

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS  
OF GUILFORD COUNTY**

Greensboro, North Carolina  
February 9, 2017

*The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed regular meeting Thursday February 9, 2017 at 8:00 a.m., and Friday February 10, 2017 at the Guilford Technical Community College-Conference Center, located at 7908 Leabourne Road, Colfax NC*

Present: Chairman Jeff Phillips, presiding, Vice Chairman Alan Branson, Commissioners Kay Cashion, Ray Trapp, Alan Perdue, Carlvena Foster (in at 8:57 a.m.), Carolyn Coleman (arrived at 2:19 p.m.)

Absent: None.

Also Present: County Manager Marty Lawing, Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier, Finance Director Reid Baker, County Attorney Mark Payne, Clerk to Board Robin Keller, Members of County Management and members of the media.

**1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Phillips called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed those in attendance and thanked staff for their work in preparing the agenda.

**2. OPENING REMARKS**

County Manager Lawing reviewed the agenda with the Board and reviewed the retreat purpose and goals.

**3. 2016-17 FINANCIAL REPORT/BUDGET UPDATE**

Budget Management and Evaluation Director Michael Halford provided a financial overview and budget update; outlined revenue projections and noted the County was slightly above expectations for property tax collection; property tax rates for Guilford County in comparison with other counties; and highlighted Wake and Durham Counties for their recent reduction of tax rates as result of reevaluations.

Chairman Phillips noted that Guilford County had not yet completed its reevaluation and upon completion could potentially exhibit some changes.

Commissioner Henning asked if would be possible to receive a recalculation of financial projections once Guilford County's revaluation was completed.

Staff shared that they would be providing additional figures during the budget process period.

Discussion ensued regarding Durham County's tax adjustment; Durham County had adjusted their tax rate to be revenue neutral; and tax data could be compared once the revaluation continues.

Lawing noted that the County would need to make some projections associated with appeals; and discussed the Tax Department's preliminary projections.

Halford spoke to sales tax revenues; the improvement of taxable sales; sales tax revenue increased noted a rise in sales tax refunds; spoke to the increased population of older aged residents in Guilford County; emphasized was considerably higher than Wake County; the need for an increase of Social Services and Medicaid eligibility.

Commissioner Cashion asked about the expense history and why it was running at 96% and whether it was due to a creation of a cushion in the budget.

Halford stated that no cushions are set in budgeting but some financial flexibility does throughout the year when there are position vacancies. Halford recommended becoming less aggressive on expenditures to reduce Fund Balance throughout the year; discussed new positions and the counties practice of adjusting hire dates to allow for variances. Halford spoke to the County's budget as a hard stop on spending and reviewed budgetary guidelines. Halford emphasized the need for departments to remain within the allocated budgets and stated that intergovernmental revenues are typically reimbursements for expenditures; and reviewed replacing the appropriated fund balance; and cautioned the Board on the challenge for available fund balance.

Chairman Phillips inquired about the major revenues for intergovernmental services.

Finance Director Reid Baker spoke to the bonds; bond premiums as it may assist the County in larger funding needs.

Discussion ensued regarding the fund balance; effects of bond rating score; the impacts among rating agencies; future issues regarding the retirement system contributions; foster care and day care; and other mandated human services program costs.

Commissioner Cashion reiterated the need for staff to anticipate a tight budget for fiscal year 2017/2018.

## **2. REVIEW PRELIMINARY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Commissioner Henning requested a review of the bond document approvals; and to re-arrange the order of the Agenda.

The Board agreed to the agenda adjustment.

## **BOND DOCUMENT APPROVAL**

Finance Director Reid Baker introduced the bond document information; spoke to additional savings beyond the original estimates; and outlined the potentiality for those funds to be allocated to other projects.

Halford reviewed County renovation needs; addressed the Old Jail renovation project; discussed anticipated need of \$3.5M including renovations for probation and parole; spoke to the revised totals for utilizing the 2/3rds bonds; Old Courthouse repairs; Animal Shelter Replacement; EMS Phase 1; and Law Enforcement renovations.

Commissioner Cashion voiced approval for said projects; reiterated that as projects arise approval will be granted for the amounts requested; and stated that opportunities would be provided if adjustments become necessary.

