

**MINUTES**  
**CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**JANUARY 3, 2011**

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The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in the Central Carolina Community Library, 197 Highway 87 North, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 9:00 AM on January 3, 2011.

Present: Chairman Brian Bock; Vice Chair Commissioner Walter Petty; Commissioners Mike Cross, Sally Kost, and Pamela Stewart

Staff Present: Charlie Horne County Manager; Jep Rose County Attorney, Renee Paschal Assistant County Manager; Vicki McConnell Finance Officer; and Elizabeth Plata Deputy Clerk to the Board

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION**

Commissioner Petty delivered the invocation after which the Chairman invited everyone present to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairman called the meeting or order at 9:01 AM.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA AND REGULAR AGENDA**

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

Commissioner Kost asked that the following be considered:

Item #7, Approval of agreement with Chatham County Schools for construction management services be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda for discussion.

Item #9, Approval of a request to authorize County Staff to negotiate a contract with Hemphill-Randel Associates as architects for the Chatham County Jail and authorize the county manager and clerk to execute the contract upon final review by the county attorney and placed on the regular Agenda for discussion.

Item #18, Employees of the Month be moved to follow the Consent Agenda

Item #16, Public Input Session, that the twenty-minute time limit be removed due to the number of people in attendance who would like to make comments.

Chairman Bock reiterated the request. He stated that due to the full agenda, he would suggest extending the Public Input Session to thirty minutes.

Commissioner Kost objected to the thirty-minute time limit and requested that the time limit be waived or extended to one hour.

Commissioner Kost also asked that the following be considered:

Item #2, Approval of a request to increase the fee for installing a split tap from \$400 to \$1,000 be removed from the Agenda

Item #15, Approval of a request to adopt Resolution of Support for Approval of the Application of the Town of Pittsboro for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit to Build a New 32.2 Million Gallon Per Day Wastewater Treatment Plant in Pittsboro, North Carolina be removed from the Agenda

Commissioner Kost moved to approve the amended Agenda.

Chairman Bock asked if the motion included amending the Public Input Session to ninety minutes.

Commissioner Kost restated her motion to approve the amended Agenda and requests as follows:

Item #2, Approval of a request to increase the fee for installing a split tap from \$400 to \$1,000 be removed from the Agenda.

Item #7, Approval of agreement with Chatham County Schools for construction management services be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda for discussion.

Item #9, Approval of a request to authorize County Staff to negotiate a contract with Hemphill-Randel Associates as architects for the Chatham County Jail and authorize the county manager and clerk to execute the contract upon final review by the county attorney and placed on the regular Agenda for discussion.

Item #15, Approval of a request to adopt Resolution of Support for Approval of the Application of the Town of Pittsboro for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit to Build a New 32.2 Million Gallon Per Day Wastewater Treatment Plant in Pittsboro, North Carolina be removed from the Agenda.

Item #16, Remove the time limitations of twenty minutes from the Public Input Session.

Item #18, Employees of the Month be moved to follow the Consent Agenda.

Chairman Bock called for a second to the motion. Commissioner Cross seconded the motion.

Chairman Bock stated that he had no problem with moving the items around but voiced concern with regard to the ninety minutes for the Public Input Session stating that he felt it might be too long. He suggested having a thirty-minute input during the regular meeting and another thirty minute session during the work session which would keep the regular meeting more on schedule. He asked if the motion was all inclusive.

Commissioner Kost stated that she was unwilling to amend her motion.

Chairman Bock moved to amend the motion to separate the Public Input Session timeframe from the other items. Commissioner Petty seconded the amended motion.

Chairman Bock asked if there was further discussion of the amendment to the motion.

Commissioner Kost asked the County Attorney if she had to agree to any amendments to her motion. The County Attorney stated that she did not have to agree to an amendment as the amendment would change her motion.

Chairman Bock stated that once a motion is made and seconded, it no longer belongs to the person making the motion, it belongs to the floor.

Commissioner Kost agreed.

The County Attorney explained that the Board would vote on the amended motion first.

Commissioner Kost added to the Chairman's amendment that many people took off from work to speak at the meeting; that the Chairman is asking that they be given the opportunity to speak at the work session; that out of respect for the citizens in attendance to speak, a sixty-to ninety minute time frame is appropriate; that a thirty minute time frame, given that there are approximately 29 people who wish to speak, will be inadequate; and that it is not in the spirit of citizen focused government.

Chairman Bock called the question to vote on the amendment to separate the time limit from the Public Input Session from the main motion. The motion carried four (3) to two (2) with Commissioners Kost and Cross opposing.

Chairman Bock called the question to remove Item #2 from the Agenda, place Items #7 and #9 on the Regular Agenda, Item #15 be removed from the Agenda, and move #18 for discussion immediately after the Consent Agenda. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

Commissioner Cross stated that considering the magnitude of the day's discussion, that they need to allow citizens to speak; that ninety minutes is a long time for input on a normal basis, but this is hardly a normal basis; and that he strongly recommends allowing a ninety minute input session or allowing each person signed up to speak three minutes.

Commissioner Stewart agreed that the citizens need to be able to speak; that this is an important meeting; that an hour and a half is a long time for people to be at the meetings; that she recommends keeping very close to the three-minute time limit and ask those speaking to respect the time limit.

Commissioner Petty also agreed that people have made an effort to be at the meeting and should have an opportunity to speak; that if the time can be slightly adjusted to allow an opportunity for the people to speak; however, he asked that it be held within the time limit so that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and it is not dominated by only a handful of people. He stated that there has been a lot of work that has gone into this; that there has been a lot of research done to address the difficult tasks; that he does not have a problem adjusting the time, but would appreciate the time limit being enforced.

Commissioner Kost moved, seconded by Commissioner Cross, that the time limit for Item #16, Public Input Session, be extended to ninety minutes, that the Clerk carefully monitor the timer so that all speakers are limited to three minutes. The motion carried four (4) to one (1) with Chairman Bock opposing.

Commissioner Kost noted a couple of very minor typographical errors on the minutes.

The Agenda and Consent Agenda were approved with the noted requests as follows:

1. **Minutes:** Approval of Board Minutes for Special Meeting held on September 8, 2010, Work Session held on November 1, 2010, Regular Meetings held November 1, 2010, and December 13, 2010

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

2. ~~**Split Tap Installation Fee:** Approval of a request to increase the fee for installing a split tap from \$400 to \$1,000~~

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda and deferred to the January 18, 2011 Board of Commissioners' meeting.

3. **Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee Appointment:** Approval of a request to appoint Michael Levandoski to the Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee by Commissioner Bock

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

4. **Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee Appointment:** Approval of a request to appoint Kelly Ardoin to the Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee by Commissioner Stewart

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

5. **Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee Appointment:** Approval of a request to appoint Carolyn Townsend to the Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee by Commissioner Petty

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

6. **Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee Appointment:** Approval of a request to appointment Al Mendlovitz to the Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee by Commissioner Petty

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

- ~~7. **Agreement for Construction Services:** Approval of agreement with Chatham County Schools for construction management services~~

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda for discussion.

8. **Resolution for Addition of Streets to North Carolina System of Secondary Roads:** Approval of a request to adopt Resolution for the Addition of Streets or Roads to the North Carolina System of Secondary Roads – Monterrane Subdivision

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

- ~~9. **Hemphill-Randel Associates Contract for Jail:** Approval of a request to authorize County staff to negotiate a contract with Hemphill-Randel Associates as architects for the Chatham County Jail and authorize the county manager and clerk to execute the contract upon final review by the county attorney~~

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda for discussion.

10. **Set Date for Public Hearing- Grant from NC Department of Transportation (DOT) to the Council on Aging:** Approval of a request to set January 18, 2011 as the date on which to hold a public hearing to receive comments on a grant in the amount of \$270,000 from the NCDOT to the Chatham County Council on Aging

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

11. **Courthouse Stabilization and Reconstruction:** Approval of a request to (1) approve a Resolution to Exempt in the amount of \$398,750 for Hobbs Architects for additional design and construction administration services for the stabilization and reconstruction of the Chatham County Courthouse Project (2) approve Design Amendment #2 to the original Courthouse Stabilization and Reconstruction Contract in the amount of \$398,750 (3) authorize the County Manager to sign the amendment on behalf of the county

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

12. **ETJ Town of Pittsboro Planning Board Appointment:** Approval of a request by the Town of Pittsboro Commissioners to appoint Kenneth Hoyle as a member of the Town of Pittsboro Planning Board

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

13. **Planning Board Appointment:** Approval of a request to appoint Philip Bienvenue to the Planning Board by Commissioner Bock

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

14. **Planning Board Appointment:** Approval of a request to appoint Michael Mayo to the Planning Board by Commissioner Stewart

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

- ~~15. **Resolution of Support for Town of Pittsboro Application for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System:** Approval of a request to adopt Resolution of Support for Approval of the Application of the Town of Pittsboro for a National Pollutant~~

~~Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit to Build a New 32.2 Million Gallon Per Day Wastewater Treatment Plant in Pittsboro, North Carolina~~

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and deferred to the January 18, 2011 Board of Commissioners' meeting.

**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**COMMISSIONERS' PRIORITIES**

**Employees of the Month:** Presentation of the December 2010 and January 2011 Employees of the Month.

Carolyn Miller, Human Resources Director, stated that the **December 2010 Employee of the Month** is Margaret Goldston of the Tax Office. Margaret has worked for Chatham County for over sixteen years. An excerpt from her nomination form follows:

"Margaret Goldston has been an employee of Chatham County Tax Collector's Office since 1994. Margaret has proven time and time again that the decision to hire her for our department was a wise decision. She takes pride in her work, is a team player, has achieved certifications with the NC Bar Association and NC Tax Collectors' Association. Margaret is committed to the success of our office's annual percentage of collection in addition to the collection of delinquent taxes.

Recently Margaret was asked by our Land Records staff to review a deed which was transferring ownership of property. Margaret's training as a certified paralegal caused her to question the transaction. She went to the Clerk of Courts office as a guardianship was involved in the transaction. She discussed the situation with Dana Hackney, Assistant Clerk of Court. Dana wrote the following email:

I would like to take a moment to commend your employee Margaret Goldston. I have worked in estates and special proceedings at the Clerk's office for more than 10 years and during those years I have worked with Mrs. Goldston on more than one occasion. She has always presented herself as very competent and has been a pleasure to work with.

A couple of weeks ago, Mrs. Goldston "caught" an issue on a deed that dealt with a Guardianship. Mrs. Goldston immediately brought this to my attention and I in turn contacted the Administrative Office of the Court's legal department head. This gentleman deals with legal issues with Clerk's all over the state. When I explained the situation to him he commended Mrs. Goldston's keen eye and stated that Chatham County was very lucky to have someone who would have picked up on this. I promptly responded that Mrs. Goldston and I have an excellent working relationship and that I do indeed feel lucky to have her.

I sincerely hope that Mrs. Goldston will be praised for this and that she will be around for many years to come.

Dana M. Hackney  
Assistant Clerk of Superior Court

The example cited above from an outside department indicates that Margaret's actions as a County employee goes beyond the call of duty. Because of her training and knowledge, she realized there was an issue with the deed and brought it to the attention of the Clerk of Court's office.

Margaret wears multiple hats as the department's paralegal. Her primary responsibilities are to deal with bankruptcies and foreclosures. She also assists Land Records departments when interpreting deeds and other legal documents. Her ability to understand the documents and her attention to detail assures us that our tax records are correct. The public relies heavily upon our records and Margaret is doing her part to make certain that our records are accurate. Margaret also processes payments during our peak collection periods throughout the year. She is also the employee who is primarily responsible for uploading the photos of homes and buildings to the

tax records. Her willingness to assist in other areas of the department demonstrates that she is a team player.

As a paralegal Margaret also understands the ramifications of actions that our office deals with and how they may impact our office in future situations. Margaret has earned her certification through the North Carolina Bar Association. To obtain certification she attended numerous workshops that pertained to her profession. She has maintained certification by attending a continuing ed workshop held annually throughout the state. Margaret has also earned her certification through the NC Tax Collectors' Association as a Tax Assistant. She also is a graduate of the Chatham Leadership Academy.

Sometimes her opinion may differ from those that I may have regarding particular situations that arise, and when those times occur Margaret will state her case backed as to why she believes a different decision should be made regarding a particular circumstance.

Margaret is also knowledgeable of the law regarding tax rates for special districts. A few years ago Margaret pointed out that the rate that Chatham set for the West Sanford Fire District which exceeded the rate set by Lee County. Because of her attention to detail and accuracy, the county budget had to be amended to correct the fire district tax for West Sanford.

Margaret also plans ahead. On a couple occasions she has taken extended vacations and in preparation for her absences she reviewed her calendar and took care of any task that needed her attention prior to leaving or informed me of those tasks that she could not complete so that I could follow through on her behalf.

Margaret is also a volunteer with Chatham Together. She has dedicated her time to working with families in need, paying special attention to at risk children by offering one on one support.

Margaret is a great asset not only to our department but to the county as well. She is very deserving of the employee of the month award.”

Ms. Miller stated that the **January 2011 Employees of the Month** are Dawn Stumpf and Pandora Paschal of the Board of Elections Office. Combined, they have worked for Chatham County for nearly 17 years. An excerpt from their nomination form follows:

“To be clear—the Board of Elections Office does not work just two days a year. The office is responsible for maintaining the public trust in a function that is the cornerstone of our democracy. There is no doubt that in local government, we are closest to the public, and are most responsible for that trust. This is not a job they take lightly.

Dawn and Pandora run an efficient and effective department all with a very high level of service to people of all political viewpoints. They are responsive and courteous, and most importantly, have a high level of integrity. Not one ethical slip is allowed in that office, lest it have tremendous ramifications.

I know you are thinking...so what? Lots of other people do this too in their every day work environment. This may be true, but the reason for this nomination is that these two individuals epitomize the “working more with less” mantra that we hear so often these days, as well as their commitment to the process and the community.

Dawn and Pandora both put a lot of themselves into their work, and see their performance as a reflection of themselves. They go the extra mile in nearly everything they do. They conduct voter registration drives on weekends, talk with school groups and new voters, assist candidates with their filing and finance reports, answer a myriad of questions during election time, all which seem to come in at one time.

