



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Monday, September 21, 2020

6:00 PM

Agricultural and Conference Center

Work Session - 2:00 PM - Agriculture and Conference Center

Present: 5 - Chair Karen Howard, Vice Chair Diana Hales, Commissioner Jim Crawford, Commissioner Mike Dasher and Commissioner Andy Wilkie

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

No one signed up to speak.

BOARD PRIORITIES

[20-3623](#)

Receive Library Advisory Committee Annual Report

Attachments: [2020 ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT \(1\)](#)

Library Advisory Committee Chair Jeanne Marie Patterson gave the annual report to the Board. (Report attached)

Library Director Linda Clarke and County Manager Dan LaMontagne answered questions about the reopening of the libraries.

[20-3624](#)

Receive Environmental Review Advisory Committee Annual Report

Attachments: [ERAC Report 2019](#)

Chair of the Environmental Review Advisory Committee (ERAC) Ray Bode gave a presentation to the Board. (Presentation attached)

Vice Chair Hales suggested there be some collaboration between the Planning Board and the ERAC. Mr. Bode said that he, Planning Board Chair George Lucier, and County staff have been discussing a need for a liaison between the two committees and meetings between Chairs, Co-Chairs and County staff. County Manager Dan LaMontagne encouraged both committees to work through the staff liaisons so that they can ensure the Open Meetings Law is followed.

[20-3625](#)

Vote on a request to approve Legislative Goals to submit to the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.

The Board decided to submit the following legislative goals to the NC Association of

County Commissioners:

REMOVE RURAL BROADBAND BARRIERS

Promote legislation that would remove barriers and restrictions and put in place the support that will provide access to high-speed broadband to everyone. This means:

- Allowing local governments to be active partners in broadband projects serving the public, including allowing public facilities to serve as broadband hubs and providing some level of matching funds.
- Extending and increasing state funding for broadband efforts in rural areas that are unserved or under-served by broadband.
- Remove territorial locks that allow providers to pick who they will and who they will not serve.
- Promote FCC changes to the service reporting provided by telecoms to require precise addresses served with service details, mapping of the service addresses and targeted funding and requirement of telecom deployment to those targets.

EXPAND MEDICAID IN NORTH CAROLINA

APPROVE NC PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS BOND

The General Assembly should approve a Public School Buildings Bond Act to put a school facility bond referendum up for a statewide vote as soon as possible. Chatham County supports any action by the General Assembly to obtain passage of a statewide vote on a school construction bond.

PROTECT THE PROPERTY TAX BASE FROM FURTHER EROSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

Over the years, substantial legislation has been introduced and passed that has applied property tax exemptions, exclusions and deferrals to specific property types. The trend to exempt or exclude more property types is on the rise. This has gradually shifted the tax burden to a shrinking group of individuals. Recognize and oppose any legislation that would further erode the tax base of counties and potentially add to administrative costs.

INCREASE FUNDING FOR HOME & COMMUNITY CARE BLOCK GRANT, SENIOR CENTER GENERAL PURPOSE FUNDS, AND ADULT PROTECTIVE & GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES AND ASSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR SENIORS AND THE DISABLED

Many of these programs have seen decreases in funding in past years or have not seen increases in funding while experiencing increased need by this growing segment of our population. Support legislation increasing state funding for these critical programs to support seniors.

REDEFINE OR REPLACE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TIERS

We would ask that counties and municipalities have input and that the formula recognizing the far-ranging economic differences that exist within most counties. Creating zones within counties would be a possible solution.

PROTECT LOCAL CONTROL OF PLANNING, PERMITTING & INSPECTION FUNCTIONS

Over the years, substantial legislation has been introduced and passed that has eroded local control over land use, permitting and inspections functions. Such legislation has several broad negative impacts.

