



# Chatham County, NC

## Meeting Minutes Board of Commissioners

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Thursday, January 8, 2015

9:00 AM

DSS Conference Room

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### BOC Retreat

#### BOC Retreat - 9:00 AM - DSS Main Conference Room

**Present:** 4 - Commissioner Diana Hales, Commissioner Karen Howard, Commissioner Walter Petty and Vice Chair Mike Cross

**Absent:** 1 - Chairman Jim Crawford

#### CALL TO ORDER

*Vice Chairman Cross called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.*

#### [14-1091](#)

County Department Orientation (Department Heads - 4 hours)

**Attachments:** [10--Department Orientation](#)

*The County Manager stated the morning was designated to Department Head Orientation. The afternoon was intended for Commissioner discussion, however, Chairman Crawford is absent. He asked if the Board would like to postpone the discussion. The Board decided to postpone the discussion on their goals until Tuesday, January 13, 2015 which is the third day of the retreat. The County Manager asked if they also wanted the attorney present on the January 13th for the coal ash conversation. He also said they may need an extra day of the retreat. The Board agreed they would like the attorney present on the 13th whenever he is available or whenever is best for the rest of the agenda.*

*Department of Social Services:*

*Jennie Kristiansen, Department of Social Services Director, spoke about the mission and responsibilities of the department.*

*Commissioner Howard asked if Chatham Transit provided transportation across the county. Ms. Kristiansen stated yes, and outside the county.*

*Commissioner Hales asked if one has to be on Medicaid to use Chatham Transit. Ms. Kristiansen stated no, however to be served through the DSS program one does have to be on Medicaid.*

*Commissioner Howard asked if Ms. Kristiansen could talk about North Carolina not having expanded Medicaid and the impact that it has had. Ms. Kristiansen stated they are moving to a web based management system for their Medicaid program. They are seeing an increase of people applying through the Affordable Care Act. That system is working better this year than it did last year.*

*The County Manager asked if Ms. Kristiansen could touch on NC FAST. Ms. Kristiansen stated before NC FAST they didn't have any way to communicate*

between counties and they began working on this project in 1999. Due to the Affordable Care Act they had to push this program through. It wasn't a customized system for North Carolina and it didn't work out of the gate. It has been a really challenging transition. They are really feeling the effects of getting all the Medicaid entered. They have had to use temps in a way they have never had to before to try to get the work done. They can't afford for people to miss out on their benefits because DSS is late getting their information in. Ms. Kristiansen is hopeful it is going to be a better system because they can talk to other counties.

Commissioner Howard asked if they are able to provide services to undocumented people. Ms. Kristiansen stated they are not. None of the federal programs allow that. With Child Welfare and Protective Services they are mandated to work with anyone suspected of abuse or neglect and they can work with people that way.

Commissioner Howard clarified it is people with a social security number. Ms. Kristiansen stated yes. She is not sure of the timeline of when you get a green card and when you can receive Medicaid, but she will be happy to email that information. You can be a legal permanent resident but still need to meet certain legal requirements to receive assistance.

*Public Health:*

Layton Long, Public Health Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.

The County Manager stated Mr. Long mentioned most of the routine matters but sometimes things pop up like Ebola. Mr. Long stated Ebola really consumed a lot of time. They initiated a community stakeholders meeting and worked with the hospitals closely. Chatham and the surrounding area have a lot of worldly travelers and they thought it was important to work together.

Commissioner Hales asked if there are still school nurses. Mr. Long stated there are and they are employed by the school system.

Commissioner Hales stated she was aware Tuberculosis is increasing. She asked if there is a program for Tuberculosis testing. Mr. Long stated the Health Department does routine Tuberculosis testing for anyone who wants the test done. Active Tuberculosis testing runs 1 to 2 a year in this community.

Commissioner Howard asked what role public health would have on coal ash or environmental impacts. Mr. Long stated the extent it affects human health is important. He has had to get directly involved in some of those issues in the past but to actually enforce anything it becomes more of an effort to inform to make sure the public's health is protected.

*Sheriff's Office:*

Mike Roberson, Major with Chatham County Sheriff's Office, congratulated the commissioners on their re-election and thanked all the commissioners for their service. Major Roberson introduced Captain Charles Gardner overseeing patrol, Captain Roy Allen overseeing the courts, Captain Tracy Kelly overseeing personnel, Captain Joe Birchett overseeing investigations, and Captain Doug Stuart overseeing the jail. Sheriff Richard Webster was not present due to recent surgery. Major Roberson presented the mission and responsibilities of the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Petty asked if Major Roberson could explain what clearance rate means. Major Roberson stated it means coming to a conclusion in a case and how the state says you can do that. There are many different ways that can be done.

