

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING, FEBRUARY 01, 1999

The Board of Commissioners ("the Board") of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in regular session in the District Courtroom, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 10:00 A.M. on February 01, 1999.

Present: Chair Rick Givens; Vice Chair Uva Holland,
Commissioners Margaret Pollard, Carl Outz,
and Gary Phillips; County Manager, Charlie
Horne; County Attorney, Robert L. Gunn;
Finance Officer, Vicki McConnell;
and Clerk to the Board, Sandra B. Lee

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 10:00 AM.

AGENDA

- The Chairman asked if there were additions, deletions or corrections to the Agenda.

The County Attorney asked that the Minutes of the January 19, 1999 Board of Commissioners' meeting be removed from the Consent Agenda to discuss the application for tax exemption for Pittsboro Christian Village, Inc., submitted December 31, 1998.

Commissioner Outz asked that a letter be sent to the Department of Transportation encouraging the paving of State Roads #1951 and #2324. A copy of the letter is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Commissioner Pollard stated that she would like for a discussion to ensue regarding rifle restrictions under the Commissioners' Reports.

Chairman Givens asked that a discussion regarding the NRC and Chatham County's willingness to support Orange County be added to the Agenda as Item #8A.

The County Manager asked that the Southwest Improvement Project relating to the County's on-going waterline project be added to the Agenda as Item #6A.

The County Manager asked that Item #6, Strategic Plan Steering Advisory Team, be deferred until the Board of Commissioners' meeting on February 15, 1999.

Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Holland, to approve the Agenda. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

CONSENT AGENDA

- The Chairman directed the Clerk to the Board to read the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Pollard moved, seconded by Commissioner Outz, to approve the items listed on the Consent Agenda as read by the Clerk.

1. **Minutes:** Consideration of approval of Board Minutes for Work Session held January 19, 1999

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

2. **Advertisement of Unpaid Tax Liens:** Consideration of a request to approve an advertisement of unpaid tax liens

The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

There was no one present who wished to make public comments.

COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK PROGRAM PRESENTATION

Community Service Work Program: Presentation of the Community Service Work Program, a State agency of the NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety

Sandra Riha, Coordinator of the Community Service Work Program, stated that the program is a State agency of the North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety which marks its 16th year as a statewide program providing labor and assistance to the community at large. She explained that almost any agency that is providing a public service is eligible to participate in the program; that currently, there are twenty-four agencies in Chatham County with active agreements to provide work sites for community referrals; that all referrals are Court ordered, ranging from young first offenders with minor alcohol charges to probationers with more serious offenses; that the offenders are screened by the community service coordinators that provide support and monitor their progress; that during the year 1998, the program received 196 new admissions in Chatham County; that during this time, there were over 6,000 hours of service performed; that the program is always looking for new agencies to recruit as work sites for their referrals; and that they are especially in need of weekend sites with adequate supervision.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION

Chatham County Recreation Master Plan Survey: Presentation of the survey for the Chatham County Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan

Tracy Burnett, Recreation Director, stated that the Recreation Department and the Master Plan Steering Committee met on Wednesday, January 20, 1999 to make recommendations with regard to the survey which would be most beneficial to the County. She explained that the surveys will be distributed February 17, 1999; that if there are sponsorships for the survey, they will be distributed by being inserted in the Chatham Newspaper, through schools and drop-off locations such as libraries, banks, grocery stores at an approximate cost of \$1,500.00; and that if there are not enough sponsors, the surveys will

be distributed through drop-off locations and schools.

Commissioners Holland, Phillips, and Pollard offered to help distribute brochures to the areas in which they reside in the County.

TAX DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION

Lock Box Report: Report on lock box collection services

Kim Horton, Tax Administrator, stated that forty-four percent of the 20,971 transactions processed during the month of December were “lock box” forms of payment; that the response by the taxpayers of Chatham County to this new payment method was very well received; that some citizens still chose to mail their payment directly to the office or to come into the office personally to make payments; that those payments were processed daily; that on December 31, 1998, the Tax Collector’s Office had collected \$15,636,116.24 which included regular, motor vehicle and public utility payments; that this figure compares to \$11,444,752.31 collected as of December 31, 1997; that the difference between the two years reflects payments that did not need processing staff; that in past years, staff was unable to post all payments until the second week in January; that the lock box method allowed payments to be deposited directly to the County’s accounts and interest to begin accumulating immediately.

Ms. Horton advised the Board that by using the lock box method, interest began accumulating on \$4,000,000 nearly two weeks earlier than normal; that additional savings were realized by not having to hire temporary employees to post mail payments; and that the workload of the collections staff decreased considerably from fifteen hour overtime per week over a three-week period to five hours per week over a two-week period.

Frances Wilson, Tax Collector reviewed the percentage increase of collections from December, 1997 to January, 1999 and stated that there were 17,983 lock box transactions from October, 1998 – January, 1999 totaling \$8,901,822.44; that the amount of current and delinquent taxes collected through January 31, 1999 totaled \$22,104,857.98; and that the Tax Office has requested employee lists from 127 area employers in order to issue wage garnishments.

BOARD AND COMMITTEES

~~**Strategic Plan Steering Advisory Team:** Consideration of approval of appointments to the Strategic Plan Steering Advisory Team~~

This item was deferred until the February 15, 1999 Board meeting.

