

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
MARCH 15, 1999**

5:30 P.M.

Joint meeting with Greenville City Council

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a recessed session with the Greenville City Council on Monday, March 15, 1999, at 5:30 p.m. in the Greenville City Council Chambers, 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

Commissioner Absent:

Charles P. Gaskins, Commissioner

City Council members present:

Nancy Jenkins, Mayor
Inez Fridley, Mayor Pro-Tem
Mary Alsentzer, Council member
Chuck Autry, Council member
Mildred Council, Council member
Rufus Huggins, Council member
Blanche Forbes, Council member

Staff present:

Thomas B. Robinson, County Manager
Ron Kimble, City Manager
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney
Dave Holec, City Attorney
Susan J. Banks, Clerk to the Board
Wanda Elks, City Clerk
John K. Bulow, Assistant Manager
Marvin Davis, Assistant City Manager
Melonie Bryan, Director of Financial Services

Mayor Nancy Jenkins called the City Council meeting to order.
Chairman Eugene James called the Board of Commissioners meeting to order.

Council member Chuck Autry motioned, seconded by Council member Blanche Forbes, the City Council unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

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

Consideration of Companion Resolutions Supporting an Additional One Percent Local Option Sales Tax - JoAnne Burgdorff and Dave Holec

Mrs. JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney, presented the County Commissioners with two resolutions; Resolution requesting an additional one percent local option sales tax for all counties and Resolution requesting an additional one percent local option sales tax for Pitt County. Mrs. Burgdorff pointed out that the each of the resolutions include that the sales tax would be distributed by point-of-origin and would be shared by the County and Municipalities as they are currently.

Vice Chairman Savage motioned, seconded by Commissioner Shank, to approve the two resolutions supporting an additional one percent local option sales tax for Pitt County and all counties. Commissioner Bowen offered a substitute motion that the Pitt County one percent local option sales tax be determined by a referendum of the people. The substitute motion died due to lack of a second to the motion. Vice Chairman Savage noted that at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Legislative Goals Conference the County Commissioner Association reported that this one percent local option sales tax would be better perceived by the legislators if the municipalities also joined in support of the request. Chairman James called for a vote on the motion to approve the two requests for local option sales tax resolutions. The vote was seven to one with Commissioner Bowen voting in opposition.

**RESOLUTION
REQUESTING AN ADDITIONAL ONE PERCENT
LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX FOR PITT COUNTY**

THAT WHEREAS, the Pitt County Board of County Commissioners is charged with the responsibility of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Pitt County, as well as those who work within or visit the County; and

WHEREAS, this Board of County Commissioners has determined that there exists a great need for capital outlay, and that counties and the Municipalities located therein have many needed capital outlays; and

WHEREAS, this Board is seeking alternatives to continued reliance on ad valorem property tax as property tax payers are carrying a disproportionate share of the tax burden for providing the funding for necessary services and facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners believe that having the ability to assess a one percent local sales tax returned to its point-of-origin is the best alternative to raise revenue for needed capital outlay;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pitt County Board of Commissioners hereby requests that all members of the Pitt County Legislative Delegation introduce and see enacted into law a one percent point-of-origin option sales tax for Pitt County with the proceeds of such a tax to be distributed to the County and the municipalities within the County in the same manner as other sales tax proceeds are distributed.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chairman of the Pitt County Board of Commissioners and the Clerk to the Board shall execute this Resolution confirming this grant of approval;

Duly adopted this the 15th day of March, 1999.

Eugene James, Chairman

Attest:

Susan J. Banks, Clerk

**RESOLUTION
REQUESTING AN ADDITIONAL ONE PERCENT
LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX FOR ALL COUNTIES**

THAT WHEREAS, the Pitt County Board of County Commissioners is charged with the responsibility of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Pitt County, as well as those who work within or visit the County; and

WHEREAS, this Board of County Commissioners has determined that there exists a great need for capital outlay, and that counties and the Municipalities located therein have many needed capital outlays; and

WHEREAS, this Board is seeking alternatives to continued reliance on ad valorem property tax as property tax payers are carrying a disproportionate share of the tax burden for providing the funding for necessary services and facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners believe that having the ability to assess a one percent local sales tax returned to its point-of-origin is the best alternative to raise revenue for needed capital outlay;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pitt County Board of Commissioners hereby requests that all members of the Pitt County Legislative Delegation introduce and see enacted into law a one percent point-of-origin option

sales tax for all North Carolina counties with the proceeds of such a tax to be distributed to the County and the municipalities within the County in the same manner as other sales tax proceeds are distributed.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chairman of the Pitt County Board of Commissioners and the Clerk to the Board shall execute this Resolution confirming this grant of approval;

Duly adopted this the 15th day of March, 1999.