**Commissioner Henning motioned to Approve Resolutions (1) making certain required findings, (2) introducing a bond order authorizing \$27,195,000 “two-thirds” general obligation bonds for public buildings, including without limitation an emergency medical service facility, an animal shelter facility, a law enforcement administration facility and courthouse renovations, and (3) calling a public hearing on the bond order to be held at the meeting on February 23, seconded by Commissioner Branson**

**VOTE: Motion carried 6:2**

**AYES: Commissioners J. Phillips, A. Branson, H. Henning, K. Cashion, J. Conrad and A. Perdue**

**NOES: Commissioner J. Foster, Commissioner R. Trapp**

**ABSENT: Commissioner C. Coleman**

## **2. REVIEW PRELIMINARY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PL**

Halford spoke to potential changes in the laws relating to the incarceration of juveniles; staff anticipation of additional funds; the removal of juveniles from the Adult detention center; and the anticipation of needs for expansion of the juvenile detention center.

Commissioner Cashion voiced concern for Guilford County’s role as acting as a regional center; and stated that the County needed to back off as serving in that capacity.

Lawing spoke to County revenues that would offset the costs of the detention center; and voiced concern for the loss in revenues should the housing of regional detainees be discontinued.

Commissioner Conrad asked for a breakdown of the regional costs and subsequent County expenses.

Court Alternatives Director Doug Logan spoke to the County costs to operate the facility; the impacts of the State's facility closure; the County facility's assumed responsibility for housing eight additional county's detainees; the influx of regional detainees; and emphasized the 44 bed capacity of the facility; and addressed that it was currently housing 38 detainees where 26 of those are regional.

Discussion ensued regarding a request for a full analysis of expenditures; the impacts of expansion; the regional detainees; the potential for increasing the number of beds; the fund requirements from the State Association; juvenile detentions centers moving toward a regional model; future Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) plan in 2020; and various Capital projects.

Logan addressed the need for an additional 32 beds; and that State funds would offset the costs of the construction.

Commissioner Cashion underscored the need for the County to continue to serve as a regional center to better leverage State funding for expansion.

The board discussed proposed projects; upcoming expenses for the total replacement of election voting machines; total project needs for all of the proposed categories; future five-year projections; expenditure expectations; the creation of a funding formula to plan for future expenses; the current expenditure balance; the allocation of funds to avoid additional debt; and recommendations to increase the annual transfer into the CIF.

Lawing stated that a decision would need to be established early in the process.

Chairman Phillips inquired about additional debt service repayments; their impacts; and sought Board concerns regarding an increase of allocations.

Commissioner Henning requested a work session.

Baker spoke to the typical procedure regarding the sale of properties; and transfers into construction funds.

Halford recommended the board to consent to a "one cent" guideline; and to allow staff to prepare a budget for the Board's consideration.

Halford reviewed the Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) and Guilford County Schools survey of needs; and discussed adopting a more effective procedure to identify capital needs.

Henning left the meeting at 10:00am

### **3. COUNTY MWBE PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS**

Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier reviewed the County's MWBE program; the progress made over the previous two months; the County's work toward digitizing and automating the contract process. Grier discussed suppliers and MWBE vendors; the requirements for qualifications as an MWBE vendor; the 2016-2017 expenditures year to date; the stated goal of 10%. Grier noted that the County does not currently require a Historically Underrepresented Businesses (HUB) certification to be listed as a MWBE business. Grier stated that the County recommends moving toward HUB certification requirements within a year and a half for more accurate reporting measures. He noted that based on business self-reported MWBE status the county's current participation rate is 15.63% and the total HUB certified vendors is 1.45%; Grier reviewed the new electronic contracting system and that historically MWBE self-reporting was not regulated or monitored effectively; Grier reviewed ongoing MWBE recommendations; and presented the new MWBE website.

Conrad left the meeting at 10:20am

Commissioner Foster inquired about the use of Daycare providers in the MWBE numbers and questioned how the County comprises with the other entities; Grier stated that reviewing the MWBE validations is an important step. Foster noted that that the MWBE participation target goals should be increased to a minimum of 15%; and asked the Board if it would set the MWBE participation goal at 15%.

Grier spoke to Daycare as sole vendor type selected for the diversity overview; affirmed that Guilford was comparable with other systems; He stated that they have requested additional vendor information to confirm existing data. Grier reported the need for better reporting management and that staff would continue to leverage partnerships with other larger entities. He stated that they are working to implement more holistic purchasing procedures seek out and address purchasing procedures in a more holistic manner.

