

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 16, 2004

The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in the Henry H. Dunlap, Jr. Building Classroom, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 3:00 PM on February 16, 2004.

Present: Chairman Tommy Emerson; Commissioners Margaret Pollard, Bob Atwater, and Bunkey Morgan; County Manager, Charlie Horne; County Attorney, Robert L. Gunn; Assistant County Manager Renee Dickson; Finance Officer, Vicki McConnell; and Clerk to the Board, Sandra B. Sublett

Absent: Commissioner Carl Outz

The Chairman called the Work Session to order at 3:00 PM.

Work Session Agenda

1. Water Issues
2. Noise Ordinance

COMPACT COMMUNITIES STATUS

George Lucier, Planning Board Chairman, reviewed discussions from the Compact Communities Ordinance discussion at the meeting held on February 10, 2004 in the Superior Courtroom.

He stated that the next meeting will be held on February 19, 2004 in the Superior Courtroom; that the proposed ordinance will be finished; and that a public hearing date will be set at that time.

Charles Eliason, Planning Board Member, stated that he was very pleased with the meeting; that the legal staff did an excellent job; and that he was appreciative that they took the time to be in attendance to explain their methodology and how they came about their decisions.

Bob Gunn, County Attorney, stated that he thought the meeting went well and that he looks forward to wrapping it up on Thursday night.

WATER FOLLOW-UP

St. Luke’s Water:

Commissioner Morgan asked where the County now stood on St. Luke’s water.

The County Manager explained that the County is waiting for a decision from the St. Luke Board of Directors.

The Chairman explained that they have communicated with St. Lukes that the County did not receive the proposed grant; that the improvements to their system would have to be done through a loan, bond sources, or general fund, etc. so that prior to proceeding with it, there would have to be an understanding of how they would reimburse the rest of the County for it; and that a letter was sent to them asking for a response.

Water Connection Policy for Subdivisions:

The County Manager reviewed the proposed amendments to the "Water Connection Policy for Subdivisions".

Bill Lowery, Chairman of the Water Board Advisory Committee, reviewed the "County-Wide Water Connection Policy" and the "Proposed Availability Fee Policy".

Keith Megginson, Chatham County Planning Director, explained that there are two separate subdivision processes; that there may be a regular five hundred lot subdivision that goes to sketch, preliminary, and final; that sketch is on paper, preliminary is where all the detailed engineering drawings are done and final is when it is built; that if they are asking for a zoning change, increased density, or for clustering things together, it would go through a Conditional Use; that the master plan is considered to be the first phase of the subdivision which is sketch; that they don't get to the detail erosion control, DOT, and engineering details for water and sewer until preliminary; and that the developers have probably already figured what the costs are going to be from the outset based on current policy.

After considerable discussion, Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Atwater to approve the proposed amendments to the "Water Connection Policy for Subdivisions" which includes sections "County-Wide Water Connection Policy" and "Proposed Availability Fee Policy" with the language change approved by the Board of Commissioners. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0). A copy is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Commissioner Morgan commended Stephen Talbert, Chatham County Public Works Director and the Chatham County Water Board for their work in revising the new policy and stated that he would like to see a policy manual so that everything could be stored in one place for easy reference.

Commissioner Morgan asked that actual costs for commercial water lines be determined so that it could come before the Board for adoption.

BREAK

The Chairman called for a five-minute break.

Project Ordinance Concerning the Water Treatment Plant Modifications & Upgrade:

The Public Works Director stated that the North Chatham Water System Water Treatment Plant project includes modifications at the Jordan Lake Water Treatment Plant as follows: replacement of the filter media, demolition and re-piping of the water treatment plant effluent chamber valves, piping controls and miscellaneous electrical modifications that will be associated with the control of the effluent filter and backwash valves. He stated that the project need is two-fold: maintenance and upgrades; that the maintenance issues are related to the filter media which has been in need of replacement for sometime; that over the past couple of years, the filers have become bound with various

chemicals used in the treatment process and subsequently have not operated as efficiently as intended; that the upgrade portion of the project is tied to the proposed “high-rating” of the water treatment plant filters to achieve higher flow rates across the filters which will lead to increased capacity of the water treatment plant; that the upgrade portion of the project will include upsizing of the piping and valves in the filter effluent chamber; that both of these portions of the project will require a temporary shutdown of the plant; that during this period of shutdown, water will be obtained from the City of Durham and the Town of Pittsboro; that it is expected that the duration of the plant shutdown will be approximately three weeks; and that it is imperative that these modifications be achieved during this time of the year in which the County’s customer demand is low.

