

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
MARCH 2, 1999**

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a workshop session meeting on Tuesday, March 2, 1999, at 5:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Agriculture Building, County Office Park, Greenville, North Carolina with the following commissioners present:

Eugene James, Chairman
Jeffrey E. Savage, Vice Chairman
Glenn Bowen, Commissioner
David Hammond, Commissioner
Thomas H. Johnson, Commissioner
Mark W. Owens, Jr., Commissioner
M. Theresa Shank, Commissioner
Beth B. Ward, Commissioner

Absent:

Charles P. Gaskins, Commissioner

Also present were:

Thomas B. Robinson, County Manager
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney
Susan J. Banks, Clerk to the Board
Arlen Holt, PIO and Cable Coordinator
John K. Bulow, Assistant Manager
Melonie Bryan, Director of Financial Services
Mike Taylor, MIS Director
Florida Hardy, Human Resources Director
Loretta Lewellyn, Budget Administrator

Call to Order and welcome by Chairman James.

Prayer by Commissioner Savage.

Pledge by Commissioner Ward.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

UPON MOTION by Commissioner Hammond, seconded by Commissioner Shank, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

Mr. Robinson introduced Kurt Jenne and Fleming Bell with the Institute of Government, University of Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He stated that they were there to assist the Board with review of their draft rules of procedures for Board meetings and expectations of each other, the chairman, manager, attorney and clerk. He stated that they understood that some of the commissioners have scheduling conflicts and may need to discuss items in a different order from that shown on the agenda.

Chairman James asked to be excused for 30 minutes around 6:45 p.m. Commissioner Hammond also asked to be excused around 7:15 p.m.

Mr. Robinson asked for introduction of others present which were: Phil Dickerson, John Bulow, Loretta Lewellyn, Melonie Bryan, Mike Taylor, Florida Hardy, Judy Royal and Nancy Colville.

Mr. Jenne reviewed the six ground rules for this meeting. He suggested that the commissioners hold questions for a good opening, eliminate cheap shots and have respect for others opinions. They discussed whether they could make decisions in this retreat forum. It was determined that it would be acceptable to make decisions but the consensus was that any items for decision would be brought up for approval at a regular meeting.

Mr. Fleming Bell made some suggestions for the board members to keep in mind in view of the meetings being televised in the future as follows:

- more formality than normal
- speak clearly to camera
- don't turn into campaign ad, speak to issue at hand
- pay attention to camera and microphones, make it look professional, have zoom in on cameras, suggested taping meetings prior to going on television
- suggested watching legislative review on television for practice
- discouraged speaking to each other while the meeting is going on (when it is not part of the general group discussion)

Mr. Holt stated there would be practice meetings offered the week of the budget sessions.

Mr. Bell said that our Board is considered a small board.

Commissioners Owens and James left at 6:50 p.m.

Mr. Bell reviewed the rules about having a quorum present and what happens when people leave the meeting unexcused. He said that currently their vote goes with the affirmative. A Commissioner must be physically present to vote. If they are present at the start of the meeting, they may be excused by vote of the board and then their vote does not count.

Mr. Bell reviewed the possibility of having pre-agenda meetings and stated that in the counties where they work the best, all of the commissioners attend the meetings.

Mr. Robinson said that the Board had looked at pre-agenda meetings and he is now questioning whether its a good idea to even have those meetings. He stated that some of the Board members have indicated that they could not attend and it would not be beneficial if everyone was not present. Mr. Bell stated that you have to adopt your own rules for pre-agenda meetings and that they are really only useful if everyone is present. Pre-agenda meetings are open public meetings.

Mr. Bell stated that the Board members need to make clear motions by restating their motion if necessary. He reviewed procedures for debate and was asked about charging for agendas. Mr. Bell said you can charge but only cost for duplicating \$.05 to \$.10 a page.

Mr. Bell was asked about the motion to Call for the question. He stated that the "call for the question" is a motion in itself and needs a second to be voted on because this is a motion to end debate. He stated that the Chairman should ask if the Board is ready to end debate, get a second to the motion and vote on the "call for the question" motion.

Mr. Bell reviewed the three kinds of motions': main, subsidiary and procedural motions. He stated that it sounded like this Board works best with substitute motions and that may be the procedure they wish to adopt.

At 7:30 p.m. Chairman James returned.

Mr. Bell said everyone needs a copy of Roberts Rules of Order if this Board is going to follow them. Everyone must know them to follow them or it is not appropriate to say that the Board follows Roberts Rules of Order.

Commissioner Hammond left at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Bell stated that the rules are written assuming that the chairman has the power to rule motions in or out of order and to determine reasonable standards of courtesy, and to determine that the rules of procedure are being followed. There is no ability to appeal the rule of the chairman in these proposed rules of procedure. If this board wants it then they need to put the appeal procedure in. He emphasized that the Board members need to follow their rules consistently. There was much discussion on the rules for calling the question by the members of this Board.

Mr. Robinson mentioned that unwritten procedure for how the Chairman position is now rotated on an annual basis. Mr. Bell suggested that this would not be appropriate to put in the rules of procedure. Commissioner Savage suggested that a two-thirds vote should be added to the rules. Commissioner Shank said the Manager puts the agenda together with input from the Chairman and that is the way it should remain. She stated that she did not support items being added to the agenda at the last minute and would support a rule not allowing it or items from the floor being added.

This meeting was recessed at 8:30 p.m. and was scheduled to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday morning.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Banks, CMC
Clerk to the Board