Recognize and oppose additional legislation imposing state control over local land use, permitting and inspection functions.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Dasher, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

CLOSED SESSION

[20-3627](#)

Closed Session to discuss matters relating to economic development and personnel.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dasher, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, to go out of the Work Session and into Closed Session pursuant to GS 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses; and GS 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, and fitness of an individual public officer. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

End of Work Session

Regular Session - 6:00 PM - Agriculture and Conference Center

INVOCATION and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Howard asked everyone to pause for a moment of silence after which she invited everyone present to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Howard welcomed those in attendance and called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA and CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that the Agenda and Consent Agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3600](#)

Vote on a request to accept \$7,500 Maternal Health Innovation Funds - Telehealth.

Attachments: [\\$7,500 Maternal Health Innovation Funds](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3630](#)

Vote on a request to accept \$101,047 COVID-19- Crisis Response Epidemiology-Communicable Disease Branch Funds

Attachments: [\\$101,047 COVID-19 Funds - FY20-21](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3604](#)

Vote on a Request to Approve a Pyrotechnics Display at the Bennett Baptist Church, 68 E. Bonlee Street, Bennett, NC 27208, on October 31, 2020.

Attachments: [Attachment A-N.C.G.S. Pyrotechnic Displays](#)

[Attachment B - Pyrotechnic Display Request Bennett Baptist 2109](#)

[Attachment D - Hale Artif. Certificate of Insurance](#)

[Attchment C - Pyrotechnic License](#)

[Attachment E - Hale Atific. ATF License](#)

[Attachment F - Bennett Baptist Site Plan 2019](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3611](#)

Vote on request to approve Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a Joint Water Treatment Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) between the City of Sanford and Chatham County and approve Dan LaMontagne, County Manager, to sign the MOU on behalf of the County.

Attachments: [Chatham County - City of Sanford - MOU Preliminary Engineering Report - Sanford Plant Expansion](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Contract, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3618](#)

Vote on a request to approve the contract for Ellington Contracting to serve as the Contractor for the Government Annex - Phase II Renovations project.

Attachments: [ANNEX PHASE 2 - Construction Contract-Signed by Ellington](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Contract, attached hereto and by record made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3616](#)

Vote on a Request to approve competitive bid exemption for standardization and sole source for the Chatham County Utilities Department for Badger Meter, Inc.

Attachments: [Abstract - attachment - Badger Meter Sole Source letter](#)
[Abstract - Badger Meter - GS 143-129 Exceptions-SoleSource-e6](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3631](#)

Vote on a request to approve a lease for the Board of Elections for 984 Thompson Street for two years for \$108,000 and authorize the County Manager to execute the contract.

Attachments: [BOE Lease for 984 Thompson Street](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Contract, attached hereto and by record made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3612](#)

Vote on a request to approve Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Amendments

Attachments: [Budget Amendment 2020-2021 Sept](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that the budget amendments, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3605](#)

Vote on request to adopt a resolution approving Amendment #1 to previously approved Interlocal Agreement between Chatham County and the City of Durham respecting water sales and approve Dan LaMontagne, County Manager, to sign the Interlocal Agreement amendment on behalf of the County.

Attachments: [Durham-Chatham Water Sale Agreement Amendment 1 - 081420](#)
[DurhamChathamWaterAgreement 2008](#)
[Resolution approving amendment to interlocal agreement](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Resolution #2020-34 Approving Amendment #1 to previously approved Interlocal Agreement between Chatham County and the City of Durham respecting water sales and approve Dan LaMontagne, County Manager, to sign the Interlocal Agreement on behalf of the county, attached hereto and by record made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3613](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution of Intent to set a public hearing for October 19, 2020 to permanently close a portion of 15-501 Right of Way as a result of petition.