Commissioner Trapp emphasized the need to require HUB certification; expressed concern for its potential impacts on goal totals.

Chairman Phillips asked about the difficulty of the process.

Grier spoke to the process; stated that staff would work with those smaller vendors over the next year and a half to provide assistance to mitigate the process.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to partnerships; inquired about County leveraging buying power among US communities; and addressed complaints received over the years regarding MWBE vendors.

Grier affirmed that the collection of good data and that the County is making an effort to review and clean the data.

Discussion ensued regarding the data scrub; review of the purchasing procedures; procedure for overseeing daily operations; meeting expectations; and emphasized equitable practice of awarding contracts to vendors.

Grier spoke to providing equity in contract awards; overall 20% MWBE participation; reporting accurate information; and outlined Guilford County's business conduct goals among vendors.

**Commissioner Trapp Moved, to require HUB certification and decrease MWBE goal to 15%  
Seconded by Commissioner Foster.**

**Motion Carried 5:1**

**AYES: Commissioners Phillips, Cashion, Trapp, Foster and Perdue**

**NOES: A. Branson**

**ABSENT: H. Henning, C. Coleman, Conrad**

#### **4. DATA ANALYTICS/ OPEN GOV INITIATIVE**

Commissioner Perdue spoke to the decision-making process; the County usage of service delivery data in the administration of Emergency Services; and emphasized the importance of data tracking.

Halford introduced Budget Analyst and project manager for the open data project Jason Jones; reviewed data analytics; discussed the advantages of locating and connecting data with performance to achieve productive outcomes; the details of Open Gov; the process data connectivity throughout the County; a service innovations team to identify projects; provided examples of a request for Sheriff's positions; stated that they were moving forward with the project, and hoped to develop dashboards within the next 6-9 months; and reviewed the phases of the project.

Commissioner Foster stepped out of the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Information Services Director Hemant Desi provided an overview of six sigma mentality; the first phase of the project; and stated that the City of Greensboro had begun its effort as well.

Chairman Phillips voiced his surprise that County had not been previously conducting said measures. Phillips thanked staff for their efforts and shared his support for the project. Phillips inquired about measurable data points and the data points as a means to assist the Board to identify both priorities and other areas to measure.

Halford outlined the data that was currently available; departments to obtain clean and reliable data; the increase of transparency and communication among County services; and stated that there was a need to build an internal capacity to accommodate these types of analyses.

Commissioner Cashion voiced concern for interdepartmental data sharing deficiencies she echoed opportunities to re-assess County business practices and identify needs.

Desi provided an update on the partnership with universities; local municipalities; the Piedmont Triad Regional Council (PTRC); evaluated the feasibility to provide high speed broad band across the county; stated the County was nearing the selection of North State as the primary vendor; the identification of pilot areas; receiving affordable broadband; stressed that due to the public/private partnership, no cost would be involved; and emphasized that the County could offer assets to provide services for county citizens.

The Board recessed at 10:51 a.m.

The Board returned from break at 11:20 a.m.

## **5. FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**

Conrad, Henning and Foster returned to meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Lawing introduced the item and introduced a community request regarding the potential service expansion of the Family Justice Center into High Point.

Chairman Phillips requested to discuss the Board's will for services and a possible expansion.

Family Justice Center Director Catherine Johnson spoke to the 8,000 citizens the Family Justice Center (FJC) had served since its opening on June 21, 2016. Johnson spoke of access to five service agencies on site; addressed four full-time staff and over 60 volunteer hours of support per week. Johnson stated the number of clients served have highly complex needs; Johnson updated the Board as to the ongoing the partnership with Elon Law School to rendering quality legal services for clients. Johnson shared and update as to the partnership opportunity with Camp Hope and upcoming plans to host partnership at Camp Weaver. Johnson noted that the program continues to receive positive national and local support and emphasized that Guilford County had set the standard to efficiently establish and run an FJC.

High Point Chief of Police Kenneth Shultz was available to answer questions on High Point's needs.

Commissioner Trapp inquired about the FJC compared to facilities in other counties.

Johnson spoke to the volume of individuals served in Guilford County; the increased level of crises in Guilford County; a lack of victim engagement prior to the FJC; a corollary reduction in crime; victim follow-through for seeking offender accountability. Johnson noted that the staffing in

Greensboro is very fragile with the record setting day of 69 victims served she advised the board of the need to expand the Greensboro services into a secondary space in the building in order to accommodate increasing demand.