PUBLIC WORKS

Southwest Chatham Water Main

Commissioner Pollard moved, seconded by Commissioner Holland, to approve **Resolution #99-02 Requesting State Loan Assistance to Install Water Lines Along State Roads #902 and #1139 in Chatham County**, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

MANAGER' S REPORTS

The County Manager informed the Commissioners of the following:

- 1) **Public Hearing from Communications Tower Ordinance:** The annual public hearing on the Chatham County Communications Tower Ordinance will be held on April 19, 1999.
- 2) **Fire Marshall Vehicle Transfer:** Consideration of vehicle transfer from the Chatham County Fire Marshall to the East Chatham Rescue Squad will be discussed at the February 15, 1999 Board meeting.

PSLAC

Mary MacDowell, PSLAC Director, reviewed a letter received from Diane Curran explaining the County's options for becoming a party to the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) license amendment proceeding for expansion of the spent fuel pool at the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant. A copy of the letter is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Katherine Thomas, CP&L representative, stated that CP&L fully supports an open process; that they are hosting an open house and public information session to be held on Thursday, February 04, 1999 at the Harris Visitors Center near New Hill; that CP&L regularly updates their computer web sites; and that they have responded directly to any e-mails they have received from citizens asking for information. She stated that they have participated in discussions, met with members of their customer base, and mailed out newsletters to customers within a ten-mile radius of the Harris Nuclear Plant. She further stated that CP&L does not support another independent review in addition to the review that the federal government set up through the Federal Regulatory Commission; that CP&L remains confident that any independent technical review conducted by Orange County will affirm the company's own safety assessment of the fuel storage plan; that the Harris Plant, which began commercial operation in 1987, was originally designed for four nuclear units; that common support facilities, including a fuel handling building, were required to be built to support the operation of Unit 1, the first unit to begin operation; that as plans and regional electrical demand projections changed, the remaining three units were canceled; that CP&L has safely stored spent fuel in the two operating pools at the Harris Plant for eleven years and the activation of the two other existing pools is aimed at preparing the future storage needs; that CP&L stores spent fuel from its own reactor and from its Brunswick and Robinson nuclear plants; that the fuel is in the form of ceramic pellets encased in twelve foot long steel tubes; that nuclear fuel is used as is coal, oil, or natural gas in other power plants, to create heat to produce steam; that the high pressure steam forces a turbine to turn, producing electricity; that the nuclear fuel bundles must be replaced periodically and the used nuclear fuel is stored underwater in a pool; that ultimately, the US Department of Energy is responsible for building a permanent storage facility which is scheduled to open in the year 2010; that CP&L's plans call for the third pool to be in service in the year 2000; that the fourth pool would not be needed for several years thereafter; that CP&L operates a system of 16 power plants in the Carolinas; that during 1998, the company's nuclear plants produced nearly 45% of the electricity generated on behalf of CP&L customers with the remainder being generated from the use of coal, natural gas, and hydroelectric facilities. She stated that about half the electricity used in North Carolina comes

from nuclear power plants.

Liz Cullington, asked the Board to request a 30 day extension for a comment period from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Commissioner Phillips suggested a reaffirmation by the Board to support Orange County for an open process, request a thirty day extension for public review and to receive the information from the technical consultant and make a decision at that time.

Commissioner Pollard asked the Board to consider reaffirming their intent to join with Orange County in seeking an independent technical and legal evaluation of the current and proposed high level waste storage at the Harris Nuclear Power Plant and offer support for Mary MacDowell who is more knowledgeable in that arena.

Commissioner Outz moved to make a decision at a later date.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Pollard moved, seconded by Commissioner Holland, to continue at the County's own pace. The motion carried four (4) to one (1) with Commissioner Phillips opposing.

Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Pollard, to send a letter requesting a thirty day extension of the filing period to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0). A copy of the letter is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

Deer Population

Commissioner Pollard expressed concern with regard to the over abundance of deer in the County. She stated that the County has already had one fatality and one injury with hunters using high-powered rifles; that some counties have regulations as to how rifles and deer stands are used so that the long-range risk is reduced by using deer stands. She asked that staff evaluate the efforts of some other counties as to how they improve safety.

Pittsboro Christian Village

County Attorney, Robert Gunn, asked that the minutes of the January 19, 1999 be amended to clarify the approval of the application from Pittsboro Christian Village, received December 31, 1998, requesting property tax exemption for the addition to their main building.

Commissioner Pollard moved, seconded by Commissioner Phillips, to approve the application for property tax exemption for Pittsboro Christian Village, Inc. for its construction in progress of the addition to the main building for 1998 as described in its application received on December 31, 1998. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0). A copy of the letter is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

January 19, 1999 Minutes Approval

Commissioner Phillips moved, seconded by Commissioner Holland, to approve the Minutes of the January 19, 1999 Board of Commissioners' meeting as corrected and amended. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

Jordan Lake Reimbursement

Commissioner Outz asked that a letter be sent to the Army Corps of Engineers and Legislature requesting that the County's appropriations be increased to cover the cost of lost taxes on the land covered by Jordan Lake.

Commissioner Outz also expressed concern with regard to the incomplete soil survey which has been in progress for approximately five years to be used County-wide.

School Visitation

Chairman Givens stated that he had visited a couple of schools and was very impressed with the schools, students, school board, and teachers. He stated that the County has a great school system and that all should work harder to support the schools.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chairman Givens declared the meeting adjourned for lunch with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and consideration of their annual report. The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 AM.

Rick Givens, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sandra B. Lee, Clerk to the Board
Chatham County Board of Commissioners