

MINUTES
CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SUMMIT SESSION
FEBRUARY 05, 2009

The Board of Commissioners (“the Board”) of the County of Chatham, North Carolina, met in the Henry H. Dunlap Building Classroom, 80 East Street, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, at 9:00 AM on February 05, 2009.

Present: Chairman George Lucier; Vice Chair Sally Kost; Commissioners Mike Cross, Carl Thompson and Tom Vanderbeck; County Manager, Charlie Horne; Assistant County Manager, Renee Paschal; Finance Officer, Vicki McConnell; and Clerk to the Board, Sandra B. Sublett

Summit Agenda

DAY TWO:

1. Continue Goal Discussion (Brainstorming)
2. Infrastructure-Water System Status Report/Speculative Limits (19 MGD)
3. Budget Direction – Tax Rate Information/Revaluation
4. Status of Already Approved Development
5. Expected Impacts of Growth – Schools, Infrastructure (preparing for economic upturn)
6. Next Steps
7. Direction to Staff

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM.

APPROACHES TO BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Renee Paschal, Assistant County Manager, presented a PowerPoint and provided a list of various types of approaches to cutting budgets, temporary, long-term, and comprehensive as follows:

Strategies for Balancing the Budget During Fiscal Crisis Sources:

Sources:

- ⊙ Cary McSwain: Potential Budget and Financial Strategies
- ⊙ Jack Vogt: Adapting Annual Budgets & Capital Plans to Current Financial Challenges
- ⊙ Chris Fabien, Scott Collins, and Jon Johnson: Getting Your Priorities Straight
- ⊙ Alliance for Innovation: Navigating the Fiscal Crisis: Tested Strategies for Local Leaders
- ⊙ Budget Cuts: Departments’ Perspective
- ⊙ Budget Cuts: “Budget Office’s” Perspective

Long-term Financial Health

- ⊙ Maintain flexibility
 - Avoid excessive debt
 - Avoid unfunded postemployment liabilities
- ⊙ Diversify revenue sources
- ⊙ Rely on stable funding sources (such as property tax)
- ⊙ Long-term financial planning
- ⊙ Maintain adequate reserves
- ⊙ Educate stakeholders about the financial situation and the need for fiscal planning and restraint

Three major categories of cuts:

1. Temporary

2. Long term
3. Comprehensive

Temporary

- ⊙ Freeze vacant positions
- ⊙ Freeze employee pay and benefits
- ⊙ Increase employee share of health insurance
- ⊙ Reduce employee hours and pay
- ⊙ Reduce pay and benefits
- ⊙ Offer early retirement
- ⊙ Furlough employees
- ⊙ Lay off employees

Temporary

- ⊙ Delay capital projects
- ⊙ Delay capital purchases
- ⊙ Defer capital projects that drive increases in the operating budget
- ⊙ Postpone transfers to capital reserves
- ⊙ Use capital reserves for one-time, critical capital projects that should not be deferred

Temporary

- ⊙ Restrict travel
- ⊙ Reduce energy costs by changing thermostats
- ⊙ Reduce overtime expenses (consider adding more part time employees if less costly than overtime)
- ⊙ Shut down some facilities for a half or full day and reduce salaries and expenses
- ⊙ Delay new programs and services
- ⊙ Reduce contributions to community agencies

Temporary

- ⊙ Require reversions from the current budget
- ⊙ Allow no budget transfers from personnel-related accounts (we already do this)
- ⊙ Require contingency plans for cuts; implement if necessary
- ⊙ Hold part of department's allocation in reserve until half or three-quarters through the fiscal year
- ⊙ Use fund balance and/or reserves to maintain or increase funding levels

Long Term

- ⊙ Consolidate similar or duplicative services
- ⊙ Reward employees and departments for cost-saving ideas
- ⊙ Review all fees to determine portion of costs being covered; set fees to recover higher proportion of costs
- ⊙ Research all available fees not currently used and consider implementation
- ⊙ Recover more revenues from enterprise funds:
 - Lease equipment
 - Share personnel

Long Term

- ⊙ Bid and privatize services
- ⊙ Consolidate services with municipalities and share costs
- ⊙ Establish incentives for good health to reduce insurance costs
- ⊙ Reduce overhead:
 - Bid insurance coverage
 - Consolidate purchasing of supplies, etc.
 - Review "take-home" policies of vehicles, etc.