Mr. Talbert stated that once the projects are complete, the next phase of the water treatment plant upgrades will be to conduct a “Pilot Study” for a period of one year; that during this period of time, one portion of the water treatment plant filters will be operated at a higher rate of filtration to demonstrate to NCDENR – Public Water Supply Section that this plant is capable of producing up to 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD) without a physical expansion of the plant (the current design capacity is 3.0 MGD); that this increased flow-rate will benefit Chatham County’s ability to provide water to all of the current Chatham County Water Systems (North, Southeast, and Southwest); that the estimated project cost for improvements is \$300,000.00; that it is the recommendation of Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates, P.A. that Chatham County award the project to Turner Murphy Company, Inc., with whom they have worked on numerous projects of similar scope and have found them to be capable of completing projects in a timely manner with quality workmanship, in the amount of \$184,000.00.

Tim Carpenter, Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates Engineer, stated that the pilot study portion of the scope includes the operation and reporting of a portion of the plant at higher filtration rates which will serve to increase the plant capacity from 3.0 MGD to 4.0 MGD; that as mandated by NCDENR-Public Water Supply Section, this Pilot Study must be conducted for a period of one-year to demonstrate the plant’s ability to treat water in all seasons of the year; that once the data is accumulated, a report of the findings will be forwarded to NCDENR-PWS for approval; and that if NCDENR-PWS agrees with the findings of the report, the water treatment plant capacity can be increased with relatively small capital expenditures.

Commissioner Pollard moved to adopt the Project Ordinance Concerning the Water Treatment Plant Modifications and Upgrade.

Commissioner Morgan stated that he had a problem approving that great amount of money without having an opportunity to study it.

The motion died for lack of a second.

After further consideration, Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Atwater, to approve the Project Ordinance Concerning the Water Treatment Plant Modifications and Upgrade in the amount of \$184,000 to come from the Water Capital Reserve with the balance of the project to be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting or a special called meeting, if necessary. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0). The Project Ordinance Concerning the Water Treatment Plant Modifications and Upgrade is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Automatic Meter Reading System:

The Public Works Director explained that the Automatic Meter Reading System (AMR) enables meter reading to be performed by radio versus manual methods; that the County currently purchases Neptune touch read meters that are single source and readable only by a Neptune meter reading device;

that the County has a group of 121 radio read meters which have not been installed; that the radio read devices can only work with the Neptune meters; that the Chatham County Water Utility proposes to move toward a more flexible meter; that the broad based readers work with a variety of meters, not just the Neptune reader; that Hersey meters will be \$50.03 cheaper per meter and have the capability of reading any radio read meter on the market; that radio read meters reduce monthly reading cycles, reduce the number of meter readers needed to read meters, eliminate errors when reading meters, and improve customer service; that the exchange value would be \$18,648.00 credit toward the Hersey meters which will give the County 500 radio read meters; that the Public Works Department is asking for approval of Hersey MVR System at a cost of \$19,950.00, retrofit existing 300 plus meters in inventory at a cost of \$29,700 making the total investment cost \$49,650.00.

Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Atwater, to accept staff recommendation and authorize the purchase of the Hersey radio-read meter system and authorize the exchange of 121 Neptune water meters and radio-read devices for credit toward the purchase of the Hersey broad-based meters. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

Project Ordinance Concerning the North Chatham Hydraulic Improvements:

The Finance Officer explained that the project considered consists of the construction of a water main on Lystra Road, new elevated tank and booster pump station near the intersection of Lystra Road and Jack Bennett Road, and the installation of a new water main (restrained joint) crossing at the dam on Moorehead Drive.