During the presidential election of 2008, Chatham County had the highest voter turnout in the state at 78%. During the mid-term election of 2010, the voter turnout was 58%, unbelievable numbers for a still largely rural county. With more voters comes more questions, problems, and issues. Dawn and Pandora handled this all with professionalism, and without an expanded staff. They relied on some temporary staff, an army of poll workers to get the job done. Both did extensive training for poll workers so that they would be able to serve on

Election Day without trouble. In the 2008 election, there were no protests filed at all, and thus far, it is the same for the 2010 election. To help insure this, they work hours and hours and hours of overtime, and one of them is an exempt employee.

So no, they didn't save anyone from a burning building, but silently have held steadfast during a troubling economic and social time in our nation's history. It may sound melodramatic, but they really do perform at an outstanding level and have held their office to a high standard and made the Chatham County Elections Office one of the best functioning in the state. To consistently conduct elections that have super-high turnout numbers with no protests or problems is simply amazing.

Dawn and Pandora both have tremendous pride in their work. They OWN it, and hold themselves to a high ethical standard, which in turn benefits us tremendously. They provide excellent customer service to people of all political persuasions, and every voter in Chatham matters to them. Their job performance is beyond excellent, as they have consistently performed at a high level, even when the demands of the job have increased tremendously."

### **PUBLIC INPUT SESSION**

**Hugh Harrington**, 191 Bellemont Road, Pittsboro, NC, a member of the Pittsboro Board of Commissioners, stated that the Board had been sent a draft resolution asking for the Board's support on Pittsboro's discharge permit for their proposed sewer plant. The permit was critically important to Pittsboro, in that there was nothing that would have more potential impact on economic development than a sewer plant in Pittsboro. The Town was presently under a development moratorium because they could not bring any future development into the Town until more sewer capacity was available. The County would benefit as well, and that was why they were asking for the County Board's support of approval of Pittsboro's discharge permit into the Haw. Mr. Harrington offered to provide any additional information the Board might require.

**James Pollard**, 3120 Christian Chapel Church Road, New Hill, NC, stated that he was representing the people of Christian Chapel Church Road and the congregation of Christian Chapel Church which was established in 1824. They were requesting that County water be provided to the Church and the residents, noting that water was available at either end of Christian Chapel Church Road within a half-mile of the church. Mr. Pollard said over the years there had been proposed projects to connect onto Harnett County to get water down to Christian Chapel Church Road, but all efforts had failed so far. They had brought this issue to the Board many times over the years, but it appeared that available funds had been spent elsewhere. The people who lived in that area were not wealthy and he asked that the Board take their request under consideration and address the issue.

**Candace Steele**, 145 Julia Lane, Pittsboro, NC, asked that the Board look closely at positions in the County and decide if those positions were vital to government or could responsible citizens handle those functions. She asked that they abide by their campaign promises throughout the coming year and hoped they could get started sooner rather than later. Her tax money was precious and she wanted the Board to be good stewards of that money.

**Heather Johnson**, 449 Foster Lane, Pittsboro, NC, stated that many times the majority of citizens would follow the lead of County government. Although many think the budget process occurs over a short period time, it was actually an almost year-round process, and corrections were made throughout the year if conditions warrant. When the economy faltered, it was the actions of staff to alter some things over the year from the adopted budget process to avert a serious budget crisis in the following fiscal year.

The new members of the County Board had run on a platform of reducing government spending and highlighted many positions and programs currently being discussed as examples of the types of decisions made by the previous Board that they disagreed with. There was a 90-minute public input session where the public had the opportunity to weigh in on the positions currently under review, so the public had already spoken. Voters had rejected the policies and initiatives of the last four years and endorsed a more restrained reproach. She did not know how much more discussion was necessary to make a decision based on what many people had been discussing for months if not for years in some cases. While the process may seem rushed to some in reality there had been more discussion and debate than was common.

The first major action of the Human Relations Department had prompted many citizens to begin paying more attention to how the County did things. She disagreed with the approach that they needed a special department to ensure that everyone was treated fairly; they already had a Human Resources Department to make sure that employees were treated fairly and that they treated the public fairly. They had a Community Relations Department to disseminate information to the community. Why create a special department to target subsets of their community for special attention? Claiming that certain racial minorities or immigrant groups had special needs was insulting to the many people within the community who succeeded without special attention.

**Dee Reid**, 590 Old Goldston Road, Pittsboro, NC, provided the following comments which she read into the record:

“I am stunned to learn that you are planning to have an unscheduled and unpublicized discussion and vote on Monday morning Jan. 3 about withdrawing county support for the Pittsboro Express Bus. As you know, most local residents who ride the bus will not be able to participate on Monday morning in a discussion that will affect how they travel to and from their jobs, especially since they won't know about it. Just as important, most other local citizens will not even be aware that you are considering reversing a County budget decision that would result in the reduction or elimination of County support for a public service that has attracted \$120,000/year in federal grant monies, and another \$74k in non-County funds.

Though we may disagree on the proper size and role of County government, and the essential need for public transit, I hoped that we would find common ground about the importance of open deliberation and citizen participation in County decision-making. You have, admirably, made a public commitment to include citizens in your deliberative processes. I also applaud your statement that elected officials should publicly explain the basis for their votes on decisions, particularly if they contradict substantive recommendations.

However, if this discussion takes place Monday without proper public notification during a time when bus commuters cannot attend, it would contradict your public pledge to make government more accountable, transparent and inclusive, and it would negate the promises you made about transparent government during your campaign.

Responsible governance is much more complex than making choices between spending, cutting and taxing. For governance to be truly democratic, open and accountable, at least three things should occur before substantive decisions are made, especially when public funds and services are involved: 1) adequate notice to residents; 2) opportunity for citizens to be heard; 3) objective analysis of the short- and long-term costs and benefits.

Clearly, making a decision on the future of the Pittsboro Express on Monday morning -- without adequate public notice, input, analysis and explanation - would be the opposite of the kind of open and transparent government you have pledged to provide.

I am writing now in case I am not able to take personal leave to attend the work session on Monday, so that I may clarify some important points about the Pittsboro Express and why I believe it is an essential public service and a wise public investment.

First, contrary to disinformation spread by those who do not ride the bus, the Pittsboro Express buses are extremely well used by a growing and diverse ridership. The PX buses, especially during rush hour, are nearly filled with local commuters from all walks of life. They work at UNC hospital, in clinics and on campus, in secretarial, administrative, laboratory, classroom, automotive and maintenance jobs. They come from Pittsboro, Moncure, Bear Creek, Silk Hope, Siler City and Sanford.

I know this because I ride the bus daily and have spoken to many bus commuters on nearly all of the scheduled PX routes.

The PX has averaged about 2,000 riders per month. This is better than most transit systems of this size are expected to achieve in their first year or so. The average daily ridership, even when spread out across each of the scheduled PX routes, is still greater than the minimum needed per bus to have a positive impact on reducing gas and carbon emissions and highway traffic.



In other words, the PX is already considered a success on all counts. Moreover, as gas pump prices increase, ridership will continue to grow, as happened with Chapel Hill Transit routes in north Chatham and throughout Chapel Hill the last time gas exceeded \$3/ gallon.

Second, the PX is a great investment for Chatham County and the Town of Pittsboro, not just for those who directly use it. No transportation system is completely self-sufficient. Our highways, which are much more expensive than the bus system, are also subsidized by taxes, a fact that most automobile commuters fail to take into account when criticizing the cost of public transit. You may recall that when U.S. 15-501 was widened at great public expense, there was very little traffic on it at first; yet most agree it was a necessary investment for the long-term good of our community as our population and traffic increase.

What makes the PX especially attractive for Chatham now is that the county is only expected to provide 19 percent of the total \$240,000 year cost. The remaining 80% is provided by a fortunate alliance involving a federal grant (\$120,000/year), UNC bus ticket subsidies, Chapel Hill Transit buses, the Town of Pittsboro (\$18,000) and riders who purchase tickets (\$6/day or \$65/month).

Chatham's \$46,000/year investment brings our county a \$240,000 public transit system that it would never otherwise be able to afford. That's an extraordinary five-fold-plus return on our investment per year, for a public service that benefits all Chatham residents by making our community much more attractive for business and residential development.

All of us who ride the bus are grateful for this service, especially in these economically challenging times. For some riders, the bus is an absolute necessity. Several have told me they would not be able to keep their jobs without the PX, which is their only transportation option for work.

In all cases, the bus provides a significant savings over driving, parking and car maintenance costs. This is especially important now to UNC commuters who are state employees, who, unlike county government workers, have not had a salary increase or bonus since July 2008. State employees saw their salaries reduced during a furlough last spring and now face the possibility of a further salary cut for 2011.

I believe you have said that Chatham County does not have a revenue problem, it has a spending problem. Yet this month you voted to spend up to \$711,000 to give some county employees a retroactive salary bonus - a puzzling move for a fiscally conservative government in the midst of the worst economy since the Great Depression. In the context of that decision, it is especially difficult for many of us to understand why you are hesitating to spend the equivalent of 6% of that sum on a public service that helps other public employees -- who already have suffered salary cuts -- to use a cost-effective way to get to work, especially when 80% of the costs are provided by other institutions. Clearly, it's important to seek local citizen input before you disregard \$200,000 in outside financing of a vital service.

Finally, I hope in assessing this situation that you are not considering down-sizing the bus or decreasing the number of routes. The PX is successful because it accommodates commuters' diverse and unpredictable work schedules by offering multiple routes through morning and afternoon rush hours. Without this flexibility, the bus would be no better than a car pool- one vehicle leaving and arriving at a set time each day. This does not work for UNC employees who are being asked to work longer and less predictable hours due to State budget cuts (that's why the local UNC van pool was eliminated.).

If the PX is reduced to a single van, I know that I and many other riders would no longer be able to use it. Successful transit systems grow gradually, and the more routes they offer, the more ridership they eventually attract.

As the PX system grows, in concert with Chatham Transit, even more local residents will directly benefit as more frequent routes are offered throughout the day that would connect riders with our towns and shopping centers, as well as with Chapel Hill and the rest of the Triangle. This would place Chatham in an economically competitive position to attract residential and business development as the economy gradually recovers. However, this won't happen if the County pulls out of the federally supported UNC-Chapel Hill Transit partnership.

I hope I am wrong about your intentions on Monday and that you will live up to your public pledge by having a public hearing on this important matter before any decisions are made. Local citizens deserve a chance to hear factual information about this and to comment on it themselves, especially in light of the inaccurate information that has been circulated about bus ridership and expenditures.

**Loyse Hurley**, CCEC, 16 Matchwood, Pittsboro, NC, provided the following comments which she read into the record:

“Good morning. I am Loyse Hurley President of Chatham Citizens for Effective Communities (CCEC). I live at 16 Matchwood, in Pittsboro. As usual, I speak on behalf of the Board of CCEC. Thank you for attempting to live up to your commitment for an open and transparent government. The public, whose rights and lives are directly affected by your decisions, deserve this openness.

On your agenda today, we do not find the qualifications for the two new appointees to the Planning Board. This omission could certainly be considered a lack of transparency and openness. These appointees may indeed be competent to serve, but the citizens have no way of knowing that.

January starts your budget considerations. You want to encourage growth in the county. Certain positions offer services that do precisely that. We urge you to consider all the repercussions of eliminating positions before you make any final decisions. In your efforts to cut to the bottom line of salary and benefits costs, you may inadvertently impede or eliminate services that support citizens and businesses who live and operate here and those that affect public health. For example:

The Human Relations Director averts and preempts issues by dealing with discrimination, labor violations, hate bias and hate crimes before they become problems and expensive law suits for the county. This is not something that can be measured by any "bottom line".

The Sustainability Director coordinates planning, permitting, transportation, affordable housing, energy conservation and the Fire Marshal and provides operational efficiencies. These efficiencies as well as comprehensive long range planning, provide desirable services to businesses and people. They foster economic development and are not something that can be measured by the "bottom line".

The Obesity Coordinator position directly affects the future health of our children. The long range problems related to childhood obesity have been well publicized and are now the subject of a 5 part series in the N&O. Coordination within the system is not a duplication of effort; it is a necessary function that brings all parts together. Future Medicaid expenses are not something that can be measured by the "bottom line."

The bus service provides transportation to people who might otherwise not be able to get to their jobs, as well as an alternate means of transit in these days of increasing gas prices. It reduces air pollution by lessening the reliance on individual cars in our non-attainment area. The cost is modest and the long range benefits are huge. Availability of mass transit draws growth and economic development. These benefits are not easily measured by any "bottom line".

All factors should be carefully weighed and considered, not just the "bottom line", including the less conspicuous benefits and services that contribute to the efficiency of operations, the ease of doing business and the intangible human factors that make Chatham a great place to live and work.

These decisions should be made in the clear light of day and not hidden in any agenda item. This is consistent with a commitment to an open and transparent government process.

**Randy Dye**, 173 Olde Farm Road, Pittsboro, NC, stated that they were being sucked dry by needless political offices, programs and paid positions within the County, and today he would focus on the Human Relations Commissioner. He failed to see any benefit to the legal citizens of Chatham County or any need for this position or the salary that cost the taxpayers. State and federal government had laws in place protecting citizens from age, race, sex, sexual orientation,

or religious discrimination. They were once again just reinventing the wheel in government cost and bureaucracy.

Mr. Dye expressed concern on the hiring and screening process for local County employees. The current Human Relations Commissioner was hired with a looming lawsuit she had filed with her previous employer which turned out to be a frivolous lawsuit. It was appealed twice and still thrown out by a Virginia court judge as having no merit. Last year he had spoken to the County Manager on this issue, and he was advised that Ms. Coleman had advised the County that she still was involved in the ongoing act of lawsuit against her former employer. He would like to think that at bare minimum that she would have thrown up a red flag on the legitimacy of the merit and potential for her employment in an executive position during her employment screening by County administration. In summary, his concerns were the need for the position and County screening practices for employees.

**Alan Ross**, 493 Legacy Falls Drive, Chapel Hill, NC, stated that his wife and he had recently moved to the County and participated in their first election and in getting out the vote. In general, they had done that because they believed that the country and local government was out of control and was spending beyond its means with debt piling up. They had wanted to get involved and had done so at the local level by supporting a slate of candidates that had ultimately been elected. They were extremely pleased to see that at the first Board of Commissioners meeting of the new year that the Board was addressing the problems and the commitments made during the campaign, which was to address the spending of the government, define positions, and make government operate more efficiently. They supported the Board in that effort; however, there was no question in his mind that it would only become more difficult.