Long Term (with upfront costs)

- ⊙ Promote economic development
- ⊙ Invest in grants writing
- ⊙ Invest in automation of services and e-government to reduce staffing needs
- ⊙ Develop in-house capacity for training
- ⊙ Re-engineer services and organization to produce the same service at a lower cost
- ⊙ Conduct energy assessment and implement energy savings plan

Comprehensive

- ⊙ Across-the-board cuts
- ⊙ Across-the-board cuts, excepting high-priority services

Comprehensive

- ⊙ Zero-based budgeting: (ZBB)
 - Pure ZBB—Require departments to justify all programs from scratch
 - Modified ZBB—Establish thresholds (e.g., 90% of last year’s resources, create “packages” for spending above that level, rank packages)
 - Rotating ZBB—Look at a few services each year

Comprehensive

- ⊙ Targeted cuts:
 - Amount of cut based on available revenue
 - May impose spending limits for certain items (e.g., travel)
 - A target is set for each department/service, approaches:
 - Based on service priorities (Jefferson County, CO)
 - Based on discretionary versus core services
 - Based on aggregate priorities (by department or by purpose – education, public safety, environmental protection, etc.)
 - Based on effectiveness of services (performance review)
 - Ask departments to develop “cut lists” based on varying levels of cuts

Comprehensive

Revenue based approach:

1. Estimate revenues
2. Deduct earmarked revenues
3. Deduct capital purchases and BOC “new programs”
4. Allocate remaining revenues in proportion to prior year spending; allocate capital separately
5. Departments develop list of unfunded requirements; BOC or manager prioritizes
6. Departments develop “cut lists”
7. Manager reallocates funding from cut list to unfunded requirements list

Recommended Approach

- ⊙ Depends on Commissioner priorities
- ⊙ Resources are adequate to fund current programs; short and long-term strategies may be work for FY 2010
- ⊙ If Board of Commissioners’ new programs require considerable resources, staff recommends comprehensive approach: either targeted cuts or a revenue-based approach

Fiscal Crisis Can Be an Opportunity

- ⊙ Realign resources to priority services
- ⊙ Eliminate redundant or ineffective programs
- ⊙ Promote greater productivity and innovation

Chairman Lucier agreed that across-the-board budget cuts are not effective. As to the recommended approach, the group discussed other points.

- **Goal:** Start requiring the major departments on some regular cycle to provide more information on their full funding sources and specific programs. Not this year, but get ready for it next year. Some older programs may not be necessary. Would help us stay leaner and more effective use of money. A form of rotating program-based budgeting.
- Commissioner Kost agreed that a rotating basis to have an intensive review of departments would be less of a drain on staff. New management analyst could work with those departments.
- Chairman Lucier said that this year may require some specific targeted cuts, but hopefully not a lot.
- Commissioner Thompson said some other long-term approaches also may be good. Maybe we should look now at consolidating similar or duplicated services.
- Former Commissioner, Patrick Barnes noted that we don’t want to hurt morale in the process. Chairman Lucier said that some departments could end up with more funding if they can do a good job of justifying need & effectiveness.
- Commissioner Kost suggested we use “**program-based budgeting**”, not zero-based, because of these concerns.
- All major programs would be reviewed every 3-5 years.
- The County Manager said that this would create the need for a full-time budget analyst.

- All departments must go through the purchasing process for items \$500+. Has been at this level for a long time and may need to be higher.
- Commissioner Kost said that nonprofits should not be cut. Ms. Paschal noted that they do provide services that we would have to do and can sometimes do it cheaper/better.
- Ms. Paschal asked about any increase for nonprofits as they are now held at no increase. Commissioner Kost suggested that we give them the half-cent but make this an effective half-cent. Chairman Lucier said maybe not give them all of that...could be 10% increase.
- The Board of Commissioners had a discussion about having some discretionary amount to be a bit flexible with nonprofit funding. Or do they stick with a set allocation?
- Get input from nonprofits on how to help promote them to the public for contributions.
- Action for Budget: Set allocation based on growth in property tax base. This amount should include \$10,000 for Board of Commissioners to allocate.
- Commissioner Kost recommended that we make this nonprofit process part of our budget policies.