Eugene James, Chairman

Attest:

Susan J. Banks, Clerk

Mr. Dave Holec, City Attorney, presented the City Council with a companion resolution for adoption as follows:

RESOLUTION NO.
RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF THE REQUEST OF THE PITT
COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR A SALES TAX MEASURE
WHICH PROVIDES THAT MUNICIPALITIES LOCATED WITHIN PITT COUNTY
RECEIVE THEIR SHARE OF THE PROCEEDS OF SUCH A TAX

WHEREAS, the Pitt County Board of Commissioners has approved two separate resolutions requesting legislation which will provide for a sales tax measure either in the form of a local bill involving the authority to levy a one percent sales tax or in the form of a statewide local option sales tax in the amount of one percent with the distribution of the proceeds to the county and the municipalities located within the county to occur in the same manner as are other sales tax proceeds;

WHEREAS, the proceeds of sales taxes are an important revenue source for the City of Greenville and any additional sales tax measure should provide for a distribution to the county and the municipalities located within the county in the same manner which other sales tax proceeds are distributed;

WHEREAS, there is a critical need for additional revenue sources for the City of Greenville to meet the infrastructure and service demands of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, it would be appropriate for the North Carolina General Assembly to enact legislation which would provide this additional revenue source;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Greenville that it does hereby express its support of the request of the Pitt

County Board of Commissioners for an additional local option sales tax as either a local bill or a statewide measure in the amount of one percent with the proceeds of such a tax to be distributed to the county and the municipalities within the county in the same manner as other sales tax proceeds are distributed;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Greenville that a copy of this resolution shall be distributed to the delegation to the North Carolina General Assembly which represents the House Senate district of which Greenville is a part.

ADOPTED this the 15th day of March, 1999.

Nancy M. Jenkins, Mayor

ATTEST:

Wanda T. Elks, City Clerk

Council member Mary Alsentzer motioned, seconded by Council member Blanche Forbes, to adopt the RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF THE REQUEST OF THE PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR A SALES TAX MEASURE WHICH PROVIDES THAT MUNICIPALITIES LOCATED WITHIN PITT COUNTY RECEIVE THEIR SHARE OF THE PROCEEDS OF SUCH A TAX. The City Council unanimously approved the resolution.

Mr. Robinson stated that it was the intention of the County to request that the other municipalities also pass a similar resolution to be sent to the Pitt County delegation. Mayor Jenkins suggested that this could be brought up at the upcoming Mayor's Breakfast. Chairman James asked that it be placed in the form of a motion for the other municipalities to consider passing a resolution endorsing the request for a one percent local option sales tax.

UPON MOTION by Vice Chairman Savage, seconded by Commissioner Hammond, the Board voted unanimously to request that the other local municipalities pass similar resolutions requesting a one percent local option sales tax for Pitt County.

Mayor Jenkins asked for a similar motion from the City Council.

Council member Huggins motioned, seconded by Council member Mildred Council, to encourage the other municipalities in Pitt County to support the resolutions being sent to the legislators for a one percent local option sales tax. The motion passed unanimously.

Transportation Update

Mr. Tom Tysinger, Director of Public Works, provided an update on Transportation issues and concerns. Mr. Tysinger educated both Boards on the new two year cycle and process which the North Carolina Department of Transportation uses for request for road improvements. He stated that they are currently running two processes during the interim of changing processes. Status reports were given on the following roads by Mr. Tysinger and James Rhodes, Pitt County Planning Director:

- a. Southwest Bypass Loop
- b. Fire Tower Road
- c. Thomas Langston Road
- d. Highway 11 North to Bethel
- e. Highway 17 at Pitt and Beaufort County line
- f. Pitt-Greene Street Bridge project

Mr. Rhodes informed the Boards that the North Carolina Department of Transportation is reconsidering the alternates for US Highway 17.