Mr. Ross stated that the federal government would cut spending, the State would cut spending, and revenue coming into the County would decline and more difficult decisions were going to have to be made. As difficult as those decisions appeared today, they were easier than what they would be facing over the next few months or the next year. This Board was elected because the citizens believed they would make those difficult decisions to get the County started down that road, and to the extent the Board continued to make them they would give them their unequivocal support.

**Randy Voller**, 21 Randolph Court, Pittsboro, NC, Mayor of Pittsboro, stated that Chatham County should be a place people wanted to live, and many of the things before the Board had to do with how to make this the best community for all who lived here. Pittsboro's efforts to obtain a discharge permit played into that because it would help them create a place in the center of the County that reached out to everyone in the County. The State had mandated that Pittsboro address issues with discharge, and the Town had been working on this issue at least since 2000-2001. The Town had invested a lot of energy and time into the process. According to their Town Manager this information had been posted on the Town's Website since 2009, and apologized to those who did not know that and thought that this issue was just now being brought up. There had been a due process in that the issue had been before the Pittsboro Board and their Planning Board on many occasions, and had been before the State for review and approval. Comments had been received from the State which had taken an additional nine months to respond to and comply with.

Mayor Voller stated that they had a requirement that they would comply with Neuse River treatment standards which had to do with effluent being discharged, whether it was into Robeson Creek or into the Haw River. As a result Pittsboro would be building a plant that produced reuse quality water, and the Town stood ready to cooperate with all stakeholders including the County, the business community, and citizens in that process. There was no rush although they had been working on getting the permit for many years, but they did not want anyone to feel as if they were being bulldozed into a position in that they wanted everyone to be heard and to feel that this was an open process.

**Philip Bienvenue**, 31 Cobble Ridge Drive, Pittsboro, NC, stated that the five main issues the new Board members had run on were jobs, restrictive land use regulations, budget growth, open government, and representation. He said that today's meeting was related to unsustainable growth in the budget, but also urged that if the right hand was cutting the budget the left hand should be working on growth which had to be balanced.

**Elloy Dulaney**, 3959 Pittsboro-Goldston Road, Pittsboro, NC, stated that the Board was elected to do a job and he wanted to support them in that endeavor. Things sometimes got difficult when big decisions had to be made and you had to stand up and do whatever was right. Live within the budget and cut where necessary, just as they all had to do within their personal budgets. He encouraged the Board to be willing to do that and to not live in the shadows, but to be open with the public by letting them know where they were going and how the Board proposed to get them there. He suggested publishing a newspaper article once a quarter that stated where they had been, where they were at that moment, and what the plan was for the future. He asked the Board to remember that the community was behind them and asked them to live up to their promises and to show the public where they were going to lead them.

**Rita Spina**, 12 Fearington Post, Pittsboro, NC, provided the following comments which she read into the record:

“I wish to speak this morning about what the loss to Chatham will be should the Director of Human Relations be defunded.

When I moved to Chatham 22 years ago, there was no official spokesperson or Human Relations group to deal with racism. The Klan was still present in small areas of the county. Comments fell on deaf ears, and seemed to be handled as "this is, as it is". However, many churches were beginning to work on this issue as were many citizens.

At one point, the Health Department required all staff and volunteers (I was a volunteer) to take a two day workshop that addressed the issue openly and directly at every level. The Human Relations Commission was established in 2000 and began its work and gradually found they needed an official professional VOICE to be appointed to further their goals to REDUCE RACISM. When the previous Board of Commissioners funded Esther Coleman as Director in 2007, her presence alone made an impact on addressing racism in Chatham.

For two years now, and scheduled again for the 7 week session of Citizens College in February and March, Esther will address this year's citizens who will be attending. She is to report on the Commissions' progress and where they go next. There has already been evidence that the mind set of many has been changed, but racism is still here ... progress has been palpable ... but it is still in play.

DO NOT go backwards in your thinking ... ingrained mind set doesn't go away over night. ... it takes time and effort, and yes, it takes funding ... find some way to retain her to make still further progress on obliterating this dividing issue of race. Attention is paid to this sort of issue ONLY when there is a real leader who works with those who do much of the shoe leather work. We need her for this board of excellent citizens who work so well with her.”

**Esta Cohen**, 688 Van Thomas Road, Pittsboro, NC, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“My name is Esta Cohen; I live at 688 Van Thomas Rd in Pittsboro, and am a member of the Agriculture Advisory Board.

I would like to request that the Board of Commissioners withhold their “confirmation of support”, as requested by Western Wake Partners, for the acquisition of easements for *their* waste water discharge line, slated to run through Chatham, until a public hearing can be held.

The intrusion of Western Wake into Chatham affects all of us, as the issue of allowing other counties to think of Chatham as an extension of their own is a troubling one, and will have long-term effects on the county.

The idea that farmland is up for grabs for what some consider “more important” uses, is wrong. The farms of Chatham County are more than a scenic backdrop. They are our lives, as well as a dynamic financial presence.

Again, I respectfully request that a public hearing be held so that the concerns of the County's citizens can be heard and considered. Thank you.”

**Catherine Regula**, 19206 Stone Brook, stated that they were under a financial threat, and she as a taxpayer and living on a fixed income could not pay more in taxes. She said it appeared that the Democrats did not notice the bottom line until it was almost too late. No more jobs should be given to leftist union utopian socialists, no more to do-gooders and patriots bent on making society perfect and loveable. Chatham County is still an affordable place after the tyranny of 112 years of one-party rule. The “good ole boy” establishment of the Democratic Party was finally kicked out two weeks ago, and they had left a money mess. Republicans must blast away that 112 years of pork barrel blubber so that the County can recover from the fiscal life support it is now on. The day of decision is here. Commissioners – remove the fat from the payroll and the rest of them from all that mess so that Chatham County can continue to flow and not steep in a financial mess.

**Katherine Carek**, 50201 Manly, Chapel Hill, NC, stated that she hired them because as a small business owner she knew what it was like to be choked off by government regulation. She hired them to get out of the way of the small business owners in Chatham County so they could have a vibrant, vibrant, vibrant community in Chapel Hill, in Siler City, and in Pittsboro. If you will get out of their way they will have the power to succeed and hire. Are they having a problem with hiring? Possibly. Are they having a problem with unemployment? Possibly. Will you please make us a vibrant community and get out of our way? We worked to get you elected and want you here, and wanted you here for a purpose which was to get government out of their way.

**Patrick Barnes**, 274 McCoy Road, Apex, NC, stated that several months ago the NC Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, Division of Water Quality, had met in Apex to hold a public hearing to determine how residents of Chatham County felt about the Western Wake sewer plant and the pipeline through Chatham. They were astounded that no one, except for the Mayor of Apex, was in favor of that. After the public hearing the recommendation was that they would be in favor of the permit with five conditions which were all vague except for one. That condition was “It has been stated the Partners had not provided the Division with an agreement with Chatham County for the proposed effluent pipeline. As this appears to continue to be an issue and it is believed that such an approval may be necessary for the construction of a pipeline, it is recommended that prior to the issuance of an authorization to construct, the Division should receive such documents that the line will build out.” In simple words that meant that if Chatham did not approve Western Wake Partners to enter Chatham County, unless they went through the process of eminent domain, there would be no permit issued to build the sewer treatment plant in New Hill.

Mr. Barnes said that eastern Chatham was not in favor of the pipeline or the wastewater treatment plant, and they were very adamant about that. We do not need it. It would only enable Western Wake Partners to further annex into Chatham and they were very opposed to that. If he wanted to live in Cary he would move there, but he did not want to live in Cary.

**Karl Kachergis**, 1417 Morris Road, Pittsboro, NC, stated that he had lived in Chatham County almost 42 years and had followed politics in Chatham and politics in general through the years. He wanted to second the comments of Dee Reid, Loyse Hurley, Rita Spina, and Esta Cohen as well as Patrick Barnes in regards to the Western Wake Partners plan to run a pipeline through Chatham.

Mr. Kachergis said in regards to the Human Relations Director position, that was apparently up for a vote today but that was not clearly reflected on the agenda. He asked if that would come up for a vote today, as well as the express bus between Chapel Hill and Pittsboro and the Sustainable Communities Director position. Chatham to him was a very friendly place, and with a Human Relations Director and with that kind of office in place it helped to assure that there would not be friction between groups.

Mr. Kachergis said in terms of local government, this was the Reagan revolution come home to roost. Reagan was all about urban control, and what he meant by that was cutting taxes at the federal level which cut funding for local governments. When his parents had moved into this county taxes were really a joke, but they had now gone up to the point that they were just above average with State levels.

**Kathleen Hundley**, 136 Rocky Falls, Sanford, NC, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“I am Kathleen Hundley and I live at 136 Rocky Falls in Southwest Chatham County. I teach at Central Carolina Community College and I have a very diverse student population in my classes. As well as providing content area, it takes a lot of time and effort to plan for each of these populations. Chatham County also has a diverse population, of farmers on both large and small farms in the rural parts of the county to educators, industry workers and businesses. Similar to planning academic content for the diverse classroom, Chatham’s diverse populations require time and effort to plan for a balance of needs, jobs, space, assistance, new industry and businesses. Needs are important for all citizens, and planning for them requires knowledge, familiarity of the scenario, and specific skills. Consequently, I urge the Board of Commissioners to consider Chatham’s diversity of populations and MORE Carefully, reconsider the need for maintaining the Departments of Human Resources and Sustainable Communities, two departments of local government that are both involved, from different aspects, with planning and balancing the local diversity of which Chatham County can be proud.

**Clarence Van Der Wiele**, 7630 Luscombe Drive, Knoxville, TN, said he was present to speak on the budget and the cost containment measures the Board was considering. It was understood that they all wanted the County to thrive and to grow, in particular they wanted County government to be efficient and to support economic growth. That required people, specifically people who were well-qualified and skilled in many different areas so that they could lead change and make improvements to ensure that everyone worked together in a coordinated way. In his experience it was well worth having talented people. It was easy to point to government as being ineffective and unresponsive, and part of the solution was to have talented people whose passion was to serve the public. They were fortunate to have found such a person as his daughter, Cynthia. He had taught her to study hard, work hard, and to use her God given talent in service. Her calling was to serve and help people.

Mr. Van der Wiele’s daughter, Cynthia’s sister, stated that her sister, whether it was going on mission trips to Liberia during its civil war or serving the public and State and county government, she had always excelled at everything she put her mind to. She said her sister believed that government could and should be responsive, and did not believe that there was a utopia possible on earth and that was not what she was reaching for. Her sister was just trying to get diverse people to get along in a way that benefited Chatham County. It would break her heart if Chatham County no longer had sustainable community growth.

**Angela Glover**, 396 Rolling Meadows, Chapel Hill, NC, stated she was the mother of a special needs child who had high functioning Autism and what she had seen in the school system was that the special needs program also needed more attention. It had been left by the wayside due to budgetary issues. She had also noticed in the school system that money was taken away from the special needs budgets and allocated to other programs that were not necessary. As she was reading the notes for today’s meeting, she had noticed that there was an obesity coordinator position proposed and hoped that that position did not come to fruition. She met all of her son’s dietary needs and did not need a person in government telling her what her son should eat or what she should eat because she completely took that responsibility.

Ms. Glover said she would be talking to the School Board about the issue of assistance and teachers. It seemed to her that they had a lack of assistants, in that special needs teachers did not have assistants and parents such as her had to volunteer their time to offset the lack of help and the lack of funds to provide those assistants. The ratio of students to one teacher was so high that they were in dire need of assistants. There were positions that had been highlighted to be filled in a first and second grade combination class, and she did not feel that there should be only one teacher for first graders and second graders. They should be split up and money put in the budget for separate teachers for each grade.

**Mary Harris**, PO Box 692, Siler City, NC, read two letters of support for the Human Relations Director’s position, which she read into the record as follows:

Letter from Anthony W. Wade is as follows:

“On behalf of the National Association of Human Rights Workers (NAHRW), I am writing to express our support for the continuing existence of the position Executive Director of Human Relations for Chatham County, Esther Coleman.

The role of an Executive Director is critical in ensuring (1) issues that arise on a day-to-day basis are addressed in a timely manner before those issues become more challenging; and (2) analytical and strategic counsel is provided to the Commission that allows these citizen volunteers to act quickly and decisively on issues within their area of responsibility as assigned by the County. Ms. Coleman has earned the respect of and admiration of the Human Relations Commissioners throughout the state for her ability to perform these duties in a highly effective manner.

Ms. Coleman has also been an integral part of our organization; her leadership is felt at both the North Carolina state and national level. Evidence of her ingenuity was observed at the recent NAHRW 2010 conference where her direct guidance and input resulted in an enhanced curriculum for one of the highest-rated sessions at the conference.

NAHRW ([www.nahrw.org](http://www.nahrw.org)) brings civil and human rights agencies and professionals together from across the country to address contemporary issues related to managing conflict, equal employment opportunity, fair housing, leadership development, the concerns of young people, community harmony, and trust. As your Executive Director of Human Relations, Ms. Coleman constantly works to create a community where people's differences are acknowledged, understood and appreciated, thus fostering good community quality-of-life. It is our belief that the Executive Director of Human relations is an integral force dealing with present and future issues in Chatham County that have a tendency to divide people and communities. Consequently, the future success of local efforts to minimize and resolve those issues effectively will be dependent, in part, on the work of Ms. Coleman.

MAHRW thanks you in advance for the County's part support of Ms. Coleman and hopes that you will give favorable consideration to our request to allow her to continue her substantive work as the Executive Director of Human Relations in support of the Commission as well as the citizens and residents of Chatham County."

Anthony W. Wade, PhD, APM, PHR  
National Association of Human Rights Workers, President-Elect

Letter from Gary Tyson is as follows:

"I had the opportunity to serve on the Chatham County Human Relations Interview and Selection Committee during the fall of 2007, which hired Ms. Esther B. Coleman as the Director of the Chatham County Human Relations Commission. Ms. Coleman stood out head and shoulders above the rest of the folks that we interviewed. She possessed the commitment to the position and had the organization skills to implement the strategies that were discussed to make Chatham County a even better place to live, work, and raised a family for all of its residents.