Attachments: [113929760_1_Updated Petition to Chatham County Requesting Abandonment and Closure of a Portion of 15-501 N. in Chatham County as Submitted to J. Sullivan on 9-3-2020 with Resolutions Changed for Execution by-C3](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Resolution #2020-35 to set a public hearing for October 19, 2020 to permanently close a portion of 15-501 Right of Way as a result of petition, attached hereto and by record made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3620](#)

Vote on a Request to Adopt a Resolution Declaring Property Surplus and Conveying Property

Attachments: [Resolution Sheriff's Vehicle Surplus to CCCC](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Resolution #2020-36 Declaring Property Surplus and Conveying Property, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3614](#)

Vote on a request to approve Tax Releases and Refunds

Attachments: [August 2020 Release and Refund Report](#)
[August 2020 NCVTS Pending Refund Report](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that the Tax Releases and Refunds, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3615](#)

Vote on a Request to Approve Tax Department - Charging Off Tax Bills

Attachments: [2020 Outstanding Tax Report](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3617](#)

Vote on a request to approve Tax Department - Utility Bill Debt Write-off

Attachments: [Write off list for 2017 and prior - FY2021](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3633](#)

Vote on a request to approve appointments to the Agriculture Advisory Board.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Wilkie, that these Appointments be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

End of Consent Agenda

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

[20-3622](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution Proclaiming September 2020 as Hispanic Heritage Month

Attachments: [Hispanic Heritage Month 2020](#)

Chair Howard read the resolution in Spanish and in English and presented both resolutions to The Hispanic Liaison Executive Director and founder Ilana Dubester.

Ms. Dubester thanked Chair Howard and the rest of the Board for proclaiming September 2020 as Hispanic Heritage Month. She introduced the Board to the rest of her team: Advocacy & Civic Engagement Program Manager Maria Gomez Flores, Program Manager, Youth Leadership Selina Lopez, Marketing Communications Manager Bryant Parroquin, and Program & Volunteer Coordinator Janet Ramirez.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this Resolution #2020-37 Proclaiming September 2020 as Hispanic Heritage Month, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

[20-3632](#)

Vote on a request to adopt a Resolution recognizing The Honorable Carl R. Fox for his service to Judicial District 15B of Orange and Chatham Counties and approving the dedication of courtroom 3A in the Chatham County Justice Center to now be known as the "Carl R. Fox Superior Courtroom".

Chair Howard said it was an absolute privilege to be able to present the Honorable Carl R. Fox with the resolution and the sign designating Courtroom 3A in his honor. She stated she is said to see Judge Fox go but he has served the county well. He was the judge who presided over her original oath of office as Chatham County Commissioner.

Chair Howard read the resolution into the record.

Judge Fox thanked the Board for the tremendous honor. He is proud that in seven elections he never lost the vote of Chatham County. He said no county commissioners could have been more responsive to the tragedy of the burning of the Historic Courthouse in 2010 than the Chatham County commissioners. A temporary courthouse was ready in months and in 2013 the new Justice Center opened. The old courthouse was also restored shortly after and he thanks the Board for getting that done.

Judge Fox said no courtroom is his courtroom. He is just visiting in courtrooms holding court. He joked that the sign dedicating the courtroom in his honor comes as close as a judge can ever get to owning a courtroom. He is humbled and thankful to each of them for this honor. He said it has been a pleasure to serve the residents of Chatham County for the last 42 years of his life. He thanked his wife Julia Kemp Fox because without her he may not have lived to see this honor.

Chair Howard thanked Judge Baddour and the County Manager for helping to make this presentation possible. She stated as the mother of five young black men, she saw firsthand that they were taken aback when they saw Judge Fox as the one administering the oath of office to their mother. She believes they saw something in the room that day that made them see themselves a little differently and she thanked Judge Fox for that.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Dasher, that this Resolution #2020-38 Recognizing The Honorable Carl R. Fox for his service to Judicial District 15B and approving the dedication of courtroom 3A in the Chatham County Justice Center to now be known as the "Carl R. Fox Superior Courtroom", attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Douglas Sedlak submitted the following comments:

Good evening,

The following comments are public record - in the minutes. A month ago our County officials created and approved a 2nd Health Crisis. They prefer you discover the ramifications later. COVID-19 is the first Health Crisis. This 2nd Health Crisis is a condition called Structural Racism. You'll hear about it shortly. First, information on a style of government called a Police State. China, Russia, and North Korea are police states. They can be local too. Governments can declare arbitrary Crises and enforce them with police power. This happens in a Police State. Inhabitants experience restrictions on their mobility. Political, health, and other views are monitored. Censorship is common. People squawk on each other. Police hire informants. Race and health are always weaponized in Police States. Famous Police States include Nazi Germany, Communist East Germany, Marxist Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Communist China. Their notorious police are called the SS, Stasi, KGB, OVRA, and MSS. The East German Stasi were masters at spying and repressing human rights; you'll hear Stasi later. Amnesty International traditionally fought police states; I was a member. They had a protest "download" called an LP, "The Secret Policeman's Ball". I have it. I still admire it.

Police states can be local too. They start gradually. They seem justified - at first.

COVID-19 is our 1st Health Crisis. COVID is a real and more often deadly than the flu. Old laws give local governments extraordinary powers in "health crises". For example, Chapel Hill Stasi spied on people and made COVID-19 arrests. \$1000 1st violation and up to 60 days jail for the 2nd. The 3rd? Who knows? Are "health" arrests justified? Maybe? Dr. Fauci, the CDC, and the Feds aren't doing it though. Is jail time appropriate? Will jailed COVID criminals be protected from COVID in jail? How? The Chatham County Board of Health, the BoH, just declared a 2nd Health Crisis - a Structural Racism Health Crisis. Evident in BoH meeting minutes, Commissioners participated and supporting it. Dr. Fauci has spoken hundreds of times about COVID-19, a big health hazard. Has he mentioned a Structural Racism Health Crisis? It's just a County Health Crisis apparently. Let's call it the Racial Crisis.

In the future Countians will be fined and possibly jailed by Stasi for Racial Crisis violations - whatever those might be. Could verbal micro-aggressions become fineable misdemeanors. Could flying a flag someday be jail worthy because it inflames PTSD? The Stasi determine that. 25-50 private citizens and "public servants" (let's call them the Kreisleiters) were involved in the Racial Crisis. (See: <https://www.chathamnc.org/home/showdocument?id=51918>). Countians had no idea, due to borderline secretive proceedings; that's how police states begin - secretly. Unless you attended the June 22nd BoH meeting, a lonely agenda item was the ONLY public information:

"Board of Health Statement"

That's it:

"Board of Health Statement"

This 2nd County Health Crisis hands the Kreisleiters virtually unlimited power to create

and enforce "racism and health" edicts. The future result could be the Stasi handcuffing you. You or yours in the criminal system. The current Commissioners will say, "not on our watch". However this Racial Crisis is permanent until Racism is fixed; "antiracism" we are told by experts is a never-ending "struggle session". Ask thought "leaders" at Boston University. Are they thought leaders, or thought police?

What if radical Republicans win someday, and cower to alt-right skinheads with AK47s and Nazi flags? Or radical Democrats win, bowing to violent Antifa mobs and Marxist/Communist BLM leaders? Countians will suffer cruelly if either group jumps on a permanent Health Crisis - Stasi on steroids. The Kreisleiters also use misleading numbers to justify the Crisis. They cite the [quote] "disproportionally high COVID-19 case percentage of Chatham County Latino community members." Guess what? Many white Countians are Latino, including wealthy white Democrats. White Kreisleiters, including Commissioners, BoH members, and County staff may be Latino. You might look at me and want to scream "white Privilege", but guess what? I'll benefit from the Crisis. Because I'm Latino. Don't believe me? Ask the Census Bureau. It's a Federal Crime to lie to them.

The Kreisleiters dangle "bling" about their Crisis, but know that:

1. It enables Police State power
2. Radicals far Right or far Left could obtain that power
3. Unlike COVID, this Health Crisis can last forever
4. Wealthy Countians of all races could cash in, fueling animosity
5. Resentment of wealthy Latinos could ignite anti-Hispanic xenophobia
6. The Stasi could legally scrutinize all your actions, citing "safety"
7. Health and race were weaponized by the Nazis against Jews. Same in China today - the Uighurs are in concentration camps.
8. COVID arrests are the tip of the iceberg. Structural racism may be next.

