

**MINUTES  
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING, JUNE 13, 1994**

The Board of Commissioners (the "Board") of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in special session in the District Courtroom, located in the Courthouse Annex, Pittsboro, North Carolina, the regular place of meeting, at 7:00 p.m., on June 13, 1994.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Vice Chair Uva Holland, Commissioners Mary Hayes Holmes, Margaret Bryant Pollard and E. T. Hanner; County Manager Ben Shivar; County Attorney Robert L. Gunn; and Clerk to the Board Sandra B. Cape

Absent: Chairman Henry H. Dunlap, Jr.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Holland at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

The Vice Chair asked if there were additions, deletions or corrections to the Agenda.

Commissioner Pollard moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Commissioner Holmes seconded the motion. The motion passed four (4) to zero (0).

CHATHAM COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 1994-95 BUDGET

Public Hearing

The Vice Chair stated that the Board would hear public comment on the Chatham County FY 1994-95 Budget (the "Budget") and requested that the County Manager present background information on the Budget.

County Manager Ben Shivar presented information from the Budget Message on the following topics: fiscal environment, fund balance, economic development program for an industrial park in conjunction with Town of Siler City, \$50,000 for industrial incentives, Sheriff's Department personnel needs, Emergency Operations personnel needs, Animal Shelter personnel needs, other Health Department personnel requests, Co-operative Extension's request for a full-time 4-H position, the Department of Social Services JOBS Program, the School Board's request and Manager's recommendation, Solid Waste and Water Funds status, proposed increase in Solid Waste Fee from \$60 to \$80, construction of additional Recycling Centers throughout the County, and the proposed Household Hazardous Waste facility.

The Vice Chair opened the public hearing on the Budget at 7:23 p.m.

Megan Safrit, Route 1, Siler City, asked that the Board approve funding for an additional DARE officer as requested by the Sheriff's Department. She stated that the DARE program was important to keep kids off drugs.

Bonnie Safrit, Route 1, Siler City, stated that she was a teacher and had been for many years; that she had seen an attitude change in school children regarding the use of drugs since the implementation of the DARE program; and that the DARE program gives the children a positive role model. She asked that the Board approve the extension of the DARE program into the seventh grade as requested by the Sheriff's Department.

Jenny Pleasants, Route 4, Box 39, Siler City, yielded her time to speak.

Elizabeth Zeringue, 905 North Glenn, Siler City, yielded her time to speak.

Ted Chapin, 609 North Ivey Avenue, Siler City, yielded his time to speak.

Michael Budd, Siler City, stated that his was with the Siler City Hospital delegation and that his group wished to yield its time to speak.

Glenn Lawrence, Jr., 218 South Hillcrest Drive, Siler City, yielded his time to speak.

Eugene Simmons, Route 2, Box 282, Siler City, yielded his time to speak at this time.

Gerald Totten, Route 2, Box 283, Siler City, stated the following: he was not against economic development; he is not in a position to get County water but does support the County water program; he is concerned about the industrial development park in Siler City, which represents one cent of the tax increase; there is negative employment in the County due to three industry closings; rather than invest in a new program, the County should take advantage of existing buildings and expand that rather than start something new; this does not seem prudent at this time; County should consider developing the old feed mill in Siler City to make it more attractive; Health and Social Services have Medicare and Medicaid responsibilities which might could be the responsibility of one agency to reduce budget positions by one; when does the Hospital intend to increase community awareness and make it more than an emergency room; and people in the eastern part of the County do not use the hospital.

The Clerk noted that Mr. Totten's three minute time limit had expired.

Don Whitt, Chatham County Sheriff, of Route 1, Moncure, stated that he was speaking on behalf of the Sheriff's Department; the Sheriff's Department needs additional personnel (one clerical position and two deputies), which have been recommended; an additional drug officer and DARE officer are also needed; the major problem for his department is drugs and crime related to drugs; other counties and cities have increased the DARE program to include the seventh grade in addition to the fifth grade; and results of this increase have been positive. He requested that the Board approve an additional drug officer and another DARE officer for the seventh grade.

Ray Greenlaw, Two Jordan Woods, Pittsboro, stated that he hoped the Commissioners would take a very close look at the Departments' requests and the recommendations of the County Manager; in 1991 the landfill fee was \$30, at which time he was taking one bag of trash to a collection point per week and one-half a pick-up truck load to the landfill per year; for the coming year this fee has been increased by 167% above the 1991 level; he is still disposing of the same amount of trash per year; and he does not feel he is getting more service for this increased fee. He requested that the Board look at this proposed increase closely to make sure that the people who use the service and pay the fee really get their money's worth; he approves the method of solid waste management in the community, but the burden of paying for this service seems to be falling disproportionately on the individual households. Mr. Greenlaw also stated his views on the Health Department as follows: not to let the community oriented services, such as environmental health and health education suffer because of continued increase in clinical health services; the projection of 16.4% increase in Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement indicates that the County is escalating the expenditures and

revenues for clinical services; perhaps environmental health, health education and other community services may not be increasing proportionately; and the Planning Board has received a complaint from a developer because of the inability to get septic lines inspected in a timely manner.