Mr. Tysinger reported that they are finalizing the Regional Transit Plans and are recommending that the cost be split among each entity involved. He stated that Pitt County Memorial Hospital would be reaching people that they could not previously access.

Council member Alsentzer informed the Boards of a breakfast meeting for elected officials.

Vice Chairman Savage asked if the City was considering replacement of railroad crossings. Mr. Tysinger stated that those are very high cost projects and that they had looked at them but they were not as high a priority as other projects.

Commissioner Hammond asked about the completion date for Hooker Road. Mr. Tysinger responded that December 1999 was the planned date for completion.

Water and Sewer Planning - Phil Dickerson, County Engineer

Mr. Dickerson reported the need for planning for water and sewer throughout the County because of the limits and capacity on the water supply. He also stated that there will probably not be any new sewage treatment plants permitted because a regulatory compliance with plant expansions becoming increasingly difficult and expensive.

Mr. Dickerson reported that three elements were to be considered in planning the future water supply and sewer capacity for the county:

1. Technical
2. Financial

3. Management

Mr. Dickerson stated that the technical planning will include where the services will be placed, how it will take place and what resources should be used to achieve the proposed services. Mr. Dickerson stated that the finances would include the County making periodic investments and the management planning involves determining how to serve the whole County without regard to service area boundaries. He explained how the rural water corporations and the municipalities have existing lines and they do not wish to relinquish control. However, he said that it is what makes it essential for the County to provide the necessary leadership to facilitate an agreement under which duplication of services and other conflicts can be kept to a minimum.

Mr. Dickerson reported that a large Water and Sewer Planning Committee has been working to develop an understanding between the entities with all the issues involved. A subcommittee is developing an agreement which will address the issues involved and help to develop water supply and sewage disposal in an environmentally sound, cost effective manner. Mr. Dickerson reviewed the following water and sewer projects in which the County is already a participant:

1. Southwest area outfall sewers in the vicinity of Woodridge Subdivision. The County will split the revenue bond payments with Greenville Utilities as well as the revenues from outfall acreage fees.
2. Bethel Sewer - The County will help finance the excess capacity in a force main from Bethel to Greenville and a pump station to provide for growth in the Industrial Park. Low interest rate loans to Bethel will finance the County's part of the cost.
3. Barrett Road Waterline near Fountain - The County has obligated funds to pay the portion of the cost of this waterline above Farmville's normal cost per customer. The funds will be repaid through a surcharge on the normal water rate. Upon receipt of bids, it became apparent that the County's participation will be very small.
4. King's Crossroads Waterline - Participated in discussions between the Town of Farmville and Bell Arthur Water Corporation resulting in Bell Arthur plans to serve the area, by allowing for a Farmville well in the area.

Mr. Dickerson added that even though progress was being made, it has reinforced the need for County wide planning.

Presentation on Tobacco Settlement Issues - Mitch Smith, Cooperative Extension Director

Mr. Smith gave a detailed report on tobacco in Pitt County and the possible effects of the tobacco settlement on Pitt County. Agriculture employs 1,275 people in Pitt County and brings in close to \$100 million annually. Crops include tobacco which brings in approximately \$65 million, cotton, soybeans, corn, wheat peanuts and cottonseed. He reviewed the economic contributions for the State from tobacco. Mr. Smith reported that Pitt County is the largest

tobacco producer in the United States with 230 active producers. There were 12,163 acres of tobacco being farmed in 1998 which was 34.6% less than 1997. The value estimated for 1999 is \$45,214,199 with a value of \$92,688,943 to the local economy. Mr. Smith also reviewed exports and domestic markets. He stated that the U.S. Tobacco Program is at risk of being eliminated. He stated there was a decline of 17.5% on the quota for 1999.