George Orwell said:

- "Within any important issue, there are always aspects no one wishes to discuss"
- "There are some ideas so absurd that only an intellectual could believe them"
- "The object of power is power"
- "The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history"
- And, "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face - forever"

Adolf Hitler said:

- "All effective propaganda must be limited to a very few points and must harp on these in slogans until the last member of the public understands what you want him to understand by your slogan."

Hitler's Propaganda Minister said:

- "It would not be impossible to prove with sufficient repetition and a psychological understanding of the people ... that a square is in fact a circle. They are mere words, and words can be molded ..."

Commissioners, this Racial Crisis builds a wall between Countians. Tear down this wall Commissioners. Unite, don't divide. Create and enforce new transparency policies to prevent another Secret Policeman's Ball. We want transparency. Not government in the shadows. Otherwise fellow Chathamites, reject this disturbing Crisis sprung on us. Tell the Kreisleiters to shred it. That you don't want it back - ever. If they refuse your calls and petitions, kick 'em out November 3rd. Maybe the next lot

will hear us. We can hope - and vote.

Remember these books?

1984, Anthem, Fahrenheit 451, Animal Farm, We the Living. Maybe not, it's a Brave New World.

Remember this protest song?

The sign said "non antiracists need not apply"

So I put on my Antifa hat and I went in to ask him why

He said "You look like a fine upstanding young THEM, I think you'll do"

So I took off my hat and my mask, and said "Imagine this MAN working for you!"

Now, hey mister, can't you read?

You've gotta have a mask to get a seat

You can't even watch, you can't eat

You ain't supposed to be here

The sign said you got to have an antiracist card to get inside

Ugh!

Do this and don't do that, can't you read the police state signs?

Until time up, I'll read my last email to the BoH and Commissioners. You can contact me at douglasjsedlak@gmail.com

Here is the link to the missing By Race data in the email, STILL missing 16 days later:
<https://www.chathamnc.org/services/health/coronavirus/>

Hi Carol, Jim C., and all,

Please notify me back here that you all received this. The 24aug2020 BoH meeting minutes are not out; thus I don't have them for reference. The By Race bar chart still missing.

Adding back Commissioner Howard, as Commissioner Crawford suggested to her this topic be addressed at the Monday Sep 21 Commissioners meeting. I appreciate that!

Thanks for the responses; great to have some additional information at last!

The BoH and County Health Officials acted irresponsibly in declaring this 2nd Public Health Crisis (COVID-19 the 1st Health Crisis), because NO information was available to Countians that the BoH and County Health Officials were undertaking this drastic action. As you all know:

1. The 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting agenda said only this: IX. New Business a. Board of Health Statement
2. No 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting minutes were available by 24aug2020 when the BoH voted on and unanimously declared this Health Crisis. Unanimously.
3. Interim discussions between 22jun2020 and 24aug2020 were private to the BoH + any private invitees.
4. The 24aug2020 Virtual Meeting agenda said only this: VIII. Old Business a. Board of Health Statement**

Thus Countians were blinded to an impending Health Crisis vote, and then declaration, in the 24aug2020 Virtual Meeting. As example, Carol stated, "I recall no public provided input during the public input session at the August 24th meeting related to discussions at the June meeting." Unless one attended the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting and mentally recollected the content two months later, it was impossible to intelligently

comment as there was NO available public record of the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting.

These are indisputable facts too (as conjecture only, some might hypothesize these facts as accretive to theorizing that a cloaked agenda and the extraordinary result were "by design" and "cleverly engineered").