Commissioner Howard asked why the County's incarceration rate is so low. Major Roberson stated it is in large part because of the court system. There are many reasons such as how many warrants are taken out, failures to appear, bonds are a little lower than other counties, and the County's pretrial release program is another good reason. The staff is a good reason. The County Manager stated the triage the Sheriff's Office does also helps with the incarceration rate. They do a good job with determining who is a threat and who is not.

*Public Works:*

Dan LaMontagne, Director of Public Works and Environmental Quality, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.

Commissioner Hales asked if inert debris can still go to the existing landfill at Renaissance Drive. Mr. LaMontagne stated yes, but they don't get a lot of inert debris. They recycle any land clearing that they receive and sell it back as mulch.

Commissioner Howard asked if when he referred to small businesses he was referring to Chatham County small businesses. Mr. LaMontagne stated yes. Commissioner Howard asked how they know without a decal. Mr. LaMontagne stated they don't. He stated they accept the recycling from them because they turn around and sell that as commodity. He stated electronics is another item they will not check where their address is.

Commissioner Hales asked how soon they are moving to combined recycling. Mr. LaMontagne stated that hopefully it will be soon, it has been discussed in the CIP.

Commissioner Hales asked if they also inspect Aqua NC's lines in a subdivision. Mr. LaMontagne stated yes.

*Economic Development Corporation:*

Dianne Reid, President of the Economic Development Corporation, stated they are not a department of the County but are a 501-3c non-profit organization. She presented the mission and responsibilities of the organization.

Commissioner Petty asked if Ms. Reid would talk about how Chatham County would benefit from participating in the Global Leadership Program. Ms. Reid stated the Institute for Emerging Issues selected Chatham and Catawba Counties as the two counties that would receive scholarships to participate in the Global Leadership Germany program. It was essentially going to look at what Germany was doing in terms of apprenticeships and dual education, systems where they are training people to take jobs in the future and work and go to school at the same time. There were 29 people who participated in the program, including six from Chatham County.

Commissioner Howard stated Ms. Reid mentioned commercial real estate agents and she asked if they push information out to certain real estate agencies for commercial real estate. Ms. Reid stated they use a program called Broker Savant and they regularly contact local and regional real estate agents.

Commissioner Howard asked if there is a number the County is trying to get to with the commercial tax base. Ms. Reid stated it varies. Chatham County was the lowest of the thirteen counties of commercial and industrial real estate in the Triangle region at 9%. It is not an easy number to move because residential development doesn't stop. Commissioner Howard stated we know that we are going to have significant increases in residences. Ms. Reid stated it is a hard number to change. When she was in Orange County the goal was to get it to 15%. It will take something like a

Chatham Park or the megasite, a major project. Commissioner Petty stated the site is certified so the state will help market it now. He also stated the County has a lot of the retirement centers that are reported as commercial tax base. The reason we want that number up is because commercial tax base requires less return.

Commissioner Hales stated Ms. Reid is just like the energizer bunny and is an ambassador for the County and the EDC staff is extraordinary. Commissioner Hales stated she was concerned about the CCCC Business Park and that it is sitting there without much attention. Ms. Reid stated they continue to promote it and offer it when there is a project that fits the size. The issue with the property is that very little of any given lot can be developed because of the terrain due to the wetlands.

Commissioner Petty stated they had the megasite surveyed by a retired site selector for an automobile manufacture and he said it was the best site he'd ever seen. He stated that is a positive opportunity for the County to increase the commercial tax base and increase employment opportunities for the county. Ms. Reid stated the NC Railroad will be doing a site visit next week. Ms. Reid stated they are also changing the name from the Chatham Randolph Megasite to the Chatham Siler City Advanced Manufacturing site.

Commissioner Petty stated he would like, with the Board's approval, to get a presentation for the commissioners similar to what he saw earlier in the week at the Economic Development Forum in Durham.

*Council on Aging:*

Dennis Streets, Council on Aging Director, introduced Sadie McLaurin, Deputy Director and Budget Officer. Mr. Streets presented the mission and responsibilities of the organization.

Commissioner Howard asked if the organization has paid staff. Mr. Streets stated they did. They have twenty-four employees, sixteen are full time and nine are part time. A lot are associated with the Siler City Center where they operate a kitchen and do some catering.

Commissioner Howard thanked Mr. Streets for his letter to Representative Moore. Mr. Streets stated the backbone of their funding is the Older Americans Act and that funding is declining.

*Central Permitting:*

Jenny Williams, Director of Central Permitting and Inspections, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.