Commissioner Perdue asked if service delivery data was being tracked.

Johnson affirmed that zip codes were tracked on a voluntary basis; but allowed for anonymity.

Commissioner Foster expressed interest in the expansion into High Point she stated that she received interest from many community partners; emphasized her assistance to ensure a smooth transition into High Point; provided examples for the lack of services to victims in High Point. Johnson thanked Chief Shultz for his active involvement; the Board for their responsiveness to expanding into High Point; and expressed enthusiasm for the next launch of the expansion process.

Johnson cautioned that she would be willing to support an expansion if the Board was prepared to do so; however, cautioned that success of an expansion would be contingent on additional staffing being in place prior to the moving forward.

Commissioner Cashion voiced support for the victims; inquired about stand-alone older adult abuse services offered through Elon University; spoke to Guilford County's expansive and increasing older adult population; and emphasized the need to outline a plan.

Johnson stated that the facility had closed in June; the center would accommodate access to representation; a pilot project was currently in the works – Friends against Fraud – to train seniors in the community among senior care facilities as a tool to provide prevention training.

Commissioner Conrad spoke to the resources in Guilford County; Guilford was one of 37 counties in the United States that offered a Family Justice Center; the need for strategic discussions regarding the locations for services in Guilford County; and underscored the need for 15-20-year plan for access to services.

Chairman Phillips spoke to the root causes of domestic violence; sought clarification for identifying the underlying trends of domestic violence; addressed facility space; inquired about basement space; and the current facility the staffing needs given the volume.

Johnson stated the need for expansion and that there is a need in High Point for more coordinated services she emphasized the recommendation to move professionals at the Greensboro location downstairs to accommodate additional client rooms and waiting areas; and spoke to general staffing needs in Greensboro.

Discussion ensued concerning a move into the basement; The Board asked staff to provide a proposal for a High Point expansion and requested a staffing assessment to be completed within three months. The Board indicated that they would be willing to consider of adding temporary part-time staff to help off-set the peak hours in Greensboro

Phillips stated that he would be interested in re-aligning the Family Justice Sub Committee to include representation for High Point to include Commissioners Foster, Henning and Perdue along with Commissioner Cashion to continue to chair the Committee in order to begin regular meetings concerning feasibility for expansion into High Point. Phillips emphasized caution with the Greensboro program and to monitor the potential strains that expansion into High Point might generate on the existing program. Phillips inquired about the interest of High Point City Council for the FJC and their willingness to support an expansion.

Commissioner Foster stated that the High Point City Council had appointed Chris Williams to be the liaison for the project.

Commissioner Cashion asked for a breakdown on paid staff.

Johnson reviewed the current staff structure.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the ongoing process; the initial idea to establish a program in Greensboro for a year or two before considering an expansion; and to the issue in the lack of transportation services between High Point and Greensboro.

Chairman Philips emphasized that the recommendation to expand into High Point must be successful; that the need of a Family Justice Center was critical; considered it a priority; and thanked Catherine Johnson for her leadership.

Commissioner Henning shared that any consideration of expansion needed to be deliberative and strategic; and cautioned against stretching staff too thin.

Commissioner Foster thanked the Board for appointing her as a part of the committee; and expressed her due-diligence.

Chief Shultz outlined the data; over 1/3 of all homicides in High Point were related to domestic violence; spoke to impacts garnered through partnerships; funds for victim justice center had expired; the best studies needed to be in close proximity with the courthouse; addressed the challenges facing victims in accessing services; stated that the High Point City Council was prepared to contribute; emphasized the established community partnerships on board; and stressed the need of the support of the County.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:00 p.m.

The Board resumed at 1:22 p.m.

Trapp left the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

## **6. GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS**

Chairman Phillips welcomed Guilford County Schools Superintendent Dr. Sharon Contreras

Chairman Phillips welcomed the opportunity to work more collaboratively with the County schools; the ongoing focus of future capital needs and establishment of goals toward addressing the County's School needs.

Dr. Contreras recognized the School board members and staff; spoke to preparing students for employment at Guilford County Schools (GCS); school renovations to mirror twentieth century industry; project based learning designs; safety and security; stressed the importance of being technology-rich; voiced concern for GCSs limited technology resources; stated desire for an independent facilities study with County participation; outlined the types of schools necessary to ensure the preparation of future students; spoke to region as ranking second in technology-based jobs; and the need to prepare pathways for students to achieve viable careers.

