to lose the additional spaces used by contractors, state employees and citizens that were a part of the Bellemede location.

The Board discussed the merits and challenges of Option 2.

McNiece stated that ideally renovations would lower the maintenance costs long term.

Branson asked how long it would take the county to recoup expenses if it created public parking.

McNiece stated that even charging 80 per month per space, it would take 20 years to recoup costs. He advised that parking spaces are more for economic development rather than a return on investment.

Barnes noted that there are parking shortages at the Courthouse, as well as the Justice Center and that parking was going to be a challenge as the downtown continues to grow. Barnes asked the Board to support Option 2.

McNiece reviewed Option 3. He stated that the County would need to retain the tunnel, and this option would require demolition of the Old County jail and reconstruction of a new facility in the same location. He noted that Option 3 would produce less storage space than Option 2.

Branson questioned the value of renovation versus new construction.

McNiece reviewed the original construction of the Old Jail facility. He estimated that it would cost approximately Three Hundred Thousand to demo each floor to clear out the cells in order to prepare for renovation.

Branson asked if you could renovate and maintain operations in the same location.

Lawing clarified the option of taking out all the cells up front and then renovating the empty floors, as needed to accommodate growth.

Trapp questioned that if the renovations began, would the Old Jail retain its accreditation as a usable jail.

Barnes stated that with the renovation the Old Jail would lose its grandfather status and would no longer qualify as a jail.

There was consensus of the Board to not consider Option 3.

Phillips asked how the county would finance Option 1 or Option 2.

Lawing stated that if the building was stripped down to concrete and steel and renovation would result in essence a new building with a better investment in the long run. He stated that staff would ask the Board to give serious consideration to Option 2.

Barnes reiterated that Option 2 was his preferred choice.

McNiece stated that stripping the upper two floors would add an additional 2 Million to the cost estimations presented in the packet.

Cashion stated that the County has what it needs regarding space, but that we just need to renovate the property.

Perdue stated that a decision on a long range plan is important so that staff can begin budgetary planning and space planning. He noted that the board doesn't have to make a funding decision today but commitment to a plan is valuable.

Conrad spoke in favor of Option 2.

Barnes questioned if it would be Option 2 or Option 2 with all floors; to renovate partially, or to strip the entire building at one time. He recommended Option 2a.

Perdue moved that the Board approve option 2 with the inclusion of the alterations to all floors for future expansion. Second Conrad.

Motion Approved.

9:0

C. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) PROJECTS FOR FY2017

Budget Director, Michael Halford provided an update as to the County's Capital Improvement plan.

Halford reviewed the Cash Projects. He spoke to these as projects that would generally spread funding across the next 10 years with cash typically transferred from the general fund. Halford stated that the County does not have any dollars set aside for our immediate needs projects.

Halford shared the future projects for GTCC and Guilford County Schools. He noted that if all projects were approved it would cost 900M over ten years.

Halford stated that the Board began with a little over 8.8 Million in the Capital Improvement fund to fund non financed projects. He recommended ongoing transfers of at least 1.8 Million each year into the Capital Improvement fund.

He stated that the only money currently going into that fund is 1.8M and that consideration is needed to increase that amount in order to address the county's capital needs.

Halford reminded the Board that it approved a timber management plan in the past year and estimated 5-7 Million in revenue. He also reminded the board that they approved that those revenues be used for Parks capital projects.

Coleman asked how the Inmate welfare fund was reduced over the years.

Halford reviewed that law enforcement body cameras were used out of that fund. He also noted that staff were directed to no longer maintain that fund and that those dollars were used to offset operational needs of the department.

Coleman expressed concerns with no longer earmarking the utilization of those funds for inmate programs.

Coleman asked staff to provide a detailed accounting of the Inmate Welfare funds.

Halford noted that part of the CIP plan assumes that we can use the remaining 770K in the inmate welfare fund. Those funds are being recommended for use for renovations for the old jail.

Coleman stated there are programming needs and hoped that the County does not lose those funds on brick and mortar projects.

Halford reviewed the EMS facility's needs. He stated that the preference of the County is to co-locate with the city as often as possible.

Halford spoke to the Phase 1 and Phase 2 projects for EMS with a garage and logistic operations.

Halford stated that the original estimates of 11M to meet all of the County's needs on one property is no longer realistic and the project is now estimated at 17M.

Halford spoke to the Parks CIP projects.

Branson asked about the forestry management program and asked if there was anyone on staff capable to run it.