Mr. Smith stated that the implications for Pitt County from the reductions in tobacco income will show a further reduction in quota of 10-25%, loss of farm income of \$4.5 to \$11.3 million, and loss of local income of \$9.2 to \$23.2 million. He stated that the County needs to prepare for the economic development, infrastructure impacts and education. Mr. Smith reviewed the Phase I and Phase II grants. Phase I will be a settlement between states and manufacturers with funds equally split between the foundation for North Carolina's future and funds to be determined by the General Assembly. Phase II grant will be used for a settlement between manufacturers and growers/quota holders.

Animal Control - John Bulow, Assistant Manager

Mr. Bulow reported that he had been instructed by the County Manager to form a committee with appropriate representation to address animal control issues in the County. The committee is comprised of Paul Andrews, Environmental Health Supervisor, Charles Lehman, Supervisor of Animal Control, Dr. John Morrow, Health Director, Blair Carr, Police Attorney for the City of Greenville, and Sgt. Sherwood Sawyer, Police Department and Animal Control Supervisor for the City of Greenville. He gave a brief description of the Pitt County Animal Shelter and explained the working arrangement which the County and City have for operation of the shelter. The County built the shelter and the City operates the shelter, as well as does all the euthanasia. Mr. Bulow stated that the shelter is outdated, does not have proper ventilation and there is no room for expansion to accommodate the growth in the animal population because it backs up to a subdivision. He stated that the staff morale is low because of the working environment and the overload of euthanization that must occur due to lack of room.

Mr. Bulow stated that the committee visited animal shelters in New Hanover, Onslow and Craven counties. In two of these counties, they have constructed new animal control shelters with expense ranging from \$600,000 to \$1,000,000. He stated that many innovative design features and practices have been incorporated into these projects to make the work less labor intensive, efficient and more adoption friendly.

The committee feels that Pitt County should begin a project to design and build a modern shelter in a new and less obtrusive location that would also be accessible. The existing location is in proximity to a large subdivision and to expand the facility at the current site would not be advocated by staff. While it is difficult to recommend that the County spend the large amount of money necessary to build a new facility, it is only realistic to state that the current facility is becoming obsolete quickly. One method in which the project may be funded

is that the County begin a two to three year project and fund several hundred thousand dollars each year in a reserve account to build a new shelter on property at the old Pitt County Landfill site off Stantonsburg Road. By reserving the money and continuing to develop the project in a systematic manner, by the time the money is in place, a design that suits the County's present and future needs may be developed. Another option is for the Board of Commissioners to place this project on one of the proposed certificates of participation issues that are being considered by the County. Staff feels that we are coming to the Boards in the eleventh hour and that the current facility is already obsolete and fast becoming unmanageable. By increasing adoption with some potential help from either the S.P.C.A. or the Humane Society, the County may buy some time to implement the proposed recommendations.

Mr. Bulow suggested that the County has some land at the Pitt County landfill which may be available to locate the animal shelter. He said that the project needs to be moved forward within the next two to three years.

Intervention of Youth - Ron Kimble and Tom Robinson

Mr. Kimble stated that he had provided some statistics on youth programs for the City Council previously as a response to two Council members speaking about their experiences at the National League of Cities meeting in December 1998. He also provided a list and description of a few of the activities which are being coordinated by the City or County for youth as follows:

1. Smart Start Initiative
2. Child Support Enforcement
3. Child Care (Day Care for Children)
4. Weed and Seed Initiative
5. Boys and Girls Club
6. Recreation and Parks Program Offerings
7. Community Schools and Recreation Program Offerings
8. Family Services Support

Council member Huggins said there was a strong concern that the Smart Start funds were not being used properly. Council member Council said that as a parent she was concerned with the numerous out of school suspensions that are being placed on the children. She stated that the Pitt County Schools should look into providing a more productive way for the students to use their time. She noted that the students end up in jail and this issue needs to be revisited.

Vice Chairman Savage stated that he had hoped this meeting would be more decision directed.

Mayor Jenkins asked for a motion to adjourn stating that the purpose for the meeting had been completed which was to provide information on these topics to both Boards simultaneously.

Council member Huggins motioned, seconded by Council member Autry, and the City Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

UPON MOTION by Commissioner Hammond, seconded by Vice Chairman Savage, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Banks, CMC
Clerk to the Board