Commissioner Kost moved, seconded by Commissioner Vanderbeck, to incorporate the non-profit funding policy into the overall County budgeting policy. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

- For coming budget, Chairman Lucier suggested continuing the use of ad hoc approach when reviewing each department.
- Commissioner Kost asked if we should proceed with asking the departments to identify now what they would cut if they had to cut a specific percentage? The County Manager said that he already will be asking for contingency plans for further cuts if needed.

GOALS

Commissioner Kost led the group through this discussion and suggested several broad categories. She also reviewed the goals from the previous day.

Citizen Friendly Services & Commissioner Meetings:

- The sound system continues to be a problem. Commissioner Vanderbeck said that this has been focused on, but there are some problems. Some improvements have been made, but need more. Maybe look into a gooseneck holder that bends for the lectern mike. Look into using the court's sound system and what the barriers are.
- Look into dual projectors and screens. The screen is not large enough.
- District Courtroom...The Clerk to the Board is in the line of the laser pointer. Can we put the screen somewhere else?
- Background, explanations, and structure on agenda items - Would like more structure to the agenda. Commissioner Thompson would like a brief explanation of each item on the agenda, not just a title. Be clear if it is just discussion versus an action item.
- Provide a deadline to get in agenda items so that they come in before the agenda meeting. This would make it easier to get the agenda out before Friday afternoon.
- Chairman Lucier mentioned the need to reduce the length of minutes. The County Manager said that this was a good segue to talk about some software the County is considering.
- Ms. Henzey discussed the software and how it could help reduce the minutes and make an indexed audio record available to the public. The Board of Commissioners agreed that they want to move forward with this as soon as possible. Ms. Henzey said it would likely be May or June due to workload.

By consensus, the Board agreed to proceed with the new software which has already been budgeted in the expansion budget. Ms. Henzey is to move forward with the contract. Commissioner Thompson stated that he felt the new software would make the minutes and the Board deliberations more accessible to the public. The Board agreed. Commissioner Kost stated that she was worried about getting the new system implemented as quickly as possible, as she felt that the work load was not going to let up and it took days to prepare the minutes in their current form.

- We need to update the database of advisory board members. Hard to keep it updated. The hope is that the new Deputy Clerk can come up with a better system for doing this and take the lead role in instigating it.
- Some of the minutes are missing for advisory boards, especially the critical boards that make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. Accuracy is also important. The Board asked staff to look at possible solutions.
- Look into citizen advisory commissions/committees and get a report from staff on this. Asked staff for a report next year on what this would involve in terms of staffing, etc. Holding board meetings around the county is a good first step.
- Look into election format of the Board of Commissioners after the new Census figures. Commissioner Vanderbeck would rather this come up from the citizens. The Board of Commissioners will have to be ready after the Census to move in some direction. Get

feedback on this through citizen's meetings. Maybe look into a committee or task force to focus on this. Get the process in place. Ask staff to look at various options to consider. Fully explain the process.

Land Use Planning:

- Staff was asked to identify things that need to be done to refine ordinances.
- Planning Department should look into Conditional Zoning.
- Commissioner Thompson asked if there was some model for working with municipalities more effectively. Are there any rural examples of this? Managers in Wake County meet monthly. Wake County also has a quarterly networking luncheon of elected officials. Use Managers' Listserve to find out which counties do this well and how they do it.

Fiscal Management:

- Do we need to study when the Impact Fee is paid (at what point in the process)? Staff should look at this.

Conservation:

- Chairman Lucier noted that we need to keep the pressure on the regional transportation groups to give a priority to non-vehicular traffic (bikes, walking) and also public transit.
- Goal: Make sure the public transit route with Chapel Hill is viable financially and not a drain.
- Make sure we get a staff person who understands the importance of telecommuting and public transit.
- The County Manager raised the point that Pittsboro and Siler City will need to be more receptive to density development to make these things viable. Will require some changes in town policies.
- Still trying to find a date that works to meet with towns on water and sewer and could add this issue as well.
- Chatham Transportation Partnership is trying to put together a County plan and will come to the County. Not sure of the timetable.
- Send a letter to legislators on the enactment of Jordan Lake Nutrient Rules. Commissioner Vanderbeck noted that NCACC legislative goal is that they support the rules but don't want counties to pay the costs.