Commissioner Hales asked who does inspections for the Town of Goldston. Ms. Williams stated the Inspections Department does countywide inspections, except for Siler City.

Commissioner Hales asked about zoning compliance for the Town of Pittsboro. Ms. Williams stated if it is in Pittsboro or the Pittsboro ETJ they have to go to Pittsboro for zoning but the County does the inspections. The County Manager stated inspections are state regulations and there are no differences between counties.

*Planning:*

Jason Sullivan, Planning Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.

Commissioner Howard stated she would like a copy of his notes. Mr. Sullivan stated

*he would send them digitally.*

*Commissioner Hales stated there are new floodplain maps and she wanted to know who has responsibility for looking at those maps. Mr. Sullivan stated he and Dan LaMontagne have been working together on those. They thought they would be able to have them adopted by 2014 but it depends on the State and FEMA. There is probably going to be an appeal and they have to forward it to the State. Once that has been taken care of, the State will release it to staff to bring it to the Board.*

*Tourism:*

*Neha Shah, Convention and Visitors Bureau Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.*

*Commissioner Howard stated Ms. Shah mentioned a blog. Ms. Shah stated she would send Commissioner Howard all of the information.*

*Commissioner Howard asked if Ms. Shah saw Pittsboro-Siler City as a challenge in the name of the Convention Visitors Bureau. Ms. Shah stated they started out as Chatham County Tourism and visitors don't know boundaries. At that time all of the hotels were either in Pittsboro or Siler City and it was hard to find a way to incorporate all the townships in Chatham County. The tagline is "serving all of Chatham County". The Pittsboro-Siler City name was approved by the Commissioners eleven years ago. Commissioner Howard stated she believes all of Chatham County is a wonderful place and thinks the name can be a deterrent.*

*Cooperative Extension:*

*Sam Groce, Cooperative Extension Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.*

*Commissioner Howard stated Mr. Groce said the average age of our farmers is going down. Mr. Groce stated it is not increasing proportionately.*

*Mr. Groce spoke briefly about the Sustainable Agriculture program at the community college and the Extension's role in the program.*

*Soil and Water Conservation:*

*Henry Outz, Soil and Water Conservation Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.*

*Commissioner Howard asked how Mr. Outz's department has adapted to the reduction in funding. Mr. Outz stated they have applied for more federal money and grants to supplement what they have lost through the state.*

*Commissioner Hales asked if they are county employees. Mr. Outz stated yes. The County Manager stated they have two federal employees. Mr. Outz stated they have three county employees.*

*Register of Deeds:*

*Lunday Riggsbee, Register of Deeds, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.*

*Commissioner Hales asked about the storage of the documents and how the County was dealing with that. Ms. Riggsbee stated they have backup documents from the beginning. There is shelving space for a little longer but not a lot longer. She will have to begin evaluating if they will need to move the older record books to other storage to make room for new records. Commissioner Petty thought that was being*

monitored by staff. Renee Paschal, Assistant County Manager, stated that in the recent renovation there was a wall left between Tax and the Register of Deeds in case there needed to be a reshuffle.

Commissioner Howard asked if a paper document continues to exist if it is recorded in electronic form. Ms. Riggsbee stated that it does. Commissioner Howard stated the original document will not have an actual stamp. Ms. Riggsbee stated that is correct.

*Parks and Recreation:*

Tracy Burnett, Parks and Recreation Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.

Commissioner Petty stated there is a new regulation size soccer field in Siler City and he wanted to know what the success has been with that and whether or not the County has any arrangement to use that facility. Ms. Burnett stated she does not know what the success or status of that has been. She stated her staff doesn't program soccer so they would not have a lot of involvement with that. The Chatham Soccer League is the provider of soccer in the county and they will go to Siler City to see about using that facility for practices, game and tournaments. Commissioner Petty asked if there are ways we can help promote the use of that facility. Ms. Burnett stated they will do anything they can to help. They send out a quarterly newsletter to market events and they send it out through the school system. Commissioner Petty stated the county's hotel and motel situation is a limited for traveling tournaments. Ms. Burnett stated she is on the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board and anything they can do to bring tournaments to the county is something they want to do.

Commissioner Hales asked where the canoe turn-ins are in the county. Ms. Burnett stated one is at Bynum off of Highway 15 501 at the Haw River. The other is Bynum Beach off of Bynum Beach Road.

Commissioner Hales stated Ms. Burnett mentioned the County has two undeveloped properties. She asked where Stroud Park was located. Ms. Burnett stated Stroud Park is located at Crawford Dairy and Jones Ferry Road. Ms. Burnett stated the other property is called the Southeast Park property and is in Moncure in the Pea Ridge area.

