

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET INPUT SESSION, MAY 17, 2000

The Board of Commissioners (the "Board") of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in special session for the purpose of receiving public comment on the Manager's Recommended Budget in the North Chatham Elementary School, Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 7:00 PM on May 17, 2000.

Present: Chairman Rick Givens; Vice Chairman Uva Holland;
Commissioners Margaret Pollard, Gary Phillips, and Carl
Outz; County Manager, Charlie Horne; and Assistant
County Manager, Reneé Dickson; Finance Officer,
Vicki McConnell

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:00 P.M.

The County Manager, Assistant County Manager, and Finance Officer presented an over view of the Fiscal Year 2000-2001 Recommended Budget.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

- Tracy Burnett, Recreation Director, presented the Fiscal Year 2000-2001 Recreation Budget.

CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

- Charlie Horne, County Manager, presented the Manager's Recommended Budget for the Chatham County Schools.

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Cynthia Crossen, 1116 Marshall Road, Pittsboro, NC, encouraged the Board of Commissioners to obtain natural areas for preservation. She suggested setting aside one penny on the tax rate to obtain open space.

Phillip Cates, Executive Director of the Chatham Education Foundation, 112 Russell Chapel Road, Pittsboro, presented three alternatives to raising taxes to fund schools:

1. A five-year rolling one million dollar bond with a one-year term. He suggested that the funds be used for non-capital infrastructure and other school needs.
2. An economic development and public education summit being held in October to foster public-private partnerships to enhance education.
3. A waiver of property taxes for teachers.

Tamsie Hughes, 109 Shalestone, Chapel Hill, NC, parent of two children and representative of the North Chatham Elementary School PTA, encouraged the Board to spend money on parks and schools and to buy land for a school in Northern Chatham as soon as possible. She asked that the Board fund the Board of

Education request, especially the teachers supplement. She read a letter from Michael Burke which requested that the Board of Commissioners fully fund the supplement and the Board of Education request.

Patsy Stanley, 1102 Driftwood Drive, Siler City, NC, principal of Perry Harrison Elementary School, stated that she represented the principals in the county, who unanimously supported the Board of Education budget request. She spoke in favor of the supplement for principals, teachers, and teaching assistants. She presented the Board of Commissioners with information comparing the supplement for Chatham County principals with neighboring counties and the State. She pointed out that Chatham County ranks last among neighboring counties and 20th from the bottom of the State. She stated that the funding formula has not allowed for expansion in the school system over the last four to five years. She questioned the source of the figures presented by the County Manager showing a 146 percent increase in the principals' supplement.

Wade Lehman, 160 Reeves Road, Pittsboro, NC, principal of SAGE Academy, stated that he echoed Ms. Stanley's comments.

Rob Tharp, 11742 US #421, Goldston, NC, principal, stated that he also echoed Ms. Stanley's comments.

Ronald O. Joyce, 145 CC Routh Road, Bear Creek, NC, principal, stated that he also agreed with Ms. Stanley.

Liz Hayes, 50-Birchwood Drive, Pittsboro, NC spoke in favor of funding for the American Tobacco Trail, and asked the Board of Commissioners to set aside funds for development of trails.

Daniel Snyder, 105 George Street, PO Box 196, Siler City, NC, spoke in favor of the proposed increase in the supplement for teaching assistants and asked the Board of Commissioners not to leave them out.

Linda Murray, 180 Southern Green Way, Chapel Hill, NC, asked the Board of Commissioners to go beyond the call of duty to create a good relationship with the Board of Education. She expressed concern about the disparity between new and existing teachers in the Board of Education's supplement proposal. She encouraged the members of the audience to look at the whole process concerning school funding.

Joann Robb, 1396 Bynum Ridge Road, Pittsboro, NC, fifth-grade teacher at North Chatham, expressed concerns that the County might ask the Board of Education to increase the supplement out of its existing allocation. She stated that increasing supplements for teachers would tell them that education is a priority; and that not doing so would send the opposite signal.

Ray Greenlaw, 2 Jordan Drive, Pittsboro, NC, asked the Board of Commissioners if the citizens of Chatham County are getting their money's worth for County services. He stated that he respectfully disagreed with the Chatham County School Superintendent's answer regarding its accountability for how funds are spent; that a financial audit does not reflect performance. He expressed concerns that the county's budget does not show an evaluation of performance departments' outcomes. He also expressed that the budget did not appear to be furthering the goal of performance-based budgeting.

Larry Honeywell, 59504 Cory, Chapel Hill, NC, spoke on behalf of Chatham Habitat for Humanity. He thanked the County for its support in the budget. He cited the availability of affordable land as his organization's greatest challenge.

Greg Solomon, 406 Buck Branch Road, Pittsboro, NC, expressed concern with regard to the Board of

Education's budget, including Randolph County students who pay \$10 tuition, funds spent for waste water fines, capital outlay requests duplicated in the FY 1999-00 and FY 2000-01 budget requests, and inconsistencies in the budget document. He asked the Board of Commissioners to work more closely with the Board of Education, to hold them accountable for how they spend their funds, and to share resources between the schools and the County (such as nurses). He suggested that the County hire a professional firm to buy property; that the Board allocate the budget for Chatham County School by line item, especially for teachers supplement. He spoke in favor of increasing all supplements, the Newcomer Program, a trainer for new teachers, and increased instructional supplies.

Meg Miller, 210 Oakleys Peak, Chapel Hill, NC, spoke about the Board of Education request. She encouraged the Board of Commissioners to look at commercial development in the northern part of the County.

Craig DeBussey, 114 Tanager, Chapel Hill, NC, spoke in support of education. He suggested leasing school buildings from commercial developers. He also spoke in favor of Parks and Recreation. He praised the efforts of Tracy Burnett as the County's hardest working director. He encouraged the Board of Commissioners to make a stronger investment in parks and recreation and to increase funding for the Park Foundation. He expressed concern that the Economic Development Corporation did not receive full funding and stated that the EDC should not have to raise funds raise for operating expenses, but should use fund raising for special projects.

Pat Friedman, 35 Pioneer Path, Chapel Hill, NC, representative of the North Chatham PTA, spoke in support of increasing the teachers' supplement. She stated that the Board of Education request for a supplement was not enough. She pointed to Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Wake County as the places to which Chatham is losing its teachers. She stated that during the year, North Chatham had lost fifty percent of its K-5 teachers.

Juanita McIver, spoke in favor of the teacher's supplements.

Hubert Oakley, 256 Oakleys Peak, Chapel Hill, NC, expressed concern with regard to reducing the Board of Education budget. He stated that Randolph County should pay for its students who are attending Chatham County Schools.

June Arthurs, President of the Chatham County Association of Educators, 230 Dogwood Lane, Pittsboro, NC, presented the Board of Commissioners with a petition signed by more than seven hundred people in favor of increasing the teachers supplement to fifteen percent of their salary. She stated that the percentage of supplement, as it is currently structured, goes down as tenure increases. She encouraged the Board of Commissioners to fully fund the increase in the teachers' supplement. The petition is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Julia Cleaver, spoke in support of the Board of Education request and increasing the teachers supplement. She suggested that the County undergo a master planning process, similar to recreation, to plan systematically and proactively for schools.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:20 PM.

Rick Givens, Chairman

ATTEST:

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