Angie Henry discussed implementing a study that would assist GCS planned renovation and construction priorities.

Commissioner Henning voiced appreciation for the presentation. Henning expressed concerns with construction issues regarding High Point Central and shared his support for a joint committee of the County Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education. Henning requested that the Board receive a budget request at the school level rather than a lump sum so that projects can be identified together; and asked for reassurances that current projects were approached more holistically.

Contreras asserted that a facilities study needed to be conducted and spoke to boundary optimization review in regard to effective and efficient allocation of student population. She shared that School staff had been directed to conduct a boundary optimization study; She recognized student rights to attend schools in their zones and an efficient balance of school spaces; the need for sufficient choice in school selection. Contreras shared that Guilford County schools possessed viable career pathways and provided information on the new mega site. Contreras shared that work toward the RFP had begun and had been rolled into the feasibility study.

Contreras shared that the School Board is interested in establishing a joint committee to address school capital needs and the priority of scheduling an initial meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding a joint study group; additional consideration for facility funding models and a venue to address disagreements on allocation of funds, goal setting to review the project management process and the ability to make recommendations for managing the projects given their magnitude and volume.

Commissioner Cashion thanked Dr. Contreras; and questioned if the study would also consider allocation of student population.

Board of Education Chairman Alan Duncan voiced concern for whether or not a law existed that would ensure a student is entitled to attend a "home" school he recommended having a committee together prior to the proposal would be ideal and outlined projected estimates of the study. Duncan spoke to the benefits a committee would produce for communication and trust-building.

Chairman Phillips inquired about the need for a committee to be established prior to the request for proposal (RFP); voiced accord with the recommendation; sought clarification for a decision on the committee's description; to obtain calendar dates for upcoming meetings; and inquired about the range to potential costs of the assessment.

Commissioner Foster thanked Chairman Duncan and Dr. Contreras.

Darlene Garret – School Board member, echoed Chairman Duncan's comments and support of a joint committee.

## **7. VETERANS SERVICES**

Commissioners Coleman and Trapp arrived to meeting at 2:19 p.m.

Chairman Phillips welcomed all the veterans present.

Social Services Director Heather Skeens introduced Veteran Services Director Jack Milam, a recent hire to Social Services to assist the Veteran's services program.

Milam reviewed the veteran's services program; staff certifications; accomplishments of the department; services flow chart; average number of service requests over the last six months; spoke to staff transitions and loss; a 90-day waiting period for appointments; successful efforts to reduce the wait time to 30 days; among the State Guilford County ranked fourth in the veteran population; and stated that the largest requests made are for disability, pension, and medical benefits.

Commissioner Trapp expressed a commitment for improvement; voiced concerns regarding the County's lack of a veteran Services Advisory Council.

Bruce Davis, prior County Commissioner, voiced concerns of several local veteran agencies; and offered support to improve services for veterans.

Discussion ensued regarding collaborative impacts; recommendations for creating a Veterans Advisory Council; a group that would assist to identify the needs of the veteran population; recommended establishing a two commissioner liaison; inquired about the make-up of the council; for primary membership of existing entities; a potential re-tooling for how services are provided to veterans in Guilford County.

Commissioner Cashion commended Commissioner Trapp for bringing this forward; stated that she has often received calls referencing the lack of services or access to services.

Commissioner Trapp moved to take necessary steps to establish Guilford County Advisory Council, seconded by Commissioner Foster

Commissioner Conrad stated the role of the group would be to add assistance for identifying needs of veterans.

## **The Board voted by unanimous consent to pursue a Veteran's Advisory Committee.**

Chairman Phillips recognized Bruce Davis for his instrumental role in bringing the Carolina Field of Honor to fruition; and extended his thanks for his service and continuing his efforts to bring veteran needs to the forefront.

### **8. FOSTER CARE**

Children Services Division Director Sharon Barlow introduced Rory Station, Supervisor of Placements who oversees licensing of foster parents, Fran George, Karen Williamson, and Shelia Stokes.

Barlow provided an overview of the foster parent process; training goals; objectives of becoming a foster parent; stated that information sessions were held monthly in both group and individual settings; and spoke to weekday and weekend training where children were excluded.

Skeens outlined the State's requirements.