McNiece advised that they would outsource the forestry project.

Halford stated that the position was requested by the department but the decision point would be up to the commissioners.

Halford advised, that ideally, the county would use cash for the Zenke demolition and surface parking.

Halford reviewed the additional school projects that are above and beyond the bond projects and capital funding projects. He reported the proposals from the Schools to the County. He stated that there are a lot of needs that will need to be reconciled between the County and School boards. Halford recommended that the 600M needs would at this time require another bond. Halford recommended a joint committee with the School Board, tasked with focusing on capital needs for the schools. He stated that the current capacity of the schools is around 90K students and the current enrollment is 70K.

Halford reviewed the immediate county facility needs.

Conrad questioned the estimated costs of the current animal shelter site?

McNiece stated that the current costs was 8.5M and the costs projected from a new facility would be 7.3M.

Conrad reiterated that it saves the county 1M to build a new facility on a new site location.

Halford noted that those are figures as of today, but ongoing delay would need to include inflation.

Branson recommended re-evaluating the EMS operations site needs.

Albright stated that they agree and they are no longer able to look for an existing structure due to construction requirements for a Category 4 facility. Albright stated the project was originally submitted in 1999 and the actual allocation of dollars have never changed.

Branson stated that the County should start looking at areas outside of the central location, and perhaps looking at some industrial park sites outside of the city limits.

Coleman spoke to the space next to the AG centers as a possible EMS site rather than and Animal Shelter location

Albright stated that they have looked at that site. It is directly off Wendover, with concerns that it is a little farther to the east than ideal. He stated that the volume is driven by the southern and eastern part of the city.

Branson suggested co-locating on the property with the Animal Shelter.

Halford reviewed the proposed designs for the EMS facility.

Conrad questioned how many employees would be employed at the EMS facility.

Albright stated that approximately 100 people per day at the facility. He stated that we currently have 80 parking spaces and have an over flow parking needs.

The board discussed the increased traffic in the proposed Burlington road would be helpful for future development.

D. FINANCING OPTIONS FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Finance Director, Reid Baker stated that a 2/3s bond would be more beneficial than a bank financing when looking at financing the CIP projects. He stated that there is no security required with a 2/3s bond option. He stated that Limited Obligation Bonds (LOBs) would most likely rate the county at AA status, because they would be collateralized debt. He stated that the least expensive and best opportunity that is only available this year – and not after next year would be the 2/3 s bond. He states that it typically only exists when you have not issued bonds and get the opportunity only available when you have a reduction in your debt.

It is an opportunity to finance 41.8M, if the Board choses to do something less than that would not be a problem. Baker advised that If the Board wanted to finance more than that then it would get into a higher amount and would require a combination financing.

Phillips questioned the annual debt service projected.

Baker reviewed the estimates and discussed current interest rates.

Baker discussed the options for payment over 20 years.

Phillips noted that staff's recommendation for funding the projects has a short decision window of within the next year to fund 40M worth of projects.

Halford stated that anytime next year, before issuance of the next school bonds.

Baker reviewed the process if that is the direction the board chooses. Baker stated that if you still don't have a location for the EMS facility you could postpone the closing, but cautioned that you would most likely increase costs if a separate issuance was done even a year later. He specified they would only be LOB's or bank financing as options as the 2/3rds bond option would no longer be on the table.

E. POSITION RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CHALLENGES

Lawing introduced the item and shared that staff had prepared a listing of the most difficult to retain and fill positions.

HR Director John Dean shared that his staff reviewed the submissions of hard to fill positions that were provided by the departments. He noted that they classified 11 positions as "hard to fill".

Dean reviewed the documents provided to the board.

Human Resources staff person, Ray Willis noted that HR prioritized the jobs based on recruitment efforts. He spoke to the Dentist positions followed by the Environmental Health Specialists, Physician Extenders, Nurses and Building Inspectors. He reviewed the cost summary of increasing the pay grades for these positions as an effort to make them more attractive to potential candidates.

Willis reviewed each position classification recommendations.

Henning asked for more information as to the positions as to the duties of the and mandated requirements.

Willis stated in regards to the dental position, we currently have one dentist. He stated that they try to hire new graduates; however, many of them do not have the certifications required for the position.

Henning questioned if the requirements of the positions were considered or alternative recruitment practices prior to recommendations of increasing pay range.

Foster questioned if dental services were not being provided due to the extended vacancy. Foster asked for a comparison of the revenue gained through services versus the expenses of the position.