Chatham County is a better place today due to Esther work. I have witnessed her work firsthand through the folks that I have come into contact with. She has inspired and empowered Citizens of Chatham County from all walks of life to believe by working together, Chatham County best days are yet to come. With the continuance leadership and training that Esther is implementing, we can continue to move forward and never again become that County that lead to having to create the Human Relations Commission in the first place.

In conclusion, as a Chief of Police who came into Siler City as an outside chief, I understand the struggles of being a Change Agent. But, I also understand with strong leadership, open communication, and a winning strategy, success can come in short order. I believe Ms. Esther Coleman possesses these critical skills and that Chatham County will be a better place with Esther Coleman leadership with the Human Relations Committee."

Sincerely,  
Gary Tyson, Chief of Police

**Megan Bolejack**, PO Box 1573, Pittsboro, NC, read the following letter into the record:

"County Commissioners:

The Chatham County Cultural Competency Committee (CCC) is very discouraged by your consideration of eliminating the Human Relations position. The CCC serves as the primary

body for planning, implementing, and evaluating organizational cultural competence. A definition of organization cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes to increase the quality of life and improve outcomes in our community. The benefits of being a culturally competent organization include but are not limited to the following:

*Inside the organization:*

- *Employees are more engaged and productive.*
- *There is a broad perspective of ideas, thoughts, and opinions.*
- *Employees are valued and know it.*
- *Communication is improved.*
- *Recruiting and retaining diverse employees.*
- *Higher employee morale.*

*For the community:*

- *Improved quality of life for residents.*
- *Attract tourism, businesses, and future residents.*
- *Improved capacity to compete with other counties.*
- *Residents have better experiences with the organization.*
- *Innovative solutions to community problems that cut costs.*

The Human Relations position is essential for leading the organization to be culturally competent. The Cultural Competency Committee recommends that the Human Relations position remain fully funded.

Cultural Competence Committee”

And:

County Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Community Civil Rights Educators (CCREs), which is an outreach program that the Human Relations Director developed. We outreach to Chatham County residents regarding their civil rights and responsibilities. We also spread good news about diversity and eliminating the effects of discrimination in its complex forms. We are very concerned and disappointed that the county is considering the elimination of the Human Relations position which would be a tremendous loss for the residents of Chatham County. The Human Relations position is essential to providing services and programs aimed at improving relationships among all Chatham County residents. This position provides residents with a resource in solving problems related to civil rights and discrimination. Civil rights and discouragement of discrimination bring prosperity to all residents and benefits the community by attracting businesses and future residents. The Community Civil Rights Educators unanimously recommend that the Human Relations position remain fully funded.”

Community Civil Rights Educators

*Megan Bolejack*

*Bishop Gilbert Branch*

*Jacqueline Williams*

**Jeffrey Starkweather**, 590 Old Goldston Road, Pittsboro, NC, read the following comments into the record:

“I had not planned to speak during public input about what I understand is the desire of the majority of this board to vote on the elimination of positions and programs that are not specifically listed on the publicly announced agenda. Then I read Chairman Bock's rationale:

He wrote: “We are not violating our pledge of open government either in spirit or actuality by discussing and voting now on the other topics. These positions/programs were hotly debated by all sides for most of 2010.” He is referring to eliminating the human relations and



sustainable communities development department head, the obesity coordinator, the Pittsboro/Chapel Hill bus and funds needed to develop a comprehensive land use plan.

I would have to strongly disagree with the idea that campaign discussions with your supporters, campaign forums, and anonymous debates on internet chat sites can substitute for the public deliberations process of your governing as a board. None of those debates were informed by factual analysis. And based on my reading and observing these "debates" after the fact on the internet, much of the factual basis for the arguments I heard was incorrect. Moreover, I do not recall any opponents of these programs ever appearing before the county commissioners during the last year to present factual arguments why any of these positions/programs should be eliminated.

Like most residents of this county, I did not attend any of the candidate forums during this last election, nor have I ever posted my views on these types of "fact free" debates on an anonymous internet sites. Few of the silent majority of hard working taxpayers has thus been given an opportunity to be heard on these issues

Chairman Bock came before the Chatham County Economic Development Corporation and indicated that the new board majority wanted the EDC to provide input about the economic development impact of policy proposals. There is no question that every one of these position/program cuts have potential impacts on economic development. Clearly, the EDC has not been notified of these proposed cuts. As a non-political, professional, economic development advocacy and policy implementation organization, we certainly did not engage as a body in what you describe as "hotly debated" campaign issues during the last year.

Addendum to January 3, 2010 public input of Jeffrey Starkweather: The difference between a vending machine and a barn raising:

My first paid, 40 hour-a-week job was as on a road crew making \$1.30 an hour, minimum wage in 1965, for the Ventura, California County Public Works Department. That is why I found the following analogy by Ventura County City Manager Rick Cole particularly apt in this circumstance in explaining the difference between the old style of "for the people" governing which Chairman Bock appears to be articulating compared to "of the people" 21st Century style of governing that we have been operating here in Chatham County for the at least the last four years.

"With a vending machine, you put your money in and you get services out. When government doesn't deliver, they do what people do when a vending machine doesn't deliver. They kick the machine." The more useful metaphor is the barn raising. It is not a transaction, where I pay to do work on my behalf, but a collaborative process where we are working together. Government works better and costs less when citizens do more than simply choose or ratify representative decision-makers."

**Heather Rodin**, Chair of the Chatham County Human Relations Commission, 40 Speyside Circle, stated that the role of the Director of Human Relations was part and parcel of the Human Relations Commission. The Human Relations Commission was formed in 2000 and by 2005 the Board of Commissioners knew that in order to do their job they would need a Director, and the first Human Relations Director was appointed in 2007. That decision was made after careful consideration, community input, and full discussion. It was hard to understand how that position could be defunded at this point without the same process.

Ms. Rodin said when you think about cost containment in terms of personnel, there were two things to consider. One was the cost of the position, and the second was the benefits of the position in services to the community and in monetary benefits. The monetary benefits included grants that came with conditions, and if the conditions were not met there was a loss of funding and perhaps penalties. The Human Relations Director had the expertise and the contact network to know what problems might arise and how to avoid them. In terms of services, the Human Relations Director fought discrimination and equally important brought about harmonious relations within the community through educational programs and meetings. If you eliminate the positions at this time you will be stopping ongoing activities that were essential to the HRC, and doing that without receiving adequate consideration to all the activities and benefits provided by the Human Relations Director and the impact on the County and its residents. If you give this careful consideration and really studied the situation and not do that in the middle of a budget

cycle, you will come to the same conclusion she had that the benefits of that position were far greater than the costs.

**Allen Parnell**, 6919 Lee Street, stated that the position of Human Relations Director was important for many reasons: it was important if Chatham County expected to bring good jobs and expand the Chatham County tax base; and, to monitor and maintain compliance with society equity provisions in federal regulations to obtain federal funds for a wide range of programs.

Mr. Parnell said as far as the Human Relations Director's role in economic development, there were three key and equal components of a community economic development, and those were return on investment to stakeholders, environmental stewardship, and social equity. The Director of Human Relations was the one person in County government primarily responsible for nurturing and maintaining social equity in increasingly diverse groups. Public information about Chatham County's diversity was readily apparent to all, and that diversity was an attraction for businesses but that diversity could also be a source of conflict. That conflict could be resolved through the ongoing efforts such as that provided by the Human Relations Director and local groups.

Mr. Parnell said in the last three years the County had received \$1.4 million from HUD for housing rehabilitation, and in receiving those funds they had to affirm that the funds were being used for low-income housing. It was also required that the County conduct an analysis of those requirements every five years, which the County had never done to his knowledge. In 2009 Rochester County in New York had reached a \$62.5 million legal settlement with HUD for failure to affirmatively further their housing. The Human Relations Director knew about the mandates as well as mandates from other programs such as Title 6 compliance. It was a complicated role and they needed someone qualified to pay attention to those issues.

**Gabriel Soltren**, 1018 Candlewood Circle, Siler City, NC, read the following comments into the record:

"I was appointed by the board of commissioners on two occasions to serve on the Chatham County Human Relations Commission. For six years, I served as a commissioner, as vice-chair and as chair of the commission. The reasons for funding a Human Relations Office in Chatham County are well documented. We have significant educational achievement gaps at all ages in our county, poverty (10.3%), fair housing issues, hate crimes, discrimination, racism, hate groups, immigrant rights issues, and poor hiring practices.

In 2007, Chatham County joined Charlotte/Mecklenburg, Cumberland, New Hanover, and Orange Counties and other municipalities by funding a human relations office.

To effectively carry out the nine duties in the bylaws the County needs a highly qualified Human Relations executive director.

#### Background: Diversity in Chatham County

In 2007, 42% of the students in Chatham County were Minorities – The Human Relations office is working with the educators to address racial, ethnic, gender and gang related issues.

We are 3rd in the state in per Capita Personal Income (\$43,894 in 2008). However, we have significant Educational Gaps. For ex: at age 25 or over 27% have a B.S. degree (2000 Census). It offers intervention and prevention.

Bachelor's Degree or Higher Siler City (8.3%) v. County (27.6%)

#### Immigration

Immigration in the county has been featured on the BBC, NPR, the New York Times, the Miami Herald and other news organizations. The Human Relations Director is reaching out to the immigrant population.

This can cast us in a negative image. The message of Diversity as a Strength helps Economic Development and marketing agencies that promote Chatham County. Basically, people will not come if they think we are prejudiced.

#### Public Safety

Active and Reactive Steps are needed. For a fraction of these funds the Human Relations Director is focusing on prevention and reducing crime at its source. Over \$25 million dollars will be invested in a new Chatham County Judicial Center. When you have good relationships, you have less crime. The director works with educators on Civil Rights, Anti-Racism, and Oppression.

The above duties cannot be carried out effectively without a qualified Executive Director. The county manager's office should be applauded for filling the position with a highly qualified executive director. The search and interview committee was made up of public and private members that consisted of;

- two members of the Chatham County Human Relations Commission,
- the County Human Resources Manager,
- the County Community Relations Manager,
- the Siler City Chief of Police,
- a Chatham County Sheriff Department Captain,
- a Pittsboro Town Council Representative,
- a Chatham County Health Department Representative,
- and a Human Relations Director from a neighboring city (to provide expertise regarding the human relations position.)
- a Chatham County Minister
- and a representative from Chatham County Schools

The position was advertised locally and nationally and attracted more than 20 applicants. They used an Equal Employment Opportunity evaluation form to measure applicant qualifications against the job description. The top five candidates were interviewed and a human relations director was hired in 2008.

Our Executive Director, Esther Coleman, is vital to raising expectations for everyone in the county. I recommend that Chatham County continue to fully fund the Human Relations Office.”

**Buddy Denise**, 2196 Bonlee-Bennett Road, Siler City, NC, provided the following comments which he read into the record:

“My name is Buddy Denise. I live at 2196 Bonlee-Bennett Road, Siler City, NC. I am here today to speak in support of the proposed spending reductions which the Commissioners will consider today:

- Eliminating position of Human Relations Director
- Eliminating position of Sustainable Communities Director
- Eliminating position of Childhood Obesity-Prevention Coordinator
- Funding for the Pittsboro express bus
- \$300,000 contract to hire a consultant for land use planning

These are not new proposals! The three newly elected commissioners had these as planks of their message to voters from the beginning of their campaign starting in early 2010. It was outlined in their campaign events, literature, handouts, news releases and Web sites.

It is imperative to keep your campaign promises. You emphasized priorities for Jobs and economic development, support for existing businesses and common sense assistance to those thinking of starting a new business. Please stay the course: this will help our communities become more sustainable through the private sector industry rather than government growth.

Obesity in our society is not just a citizen problem, it is a problem with our government too. In order to afford the true functions of government we must start trimming the size of government. These proposed changes are what the majority of the voters want because it is simply being responsible with our tax dollars.

I have observed each of our new commissioners during the past year, they listened to the citizens of the whole County. They accepted the input, analyzed our current financial situation and come to the commonsense conclusion: Revenue isn't the problem, spending is! Under current economic conditions these decisions are difficult but necessary to create financial sustainability. I commend you on getting right to work on solving OUR problems.

**Miriam (Mimi) Pollard**, 1817 Gade Bryant Road, Moncure, NC, stated that this country had a flexible document called the Constitution, and it was a living document. She was concerned that they had anti-federalists among them, and believed that at times you could trim the government to the point of being terrorists. They needed to be considerate and concerned about that trimming.

Ms. Pollard said that government was not necessarily representative of the people since 49% of the County's citizens did not vote in the last election. Government must be responsive in order to maintain sovereignty, and it was not about individuals. Those of you that compare your home budget to government have no idea about what the government was charged to do in terms of being responsive to the people.

**Chet Buell**, 715 Shepard Street, Durham, Chapel Hill, NC, stated that Cynthia Van Der Wiele was his wife. He was in support of a Sustainable Communities Development Director. Over the last year and a half he had seen his wife struggle with business concerns and community concerns. What she did was to work to make businesses understand that it was not just the community they had to protect and the community must not be just concerned with the community. There must be a compromise between the two.

Mr. Buell stated this was a position that worked to coordinate, not to alienate, and this County has become divided. To eliminate this position would further divide the County. He understood campaign promises, and understood that when you took over a business you analyzed and evaluated what needed to be done. There was no evaluation done here, in that someone produced some numbers and someone did not like a title. The title of Sustainable Communities Development Director was a title of a person who worked for business concerns and for community concerns. If you have a business and you want to build, you had to pay attention to what the community wanted. If business and the community were not working together, you may end up with a mobile home park next to a multi-million dollar development. Business would run rampant and the community would have no say. Businesses could come to the Board and three of those Board members would nod and say something nice; the other two might say they agreed, and one of the three might say they agreed, but he seriously doubted it. But, this position was someone that worked not only for the community but for the businesses. Bring those two together; if you cannot bring them together then businesses would run rampant in this County and damage it in the process.

**Faythe Canson Clark**, 314 Trinity Street, Siler City, NC, presented her comments to the Board and provided them in their entirety for the record as follows:

“Good Morning, Commissioners, Town Manager, and Community,

I am here this morning to speak on behalf of the Office of Human Relations and the retention of its Director, Esther Coleman.