The Clerk to the Board noted that Mr. Greenlaw's three minute time limit had expired.

Mark Ellington, 420 Ellington Road, Siler City, stated that he is employed by the Sheriff's Department as the DARE officer for the fifth grade; he has been in this position for five years; he believes in the DARE program; he has seen the difference in the attitudes of children who have gone through the DARE program; the seventh grade DARE program would re-enforce the things learned in the fifth grade prior to these children entering high school; statistics show that the fifth grade DARE program stays with the children most of the way through middle school; and the seventh grade DARE program would instill the dangers of drugs more deeply, which would hopefully last through high school. He asked that the Board approve the additional funding for a second DARE officer.

Ed Spence, 416 South Second Avenue, Siler City, stated that he wished to speak in regard to law enforcement needs; preventive measures are important in the fight against drugs; the County can pay after the children become drug users or drug dealers or now for an additional DARE officer to prevent the need later; the County's current DARE officer, Mark Ellington, is one of the best in the State; we need to re-enforce these children's conviction not to use drugs; his child has been through the DARE program; we need another DARE officer to fight drug use in advance and another drug officer to fight the current drug problem. He requested additional funding for these law enforcement needs.

Byron Hoffman, Siler City, stated that he supports the proposal for Chatham Hospital; this is a well-founded effort by a lot of people, including the Hospital Board, community physicians, citizens, UNC Hospitals, and many others; this is an effort to improve the coordination of health care services throughout the County; this is a wonderful opportunity to improve the services available to the citizens of the County; the investment requested is small in terms of the cost; there are a lot of citizens in the County who need the services of the Hospital; this is the opportunity to improve the Hospital; the public trusts the Board to judiciously manage the tax dollars; and there is not another opportunity for the Board to do more good for more people with each tax dollar than to support this effort for the Hospital. He requested that the Board approve funding for Chatham Hospital.

Edward Straughn, Route 2, Box 466, stated that he is concerned that the proposed tax increase would be harmful to farmers and requested that farm and forestry land owners be given an exemption or break on the increased tax rates. He requested that the Board be careful in spending the County's funds.

The Vice Chair asked if there was anyone else wishing to speak.

Eugene Simmons, Route 2, Siler City, stated that he was present to create awareness for Chatham Hospital and its request; Chatham Hospital operates by using contract management; and this contract management business is a for-profit organization managing a not-for-profit hospital. He asked that the Board investigate the cost of contract management of the Hospital and that he hoped that any tax money given to Chatham Hospital would go for the betterment of the community and Chatham Hospital -- not for the private for-profit business operating under its roof.

Ted Chapin, Administrator for Chatham Hospital, thanked the Board for its consideration of the Hospital's request for funding; urged the Board to approve this funding; and stated that it is important for the future health planning for the people of Chatham County. He requested that the Board approve the Hospital funding as recommended by the Manager.

Elizabeth Zeringue stated that the people who work at Chatham Hospital, the people who use Chatham Hospital and the people who may use Chatham Hospital in the future are all taxpayers; the tax money spent now can be spent sooner or later; if people must be sent out of the County for medical care, it cost people more money and taxpayers more money. She requested support of the Hospital funding.

Michael Budd, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Chatham Hospital, stated that he hoped the Board would act favorably on the Hospital funding request; he was concerned that the management of the Hospital had been questioned; the Hospital is managed by Quorum, which is one of the largest hospital management companies in the United States; Quorum has a six year contract with the Hospital; the contract is reviewed periodically; it is true that Quorum does get paid to manage the Hospital; members of the Hospital Board of Trustees are not paid for their services; the Trustees are trying to put together a program with one of the finest teaching institutions in the country, UNC; the Hospital serves the County; the members of the Board of Trustees are overseeing the management of the Hospital; the Hospital is on-course; the deficit of the Hospital has come down because of the proper management of the Hospital; he invited members of the general public to visit the Hospital to learn more about the management and day-to-day operations; when the drug prevention programs fail, the Hospital must cope with the overdose patients and victims; federal law requires that the Hospital emergency room treat anyone who requests service regardless of the ability to pay; and Chatham Hospital abides by the law. He requested that the Board approve the Hospitals request for funding.

The Vice Chair asked if those who had not finished speaking prior to the time limit running would like to continue at this time. Col. Totten and Mr. Greenlaw declined.