Barlow reviewed the licensure requirements; spoke to home studies; criminal history; physical history; and environmental issues of the home.

Chairman Phillips asked if the home study was completed simultaneously with ongoing training.

Fran George stated that one home visit was completed during the parents' training.

Discussion ensued regarding the hours of training; ways to improve the foster parent process; review of the barriers toward becoming a foster home; the need for additional inspections through various agencies; the consolidation and training of inspectors to prevent multiple trips; the duration of being a foster parent; inquired about data collection to identify the length of time foster parents remain engaged; expressed caution regarding speed of placements into homes; the need to ensure that all placements were in the best interest of the child; and asked for figures relating to foster care correlations with drug epidemics.

Barlow discussed improvements to the licensing packets; provided assistance during the licensing requirement phases; provided examples of the required medical evaluation; spoke to the need for a fire inspection of the home; clarified that 30% of all foster home applications were denied; the four-month process from training to licensure completion; specified that oversight was given to both recruitment and retention processes; opportunities were given to obtain the required training hours online; reviewed the trends in foster care across North Carolina; compression planning; data analysis; and would include substance abuse in further assessments.

Skeens spoke to the commitment of a 30-day response time regarding application statuses; the re-designing of the Foster Parent training process; specified certification processes; the role of part

time employees to assist in speeding up MAP training paperwork; spoke to inability to currently gather or track substance abuse data from the Department of Social Services (DSS); and expressed the challenges to track said data.

Fran George spoke to recent certified MAP trainers; improved training; and stated there was discussion to have bilingual trainers.

## **9. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Clerk to Board Robin Keller provided the Board with an updated Board liaison listing. She asked the board to review the listing and to determine if any adjustments needed to be considered.

Commissioner Henning shared his interested in remaining on the Say Yes Scholarship Committee

Commissioner Conrad noted that he would serve on the Animal Advisory Committee

Commissioner Perdue volunteered to serve as liaison to the HP MPO and LEPC

Commissioner Cashion, Phillips, Branson, Conrad agreed to serve on the Chairman's Audit Committee.

Commissioner Coleman spoke to interest of assessing potential "re-entry" programs for the Jail Population Reduction Committee. Give some thought to renaming the committee to be more inclusive of topics other than population. General consensus of the Board to table the status of a Chairman's Sub-committee on Jail Population Reduction.

Conrad clarified there are two Boards for Say Yes and Clarence Grier is the liaison/staff member.

Keller shared that Innovate Greensboro is seeking a Board liaison to serve on their committee. Commissioner Trapp shared his interest in participating.

Carolyn asked for an update on biometric screening.

Lawing shared that it is scheduled for early April of this year. Can provide more information tomorrow.

Henning made a recommendation for the Environmental Review Board be dissolved due to lack of business and participation and consolidation of their duties into the Planning Board duties.

Leslie Bell asked that if the duties are consolidated that he would recommend moving a few members to the Environmental Review Board onto the vacant positions on the planning board to ensure a transfer of knowledge.

Henning stated that the two boards are duplicative and extends the planning and zoning process.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concerns in collapsing the board. She asked the board to carefully consider the reasons for consolidation.

Perdue shared that the Environmental review board does serve a planning board function and is seldom ever utilized and created an additional layer for development that is not needed.

**Commissioner Henning made a motion to eliminate the Environmental Review Board and to assign those duties to the planning Board. Effective immediately, Seconded by Commissioner Conrad.**

Commissioner Cashion stated that she has heard from her members of the Environmental Review board and explained that they have had to cancel meetings often due to lack of business and lack of quorum. She shared that she would support the changes.

**VOTE: Motion carried 7:2**

**AYES: Commissioners Phillips, Henning, Trapp, Perdue, Branson, Conrad, Cashion**

**NOES: Commissioners Coleman and Foster**

**Commissioner Foster Made a motion to appoint Marie Poteat to the Parks and recreation Board.**

**Motion Carried 9:0 by unanimous consent of the board.**

Commissioner Halford reviewed a proposed budget Calendar with the board.

Commissioner Perdue inquired about including May 19<sup>th</sup> rather than May 22<sup>th</sup> to the calendar.

Commissioner Conrad requested to be sensitive to Spring Break schedule when scheduling the April meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**Commissioner Phillips made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to §143-318.11 (1), (3) and (6) to consult with the County attorney and discuss a personnel matter. Commissioner Foster seconded the motion. The board entered into closed session at 4:30PM by unanimous consent.**

The board reconvened into open session at 5:37 p.m.