Commissioner Atwater moved, seconded by Commissioner Pollard, to approve the Project Ordinance Concerning the North Chatham Hydraulic Improvements, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

NOISE ORDINANCE

Captain Roy Allen of the Chatham County Sheriff's Office, reviewed sound level readings from the NC Sports Arena in Goldston which he recorded on Saturday, February 7, 2004. He stated that he focused on determining the difference between reading the sound level in the "A scale" and "Z scale" readings; that according to the readings, there was measurable difference between the two scales; that the average difference was 22.24db; that the readings taken during periods when the bands/recordings were not playing had similar recordings; that he believes the issue is with the construction of the building which is built basically of metal and glass; that in his opinion, some of the noise, other than that of the bands, was responsible for the difference in the readings; and that this was based on his readings and information supplied by Quest Technologies. He stated that as he was not an expert in sound levels, this information should not be used as the sole basis for any decisions that the Board makes.

Members in the audience asked questions.

A copy of Captain Allen's meter readings is attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof.

Commissioner Atwater stated that he was very supportive of what the Chairman and Captain Allen were trying to do. He asked if there should be a resolution to carry to the owner stating that the Board is very appreciative of what they have heard that they want to do by way of insulation; that the Board has a political situation that is intolerable to them; and that they will be especially appreciative of resolving this matter.

Chairman Emerson stated that he felt that the request from the Board is that they move quickly to do whatever is possible to resolve the problem.

Commissioner Pollard voiced concern that the County was asking the Sports Arena officials to do something different from that of other industries due to the fact that they were within the parameters of the Noise Ordinance. She further stated that she was troubled by pressuring them to do more until the ordinance is changed.

Chairman Emerson asked Captain Allen to set up an appointment with the tenants and owners and advise them to move quickly on trying to make improvements and insulate the building to prevent further disturbances and eliminate the problem; that he would not approach the situation as if the Board had mandated anything; that he would prefer to resolve the problem without having to change the Noise Ordinance; and that if necessary, he would recommend that the County hire a consultant.

Chatham County Sheriff's Office Retired and Surplus Firearms:

The County Manager explained that the formerly approved firearms list for the Sheriff contained weapons that should not have been on the list.

After reviewing the list, Commissioner Atwater moved, seconded by Commissioner Pollard, to approve the items removed from the original surplus list, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

Amended Project Ordinance Concerning the Construction of a Parking Lot:

The Finance Officer explained that the project considered consists of the design, construction, and inspection of a new parking area along and to the west of South Street and south of Chatham Street and the paving of the existing gravel parking lot around the Chatham County Public Works Building in Pittsboro, NC.

Commissioner Pollard moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve the **Amended Project Ordinance Concerning the Construction of a Parking Lot**, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0).

Commissioner Morgan asked if there could be more spaces designated as "Handicapped" due to the extra parking spaces now in existence.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MATTERS

Bond Refunding:

The Finance Officer stated that refunding looks good again; that the County is going to save approximately \$500,000.00; and that the bond refunding process is beginning again.

Community Development Block Grant:

The Finance Officer stated that state personnel did not come when expected; that the man called, postponed the trip, and rescheduled the meeting for February 26, 2004.

Department of Homeland Security:

The Finance Officer stated that the State had received notice from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), after seeking reimbursement, informing them that FEMA had disallowed some of the things that were purchased with DHS monies; that they are affirming that some of the equipment (even though it was listed on the approved DHS equipment list), some exercises (all exercises must have had a weapons of mass destruction, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive focus), and some training (operations or performance level training, i.e. HazMat, ICS, etc.) was ineligible.

Audit Services:

The Finance Officer requested that the Board not go out to bid for the audit.

After considerable discussion, Commissioner Pollard moved to approve the contract with Dixon Odom for audit services.

The motion died for lack of a second.

By consensus, the Board decided to delay the vote until a later date.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Pollard, that the meeting be adjourned to the regularly scheduled Board of Commissioners' meeting in the District Courtroom. The motion carried four (4) to zero (0), and the meeting was recessed at 5:59 PM.

Thomas J. Emerson, Chairman

ATTEST:

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