The Vice Chair asked if anyone else wished to speak.

John Snipes, 1088 Richardson Road, stated that he was in favor of Hospital funding; the program with the University would make the Hospital of greater service to the community; and urged the Board to approve the funding for the Hospital. He stated that he also favored the DARE program and urged support for both the DARE officer and the additional drug officer.

The Vice Chair asked if anyone else wished to speak. There being no further comment, the Vice Chair closed the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

#### Special Meeting Schedule

The County Manager stated that the Board might wish to schedule additional Board meetings for the month of June in order to discuss the budget. He also stated that a special executive session was needed at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 16, and requested that the Board schedule a special meeting for that date.

Commissioner Holmes moved that the Board set a special meeting for Thursday, June 16, 1994, at 2:00 p.m., in the Meeting Room of the Town of Pittsboro building, for the purpose of holding an executive session for a personnel matter, and that the Board meet at 9:00 a.m., June 16, 1994, for a budget workshop. Commissioner

Holland seconded the motion. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

Commissioner Pollard moved that the Board set a special meeting for 5:00 p.m., Monday, June 20, 1994, for the purpose of holding a budget workshop, prior to the scheduled 7:00 p.m. regular meeting, and, if necessary, continue budget workshop after the regular meeting agenda is completed. Commissioner Holmes seconded the motion. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

#### **TAX ASSESSOR**

##### **Cancellation of Tax Management Contract**

The Manager stated that the Tax Assessor had requested that the Agreement to Audit Business Personal Property between Chatham County and Tax Management Associates, Inc. be cancelled because it is not producing any benefit to the County to continue this contract.

Commissioner Holmes moved that the Agreement between Chatham County and Tax Management Associates, Inc., dated October 15, 1991, be terminated. Commissioner Hanner seconded the motion. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

#### **BUDGET WORKSHOP**

##### **Public Buildings**

Commissioner Holmes asked that \$500.00 be added to the Public Buildings budget to clean up the storage building at the Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Pollard questioned \$400.00 for bloodborne pathogens training. The Manager stated that this covered three shoots required to meet legal requirements, and, since current employees have received their shoots, these funds were needed for new employees.

There was a discussion regarding underground storage tanks located on property in Siler City which will have to be EPA tested and, probably, removed.

The Board discussed the utility increase, which is mainly due to additional buildings, such as Emergency Operations, new Health Building in Siler City, CP&L Building, etc.

Property and professional liability insurance costs were discussed.

##### **Sheriff's Department**

The cost of the additional DARE officer was discussed and determined to be approximately \$45,000, which includes salary, fringe benefits, uniforms, auto, retirement, etc. The Board also discussed the cost of the additional drug officer, which would also be approximately \$45,000. The Board discussed the Sheriff's request as compared to the Manager's recommendation; the need for the clerical personnel, which was requested and recommended; and the Sheriff's priority on these positions. Response times for the northern end of the County was discussed. It was noted that two drug officers were added to the Sheriff's Department last year. Cross training of officers and maximum utilization of staff was discussed.

**Jail**

The Board discussed the requested additional jailer position which was not recommended by the Manager, and the increase in the cost of food. It was noted that the number of Federal prisoners was being decreased primarily because the jail is running out of room. The Manager stated that by next year serious consideration should be given to jail expansion.

**Emergency Operations**

It was noted by the Manager that the Emergency Operations Director had requested four Telecommunicator positions; however, only two positions were being recommended.

The Manager stated that the Hazardous Materials Response STAR Team had requested time to come before the Board. It was determined that the Board would hear a presentation from the STAR Team at its first meeting in July. The Board asked the staff to investigate the manner in which other jurisdictions handled management of hazardous materials.

**Fire Prevention**

The Board noted that the requests associated with the Fire Prevention program are appropriate.

**Building Inspections**

The Manager noted that the increase is due to one 1/2 time position going to a full-time position and a utility vehicle.

**Soil & Water Conservation**

The Board questioned the need for the additional position requested by Soil & Water Conservation. The Board instructed the staff to obtain statistical information on why this additional person was needed and what responsibilities would be associated with the position.

**Public Works Department**

The Board discussed the need for the new position of technician as requested by the Public Works Department. It was noted that this person would perform drafting duties and construction inspections for various building projects planned for the County. It was also noted that this was a part-time position.

**Health Department**

The Board discussed projected revenues from third party payors and Medicaid; staff recommendations; the "Stay Put" program; the Public Health Nurse for Fearington; and the requests and recommendations for Home Health.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Holmes moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Pollard seconded the motion. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

The Vice Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

ATTEST:

Sandra B. Cape  
Clerk to the Board

Henry H. Dunlap, Jr.  
Henry H. Dunlap, Jr., Chairman