Public Safety:

- Concerns that we don't have the roads to evacuate for Harris plant. Does our current emergency crisis plan cover all types of disasters? The County Manager said that the plan covers all types of disasters/emergencies. He noted that the required biennial drill for Harris plant is a very good exercise for all of us to practice procedures involved.
- Chairman Lucier asked for an update on how each of these would be coordinated. Agreed that we need to have a work session on this issue at the EOC. Do some education of the public on these issues. What is the role of the Board of Commissioners during these events?
- EMS—are we doing this the best way we can? Is response time good enough? Sometimes they have difficulty finding locations in the County. Get a report back on this as soon as possible.
- Need to look at rates and budgets for fire districts. Volunteer fire departments are having trouble getting volunteers. Do we need to look into how to address this? Maybe Triangle J has some guidance on this. The County Manager said that some discussions on this are underway.

Personnel/Hiring/Staffing:

- **County Staff Attorney**...can we look at a way to combine DSS attorney with this position? Need to talk to the County Attorney, Jep Rose, about us hiring a general junior attorney. Begin to explore this option. Chairman Lucier clarified how this might work with the County Attorney mentoring that person. The paralegal is working on affordable housing issues.

LUNCH

The Chairman called for a short lunch with the summit to resume at 12:45 PM.

SOUTHEAST WATER DISTRICT

Commissioner Vanderbeck moved, seconded by Commissioner Thompson to recess as the Chatham County Board of Commissioners and convene as the Southeast Water District Board. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

RECONVENE

Commissioner Vanderbeck moved, seconded by Commissioner Kost, to reconvene as the Chatham County Board of Commissioners. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0).

TAX RATE/BUDGET DIRECTION

- Commissioners directed County Manager to prepare a budget based on a revenue neutral tax rate.
- Look at revenue neutral budget. Some things will be left out. Will still not impact every homeowner the same way. Some will still pay more and some will pay less, depending on whether or not your property's value went up or down.
- Ms. Paschal asked if she could share the draft goals of the Board of Commissioners with the departments during budget training.

By consensus, it was decided to hold the public hearing on the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) in the Superior Courtroom. They also confirmed that the Briar Chapel Middle School and the Northwood renovations are "done deals"; that Pittsboro and Siler City Central Carolina Community College buildings, the sustainable building, and the library are packaged together with plans to move forward; that the judicial building has been postponed for one year to be bid in December 2010 or January 2111; and that the new high school is to be bid in 2012.

The Chatham County Board of Commissioners FY 2009-2010 Goals are as follows:

Chatham County Board of Commissioners FY 2009-2010 Goals

Open Government

Background: The current Chatham County Board of Commissioners ran on platform of making county government more transparent and accessible to the residents of the county. Many efforts, such as a new county website and other improved communications with county residents, have been completed. Additional improvements, such as making commissioner board meetings more citizen friendly, improving communications with and between advisory boards, and additional citizen outreach efforts, are needed to accomplish this goal fully.

Overall goal: Increase constructive citizen engagement and promote greater citizen understanding of county government's decision-making and operations.

Strategies:

1. Make our commissioner meetings more citizen friendly.
2. Improve linkages and communications between advisory boards and committees and commissioners, including providing staff support.
3. Strengthen the budget document as a more effective tool for decision makers and citizens alike.
4. Study the feasibility of forming Citizen Advisory Committees on specific county issues.
5. Look at conducting reformatted Commissioner meetings to be held in different parts of the County on a quarterly basis.
6. Direct the manager to develop a comprehensive legislative goals process that engages departments early on to provide feedback by midsummer to Commissioners on potential issues.
7. Look for ways to reward innovation, update processes, and provide more efficient and citizen-friendly service.

8. Consider a citizen engagement task force to study how to make county government more citizen friendly and increase citizen understanding of county government decision making.