**Commissioner Branson moved to recess the meeting until 8:30 AM Friday February 10, 2017 at the same location, Commissioner Henning seconded.**

**Motion to recess the meeting carried by unanimous consent of the board.**

The meeting recessed at 5:39 p.m.

## **February 10, 2017**

The Guilford County Board of Commissioners reconvened the Commissioners' Retreat at 8:40 a.m.

Present: Commissioners Jeff Phillips, Alan Branson, Justin Conrad, Kay Cashion, Hank Henning, Alan Perdue. Commissioner Ray Trapp arrived at 8:59 a.m.; Commissioner Foster arrived at 10:26 a.m.

Absent: Commissioner Carolyn Coleman

Also Present: County Manager Marty Lawing, Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier, County Attorney Mark Payne, Budget Director Mike Halford, Clerk to the Board Robin Keller, and various department directors and members of the media.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN/FOCUS AREAS FOR FY2017-2018**

Chairman Phillips called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

County Manager Marty Lawing introduced the item. Lawing reviewed the seven focus areas that the Board adopted for this fiscal year; and stated that staff and department directors had worked to prepare a draft document to consider.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the initial goal of health and well-being and the priority areas.

Lawing stressed that staff are backing away from a health clinic concept. He emphasized the importance of the biometric screening and the goal to assist in crafting a wellness budget where funding is needed.

Discussion ensued regarding employee wellness; the impacts of the discounted gym memberships; results of the employee wellness survey; identifying specific measures to assist in wellness; expressed concerns regarding the primary role of the Board to assist in operations of the County responsibility to staff; obtaining feedback from employees; to make sound policy decisions; and the establishment of a paid internship program.

Mike Halford expounded upon the role and purpose of the strategic plan.

Lawing shared examples of pursuing more opportunities for internships and fellowships. Lawing reviewed some additional examples of the Fellow's programs; spoke to the potentiality to implement it as a recruiting tool; stated the items listed could not be completed in a single year;

stressed prioritization of goals to achieve plan implementations; and noted that items not listed in the plan were likely to arise and would need to be addressed.

The board discussed the purpose and goals and the role of a strategic plan; reviewed specific projects completed; listed the desired types of project proposals; the need for tangible recommendations to restructure and prioritize funding; more metrics associated with priorities; a focus on morale; to be an employer of choice; discussed longevity; flex time; benefits; the organization's prioritization of employees; the need for work life balance; addressed the workload pressures on employees; and employee compensation needs.

Commissioner Perdue asked staff to prioritize the items that possess the greatest impacts for attaining overall goals.

Lawing provided an example regarding retention of detention officers; spoke to the decline in benefits as being a large factor in retention; and noted the elimination of offering retiree insurance for new hires.

Chairman Phillips inquired about best-practice retention options.

Commissioner Branson inquired about retention and benefits plans in other counties.

Lawing outlined changes in the County deductible plan; stated that staff had been pursuing a higher deductible plan for increase employee options.

Commissioner Trapp discussed the changing needs of the employee base; emphasized that each generation had different expectations; and benefits needs to be more flexible to ensure retention.

Commissioner Conrad noted innovative service delivery including combining some departments; consideration of moving governmental functions out of downtown to be more centralized.

Commissioner Henning voiced consent for automating and consolidating wherever possible.

Lawing spoke to the option of jail consolidation.

Chairman Phillips spoke to the prioritization of items by areas of vulnerability; budgetary impacts; and areas of creativity.

Commissioner Henning shared his appreciation with staff for the efforts of the departments and the hard work of the employees and the success of running the day to day operations.

Commissioner Cashion echoed the appreciation for staff; spoke to staff's ability to keep services moving despite disadvantages; workforce changes; the crucial need for focus to ensure the County was a primary employment choice; thanked those employees who have committed to working through the tough times; empathized with employees for the ongoing pressures they face working in government.

Lawing stated that wellness was tied to insurance benefits.

Grier spoke to the needs of educating the community to promote further wellness.

The board discussed the need for communications improvements; public relations position to help share information; recommendations for a branding campaign to promote Guilford County.

Lawing reviewed new brandings of other counties.

Commissioner Cashion noted the insufficient efforts in this area.

Branson simply cautioned that the position would require robust oversight.

Halford spoke to blending technology to encourage work.