We sit at a unique time in our history when we are challenged to make difficult choices based on tight budgets and expanding needs. We also sit at a place of opportunity as we are growing in ways we have not grown before. As you look around this room, you see the result of this growth. We have, for the most part, grown economically, we have attained new heights in education, and we have released many of the beliefs that created separation as we moved toward a greater community. All in this picture is not fair or equal; however. If it were, there would be no need for a Human Relations Office, or Fair Housing Laws, Equal Employment Laws, an American Disabilities Act, a Civil Rights Act, and other State and Federal Protection Laws aimed at creating a safe and just life for certain segments of the community.

As we read the comprehensive report prepared by Esther Coleman entitled, “Issues Impacting People of Color in Chatham County,” we see clearly that there is still work to be done in virtually all areas of quality of life. How can we know that there is such significant need and at the same time recommend that the department that researched and recommended methods for addressing the need be cut from the budget? What is the cost savings of one person's salary as compared to hundreds of people who will increasingly become dependent on Chatham County's limited resources to survive?

As a contractor with several non-profits in Chatham County I know that the work that has been put into this document is a resource to all of us who work with low income and at-risk populations. Using these referenced recommendations provided by Ms. Coleman, we are able to

attract more funding to supplement the services provided by Chatham County that are not currently reaching all segments of the community. What would be missing from our efforts if the Human Relations Office is cut from the budget, is the oversight of a comprehensive strategic plan in Chatham County and a vital link to the many people you see sitting here in this room whose lives and organizations have been influenced by the work of Esther Coleman.

While we could go forward with a Human Relations Commission without a Director, who would implement these strategies and how would we monitor their effectiveness and overall impact in our communities. Or are we saying we simply do nothing where these recommendations are concern? And what do we lose when we release a person who has been fully trained in Fair Housing Law, the Civil Rights Act, Employment Law, the Disabilities Act, and other important initiatives? Those too are dollars wasted. I encourage you again to look out into the audience at the people who are here in support of Ms. Coleman. There is more than money at stake here, there are relationships.

If I were sitting in your position I would want a knowledgeable, committed, trusted, and respected person on my team to act as the liaison between the County and the Community on issues of sensitivity that could have the potential to cost the County thousands of dollars if handled poorly. I recommend we take 90-days to determine the best means for implementing the strategies listed in this report and the importance of the Office of Human Relations to Chatham County government. Thank you, for listening.”

Respectfully Submitted,  
Faythe Canson Clark

**Randy Voller**, 21 Randolph Court, Pittsboro, NC, Mayor of Pittsboro, stated there were about twenty people outside who had wanted to come in and speak tonight, but they were not allowed in because of Fire Code provisions and the capacity of the room. He suggested they be notified that they could provide written comments, adding that they deserved to be heard.

Mayor Voller stated that the Triangle Rural Planning Organization has been in favor of the transit options including Chatham Transit and some of the planned moves. Orange, Chatham, Lee, and Moore officials have been working on these transit issues for about six years, and they were in favor of a bus system. He urged that the Board take the time to evaluate whether they were going to pull out the funding so that they could take input from that organization of which Chatham had a liaison member. One thing brought up to consider was that Pittsboro recently received a \$750,000 grant to address some of their oldest water lines in Town. Unless Pittsboro wanted to raise taxes by 18.5 cents or do an assessment which no one wanted, they had to rely on those kinds of grants to do infrastructure investment as the County would have to do. This came through the Division of Community Assistance which was a pass through for HUD, and there were requirements associated with that grant which caused them to hire an outside company to help the Town qualify and they had also received assistance from the County from Esther Coleman’s office. Before the Board defunded that position they needed to look at the strings that it connected to. If that caused them to have problems with the grant then they would have to hire someone outside that could have been provided by the County. It was not unusual for Pittsboro as well as Siler City and Goldston to ask the County to provide those services, and without the County’s help they may have trouble complying.

The Town of Pittsboro requests that before the decision is made that they evaluate how it affected Siler City, Pittsboro, and Goldston. The last census data indicated that 50% of the population of Siler City was Hispanic, but many were not residents. It is wise to look at where their future was heading, and before they eliminated that position to analyze how it would connect back to the towns in the County.

Chairman Bock stated that those members of the public who were waiting outside and who did not have the opportunity to speak would be asked to provide their comments in writing for the public record.

**BREAK**

The Chairman called for a short break.

## **COMMISSIONERS' PRIORITIES**

### ***Public Hearing:***

**Construction of Judicial Center Public Hearing:** Public Hearing to receive public comments on the proposed borrowing of funds for the construction of the judicial center

Chairman Bock opened the floor for public comments.

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

Chairman Bock closed the public hearing.

**Secondary Roads Program Presentation by NCDOT:** Presentation by Reuben Blakley on the proposed secondary road projects to be completed using Highway and Trust Funds

Reuben Blakley, District Engineer for NCDOT, stated that he was responsible for roadway maintenance within Chatham and Randolph Counties. The Secondary Roads Program was basically a program to pave dirt roads in the County of which there were several. They had presented to the Transportation Advisory Board as well as the County Board the paving priority list, noting that the draft resolution indicated that the funding came from Highway Trust and Highway Funds. They were able to take the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 funding from the Highway Funds and come up with a total of \$1.4 million, and they were able to take a total of \$2.5 million from the Trust Fund over the same period. All of those funds would be spent completely on paving unpaved roads with the County.

Mr. Blakley said there were a couple of exceptions he wanted to point out. On the top of the Highway Fund list there were two roads that had previously been targeted for paving but they had not been paved due to lack of right-of-way. Those rights-of-way had now been obtained so those two roads were on the list for paving.

Mr. Blakley said that NCDOT was asking for the County's support by adopting the resolution, and that resolution of support would be taken to the Board of Transportation at its March meeting, and hopefully work would begin this spring and through the summer.

Commissioner Petty moved, seconded by Commissioner Cross, to adopt **Resolution #2011-\_\_ Secondary Road Improvement Program**, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

Commissioner Kost stated a question she often heard was the closing of Andrews Store Road, and asked where they were on that. She said that was a major road that many people were concerned about. Mr. Blakley responded there were a couple of different things going on there, one of which was the road improvements by Briar Chapel that was required as part of the driveway permit. That was the turn lanes and widening now ongoing. NCDOT has come back with additional funding to widen Andrews Store Road completely from 501 to Briar Chapel. It will be 24 feet wide and will be resurfaced. They also had a contract in the process of being let to widen it to 24 feet all the way to the other end. They had hoped to get the first part completed prior to school beginning but had not met that deadline because Briar Chapel had not completed their part in time. When Briar Chapel completed their part then DOT would do the remainder of the work. Commissioner Kost asked would the road have to be closed. Mr. Blakley said they did not anticipate closing the road for that widening, although it would be flagged and only one lane open at a time.

**2009-2010 Audit Report:** Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2009-2010 audit report by Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, PA

The County Manager introduced Shane Fox, auditor for Martin Starnes Associates, who had performed the audit on behalf of Chatham County.

Shane Fox, Martin Starnes Associates, stated that without the cooperation of County staff they would not have been able to do what was required, and they had received very good help over weeks and weeks of work and had been provided all required information to perform the audit. He offered his thanks to the Finance Officer and her staff for their hard work and their

help in providing the information for the audit. Mr. Fox then presented the audit report and made the following observations:

- The County received an unqualified opinion which was the very best opinion they could give. That indicated a clean opinion with no findings or questionable costs and no material internal control weaknesses were identified.
- The General Fund summary showed that revenues were slightly down which was expected, and that expenses were slightly up which was also expected.
- Fund Balance was divided into Reserved, Unreserved, and Undesignated, and this was the last year these classifications would be used. Unreserved and Undesignated were available Fund Balance. Total Fund Balance from 2008-2009 increased; however it suffered a small decrease in 2009-2010, which was not as large as had been anticipated. They were roughly back to where they were in 2008 in comparison to 2009.
- Fund Balance as a whole was roughly \$22 million, with \$3.9 million in required reservations. Of that \$3.9 million, \$3.8 million was the amount required to be reserved for accounts receivable based on State calculations.
- Unreserved Fund Balance was the true available Fund Balance at 24%, which was a small percent less than last year but was roughly three times what the State minimum was which was 8%.

Commissioner Kost stated she understood that by law 8% was the minimum set by the Local Government Commission. She asked if Mr. Fox knew what the State-wide average was. Mr. Fox replied he did not know, and he then continued his presentation.

- Property tax revenues showed a slight increase over the prior year.
- Restricted intergovernmental revenues showed a decrease, noting that was outside federal and State grants, and again was expected. It was their opinion that those revenues would begin to level out over the next two years.

Commissioner Kost stated that the Audit Report talked about a distribution change in sales tax, and asked what that was. Ms. Paschal stated that sales tax in the past was distributed on a per capita basis, but was now distributed based on the provisions in Article 42. Commissioner Kost said her point was that not all of the \$1.8 million was a part of the economy but was a part of the distribution under Article 42.

Mr. Fox continued his report:

- General Government showed a slight increase due mainly to an energy audit that was completed in 2009-2010.
- Public Safety showed a slight increase as expected, as did Human Services.
- Outstanding debt at June 30, 2010 was at \$118 million; the debt margin was the legal maximum amount that could be borrowed from the State, which was \$586 million.
- Enterprise Funds in all categories had positive cash flows, which meant that after taking out depreciation and all non-operating expenditures, the operations as a whole had positive cash flows.
- Over the last two years all Enterprise funds had showed a positive gain or income at year end in comparison to prior years.

Commissioner Kost asked was there still a transfer from the General Fund into the Water Fund. Vicki McConnell, Finance Director, stated she believed it had been eliminated. Commissioner Kost said one of their financial goals was that all Enterprise Funds be self-sufficient and run as a business, so she was trying to validate whether they had achieved that goal. Ms. McConnell replied they did not transfer any funds from last year. Commissioner Kost stated that was a very good thing.

Mr. Fox continued his report:

- In terms of current State and local conditions, 16 counties had increased their tax rates either during 2009 or 2010, and roughly half of the counties had cut their budgets from the prior year.
- About half of the counties had reported either hiring freezes, had cut positions, or had laid off existing employees during the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

- Twenty-five counties had seen a decrease in property valuations, and sales tax revenues were roughly 9% to 10% below the levels of 2007-2008 levels.
- Financial report changes for 2011 included how Fund Balances would be titled. Rather than Reserved, Unreserved, and Undesignated, they would now be known as Restricted, Committed, Assigned, or Unassigned. The State was still looking a rules in regards to Fund Balance, and the final language changes would be decided within the next few months. Those changes would not change Fund Balance as a whole but would simply change the way they were classified

Ms. McConnell stated that they had transferred \$769,000 from the General Fund to the Enterprise Fund, so it had not been entirely eliminated.

Commissioner Kost stated then they had not yet reached that goal. She said the report indicated that the Unreserved Fund Balance represented 24% of the total General Fund expenditures, while total Fund Balance represented 29%. She asked was Ms. McConnell talking just about the General Fund. Ms. McConnell said yes, just the 24%.

Commissioner Kost said in response to the comment that the former Board of Commissioners had left a money mess, she did not think that was what had just been presented to this Board.

**Agreement for Construction Services:** Approval of agreement with Chatham County Schools for construction management services

Commissioner Kost explained that she had pulled this and the next item from the Consent Agenda because one dealt with contracting with the Schools for construction management and that was something they had urged staff to work on with other jurisdictions including the towns and the schools. She applauded staff for getting that arrangement in place and believed it was a very wise decision to do it, so that was not the question.

Commissioner Kost said the other issue dealt with the architect and the selection process and the contract, so the two went hand-in-hand. She had heard from citizens during discussions about the budget about holding the new Commissioners accountable, cutting the budget, and about expenses. She also knew that one of the things in the campaign pledges were significant cuts, five to seven percent a year for each of the next three years, and that amounted to about \$15 million. If they were talking about cuts of that magnitude, and if they were in such financial straights that they needed to be eliminating filled positions during the year, she did not believe they needed to be building a jail right now. And, she did not believe they should be building the Judicial Center. If they were talking about cuts of that magnitude and if they were truly concerned about the budget, then they needed to be having those discussions all within context.

Commissioner Kost asked that the Board not take action on either of those items until they received the CIP and held the public hearing on the CIP, and until they had had a chance to talk with staff and to talk about the budget. She was very supportive of both of those projects and the new high school that was not yet in the budget, but she believed that before they gave staff permission to move forward on those issues the Board needed to discuss them.

Commissioner Petty said that entities all over the country were facing some of the same things Chatham was facing right now, so they should not be surprised that they were having to deal with it. In order to achieve some of the things they needed to do with the judicial system as far as buildings and other things they had to find ways to fund those. Situations like this are never easy, but they have to be proactive with their budget issues and not reactive. The audit indicated that they had experienced a decrease in revenue, they had experienced an increase in expenses, and it did not appear that that would change right away. In looking at what was being proposed the goal was to make sure they cut every unnecessary expense possible in order to fund the things they needed to do. They wanted to take a proactive approach because if they waited and took a reactive approach then they oftentimes made hasty decisions that had to be redone.

Commissioner Petty said they wanted to stop the bleeding; they did not want to wait until they bled out. The things they were looking at were up for discussion and a tremendous amount of research had been done, so they were not going into it blind. The comments he believed were somewhat ahead of time, but he needed to address that to set the stage for what was to come. He asked that citizens give the Board the opportunity to work through the issues, and that they



would not do anything without thought and unguided. He asked that they hear the Board out before they passed judgment on what the Board was trying to accomplish. They were trying to be responsible and accountable with their tax dollars.

Ms. Paschal stated that this was actually begun in August and the contract was coming to the Board because it was a four-year contract which required Board approval. If the Board delayed approval of the contract they would continue with the present arrangement until the contract was denied, at which time they would end their arrangement. The second issue was with the jail architect, in that if there was a realistic possibility that they would not move forward with the jail then they should not proceed with negotiations. But, if they were just waiting for final word she would recommend that they proceed with the negotiations and instead of authorizing the Manager to sign the contract that it be brought back to the Board for approval.