Land Use Planning

Background: The Land Conservation and Development Plan provides guidance for public and private land use decisions that affect the County's physical development and the stewardship of the County's natural, economic and cultural resources. The plan states that growth in the county will be balanced so that the benefits and burdens of growth are shared and that growth consists of a mix of different types of development, and is guided to suitable locations. Further, Chatham's approach to land development and conservation is to be open, pro-active and cooperative. This means that citizens are aware of land use changes; that the County prepares ahead for development issues; and that the County works closely with other jurisdictions. Much has been accomplished in the last two years in revising various ordinances which guide land use decisions: new subdivision regulations provide for conservation subdivisions and a change to our zoning ordinances allows for small neighborhood commercial centers.

Overall Goal: Land use decisions are to be made consistent with the Land Conservation and Development Plan including (1) Preserving both form and function of rural character; (2) Encouraging compact communities with a mix of activities; (3) Designating economic development centers to promote a diversified, sustainable business community; (4) Developing an integrated approach to protecting and promoting high-quality open space, recreation, historical and tourism locations; (5) Ensuring long-term quality and availability of groundwater and surface water resources; and (6) Providing infrastructure in ways that support the land use, economic development and environmental objectives regarding water supply, wastewater and transportation.

Strategies:

1. Hire Sustainable Communities Director and complete the reorganization of impacted departments—planning, permitting, environmental resources, and sedimentation and erosion control—and initiatives—transportation, affordable housing, and green building.
2. Begin process for updating our Land Development and Conservation Plan which includes integration of infrastructure – transportation/roads, schools, water lines, affordable housing.
3. Adopt Major Corridor Overlay/Ordinance.
4. Identify areas for refinement of various land use ordinances.
5. Study Conditional Zoning.
6. Hire Transportation Planner and establish Transportation Advisory Board.
7. Identify ways to better coordinate with municipalities on matters of mutual interest (for example, water, wastewater, planning, and recreation).
8. Receive recommendations from the Agricultural Advisory Board on zoning classification for farmland so that agriculture zoning is consistent with the Farmland Preservation Plan which should be completed in summer 2009.
9. Adopt joint Cary/Chatham Land Use Plan.
10. Apply the lighting ordinance countywide.
11. Promote public transportation.

Fiscal Management

Background: The County will maintain its fiscal strength through long-term financial planning, by being held accountable for its expenditures and by being careful stewards of the taxpayers' money. Approximately 70 percent of the County's budget is mandated by the federal or state government and the County will continue to meet its legal requirements. The County will continuously look for ways to be more efficient while maintaining services to its citizens. Services and activities will be periodically evaluated and the County's performance will be measured.

Overall Goals:

- ***Maintain bond rating by ensuring the County's credit-worthiness by managing the use of debt and using best practices to manage Chatham's operational resources.***
- ***Maintain an affordable and competitive tax rate.***
- ***Promote greater efficiencies through innovative solutions.***

Strategies:

1. Receive and act on Impact Fee Report (consider changing when impact fee is charged from when the building permit is issued to when certificate of occupancy is issued).
2. Present options for implementation of Pay Equity Study.
3. Implement revaluation and revisit the designation of five cents on the tax rate (post-revaluation) to the capital debt model.
4. Consolidate similar or duplicated services (revisit issue of school nurses and social workers in FY 2010 budget) and identify ways for departments to share resources, including personnel.
5. Implement program-based budgeting and a comprehensive review of all departments on a regular cycle (3 to 5 years).
6. Economic Development Corporation should explore outside funding and use surplus funds before requesting new resources from the County.
7. Funding for non-profit organizations will not be reduced; increase funding will be in proportion to the growth in the tax base. The current earmarking of one-half cent on the tax rate will be adjusted to reflect the impact of revaluation.

Conservation

Background: The Chatham County Board of Commissioners is committed to sustainable practices that reduce green house emissions, conserve energy, and protect the county's environment. Commissioners have implemented significant amendments to the watershed and sedimentation and erosion control ordinances and a new stormwater ordinance, the cumulative effect of which is to lessen the negative impact of development on the environment.

Overall Goal: Improve the quality of our water and our air by permitting and enforcing ordinances and regulations, which involves ongoing testing and monitoring of environmental conditions.

