

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

Greensboro, North Carolina  
August 15, 2019

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed work session at 3:00 p.m. in the Blue Room, located on the first floor of the Old Guilford County Courthouse, Greensboro, North Carolina.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Alan Branson, presiding; Vice Chairman Jeff Phillips, Commissioners Melvin “Skip” Alston, Hank Henning, Kay Cashion, Alan Perdue (in at 4:41PM), Justin Conrad, Caroline Q. Coleman (out at 4:30PM).

**ABSENT:** Commissioner J. Carlvena Foster.

**ALSO PRESENT:** County Manager Marty Lawing; Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier; County Attorney Mark Payne; Budget Director Michael Halford; Clerk to Board Robin Keller; Deputy Clerk to Board Scott Baillargeon; Dr. Iulia Vann, DHHS-Public Health Division Assistant Director; Dan Durham, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director and members of the community and media.

## **I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Branson called the work session to order at 3:09 PM.

## **II. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. DOWNTOWN GREENSBORO INC. (DGI) STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

Zach Matheny, President/CEO of Downtown Greensboro Inc. (DGI) introduced DGI Board Chair Paula Pierce and Board member Mark Prince. He provided an overview of the current programs in the downtown Greensboro area, and discussed upcoming potential development sites and businesses that could generate employment opportunities and additional investment. Mr. Matheny noted the last strategic action plan was prepared ten (10) years ago and reviewed DGI’s mission as an economic and social developer for the city.

Mr. Matheny discussed the downtown workforce and outlined the six (6) priority projects developed during the last strategic plan review which included completion of the downtown Greenway; encouraging connectivity through a comprehensive streetscaping program; incentivizing quality mixed-use development; activating downtown’s unique stock of historic buildings; creating a significant Performing Arts Center; and supporting a knowledge community by incentivizing local colleges and universities to relocate programs and facilities to the downtown area.

Mr. Matheny noted several of these projects are now underway and confirmed citizens approved a \$26 million streetscape bond in 2016. He requested the Board’s assistance in establishing the next 5-10 action items for the upcoming DGI strategic plan and asked the Board consider appropriating \$50,000 in county funding to support the organization. Mr. Matheny spoke to the potential return in property tax revenue that could result from additional downtown development.

Chairman Branson opened the floor for questions.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the status of funding for the Greenway and expressed her enthusiasm for DGI's efforts in developing downtown Greensboro.

Mr. Matheny shared the City of Greensboro was currently negotiating a land purchase in the western portion of the city that would allow them to complete the project.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the organization's efforts to preserve downtown markets and support small business owners.

Mr. Matheny shared the marketing campaigns designed to encourage more retailers and folk festivals, and noted the lack of "chain" businesses in the downtown area.

Vice Chairman Phillips expressed his concerns with final outcomes versus Board expectations of how county funding should be utilized when supporting economic development. He questioned DGI's plan for the additional funding, and noted the majority of downtown Greensboro falls within his district and he has been pleased with the organization's work in this area.

Mr. Matheny shared the organization's goal to develop a strategic plan with input from the City and the County. He discussed the associated costs and emphasized the community's need for additional development, but spoke to the difficulty in providing a tangible concept until all partners have shared their ideas and concepts.

Commissioner Alston expressed his disappointment with presentation and noted that while the organization's work is focused upon downtown Greensboro, there was no mention of the International Civil Rights Museum and its contributions to the city. He spoke to the economic impact of the museum and discussed the upcoming 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sit-in movement as an event expected to draw tourism dollars to the area. Commissioner Alston noted DGI has not participated in any state-wide events.

Mr. Matheny shared his interest in maintaining open communication with the International Civil Rights Museum management and staff, and expressed his interest in collaborating on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary event.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if the organization could work directly with local entities versus spending \$200,000 on a consultant to develop a strategic plan.

Mr. Matheny discussed the pros and cons of seeking out individual investors and noted while these six (6) priority projects are important to DGI, the Greensboro City Council and other entities have not formally identified them as priorities. He emphasized the need to include all entities when developing priorities to ensure economic growth within Greensboro.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if DGI should consider utilizing existing services and resources to develop a strategic plan to avoid seeking external funding for a consultant. She noted the plan should include opportunities for minority businesses across the city.

Commissioner Conrad questioned the timing of the decision and potential dates to kick-off the planning process. He noted the topic could be listed as a public hearing during the second meeting in September 2019, to give the community opportunity to speak on the topic.

Commissioner Alston recommended providing sixty (60) to ninety (90) days' notice prior to the public hearing.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the status and source of additional funding.

Mr. Matheny shared DGI currently has two (2) donors who have pledged funding and noted the strain a ninety (90) day waiting period would place on strategic plan development.

**Motion made by Commissioner Justin Conrad, and seconded by Vice Chairman Jeff Phillips, to schedule a public hearing during the October 17, 2019 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners to receive public input on the proposed allocation of funds to Downtown Greensboro, Inc. in the amount of \$50,000 to support downtown Greensboro economic development activities through the creation of a downtown strategic development plan.**

The Board discussed the motion on the floor and the timing of the public hearing.