- The overseeing Commissioner Board member was present at the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting. (The 24aug2020 meeting too?)*
- 10 other BoH members attended the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting.*
- 12 Staff were present at the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting.*
- Total combined "Public" attendance of all 2020 BoH meetings prior to the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting was one – a Public Health Student in February. Grand total 1 (one). There were an astounding 17 "Public" attendees at the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting.*
- Layton Long (U.S. Air Force retiree and Order of the Long Leaf Pine recipient) retired as Chatham County Public Health Director on May 31st, 2020.*
- Mike Zelek (Masters of Public Health 2012 from UNC-Chapel Hill), was sworn in as Chatham County Interim Public Health Director on June 1, 2020.*
- At the 22jun2020 Virtual Meeting, "Mr. Zelek introduced Zachary Horner, Communications Specialist II. Mr. Horner began working for the health department on 6-22-2020 and he is well known in the community".*

It is possible the conduct resulting in the declaration of this Health Crisis was unethical too. At this time I leave it to the BoH and its leadership, the County Commissioners, to engage in self-criticism.

As originally stated, the BoH needs to recant and renounce this Statement / BoH-manufactured "Crisis". Additionally Countians are due an authentic and heartfelt public apology. There was no transparency; this very serious agenda was hidden from Countians until declared already effective.

An investigation of what transpired will inject transparency. Was there intent to deprive Countians knowledge of this initiative? Or "innocent procedural oversight" by 1 Commissioner, 10 additional BoH members, and 12 Staff members? Even if "innocent", are there nevertheless commonplace or required repercussions to involved personnel?

Additionally, due to this disturbing and now documented situation, the Board of Commissioners should expeditiously implement new Policies and Procedures to prevent recurrences of opaque behavior. The Policies and Procedures should be especially "draconian" in reference to very serious and "toothy" agendas, as in this case declaring a Public Health Crisis. In the future, an arduous, exhaustive, and very public process must be required, given this audacious "screw up".

Last, minor but worth mention, the Board of Commissioners, BoH, and likely other Boards can do better responding to citizens. If you review this discussion (inc timestamps), Mr. Sedlak always experienced multi-day response lapses. Twice he telephoned County employees to ask Boards to even acknowledge receipt of emails. And after "pulling teeth", the information content (e.g. directly answering specific questions) - to - "spin" ratio was disconcerting in the opinion of Mr. Sedlak. Some questions were never broached, let alone answered. The silence at times "deafening". The last response quite adequate though, thank you Carol.

The upcoming 21sep2020 Commissioners meeting is a first, and unique, opportunity to initiate corrective transparency and "come clean". Should the 4 non-involved County Commissioners request resignations? Who can say? Should this also be a County

HR matter involving employee disciplinary actions? Who can say?

Cheers, and in the inestimable words of Presidential candidate John Edwards, "We can do better",

Doug Sedlak

Valerie Broadway submitted the following comments:

I'd like to begin by making sure no one on this Board is mistaking my passion to help the homeless for anger towards you. I've read all of your bios on the county website and I've even spoken to a couple of you in person. I recognize you are caring and compassionate individuals and are also concerned about the plight of those struggling with homelessness.

I come here as a citizen who has recently noticed the homeless population becoming more visible. I understand there are very few resources in Chatham County to offer these people. So my thought process was to come and address this issue with the decision-making Board who represents the entire county.

The last two times I spoke to you, my focus was on the need for a physical homeless shelter, and the lack of affordable housing in general. Today, my focus is on the need for greater access to mental health services in the county.

I didn't mention it before, but the last two times I spoke at these meetings I had a homeless person staying at my house. I saw firsthand the struggle this person had with trying to access mental health services that they clearly needed. When I bring up the issue of the need for mental health services for the homeless people often respond with the fact we have Daymark. Thank God for Daymark! But they are overloaded. Homeless people tell me they have a hard time getting appointments. These days appointments are virtual. Some people I spoke to talked about how they don't get called to have therapy sessions when they are told they will. Often the homeless are using other people's phones and by the time they get called they no longer have access to the phones, so they miss appointments.