Chairman Bock stated he did not believe there was a real possibility that they would not move forward with the jail contract, but that would come up later. There had been a fairly strong case to build a judicial center; he had looked into that in depth and also received monthly reports on overcrowding and the associated safety issues. He did not believe that Commissioner Kost was suggesting that there was a serious movement to stop that process.

Commissioner Kost stated she believed they needed to discuss it all in context. She had voiced her opinion about the way they were going about the budget cuts because it was not a comprehensive approach. They have not taken a comprehensive look or talked about what the Board's priorities are. They have not set their goals, yet they were coming now without any public debate, and they as a Board had not discussed them. She would like to hear about the research that had been done and why the Chair felt the way he did, but her point was that if in fact the Board was going to cut the magnitude of \$15 million out of the budget she did not see how they could build a judicial center. Something had to go, and there were not that kind of cuts in the budget identified.

Chairman Bock stated that in all fairness they had not actually brought up any of those cuts as yet.

Commissioner Kost stated in all fairness they were not on the agenda, either. Basically, the two filled positions that were being considered constituted for this year \$42,000. She asked what was the debt service on the jail? What was the debt service on the judicial center? She had supported both of those projects, but if in fact they were talking about these kinds of cuts then everything had to be on the table and not just a couple of things.

Chairman Bock said going back to the agreement for construction services, what did staff need from the Board. Ms. Paschal responded if the Board did not want to move ahead with the agreement, then she would bring it back to the Board for review along with the CIP. If they did not wish to enter into the agreement then a vote would be needed. On the contract with the architect, if the Board believed they would not move forward with the jail then it was a waste of staff time to negotiate a contract with an architect. But, if the Board believed they would likely move forward with the jail then she would recommend that staff negotiate the contracts.

Commissioner Kost stated they could postpone the decision for one month so that the Board could receive the CIP and call for a public hearing, and then either during the retreat or shortly thereafter they would have discussion. She asked would waiting a month impact the schedule as now set. Ms. Paschal replied no. Commissioner Kost said then she would request that they wait until after the CIP discussion.

Commissioner Cross suggested they go ahead and arrange the contract but bring it back to the Board for approval.

Commissioner Kost stated that Ms. Paschal had said it would be a waste of staff time if the Board decided not to move forward, so that was why she had suggested waiting one month. She was okay with staff working on the contract but believed they had some serious questions to answer as a Board as to whether they would move forward with the projects. Commissioner Kost said she was very supportive of the projects, but the magnitude of the cuts had to be on the table.

Chairman Bock said if they held the agreement for construction services for the Chatham County Schools for one month, no harm done. Ms. Paschal said they would continue with the current arrangement unless the Board instructed her not to. Chairman Bock asked was any Commissioner suggesting that Ms. Paschal not do that. Stating that he was seeing none, then they would hold the construction contract #7 for a month.

**Hemphill-Randel Associates Contract for Jail:** Approval of a request to authorize County staff to negotiate a contract with Hemphill-Randel Associates as architects for the Chatham County Jail and authorize the county manager and clerk to execute the contract upon final review by the County Attorney

Commissioner Cross moved, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to have staff negotiate an architectural contract for the jail and bring it back to the Board of Commissioners for approval.

Commissioner Kost stated that she would support the motion, but stressed that she wanted to revisit the project.

Chairman Bock called the question. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

**Cost Containment/Streamlining Discussion:**

Chairman Bock stated that as elected officials it was incumbent upon them to be good stewards of the taxpayers' money and they should constantly be looking at ways to improve efficiency and confirm that they were only spending money on items that fell in the proper functions of government. That was important at all times, but even more so in times of economic downturn particularly when they knew what was coming in the future and it made no sense to wait until there was a problem. While they did not know exactly what the \$3.7 billion State shortfall had in store for them, they did know that there would be less money for counties, specifically Chatham County. They also knew that previous estimates of growth for the County had been significantly reduced because of the recession and did not believe that would change anytime soon, and that had resulted in slower than expected revenue growth. In other words, they would not have as much revenue coming in as they had projected. Additionally, recent projects and recommended projects including those just talked about were expected to add about \$7 million in operating expenses over the next four years. The result was that they had committed expenses based on revenue expectations that were no longer accurate. That was why he believed they would be irresponsible not to revisit some of those expenses and examine if they still made sense in today's environment.

Chairman Bock stated it was important to stress that if the Board decided to reduce expenditures in a specific area or eliminate a program altogether, it did not mean that that program was not a good idea at the time of its approval. They could only make decisions based on the information available, and as that information changed or became more complete they needed to be flexible and willing to change their opinion.

Chairman Bock stated that some of the comments during the public input session steered away from positions and talked about the individuals. He wanted to stress that any discussion they have was not a reflection on any of the individual's work, but was focused strictly on the position. When he looked at expenditures of public funds, there were several questions he asked himself and one was if it was a duplication of services. In recognizing that the amount of money available to spend was finite, he asked himself was there a higher priority or other services that needed to be provided first. Assuming that it was a higher priority and it was not a duplication of services, then what was the most efficient manner to accomplish the goal? With that background, several of the Commissioners have identified areas where they could reduce spending immediately.

Chairman Bock stated that at this time, he would ask for motions for each of the recommendations. After they were made and seconded, the Board would have discussion and then they would vote.

Commissioner Kost stated that one of the speakers had referred to an issues paper, and asked was there some sort of list. She said the item on the agenda said "Cost Containment/Streaming Discussion – The Board will continue discussion of decision-making of strategies for reducing the budget." She said her argument was that they had not been really clear to the

citizens about what the Board was about to do. She had heard reference to a list and asked was there a list, and what was on the table under that very generic description on the public agenda.

Chairman Bock stated they would discuss those items one at a time and as motions were made then that issue would be on the table. He said there was nothing on the table until a motion was made. It was really his decision not to be as specific on the agenda when it came to positions. His thought process was that he had not felt it appropriate to publicly talk about someone's position, particularly positions that were filled, prior to speaking to the affected individuals. Additionally, had it been on the agenda in more detail with a list of every issue he expected to be raised, then the public input section would not have allowed those people to make comments in those areas. He understood that not everyone would agree with that decision or the thought process that had gone into it.

Chairman Bock asked at this time, did the Board want to offer any motions related to cost containment or streamlining.

Commissioner Stewart moved, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to not sign the Land Use Plan contract to hire a consultant at a total cost \$300,000 over a two-year period and return it to the Board of Commissioners for further discussion.

Commissioner Kost asked had this been referred to the Planning Board for its input. Commissioner Stewart replied no.

Commissioner Kost stated she would support the motion only if the motion was to delay the decision and not to not do it at all. She said that Chatham County was operating with a Land Use Plan without a map, and because of that their land use decisions had been very helter-skelter. The plan was to do a very comprehensive citizen-based plan, which was what had driven up the cost. They could do it for less cost but she believed they would all agree that including citizens as a part of the process was very important. She would support the motion with the caveat that it was a delay only, in that the Board needed to discuss the plan and understand all the ramifications of it, and to collect more information and learn more about what was intended and what the process was. In order to bring the newer Board members up to speed, she would support the motion.

Chairman Bock stated when the contract was brought to his attention, it was ready to be signed. The County Manager stated they had had discussions with the consultant but no formal contract had been agreed on.

Commissioner Stewart restated her motion to not sign the Land Use Plan contract to hire a consultant and that it be discussed at a later date. Commissioner Petty restated his second to the motion. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

#### **Pittsboro Express:**

Commissioner Petty stated that one of the things that had been considered was the Pittsboro Express bus service, which had been slow to develop a consistent ridership that was sustainable. Some would argue about the number of riders, but assuming a round-trip rider five days a week they were talking about 25 to 30 people. Based on those figures, he believed there were likely more effective ways to address their transportation issues. He would like to see them strengthen the already existing Chatham Transit Network, which offered smaller vehicles that were more cost-effective to purchase, cheaper to operate, and had a smaller impact on the environment with its carbon footprint.

Commissioner Petty moved to terminate the existing contract with an effective 90-day window and for staff to look at options to negotiate ways for Chatham Transit Network to fill the voids in transportation pending any contractual obligations that exist.

The County Manager informed the Board that the contract had a 60-day termination notice.

Commissioner Petty said he understood it was 60 days, but he was offering 90 days. The County Manager said that was acceptable. Commissioner Petty said he wanted to leave enough

time to fill the void with an already existing service so that it did not leave them without coverage.

Chairman Bock summarized the motion by Commissioner Petty to terminate the contract with Chapel Hill Transit for the Pittsboro Express that runs from Pittsboro to Chapel Hill, effective 90 days from today. Commissioner Stewart seconded the motion.

Commissioner Kost stated the contract went through June 30 and asked how much would be saved. Staff had informed them that the contract had a maximum out-of-pocket expense of \$39,000, and that as of March they would have spent that \$39,000 so they would not have to pay another penny to continue the service until June 30.

Chairman Bock stated he did not know that they were talking about cutting the service; they were talking about that particular bus and using that time to strengthen the services of Chatham Transit Network which serviced all of Chatham County. Any time they eliminated a contract they wanted to provide some notice.

Commissioner Kost stated if they were going to terminate it 60 or 90 days from today then what they were basically giving up was a free service for April, May, and June. Why would they want to do that? From a financial standpoint it made absolutely zero sense to do that now because they were giving up a free bus.

Chairman Bock asked that someone from staff address that issue. The County Manager stated the budget called for \$51,600; however, they had not signed the contract until September so Commissioner Kost was correct that \$39,000 was the cap. They did anticipate that that amount would be expended by late March or early April, adding that Pittsboro's appropriation would run out in February. The guarantee by Chapel Hill Transit is that they would fill in the gap for any expenses beyond the contracted amount not to exceed \$39,000 through June 30, 2011. In other words, if the County's funds are expended in March, then Chapel Hill Transit would continue the service at its own expense through June 30, 2011.

Commissioner Kost stated then the County's maximum out-of-pocket expense under the contract was not to exceed \$39,567.20. In March or early April they would reach that amount, so with the 90-day notice the County would be giving up a free bus service for April, May, and June by approving this motion, and that made no sense to her.

Commissioner Petty stated if there was no additional funding required to get them through to year-end, he had no problem with that. His main objective was to get the cost containment issue dealt with and if the cost for the bus would be covered through June 30 then he had no problem extending the service until that time. He expressed his willingness to amend his motion to continue the service through June 30 and to provide a six-month notice rather than the 90 days. His goal was to end the service before any additional funding had to be allocated, and it appeared that providing notice that the service would end on June 30 would accomplish that.

Commissioner Kost asked that additional comments be allowed because Commissioner Petty may want to amend his motion even more once other compelling and strong arguments were made about what was being considered.

Commissioner Cross stated he believed they were getting off to a slippery start in regards to cost containment and streamlining. They all understood that the federal and State governments would be cutting County allocations, and obviously the bus service needed to be discussed during their regular budget planning. If they did not choose to renew that contract in July then that would come out during those discussions as well as the Land Use Plan contract. He would like the Board to take the approach to look at everything in the budget during the normal process, identify where cuts could be made if necessary, and hopefully the Legislature would have information to them in time to complete their budget on June 30. Numbers he had been given were up to perhaps a 17% cut in State funding, and with that in mind this whole process would be better served if they took each item including the positions and worked it through the budget process and identified throughout County government what could be given up if necessary. They would do themselves a better service to approach it in that manner.

Commissioner Kost agreed 100% with Commissioner Cross, noting that was the reason they had a budget process and was the same reason why they did not allow new programs to begin in the middle of a fiscal year unless it was some emergency. She stated that everything needed to be done within the budget process where priorities were competing, and Commissioner Cross was absolutely right that they were going to be facing some tough decisions.

Commissioner Kost stated that many of the riders of the bus service had to make decisions about how they were going to get to work based on having the contract for this bus service. In talking with some of the UNC employees, they had had to make a decision on whether they would get a parking space at Cole Park, whether they would get one on campus, or whether they would take the bus, and that decision had to be made each August. There was a commitment to have a bus, and hoped that if the Board was going to terminate the service that they gave those people an option so they would have another way to get to work. If they did eliminate the bus, she believed they should at least have it run through August to give those people that opportunity.

Commissioner Kost stated when they had discussed the bus, she had wholeheartedly agreed that they should use Chatham Transit, and they had asked Chatham Transit that exact question and they had replied that they were not in the position to provide that service. There was a new director and some things were changing, but if they were going to revisit this bus whom it had been said was for a select few, she hoped that they would also throw into the mix that they look at the new Siler City route they were funding and put that on the table as well.

Chairman Bock stated he believed that Commissioner Kost had just made a case for providing as much notice as possible to end the bus rather than wait until the budget process in June. If they gave people six months notice that the bus service would not be extended, that should be sufficient time for riders to make other plans and to provide the County time to work with Chatham Transit.

Chairman Bock stated that the Siler City fixed route was in place because in fact Chatham Transit had been operating as a taxi service in Siler City which was too taxing on the system. The new director had come in and put a fixed system in place, noting that they were a non-profit organization with their own budget. The topic now was the Pittsboro Express bus and how much time the Board wanted to give notice to end that service.

Commissioner Kost stated one other issue was that she did not think that they could make that decision in isolation; she believed they should use their Transportation Advisory Board and get their input. She also believed they needed to talk with the Town of Pittsboro and the Economic Development Corporation, noting it was her understanding that having transit between Chapel Hill and Pittsboro was instrumental in the decision of having a hospital that could have 1,000 employees in Chatham County. She suggested looking at this in a much broader scope which was how they should be making decisions.

Chairman Bock stated he was relatively sure they would not have a hospital by June or August, but he believed everyone supported transit and could see the future need of the route from Pittsboro to Chapel Hill. Where they disagreed was whether they should be funding that now, and if the contract ran until June and they could give riders six months notice instead of three that the service would end, then he would support that.

Commissioner Stewart stated that Chatham County was primarily a rural county and there was a larger concentration of people in parts of the County that utilized that particular bus. But, there had always been an issue of whether it was fair to expect the majority of the people who paid taxes in the County to help subsidize a bus that had such low ridership. They knew they needed transportation and they were not saying otherwise; they were saying why have two separate transportation programs in the same county. Why not consolidate that and expand the one that they had?