Grier noted the need to create apps to access county services; for more technologically adaptive services to increase traffic.

Commissioner Henning spoke to the capital needs; utilizing technology; and telecommuting to offset capital costs for housing employees.

Commissioner Foster entered the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Commissioner Henning spoke to space needs.

Halford noted making 1.3.1 a high priority item.

Grier expressed the need for this to assist with bond ratings and utilization of fund balance.

Recess 10:30 a.m.

Chairman Phillips called the meeting back to order at 10:50 a.m.; spoke to prioritization of needs; focusing aid; to the topic of healthy people; and the need for expansion of medical care in County schools.

Commissioner Henning requested additional history on community related nursing; additional historical information, including all budgetary changes; and stated that it was helpful to have the background in deciding future decisions.

Commissioner Conrad spoke to the need for a school nurse in County schools; stated that the issue of a school nurse had been a serious issue for six to eight years.

The Board discussed the role of the advisory council; their efforts to identify priorities; the Health and Human Services Advisory Committee; and having school nurses in their top five.

Commissioner Conrad spoke to similar circumstances with the Animal Services Advisory Board; the process for identifying priorities; and bringing them forward.

The Board discussed the need to prioritize school nurses; adding access to medical services in the schools; identified changes in education with added charters; home schools; private schools; questioned the opportunity for school nurses in charter and private schools; stated the need for medical access was a priority of all schools; spoke to locating greatest needs; priorities of public schools due to higher number of enrolled students; expressed consideration on the State level to mandate medical access to all schools; that a majority of students attending public schools receive some sort of services through the department of public health; the sources of funding for a nurse; and emphasized locating alternative funding sources.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the general assembly and upcoming legislation and projects; she noted that they have appointed a committee to study school nurses; emphasized the need for the General Assembly to prioritize the issue to obtain additional State funds for school nurses.

Cashion spoke to her communications with ProjectOne representatives and realized that it was not a sub-committee of the Health and Human Services Advisory Board she advised the Commissioner that while the group consisted of several Advisory Board members that it was a separate organization turned into a lobbying platform; and spoke to the positive aspects of citizen engagement on topics of interest.

## **10. MENTAL HEALTH**

Chairman Phillips introduced the topic of quality mental health care in Guilford County; and spoke to the priority of the topic.

The Board discussed the impacting needs on departments such as Detention, Emergency Services, and the Family Justice Center; the relationship between the County and the future of Sandhills regarding a merger; voiced hesitation for the merger; and expressed a desire to merge with Eastpointe rather than Alliance; County obligations; to examine provided services throughout the State; inquired about alternative members' benefits to merge with smaller counties versus larger counties; requested the departments impacted to provide feedback to the Board; an assessment to consider further options; matters of geography; voiced concerns with the availability of mental health issues; substance abuse issues in the jail; and the need for programs to address the crisis.

Commissioner Cashion echoed the need for departmental feedback; spoke to Critical Incident training classes currently offered to providers and staff; Cashion updated the board that Sandhills is waiting on action at the State level regarding additional consolidation of LMEs across the state. Cashion requested a work session to review the services and operations of mental health services in Guilford County.

Commissioner Trapp requested an update from Commissioner Cashion on the pending Senate bill that would delegate the Secretary sole authority of decision-making; spoke to the pending merger; and the nine counties in support of a Sandhills alliance.

The Board discussed the need of a community needs assessment; referenced schools; delayed reaction time to receive services; urged additional local oversight and community involvement specific to Guilford County; stated an assessment was a primary topic of the Say Yes program; wrap around services to address needs in Guilford County; the quality of services provided by Sandhills; the specific needs of the Guilford County departments; the LME map in Guilford County; and voiced interest of a work session to discuss the specific needs and priorities for mental health services.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the ongoing conversations that advocated for improved mental health services; the jail; and for the Family Justice Center.

Phillips requested a work session to address Sandhills.

Halford clarified the strategic planning process; stated that the document would be a framework for prioritizing the county's budget.

Lawing noted that staff listed the needs of the department directors; staff would prioritize the list and submit to the Board for final approval; and stated that the timeline for approval would need to be completed before April.

The board agreed with the plan.

Chairman Phillips thanked staff for all of their efforts in preparing the retreat.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned by general censuses at 11:45AM

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Chairman, Jeffrey M. Phillips

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Clerk to Board, Robin Keller