Last month I was on a group Zoom meeting to discuss homelessness, facilitated by Siler City Police Chief, Mike Wagner. He shared his concern about not wanting to have to arrest homeless people who clearly were suffering from mental illnesses. He said arresting them will only add to their hardships by resulting in fines and court costs they cannot afford. In addition, arresting them does not help to address their mental health issues.

At last month's meeting Chairwoman Howard mentioned that the county is "working on something" related to homelessness. I don't know what it is but I'd like to thank you for it if it's going to help the homeless or help keep people from becoming homeless during these difficult times. Thank you!

PUBLIC HEARINGS

[20-3608](#)

A quasi-judicial public hearing for a request by the Chatham County Emergency Operations director, Mike Reitz, for a Conditional Use Permit for a new 325 foot communications tower to be located at 5224 Silk Hope Liberty Rd., Silk Hope Fire Department, parcel 84527, being approximately two acres.

Attachments: [More information from the Planning department website](#)

Chair Howard opened the hearing and administered the oath to all individuals wishing to speak on this item.

Planning Director Jason Sullivan reviewed the specifics of the request.

Communications Director Mike Reitz addressed the Board.

No one else signed up to speak.

The Chair closed the hearing.

This Agenda Item was referred to the Planning Board.

[20-3606](#)

A Legislative public hearing for a request by Campbell Towing and Recovery, Inc, for a general use rezoning from R-1 Residential to IND-L, Light Industrial, Parcel No's. 9599 and 61012 being 2.47 acres, located at 128 Vernie Phillips Rd, Gulf Township.

Attachments: [More information from the Planning department website](#)

The Chair opened the hearing.

Zoning Official Janie Phelps reviewed the specifics of the request.

The Board asked clarifying questions about the request.

No one signed up to speak.

The Chair closed the hearing.

This Agenda Item was referred to the Planning Board.

[20-3607](#)

A Legislative public hearing for a request by Arylex Properties, LLC, for a conditional district rezoning from R-1 Residential to CD-CB, Conditional District Community Business, for Appliance Sales and Service, Automotive service stations (including tune-ups, minor repairs, washing facilities, & similar services, Bait and Tackle Shop, Boat, Trailer, and other utility vehicle sales & service, Cabinet Shop, Contractor's plants, storage yards, & staging areas, General, Professional, and Medical Offices, Hardware, appliances, electrical, and other similar retail sales, Landscape Design Business, Lock and Gunsmith, Office (Business & Professional), Parcel No. 17885 being 2.04 acres, located at 12927 US 64 E, New Hope Township.

Attachments: [More information from the Planning department website](#)

The Chair opened the hearing.

Zoning Official Janie Phelps reviewed the specifics of the request.

The Board asked clarifying questions.

No one signed up to speak.

The Chair closed the hearing.

This Agenda Item was referred to the Planning Board.

BOARD PRIORITIES

[20-3628](#)

Receive Chatham County COVID-19 Update

Attachments: [BOC COVID Update 9'21'2020](#)

County Manager Dan LaMontagne gave an update on COVID-19 in Chatham County. (Presentation attached)

CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk to the Board Lindsay K. Ray attended the virtual NC County Clerks Conference two weeks ago. She stated she is always so proud when she attends these conferences because she is able to say such positive things about her commissioners, her county manager, the county attorney and all the staff. A large focus of the meeting was about virtual meetings and Dr. Shannon Tufts recognized Chatham County Commissioners as being incredibly accommodating of the residents with these complicated meetings.

Ms. Ray also announced that the October 5th afternoon and evening sessions will be at the Agriculture and Conference Center. The October 19th afternoon and evening meeting will be at the Historic Courthouse.

MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Dan LaMontagne reminded everyone that the Census is coming to an end. He reported the county is currently at 69.9% completion. The last census the county response rate was 66.7%.