Commissioner Howard asked when the outdoor movie events are at the Northeast Park. Ms. Burnett stated they try to do events in the warmer months.

Commissioner Hales stated Ms. Burnett and her team do an amazing amount of work for such a little staff.

*Libraries:*

Linda Clarke, Libraries Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.

Commissioner Howard asked about access to the library and had they considered library days for places like Galloway Ridge. She believes going online and requesting a particular book to be brought to an individual is going to be easier for some more than others. She believes looking through the actual materials is part of the experience for many people. Commissioner Howard stated she is thinking of the population that lost access when they lost the book mobile. Commissioner Hales asked if they were considering traveling days. Ms. Clarke stated most long term care facilities have a library or transportation so that they can come to the library or they

have an activity director to plan a day to the library.

The County Manager stated the library system is also changing and the County has to figure out the best way to get out ahead of that. Ms. Clarke stated they have the e-books and the classes are filled up. The County Manager stated there are also vending machines where you can rent books. Commissioner Petty stated one of the models they could use is Meals on Wheels. Perhaps they could look at a library day through Chatham Transit. Ms. Clarke stated the outreach is based on that model.

## **LUNCH BREAK 1:00 PM (1 HOUR)**

[14-1091](#)

County Department Orientation (Department Heads - 4 hours)

**Attachments:**     [10--Department Orientation](#)

*Elections:*

*Dawn Stumpf, Board of Elections Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.*

*Commissioner Hales asked if the Board of Elections has to do one stop voting for the Municipal elections. Ms. Stumpf stated they have to do a one stop voting for every election.*

*Commissioner Hales asked when they would know about changing the voting precincts to a couple of voting centers. Ms. Stumpf stated they did not know. They are going to go explain to the legislature what voting centers are and see what their reception is like. Commissioner Cross stated when Ms. Stumpf takes over as Director of her association, she should check with the NCACC to see if they can have a representative on the intergovernmental committee. Ms. Stumpf stated they looked into that and were told they could not be a lobbying group and they will have to take a different route.*

*The County Manager stated with the voting centers there would be a drop dead date that would make it hard to set things up. Ms. Stumpf stated as with most things in elections they are not allowed to make changes more than one hundred and eighty days before the election. Therefore, they will need to know something pretty soon, especially before the Presidential Preference Primary.*

*Tax:*

*Frances Wilson, Tax Administrator, presented the mission and responsibilities of the Tax Department.*

*Commissioner Hales asked if a person has a property worth \$150,000 but sells it for \$100,000, will the tax value stay at \$150,000 until the next revaluation. Ms. Wilson stated that was correct.*

*Commissioner Howard asked what happens to a property that increases during this cycle. Ms. Wilson stated nothing happens.*

*MIS:*

*Darlene Yudell, MIS Director, presented the mission and responsibilities of the department.*

*Commissioner Hales asked if Ms. Yudell's department is the group that looks at when computers need to be changed out in people's offices. Ms. Yudell stated yes, they have an inventory of everything in the County. They make recommendations and the*

departments fund their own purchases. Ms. Yudell stated she is about the right fitting. Just because you had a pc for five years doesn't mean you need a new pc. Many departments are talking about field access and that is what they need.

Commissioner Hales asked what the server capacity is. Ms. Yudell stated the County has 92 servers. Some are test servers and 98% are virtualized.

*Finance:*

Vicki McConnell, Finance Director, presented the mission and responsibilities for the department.

The commissioners commended Ms. McConnell and her staff for their outstanding work.

*County Manager's Office:*

Charlie Horne, County Manager, presented the mission and responsibilities for the department.

Commissioner Petty stated as a business owner, he is very impressed with the team they have put together. He appreciates what the staff does. Commissioner Howard asked how many people are in the County Manager's Office. The County Manager stated about ten.

Commissioner Petty asked if the Manager's Office could provide a flow chart with the organization of the County. Ms. Paschal stated there is a flow chart in the budget document but they could produce a more detailed chart if needed. Commissioner Hales asked how many employees were employed by the County. The County Manager stated about 485.

The County Manager stated he cannot commend the senior leadership group enough. He is proud of them and proud to work with them.

Commissioner Hales asked if the County is the largest employer. The County Manager stated the school system is the largest employer. Commissioner Petty asked for the number of employees per citizen. Ms. Paschal stated it is larger than the state average.

## **14-1092**

### **Commissioner Discussion**

The discussion was postponed until the third day of the retreat, Tuesday, January 13, 2015.

## **ADJOURNMENT**