Coleman questioned if the County had a pediatric dentist as well.

Willis reported that they did not as that person resigned.

Coleman shared that these services left unfilled are a tremendous loss of services to our citizens.

Henning asked about publication and the ranges listed. He questioned if the County offer's salaries above entry level, or if it requires all new hires to begin at the minimum of the range. He noted that the exiting range goes up to 104K per year.

Willis stated that this issue in hiring compression so most new hires are held at the minimum.

Henning expressed concerns with adjusting pay rages up rather than just addressing the compression issues, as the modification of the ranges continue to perpetuate compression.

Trapp questioned the feasibility of maintaining dentists for a long period of time. That an entry level county position would naturally be a stepping point in a career.

Lawing stated that the County's current Dentist has some longevity with the County.

Dean stated that a lot of counties normally contract out dental services.

Cashion expressed concerns with only offering one dentist and questioned if the Chandler Clinic had been closed.

Willis stated that they have a student currently working under the licensure of the current dentist. Willis stated that they have made an offer this week to fill the vacant Dentist position for the purpose of running the High Point Clinic. Willis stated that ideally placing a bigger range on the advertisement would garner more interest.

Cashion questioned how many dentists the other counties have.

Willis stated most counties contract dental services.

Perdue noted that if the issue is compression we may need to address that issue prior to modifying the pay rage.

Halford clarified that the County does have an hourly dentist but the wait time is 6-9months for an appointment.

Conrad noted that the specialized positions are harder to fill. He asked staff to consider the need for RN's rather than CMA's for some of the services being provided. Conrad echoed concerns that there is not enough position specific information such as job descriptions and duties in order to make a decision on the pay ranges. Additionally, he asked staff to consider reclassifications of vacant positions to those with lower skill requirements to fit the work demands.

Coleman questioned if the upper range for a dentist was 124K that the County should be looking at hiring a position above minimum ranges which limits the county to students with very little experience.

Cashion spoke to the revenue production of the dental positions. Cashion asked staff to provide the revenue produced by offering dental services.

Willis stated that they would work with Public Health to get the additional information.

Halford clarified that the County has used hourly positions to help offset the lack of full time staff. He noted that the revenue received money is credited to the dental area.

Phillips stated more specifics on revenue and costs would be helpful to understand why the position is difficult to fill.

Willis spoke to the Environmental Health Specialist positions. He noted that the water quality position is especially difficult to fill and that the County does have five trainees in progress. He stated that Guilford County offers an average of 44K annual salary with the comparable counties offering 46K. He noted that Guilford County has a high volume. He reported that Guilford County's hire in rate is lower than any other county in our area.

Willis spoke to the Physician Extender positions. Willis stated that in regards to the nurses the County simply cannot compete with the hospitals.

Coleman asked if there is any opportunity to make a suggestion to a position that may be new, or not filled that may need to be looked at.

Lawing stated that he would hope for Board input on the positions and are receptive to suggestions.

F. SCHEDULE DATES FOR FY 2017 BUDGET WORK SESSION

Phillips asked the Board to consider several dates to review and finalize the budget.

Through general consensus the board agreed upon setting work sessions for Monday May 23 from 1-5PM; June 8 and June 9 from 1-5 each day; and to hold June 13 from 1-5 if needed.

Lawing noted that the County does have some difficulty to retain positions, specifically the detention officers. He reported that the Sheriff has suggested some sort of retention compensation for those employees who work for 12 consecutive months.

Barnes spoke to the challenges facing the role of detention officers which cause high turnover. He stated that the position is very stressful and have difficulty with retention. He stated that they have 25 openings and Forsyth currently has 30. Barnes recommended performance incentives for those employees who work longer than 12 consecutive months. He noted that retention will be a huge issue for Guilford County as the economy continues to improve and the County does not continue to offer

strong benefits to its employees. He stated that he would like to see Guilford County return to the reputation of “The place to work”.

Trapp likened the incentive to hazard duty pay, and saw benefit in the retention tool.

Coleman stated that \$1,000 dollars is not a substantial incentive based on the nature of the work.

Barnes clarified that he moved the salary range from detention officers to the same pay range as those on patrol.

Coleman spoke to the discrepancies in the state’s recognition of sworn and non-sworn as seen by the state retirement system.

There was general consensus of the Board to allow staff to pursue the utilization of the retention pay for detention officers.

III. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:15PM.

Robin B. Keller, Clerk to Board

Jeffrey M. Phillips, Chairman