He also said he will be giving a presentation to the Triangle J Council of Governments this Thursday on the megasites.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Crawford stated health disparities are preventable differences in health outcomes between groups in society. The following statement was adopted by the Chatham County Board of Health at its August 24, 2020 meeting:

“As members of the North Carolina, Chatham County Board of Health, it is our stated purpose to identify factors that adversely affect health outcomes, formulate plans to address these factors, and to ultimately negate their effect on the health of Chatham County residents. As such, we are formally declaring structural racism as an ongoing public health crisis, and pledging the Board’s commitment and expertise in mitigating the associated health disparities.”

“It is an irrefutable fact that race and socio-economic status have innumerable influences on health outcomes. This is evident in a multitude of statistics in Chatham County, and throughout the State, including, but not limited to, the disproportionately high COVID-19 case percentage of Chatham County Latino community members, the decreased life expectancy of African American men, and the suboptimal birth outcomes of African American women.”

Commissioner Crawford continued by saying Chatham County has cradle to grave disparities, documented by several surveys, ongoing data collection, and targeted studies:

Maternity/Births: Chatham’s infant mortality rate is above the state’s 7.1 per 1,000 versus 10.7. Disaggregate the data: white 5.2; black 18.7 deaths per 1000.

Low weight babies: White, 9.3%; Hispanic, 11.6%; and black 11.6%.

Women’s preventative care: Older women have disparate rates of mammogram screening, according to our data. White, 46%; black, 45%; and Hispanic, 32%.

Flu shots: 62% of whites using our Medicare service enrollees get vaccinated; 45% of African-Americans, 33% of Hispanic.

All of the above impacts morbidity and mortality: Black women are more likely to die from heart disease than white women; 114 v. 81 per 100,000. Black men have a rate of 208 v. 126 for white men, per 100,000. Poor cancer treatment kills at black men at a rate 235 per 100,000 versus 172 for white men. For women the corresponding numbers are 133 versus 99. Overall black folk in Chatham have seven fewer years of life expectancy than whites.

Half of Chatham’s Covid-19 victims are Hispanic, although they are about 12% of the population.

The Health Board is also concerned with community mental wellness: attempted suicides are seven points higher among Latina high school students, four points higher for Hispanic boys. There is a higher reporting of symptoms of depression too.

Each of these indicators (and others) is the outgrowth of marginalization in a society shaped by white supremacy as a legal, cultural, and political value with damaging social, economic and psychological consequences.

In turn, the public must acknowledge the socio-economic determinants of health: Poverty, lack of medical insurance, lack of screenings, preventative measures, diagnosis and treatment. Bad health outcomes are tied to the marginalization of our neighbors. Whereas 14% of white children in the county are living in poverty, 24% of black and 30% of Hispanic/latinx children live in poverty. White median income is \$85K, African-American is 45K and Hispanic/Latino is 47K.

This is the local context in which the state legislature's rejection of Medicaid expansion must be reckoned. To be clear, North Carolina's leaders choose to deny preventative care, diagnosis opportunities and treatment to the poor and working poor. To the extent that it falls more heavily upon people of color, it is a form of structural racism dating not to 1915 or 1815, but 2015.

We must commit ourselves to doing better. When? Now. The BOH statement continues: "It is not enough to simply declare structural racism a public health crisis, measures must be taken to address the root causes and secondary influences if we hope to succeed." The first step to doing better is to have a thorough diagnosis, to reckon the metes and bounds of the problem of disparities, inequalities and iniquities.

It is an iniquity to obfuscate, deny or obstruct discussion of the issue. This willful blindness is not new; just wrong.

Vice Chair Hales let everyone know about the TJCOG webinars on equity starting this Thursday. She has also attended several webinars on different water issues.

Commissioner Wilkie reminded residents that absentee voting has already started in Chatham County. The last day to request an absentee ballot is October 27th. Ballots need to be returned to the Board of Elections by 5:00 pm on November 3rd, which is election day.

Chair Howard reminded everyone of the Chamber of Commerce Chatham Development Briefing on Thursday morning at 9:30 am.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chair Hales, seconded by Commissioner Crawford, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Crawford, Commissioner Dasher and Commissioner Wilkie