Strategies:

1. Identify ways to improve energy conservation and efficiency in county buildings and vehicles through strategies such as telecommuting, teleconferencing, and use of alternative fuels. Establish base line information; track and report savings.
2. Support public transit networks. Ensure the public transit route between Pittsboro and Chapel Hill is financially viable, effective, and efficient; explore options for other bus routes.
3. Encourage regional transportation groups to prioritize non-vehicular traffic and public transit.
4. Require developers to provide and/or fund trails and public parks to encourage walking, cycling, and other recreation.
5. Support enactment of Jordan Lake Rules.
6. Adopt/support a conservation plan (Chatham Conservation Partnership).
7. Consider all options for effective waste management.

Public Safety

Background: Ensuring public safety at a reasonable cost is a key role of county government. The ability to plan and respond during emergencies, a well-functioning court system, and a secure jail are all expectations the public has of our county. In addition, funding effective prevention programs for youth and intervention programs for those already involved in the court system help provide a safer community for all.

Overall Goals:

- ***Create a state of readiness to respond to community disasters/situations.***
- ***Provide efficient criminal justice system, supporting the court system.***
- ***Operate a secure jail.***

Strategies:

1. Dedicate a Commissioner work session to the issues of Emergency Preparedness and Fire Service to better educate the community and Board of Commissioners.
2. Ensure emergency evacuation route for Harris nuclear plant is adequate.
3. Ambulance Transport Service – evaluate effectiveness (response time and patient outcomes) and expense.
4. Review fire districts' budgets and tax rates.
5. Study options to volunteer organizational structure of fire districts.
6. Further develop gang prevention programs.

Personnel/Hiring/Staffing

Background: Chatham is a large rural county with 55% of its workforce commuting outside the county. We are surrounded literally on all sides by counties with large metropolitan areas, which offer higher salaries for professional positions that our county government employs. Our challenge is to provide the competitive wage structure with benefits in order to secure and retain highly competent employees in this stressed economic environment. Ranking 59th out of 100 counties in employees per capita, our county also has a relatively small workforce. Because the workforce is lean, considerable attention should be given to retaining and attracting high-quality employees.

Overall Goals:

- **Promote a high-quality, well-trained workforce that performs in a citizen-friendly environment.**
- **Promote respect and appreciation for cultural and ethnic diversity.**
- **Provide market-driven competitive pay.**
- **Ensure diversity within county employment.**
- **Ensure adequate staff development and training.**

Strategies:

1. Manager should develop options for implementing the pay study, which will be difficult in this fiscal environment.
2. Provide incentives to employees, who participate in staff development training beyond a certain number of specified hours.
3. Establish criteria by which the level of staff development training hours is considered when pay raises or promotions are considered.
4. Promote a mentoring and/or shadowing program when implementation is practical.
5. Require public relations/customer service training for all employees who deal with the public on a consistent basis.
6. Utilizing the Human Relations Department, require cultural sensitivity training for all new and existing employees.
7. Initiate a cultural competency survey to determine the level of ethnic diversity within county departments.
8. Continually review the structure of county government to ensure the most effective organization for efficiency and service delivery.

Economic Development

Background: Chatham County's growth is out of balance. Our residential growth has been rapid, yet our economic and job growth has been weak. Almost 60% of Chatham residents who hold jobs work outside the county. Moreover, the jobs outside the county are higher paying than those inside the county. In the last year, we have restructured the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and completed a strategic plan for economic development. Now is the time for the Board of Commissioners and EDC to implement that plan. We need to recognize where we have competitive advantages; identify clustering opportunities; work with Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) to provide relevant job training; work with all parts of the county in a way that recognizes economic development needs are different in different parts of the county; and work with the municipal governments and improve our infrastructure resources, such as water, sewer and broadband. We also need to recognize that quality of life issues are critical for attracting, retaining and growing businesses and that our economic growth and stability will depend on small businesses. Specific goals are as follows:

Strategies:

1. Work with the EDC to implement the strategic plan for economic development.
2. Support the EDC's efforts to broaden citizen and business participation in economic development.
3. Focus on areas in which we are competitive, such as agribusiness, organic farming, ecotourism, arts, green building and energy conservation.
4. Work with the CCCC to develop innovative and relevant job training programs to enhance our efforts in retention and recruitment of businesses as well as entrepreneurship.
5. Complete business rezoning along our major corridors to ensure that we have locations for heavy and light industry as well as other business designations.
6. Work with EDC to take advantage of our proximity to Research Triangle Park and Fort Bragg, which will benefit from Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) efforts.
7. Establish a small business incubator.
8. Work with state and federal governments, as well as providers, to help bring high-speed internet access to all parts of Chatham County.
9. Consistent with the County's Land Use Plan and subsequent ordinances, attempt to increase retail and commercial establishments in Chatham County to increase our sales tax revenues and property tax base.
10. Work closely with municipalities to help resolve common problems, such as water and sewer infrastructure necessary for economic development.
11. Continue to develop a regional water intake/treatment system.