**Substitute motion made by Commissioner Hank Henning, and seconded by Commissioner Justin Conrad, to schedule a public hearing during the September 19, 2019 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners to receive public input on the proposed allocation of funds to Downtown Greensboro, Inc. in the amount of \$50,000 to support downtown Greensboro economic development activities through the creation of a downtown strategic development plan.**

**VOTE: Motion carried 7-0**

**AYES: Alan Branson, Jeff Phillips, Justin Conrad, Carolyn Q. Coleman, Kay Cashion, Hank Henning**

**NOES: Melvin "Skip" Alston**

**ABSENT: J. Carlvena Foster and Alan Perdue**

## **B. RECEIVE STATUS OF COUNTY CLASS & COMPENSATION STUDY**

County Manager Marty Lawing reviewed the status of the plan and noted that throughout the process of the study he expressed his concerns with the reduced number of pay grades. He shared he was not comfortable releasing the results and requested the consultants conduct another study to develop additional pay grades. Lawing shared the County has 444 job classifications and spoke to the difficulty of collapsing them into 22 pay grades.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if the current grade structure could remain.

Lawing confirmed the current grade structure could remain in place, but noted the goal of the salary study and new grade structure was to move employees to the mid-point in a timelier manner. He spoke to the survey of larger counties and noted none have as few as 22 grades. Lawing noted the importance of developing an accurate grade structure to ensure an effective triennial review. He confirmed he would present a new study to the Board within thirty (30) days.

### **C. RECEIVE BOARD OF HEALTH TOBACCO HEALTH REGULATIONS UPDATE**

Commissioner Coleman questioned why staff did not provide additional information regarding this item to the Board prior to the work session.

Lawing stated that staff will only provide a status update regarding the regulations and no decisions will be made during the work session.

Dr. Iulia Vann, DHHS-Public Health Division Assistant Director introduced the item and noted the intent is to determine the Board's will regarding the proposed regulation. She outlined the current policy and the need to curtail tobacco usage on County campuses. Vann shared the goal is to develop a comprehensive rule that is easily enforced and accessible to the public. She reviewed the definitions of smoke-free versus tobacco-free environments and reported Randolph County recently approved regulations designating it as a tobacco-free county, to include county properties and parks. Vann discussed next steps and Board actions required to adopt the rules.

Commissioner Coleman left the meeting at 4:30PM.

**Chairman Branson recommended scheduling a public hearing during the September 19, 2019 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners to consider proposed amendments to the Guilford County Board of Health regulations regarding tobacco and tobacco-related products on governmental property. There being no questions or debate, the public hearing was scheduled by general consensus of the Board.**

### **D. RECEIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT UPDATE**

Dan Durham, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director provided an update on the Old Courthouse Renovation project. He stated the project should be completed by the end of September and noted the landscaping and exterior renovation, to include repair of storm drain piping, will be bid as a separate project at an estimated cost of \$200,000.

Commissioner Alston questioned the status of the bid specifications and requested copies of the complete landscaping project specifications for Board review.

Durham shared the specifications are currently under review by the Purchasing department, but would ensure they are provided to the Board.

Durham discussed progress at the EMS Phase 1 site, reviewed overall construction costs and the target date for completion.

Durham provided design specifications for the Animal Shelter and reviewed the project timeline, noting the County plans to receive bids from contractors in November, request contract approval from the Board in December with a goal for project completion by June 2021.

Durham shared 50% of design documents for the Mental Health Facility have been completed and civil drawings are currently under review at the City of Greensboro. He noted the goal is to return to the Board for approval of the site package in November and to begin site work in December. Durham reviewed the building construction schedule to achieve opening of the adult facility by March 2021. He confirmed the overall project budget for the facility is \$20 million.

Durham provided an updated on the Sheriff's Office building and reviewed the approved site plan A project, which includes demolishing the Law Enforcement Center (LEC) building and maintaining operation of the underground tunnel. He shared the estimated project budget is \$12 million and the target date for issuing A/E requests for proposals is September 2019, with Board approval of design specifications in November. Durham confirmed the target date to complete construction of the building is February 2022.

Commissioner Perdue arrived to the meeting at 4:41PM.

Durham reported the County is currently managing 27 active or funded projects.

Vice Chairman Phillips questioned completion dates for the Mental Health Facility, Animal Shelter and other projects.

Durham confirmed the EMS Phase 1 project is on schedule and noted the Mental Health Facility project is dependent upon the closing on the land purchase, which will not occur until the end of September. He shared that the County's lease with the Bellemeade Center will not expire until June 2021.

Vice Chairman Phillips expressed his concern with the March 2021 opening date and urged staff to expedite the project timelines.

Commissioner Alston questioned the possibility of incentivizing an expedited project timeline.

County Attorney Mark Payne confirmed the standards for offering incentives for early completion and potential punitive actions for delays.

Lawing noted once the guaranteed maximum price is finalized the Board could discuss incentives for expediting the project.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the County's projected schedule matches Samet Corporation's schedule for construction of the Mental Health Facility.

Durham stated the projected schedule is developed by the architect, but noted Samet is part of the construction team.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the schedule accounts for the simultaneous construction of two (2) buildings.

Durham confirmed the team anticipates a slight lag in the Mental Health Facility construction due to the scope of the project.

Commissioner Perdue questioned the ability to fast track the permitting process for the project.

### **III. OTHER BUSINESS**

**IV. HOLD CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSULTING WITH THE COUNTY ATTORNEY**

By unanimous consent, the Board agreed to enter into closed session at 4:50PM.

The meeting was recessed at 4:50PM.

The meeting was reconvened at 5:24PM.

**IV. ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:25PM.

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Chairman J. Alan Branson

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Clerk to Board