

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WELFARE REFORM MEETING, JANUARY 26, 1998

The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in special session in the Health Administration Building, Byrd’s Classroom, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 7:00 P.M. on January 26, 1998.

Present: Chairman Margaret Pollard; Vice Chair Betty Wilson;
Commissioners John Grimes, and Uva Holland, County
Manager, Charlie Horne; County Attorney, Robert L.
Gunn; Assistant County Manager, Reneé Dickson;
and Clerk to the Board, Sandra B. Lee

Absent: Commissioner Henry Dunlap

The Chair welcomed those in attendance and the meeting was called to order at 7:10 P.M.

Agenda:

1. Welfare Reform
2. Grants:
 - Project Turn Around
 - Breaking & Entering Task Force
3. Other
4. February 23, 1998 – Possible date on which to hold a joint meeting with the Board of Education
5. JOCCA

Welfare Reform:

Bill Lail reviewed the Chatham County Work First Plan, eight goals required of the County, and plans to achieve and measure outcomes and goals. He stated that Chatham County will parallel the goals set forth by the State of North Carolina and not construct its own outcome goals at this time. He explained the outcomes and goals for the County as follows:

1. Reducing the Work First Caseload
2. Putting Adults to Work
3. Staying Off Welfare After Going to Work
4. Meeting the “All Parent” Participation Rate
5. Meeting the “Two Parent” Participation Rate
6. Avoiding Welfare Through Diversion Assistance
7. Increasing Child Support Orders and Collections for Work First Families
8. Child Well-Being

Mr. Lail thanked everyone for their work efforts in this endeavor.

Commissioner Pollard commended everyone involved, including the consultants, for their time spent on this project.

After considerable discussion, Commissioner Grimes moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to send the plan forward. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0). A copy of the plan is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Project Turn Around:

Paige Vernon stated that "Project Turn Around" is a support based program designed to provide an alternative to incarceration and to keep participants from committing a second drug or drug related offense; that the diversion program would enable participants to overcome drug dependent life-styles and to contribute to the community in a positive manner; that individuals will be court mandated to participate in the program for six months to one year; that first time offenders, sixteen years or older, who are involved in crimes of a non-violent nature and have a documented substance abuse problem will be eligible; that individuals will be referred into the program mainly through the District Attorney's Office, but may also be referred by judges, public defenders, private attorneys or self-referred. She stated that "Project Turn Around" will provide screenings, identifications, assessments, referrals, and monitoring; and that upon completion of the program, charges will be dismissed by the State and later expunged off their record.

Commissioner Pollard thanked those in attendance for the opportunity of bringing this offer to the Board of Commissioners and stated that she sees this as an opportunity to meet a commitment to the County's citizens.

Commissioner Wilson moved, seconded by Commissioner Grimes, to adopt the "Project Turn Around For First Time Drug Offenders" program for Chatham County and commit to the County's share of the grant. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0). A copy of the grant application is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Breaking and Entering Task Force and COPS FAST Program:

Sheriff Don Whitt stated that the County had been awarded two additional officers for the COPS FAST Program that will begin in July; that because the additional officers were awarded, they may not need to proceed with the Breaking and Entering Task Force Grant application; that the Breaking and Entering grant would be for an additional three officers and an administrative assistant for record keeping; that the COPS FAST officers would be added to the community police force; that the COPS FAST grant award began in January, 1998; that the COPS FAST grant would only cover the cost of salaries, and additional equipment and vehicles would be needed; that additional officers in the community policing areas would cut down the amount of breaking and entering in these areas thus eliminating the need for the breaking and entering task group; that the Breaking and Entering grant award would include salaries, equipment, weapons, and vehicles expense, with a match from the County for two years.

Commissioner Grimes moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, to give permission to apply for the Breaking and Entering Task Force grant. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

Future Grant Applications:

Charlie Horne, County Manager, asked that the staff and agencies be given Commissioner direction in the future regarding applying for grants which will require a County match or a substantial County

commitment in the future.

Board of Education Joint Meeting:

It was decided, by consensus, that the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education will hold a joint meeting at Hayley-Bales Steak House, Siler City, NC, January 23, 1998.

JOCCA-Next Steps:

Commissioner Wilson moved, seconded by Commissioner Holland, to give JOCCA the money that has been allocated to them, with some accountability as to how they are managing their money, as well as allowing staff to set up a monthly reporting system for JOCCA to monitor spending and deficit management. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Grimes moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, that there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0), and the meeting was adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Margaret B. Pollard, Chair

ATTEST:

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