Commissioner Stewart stated another issue that had not been talked about was that right now the size of the bus that was running that route was quite large and took a lot more fuel and required a lot more maintenance. If they did not fill that bus with riders then it was not very cost effective. Earlier the comment was made that they were only spending \$50,000. One thing that had been said over and over again today was that was today, but what about next year when cuts were made on such programs at the State and federal level. It might be \$50,000 today, but it

could be \$150,000 next time. If they waited until that happened, they would be back-peddling. Commissioner Stewart stated she believed they should look at alternatives by finding a way to expand the existing Chatham Transit Network.

Commissioner Petty revised his motion to provide six months notice and not renew the contract with Chapel Hill Transit for the Pittsboro Express to end on June 30, 2011. Chairman Bock seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cross stated he basically agreed with the points made about trying to expand the existing Chatham Transit service and seeing if that would work, and asked that the motion be revised to state that the Board at this point did not intend to renew the contract with Chapel Hill Transit pending examination of whether the service could be replaced with Chatham Transit.

Chairman Bock stated that in June that issue could be brought up.

Commissioner Cross stated it was all connected, in that they were either going to do away with the bus service or they were not. He was suggesting that the motion state that they were not going to renew the Chapel Hill Transit contract until they had revisited combining the routes with Chatham Transit at which time they would make a decision on whether to continue the service or not.

Commissioner Petty stated that anything that they did or undid, they had to be flexible. He said anytime the Board did something it was done on the information available at that time. Six months or a year from now that could change again because things could change.

Chairman Bock stated he believed it was important to send the information now that at the end of this contract on June 30 that it would not be renewed. When the first official contract had been brought up it was a trial that had ended last year and was extended for an additional year. He believed they needed to make it clear that they were not supporting at this time Chapel Hill Transit operating a bus between Pittsboro and Chapel Hill. You can see that once a program was begun it became critical, in that it was nearly impossible to stop a government program. He would like to send the message now that this was one of those programs that they would stop.

Commissioner Kost stated that Brian Litchfield with Chapel Hill Transit had told the Board of Commissioners that it took three years to build a route. She wondered if anyone had the current ridership numbers, noting if so they were not shared with her.

Chairman Bock stated that the ridership numbers were available, but it did concern him that the service had been in place for a year and a half and they did not know the exact ridership numbers.

Commissioner Kost stated those numbers had been provided to the Chair but not to the rest of the Board.

Chairman Bock stated the ridership numbers had been provided to him as a citizen by contacting Mr. Litchfield some time ago, but the updated numbers were 1,260 average boardings for the month of November with an estimated average of 80 boardings a day. The problem with those averages was if you rode to Chapel Hill and back, that was two boardings, so boardings were not riders. He emphasized that those ridership numbers were available to any citizen who requested them.

Commissioner Kost stated her point was that the professionals in the transportation field had indicated that it took three years in order to build a route, do the marketing, show that it was dependable and attract the ridership. They were stopping that, in that they were not going to get increased ridership because they had said they were going to terminate the program. If the program was turned over to Chatham Transit, it would not be successful because no one would want to give up their parking pass at UNC knowing that the Board of Commissioners was not really committed to operating the service. As a result, ridership numbers would go down.

Commissioner Kost stated her other point was that they did have a federal transportation grant, and her guess was if they ever applied for another one they would not get it even if it was for Chatham Transit because they had just shown that transit was not something the Board

considered a real priority. Her last point was that the former Board of Commissioners had signed on to a Reality Check; that is, the thirteen municipalities around the Research Triangle area had developed goals and transit was one of the top goals. If in fact the Board took that action, they would probably need to rescind their resolution of support for regional transportation.

Chairman Bock called for the vote. The vote was three (3) to two (2) with Commissioners Kost and Cross opposing. The motion carried.

**Resource Conservation Manager Position:**

Chairman Bock moved that effective immediately the Resource Conservation Manager Position be eliminated and removed from the budget, seconded by Commissioner Petty.

Commissioner Kost stated that this position was currently vacant, and to be clear she asked if this is the position that they were going to reallocate within the department and was not a new position.

Chairman Bock stated that was correct.

Commissioner Kost asked was it also the same position that the Board had said it would revisit in January. The County Manager stated that was correct.

Chairman Bock stated that currently the salary and benefits as budgeted were approximately \$82,000 with an additional operating expense of about \$3,500, so the total budget was about \$86,000.

Commissioner Kost stated but, it was a reallocated position.

Chairman Bock stated that was correct.

Commissioner Kost asked what was the position that was reallocated. Mr. Horne replied it was the position of Assistant Planner.

Commissioner Kost asked how long the position had been vacant. Ms. Paschal stated the position had never been filled. Commissioner Kost asked when the position had been created. Ms. Paschal stated it was created along with the current budget.

Commissioner Kost stated that the position was a reallocation of an existing position and shifting the workload, and believed that if they eliminated the position that there may still be a need for a position in the Planning Department to do the work. If they eliminated a position then they needed to eliminate the work that it did, so if they were going to eliminate it then they needed to lay out what it was that they were not going to do anymore. She said already their Planning staff was overtaxed and they were in a slow period of development. Her question was if they gave up the position, what work would they be willing to eliminate from the work plan or from the mission of the organization.

Commissioner Petty stated the position had never been filled and since development was in a lull it was obvious they did not need that position currently. Whenever there was a need and building picked up, they could revisit it at that time. Currently work was getting done while that position was vacant, and believed they could continue to get the necessary work accomplished without it.

Commissioner Stewart asked was this position something that staff had requested. Ms. Paschal stated it was requested by staff who had put together the justification for it.

Chairman Bock stated from what he could tell, it was created to help coordinate all the land use plans and the land use ordinances, but they did not yet have a Land Use Plan and had just put on hold a contract for someone to do that. So, there was no reason to have this position at this time, and certainly did not want to fill the position and then have to come back in June and cut it from the budget. This should be a relatively easy position to eliminate since it was vacant.

Commissioner Kost asked was the position funded for the entire year. Ms. Paschal replied that was correct. Commissioner Kost asked by eliminating the position how much would be saved.

Chairman Bock stated if they filled the position they would be spending roughly \$86,000 per year.

Commissioner Kost stated that these were the types of decisions that should be made during the budget process as Commissioner Cross had pointed out. Certainly, they could direct staff to freeze the position and revisit it, but to eliminate it now without fully understanding the ramifications she did not believe would be a wise decision.

Commissioner Stewart stated that when they were talking about these positions that it was true that they needed a complete review of all County programs which was being called for and would happen. The reality was and had been clearly shown that they should be looking at ways to be more efficient and to hold off on programs and not expand them. Having said that, her research had shown her in a county's fiscal policy guidelines there was a part of the budget that made a statement about new positions. It said that new positions should be added as a last resort, and other alternatives such as contracting, technology, and reassignment of duties should be fully explored and documented before new positions were funded. Commissioner Stewart said based on that, if work could be done through contracting for now should they not consider that? When these new positions were created, they could not honor paper performance contracts for County workers and then approve additional positions. That did not bode well and should have been a warning that if they could not take care of the obligations they already had then to put other things on top of that just added more burden. And, they would become suspect which they were today and that was why the Board was having this discussion now. That concerned her, and believed that the Board might want to back up and do exactly what the guideline she had offered said, which was that they look at all other alternatives before filling any more of those positions.

Chairman Bock called the question. The motion carried four (4) to one (1), with Commissioner Kost opposed.

**Obesity Coordinator Position:**

Commissioner Petty stated that they must reduce spending in non-essential areas to be sure that they met their obligations for infrastructure, capital improvements, debt, and education. They had to be able to support and fund those necessary areas, and they had another position that if filled could cost the County approximately \$63,000 per year but was currently vacant.

Commissioner Petty moved to eliminate the Obesity Coordinator position effective immediately, seconded by Commissioner Stewart.

Commissioner Kost asked had the Board of Health been asked their position on this, noting that the Board of Health did provide guidance on health issues in the County.

Chairman Bock stated they could continue to do so.

Commissioner Kost stated then why not ask them? Her other point was that she was sure they had all read the report titled Chatham County 2009 Obesity Prevention Retreat, Final Report and Recommendations. She stated that she believed they should read that report before they took any action to eliminate the position. That report said that in 2007 \$1,868,826 of total dollars spent in Chatham County Medicaid was attributed to overweight and obesity. The report was created through public involvement including the School system, and before the Board voted on eliminating the position she would highly urge the new Board to read the report.

Chairman Bock asked if Commissioner Kost had read the 2010 Chatham County Youth Health Behavior Report.

Commissioner Kost asked what that report said that contradicted her statements.

Chairman Bock stated he had not said it contradicted her statements; he was only asking had she read that report.



Commissioner Kost stated they were dealing with a recommendation on obesity and Chairman Bock brought up a different report, and she did not understand how that was germane to the discussion.

Chairman Bock said it was as germane as her bringing up a report and suggesting that he read it, and he had simply suggested that she read one as well.

Commissioner Kost stated she would be happy to read it, but was making the point that he had said he had done his homework, yet the one report that the recommendation was based on he had not read.

Chairman Bock said he was not disputing the fact that obesity was a problem, and was not disputing that obesity caused all kinds of health issues. Where he was beginning to have some dispute was if this position could have an effect on that, and that was where he and Commissioner Kost disagreed. He suggested that perhaps they could agree to not accuse anyone of not doing their homework, because at some point that just became insulting.

Commissioner Petty stated that part of that homework included being able to figure out a way to fund positions, in that they just could not create money out of thin air.

Chairman Bock stated that they all knew that obesity was a problem, and where they had disagreement based on all of their research was could the position have an effect. Out of the report he had just mentioned, the 2010 Chatham County Youth Health Behavior Report, it did in fact say that the students in Chatham County had a higher incidence of overweight than some of their surrounding counties. Interestingly, though, it also said that more of their students drank soda during the day than other parts of the State and the nation. It also said that "With changes being made throughout the County to increase opportunities for physical activity with the opening of new parks and the inception of new school-based physical activity promotional programs, they will hope to see a leveling off or a downward trend to the childhood obesity rate in the years to come." Chairman Bock said that was without an Obesity Prevention Coordinator in place. He believed they all agreed obesity was a problem, and where they disagreed was could that position have an effect on that.

Commissioner Petty stated he believed that issue could be handled without this position being filled, so he reiterated his motion to eliminate that position and to allow the Health Department to perhaps work with the Board of Education and any departments within the educational system to encourage other ways to handle the obesity issue rather than filling this position.

Commissioner Kost said for the record that hearing the quote had jogged her memory that she had indeed read that report.

Commissioner Stewart wondered if Chatham County was the only "fat" county in the State, noting her research had not turned up a specific position that was addressing the issue in other counties.

Commissioner Cross stated that his pro vote on this issue as well as the Human Resources Manager was only because the positions were not filled and not because anything had been proven or had gone through the budget process.

Commissioner Kost stated that the Health Director was present if the Chair would like to have her address Commissioner Stewart's comments.

Commissioner Stewart stated she was curious what other counties were doing to address obesity. Holly Coleman, Chatham County Health Director, stated that obesity was considered the number one public health problem, and this State was one of the higher overweight and obese states in the nation. There were many different initiatives and programs that were started by individual counties to address obesity prevention. They had received grants in the past for such initiatives, and they had also had programs to increase policy around obesity such as developing greenways and the like. As far as she knew there were no counties in the surrounding area that had an obesity prevention coordinator, although there were health educators that worked on obesity prevention issues. They were fortunate that they had many health educators on staff in the State who were addressing the obesity issue.

Ms. Coleman stated the Commissioners had previously stated a priority to have a coordinated effort with the schools and the Y and all the other public health agencies to address obesity, and Public Health had taken that on because they believed they were the agency best suited to do that. They had held meetings that involved the community and out of those meetings came the recommendation that they have someone to coordinate overall efforts. That was where the recommendation had come from to create the Obesity Coordinator position.

Commissioner Petty stated the Board by no means wanted to not address the issue, and that was the case with almost all the issues they were discussing today. He would certainly encourage her and all educators to continue to address the obesity issue, and if appropriate to move it up on the priority list. They had been doing their work without that position being filled and believed they could continue to do so and save those dollars to fund other things. The Board appreciated what they were doing and were behind their efforts, but they had to find a way to work smarter and harder without it costing more dollars. Ms. Coleman remarked she appreciated that support.

Commissioner Kost stated that when the position was approved in the budget one of the reasons for the position was to coordinate the various programs dealing with the obesity issue, and that position was to also seek other funding sources outside of Chatham County to support that effort. During the budget process she had actually commented that it should be a time-limited position so that it could be evaluated within a year. She would hope that there would be at least someone who would be looking for funding sources outside the County to fund various efforts.

Chairman Bock called the question. The motion carried four (4) to one (1) with Commissioner Kost opposing.

#### **Sustainable Communities Director Position:**

Chairman Bock moved, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to eliminate the Sustainable Communities Director Position, effective January 14, 2011; that the affected employee be put on appropriate administrative leave until that time; that the County provide three weeks severance pay for every one year of service in addition to any regular leave payout; and, that the County will also provide health coverage for the employee for three months only.

Commissioner Kost stated that she again had to go back to the question of what they would give up. This was a filled position and that person worked many hours over the 40-hour week. So far the Board had postponed the Land Use Plan so that lightened the load somewhat, but what function of County government were they giving up by eliminating this position.

Chairman Bock stated that part of the reason the position was put into place was to help coordinate the various activities which in effect had created another layer between the County Manager and various functions. He was not making a judgment about whether or not at the time that was or was not a good call. What he was proposing was to flatten the organizational structure and put it back to the reporting structure they had prior to the position being added. He understood it was initially meant to create less confusion when people dealt with County government, but he did not know that it accomplished that. In looking at the minutes when the position was created, former Commissioner Lucier had said from time to time it was necessary to change the structure of the government, and that may be true. He believed this was one of those times, again, to flatten that structure.

Chairman Bock said former Commissioner Lucier had also stated that because of the number of ordinances recently adopted that this was an extraordinarily important position for the County that would expand the role of government. Anytime a position was put into place to expand the role of government, it got his attention. He was not making any judgment at all in the quality of work that had been done in the position, but did think that when looking at the budget aspect of it including salary, benefits, and operating expenses it was close to \$170,000. That could be flattened and the organization structure be put it back under the County Manager.

Commissioner Kost stated that not all of the positions under discussion were under the County Manager, and asked could the Chair explain how the organizational structure would look.