Schools

Background: The Commissioners are committed to working with the Board of Education (BOE) and school administration to improve public education in Chatham County. Our children are our future and that future will be a lot brighter with a strong school system. Moreover, economic development benefits greatly when local governments have a high-quality school system. We are fortunate in Chatham County to have a Board of Education, county school system, and Board of Commissioners who work well together with common purpose. We are all committed to developing a forward-looking school construction program, renovating and maintaining our current schools, providing a safe environment for our students, and recruiting and retaining good teachers. We also recognize the importance of the community college system in providing educational opportunities for our citizens and we will support it. Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) will be covered in both economic development and schools.

Strategies:

1. Maintain and foster a strong working relationship with the BOE and school administration.
2. Provide the necessary resources to ensure that the new Briar Chapel Middle School opens on schedule.
3. Lay the groundwork for construction of the new high school so that construction can begin when funds are available.
4. Continue to supply capital outlay funds necessary to renovate and maintain our existing schools and to provide a safe learning environment.
5. Work with the school system to ensure that our existing schools and new schools meet high standards of energy conservation.
6. Work with the Board of Education to study a teacher pay supplement that better rewards experience and effectiveness.
7. Continue our active land banking efforts to provide sites for future schools and other county needs.
8. Plan for an economic upturn, which might cause a rapid increase in the student population. (More than 12,000 houses have been approved, but not yet built. As many as 4,000 to 5,000 new students may enter the system when these houses are occupied.)
9. Support the efforts of the BOE and school system to reduce the dropout rate.
10. Begin construction of the Pittsboro CCCC building, Siler City CCCC campus, and the Chatham Community Library (a joint facility with CCCC) this summer.
11. Encourage joint programs between CCCC and the public school system in the areas of job training and dropout prevention

Other Goals/Issues

1. Coordinate efforts focused on obesity, linking Health Department, Cooperative Extension, Recreation, Schools, and others concerned about this issue.
2. Coordinate promotions to buy locally produced agriculture products.
3. Increase public access to computer/internet, especially for job hunting (libraries, CCCC, and schools should work together on this issue).
4. Work closely with municipalities to help resolve common problems and attain greater efficiencies

Tax Rate/Budget Direction

Prepare a revenue-neutral budget with additional items “packaged” in terms of their effect on the tax rate.

BREAK

The Chairman called for a short break.

STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

- Slated for March 16th at the evening meeting in Superior Courtroom. Summary of Planning efforts, land use, lean government, budget challenges, ways we are reducing spending but doing better than most, cuts will be targeted based on needs, sustainable development...reorganization and efficiency, key survey results, major CIP highlights, future challenges in economic times (sheriff, DSS, etc.), farmland preservation, EDC and jobs, Uniboard, agricultural opportunities in Chatham County, summary of environmental accomplishment, schools-containing operating costs with energy savings, energy savings figures and all County buildings
- Start with economy and lean/mean. Taking leadership in tough times. Positioning ourselves to be ready for this. The County Manager suggested beginning with recognizing the state of the economy, being in chartered territory, and recognizing why we are lean and mean.
- Ms. Henzey should send the school system the same questions that were sent to the key departments.

Status of Already Approved Development:

- Subject to somewhat explosive growth mostly in northeast; substantial need for schools; importance in preparing for economic upturns as well as economic downturns; and water and wastewater issues; and Belmeade had been discontinued as a subdivision.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Kost moved, seconded by Commissioner Vanderbeck, to adjourn the Summit Session. The motion carried five (5) to zero (0), and the meeting adjourned at 3:12 PM.

George Lucier, Chairman

ATTEST:

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