Chairman Bock asked which position or positions she was referring to.

Commissioner Kost asked if Central Permitting reported to the County Manager.

Chairman Bock stated that that position reported to the Planning Director.

Commissioner Kost stated they had just abolished the Human Resources Management position which had been an Assistant Planner. She asked where the Transportation Planner position would be placed. They were proposing a reorganization so she needed to understand that.

Chairman Bock stated that the County Manager's office was working on a complete structure, and he had been assured by the County Manager that the work currently being done by this position could be absorbed without creating any issues.

Commissioner Kost stated she would like to see that revised organizational structure before she voted on it. They were elected to make decisions and she would like to see what the organizational structure would look like before a vote was taken. She asked how much eliminating the position would save this fiscal year.

Chairman Bock stated they needed to look at that long term.

Commissioner Kost stated she understood that, but they were taking an action mid-cycle. If they were doing it as a part of the budget process she would not be so adamant about it, but they were doing it now because some sense of urgency had been created. It was important to the citizens that by eliminating a position in County government that they know how much money they were talking about saving between now and June 30.

Commissioner Stewart stated that in regards to doing this mid-cycle and the urgency, did they know that the revenues for this budget year were guaranteed, in that did they know for an absolute fact that there would be any shortfall at all.

Commissioner Kost stated they were never guaranteed about what the revenues would be, but staff had not alerted the Board that there was any sort of emergency for the current fiscal year. She said she wanted to know how much money this would be saving so they would know if this was really a valid budget cut in January for this current year. Again, if they were reviewing this as a part of the budget process she probably would not be raising the issue. But, they were discussing this under the guise on the agenda, so she wanted an answer to that question. Ms. Paschal stated that she did not have what the operating expenses were with her, but they would roughly save \$38,000 in salary. Commissioner Kost asked if that included the payout for vacation and any other expenses. Ms. Paschal stated that was correct. Commissioner Kost stated then to eliminate a filled position in January they were talking about a savings of \$38,000 to June 30.

Chairman Bock stated there was no good time to eliminate a position and it certainly was not good news if you were the person receiving that news. This was likely the third time it had come up that they were only saving a small amount for this current year, but all of those savings were real money to real people. By waiting to June, assuming you wanted to be fair to the affected employees you were not in fact ending it in June but were giving notice and paying out time for their work. At some point that decision had to be made and this was one of those times, and they were asking for a decision to be made today.

Commissioner Kost stated again that she believed that if citizens had known that this was on the agenda that there would likely be many more people in attendance who were concerned about land use and decisions made in the County. But, they were not open and forthright in putting this on the agenda for whatever reason, and they really had not given proper notice to the citizens.

Commissioner Petty asked with standing room only, did she really believe that citizens did not know about it.

Commissioner Kost stated she believed that many did not know about it because if they did then many more would be present.

Chairman Bock called the question. The motion carried three (3) to two (2) with Commissioners Kost and Cross opposing.

**Human Relations Director Position:**

Chairman Bock moved, seconded by Commissioner Petty, to eliminate the Human Relations Director position, effective January 14, 2011; that the affected employee be put on appropriate administrative leave until that time; that the County provide three weeks severance pay for every one year of service in addition to any regular leave payout; and, the County will also provide health coverage for employee for three months only.

Commissioner Kost stated that she believed the Board had already made up their minds a year ago before they had any information. She believed there had been some very compelling arguments today as to why this position was needed. They had said that they would eliminate the position but continue the Human Relations Commission's work, but without staff support she believed they all knew that that would not be very effective. This position was created because it was not working without a staff member to support the Commission, and the arguments today were so strong for the need for this position that she would ask that they not seek this action.

Commissioner Stewart stated that she was somewhat disturbed about this, noting she had gone back and done some research on how this had all come about and learned some things in reading past minutes of Board meetings. She had noticed that during the work sessions held on March 12, April 2, and May 21, 2007 that there was much discussion about this position. She was not questioning Ms. Coleman's ability to do the job well or the fact that she delivered a very good service. She was concerned because she had noticed in May of 2007 during one of those meetings that the minutes had shown that Commissioner Vanderbeck made the comment in the motion that the Board approve the addition of a full-time Human Resources Director with associated costs, and had then asked if there had been some proposal as to how to keep this position funded through grants and other resources on a long-term basis. Commissioner Vanderbeck stated that he wanted to be proactive in that regard. In reading that, it told her that there had been some concern as to whether or not this position could continue to be funded.

Commissioner Stewart stated she was wondering why there was not action taken to look at the role and responsibility of this position, which was recommended by the County Manager as a part-time position originally. That was overridden by the Board, and when Commissioner Lucier had asked what the previous budget figure was the Finance Officer had stated it was \$44,000 proposed for a part-time position. So, when the position was actually discussed and a proposal made in 2007 it was for part-time, but the Board had decided to add the additional amount to make it a full-time position. She also noted that in the minutes that Commissioner Thompson had also made a comment about the possibility of including in the role and responsibility of this position other things that would help assure that there was money and funding from grants to cover the expense of the position.

Commissioner Stewart stated she had to say today that she wondered why that had not been done. Something that was obviously so important that so many of the people in the room had commented on it, and there was a possibility to have kept the position funded without it coming out of the County budget, then why didn't something happen?

Commissioner Petty stated that on a personal level, he had had to deal with budgets and cuts in the past and that was never an easy job. It was not always about performance, because if it was the job would be easy; it was out of the necessity to come up with the dollars to accomplish the things that were necessary and being able to restructure and reorganize those responsibilities back into a department for others to handle. He wanted to make sure that the one thing they took away today with the things the Board was looking at doing was that it was not necessarily the things they wanted to as much as it was the things that they had to do.

Commissioner Petty stated on a personal level, he had served quite a bit of mission work in Haiti. If he had been able to do everything he had wanted to do there, it would have helped that nation. But there was just not enough people, not enough resources, and not enough money to do that, yet they continued to go back and chip away at the issues one at a time until they got it done. They had to deal with the same thing on a County and State level and in their personal lives. They had to be able to do the things they could afford to do and not the things that they wanted to do.

Commissioner Petty stated that it was unfortunate that it had to happen this way, and at some point in time if the County was in a better position to fund it, they may go back and revisit everything they had done here today. But, they could not wait until they had a crisis to start addressing the situation. That would cause them to make hasty decisions that often times were not effective, and then they would find themselves changing those decisions. He asked that the public understand that all of the things that were proposed today on every level had not been easy, and he did not envy anyone in such a position. He appreciated the opportunity to serve the citizens but this was what the citizens had elected him to do. The Board's job was to try to fund the necessary functions of government and take the things that were redundant or that were duplicated in different areas and try to refocus, reorganize, and restructure them and put them back in a way that they could still get the job done for less dollars. That was their goal.

Esther Coleman, Human Relations Director, stated that she believed she could respond to Commissioner Stewart's question. She stated that one of the things that was being considered to fund the position, which was done in other counties throughout the State, was to obtain HUD funding. That required substantial equivalency with HUD, and was something that the Human Relations Commission had been working on for two years but it had not yet happened. But, that would substantially fund the position as well as other associated administrative costs.

Commissioner Stewart asked were there other possibilities for grants, because she believed that there were other things included in the role and responsibility that might have provided the funding. Ms. Coleman responded she was unaware of what the Board might have been looking at in 2007, but potentially that could be the case. Commissioner Stewart stated she remembered that HUD had been mentioned, but there were two others. Ms. Coleman stated she was not sure what those others were, but believed all possibilities could be and should be considered during the budget process.

Commissioner Petty stated that things had changed financially since 2007 as well, so funding or grants that were available at that time may not be available any longer. That may be even more difficult with budget cuts to find that kind of funding today, and it may become even more difficult before they saw any improvement.

Chairman Bock called the question. The motion carried three (3) to two (2) with Commissioners Kost and Cross opposing.

## **MANAGER'S REPORTS**

### **Sound System Update:**

Mark Ellington, MIS Director, PA, provided an update on the sound system, noting that two vendors had come in to look at the current meeting space as well as the possibility of other meeting spaces. The sound system was aging and a system was needed that could handle the room size and also be portable enough to be moved to alternative locations. Of the two solutions offered one was much more expensive than the other, and he was having some difficulty pinpointing what the differences in the solutions were.

Mr. Ellington stated that they did know that they needed a system that was portable and with enough volume to reach the entire room. The proposed system would have two mixed audio outputs, one that could go to the County Clerk so she would get a mixed audio from all the microphones, and the recommendation from both vendors was to stay away from wireless mics if possible because of logistics and issues both with batteries as well as with audio quality. The other mixed audio output would be for future use with a camera, so if a video camera system were put into use it would have a mixed audio going to it. That would mean that every mic would have a mixed audio signal coming in which would improve the audio a great deal.

Chairman Bock stated then the entire cost according to the material was \$2,700. Mr. Ellington stated that was correct. He said that the other proposal from the second vendor was around \$7,000, and that was one reason he wanted to identify exactly what the real differences were between the two. Chairman Bock stated they definitely needed something to improve the sound system. Mr. Ellington agreed.

Mr. Ellington said in regards to the phone system for dialing in to hear the meetings, he had done some research and most of the systems available had a system where the public could

call in. The main issue he had identified to date was that almost all systems were in the same price range, which was around 3.7 to 4.9 cents per minute per person. They might want to look at some other solutions before pursuing that.

Chairman Bock encouraged Mr. Ellington to continue to look into that, noting that citizens had commented that regardless of the time of a meeting there were those that could not make it. His thought was that if they could have a call-in only conference line then people could call in and listen to the meeting.

Commissioner Kost stated she would hope that teleconferencing could be included so that citizens could view any slides or maps that were used during presentations. Mr. Ellington stated they were also looking into the future possibility of video streaming the meetings, but there were a lot of bandwidth issues that would have to be worked out. That would also depend on the location of where the meetings were being held, in that they would have to have a place with a good sized data pipeline to be able to handle video streaming.

Chairman Bock stated he believed they would all agree they would like to do the video streaming and that they eventually have audio and video on-line. He believed that was something they could get into sooner rather than later. And, they would also be having the videotape of the meetings on the cable channel although it would not be a live broadcast. The problem they ran into was that the cable channel was Time Warner and not all of the County had access to Time Warner, so those citizens could not have access to it. Then others said they did not have a computer or did not have access to high speed Internet, so they could not watch it. So, now it would be better to think along the lines of something not as high tech.

Commissioner Stewart asked had Mr. Ellington checked with AT&T in regards to their audio conferencing service. Mr. Ellington stated he had not checked with AT&T but he would do so, noting he had been looking for teleconferencing vendors. Commissioner Stewart asked what the County's bandwidth was like. Mr. Ellington stated they had a 10 MB fiber connection that the entire County shared, so the bandwidth was strapped depending on how much usage was going on at a given time. They would have to look when it was time to renew that contract at trying to increase that pipeline. He believed that with the way prices had dropped that they could possibly acquire more bandwidth without too much expense.

Commissioner Stewart stated that she was involved with the broadband committee and they would be meeting later this month to bring her up to speed on exactly where they were with the research being conducted. She said she understood that there was someone that was looking at possibilities. Commissioner Stewart stated she had also met with Century Link last month to discuss where their coverage was and to talk about their plans for the coming year. Hopefully, sometime next month she would have more information about where they stood and where they were going, and perhaps ratchet up the process and looking not only at DSL and broadband fiber optics, but she would also like to expand that discussion into the whole cell access issue as well as wireless to get that service improved. Right now, she lived in a "hole" where there was not cell service, and she did not live very far away from where they were now sitting.

## **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

### **Solid Waste Matter:**

Commissioner Cross stated that he had spoken to Commissioner Price, the Chair in Randolph County, noting that Randolph County was in the process of trying to permit a regional landfill that would be just off US 64 across the County line. This might be a service that Chatham County could use since it would be a regional landfill, and the initial ground test results would be returned this month. He asked that the County Manager check with the engineering people to make sure that the County did not miss a possibly good chance assuming that the ground was not bad or too rocky or would not perk. It might work out, noting that they were certainly getting a lot of information about how citizens felt about a landfill. The County Manager stated that they had been in contact with Randolph County and have been a part of that process.

Commissioner Stewart stated that she too had received her fair share of emails and comments from people expressing their concerns about the proposed landfill. The biggest issue was that it was a regional landfill as well as the location.

Commissioner Petty stated that he had also heard about the landfill issue which had already been addressed today, and it was certainly something that deserved their attention and which they would do due diligence to go through the process to make sure that it was handled properly. Having a landfill just across the County line in Randolph County was good news and would provide Chatham County with opportunities.

**Census Data:**

Commissioner Kost stated that Mayor Voller had mentioned census data during citizen input, and reminded the Board that they would be receiving that data sooner rather than later and they would need to discuss the process that they would take to redraw the districts. As well, they would need to discuss whether to revisit the issue of district-only voting or a combination of district and at-large voting. She hoped that that would be a very citizen-based process, but given that Mayor Voller had said he had seen data that would mean that the Board would have that information shortly.

**Central Carolina Community College Board of Trustees Appointment:**

Commissioner Kost stated that at the December 13 meeting there was an item on the Consent Agenda making an appointment to the Community College Board of Trustees, which was held by former Commissioner George Lucier. She had raised the issue that she did not believe that was an appointment and had asked the County Attorney to report back to the Board. She asked the County Attorney for that report. Jep Rose, County Attorney, stated that he had looked into the issue and it appeared that they were four-year fixed terms. There were different ways of interpreting that statute and the way the Community College read it, it was a four-year fixed term. It would be something the Board could look at if they wanted to make a challenge on that.

Commissioner Cross stated he certainly had no intention of challenging the Community College Board of Trustees. It was his understanding that they also had not known about that State statute, and just to make it clear that based on some other correspondence this was not a conspiracy by Mr. Lucier and that Board of Trustee member had been replaced with Patrick Barnes.

Chairman Bock stated that the Board had a work session scheduled for this afternoon for anyone interested in attending. He suggested adjourning this meeting and reconvening for the work session at 2:00 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Petty moved, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, to adjourn the meeting and reconvene at 2:00 PM. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0), and the meeting was adjourned at 1:04 PM.

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Brian Bock, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Sandra B. Sublett, CMC, NCCCC, Clerk to the Board  
Chatham County Board of Commissioners