

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES FOR MAY 17, 2000**

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Wednesday, May 17, 2000, at 1:30 p.m. in the Commissioners' Auditorium, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Greenville, North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting is to consider public business as indicated on the following agenda.

Commissioners present:

Charles P. Gaskins, Chairman  
David Hammond, Vice Chairman  
Glenn Bowen, Commissioner  
Ann Huggins, Commissioner  
Eugene James, Commissioner  
Thomas H. Johnson, Commissioner  
Mark W. Owens, Jr., Commissioner  
M. Theresa Shank, Commissioner  
Beth B. Ward, Commissioner

Others present were:

Thomas B. Robinson, County Manager  
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney  
Susan J. Banks, Clerk to the Board  
Melonie Bryan, Director of Financial Services  
Arlen Holt, Public Information Officer

**CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Gaskins

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

The Invocation was provided by Vice Chairman Hammond.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner James.

Chairman welcomed everyone in attendance.

**UPON MOTION** by Commissioner Bowen, seconded by Commissioner James, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as provided.

Mr. Robinson informed the Board of the process that would be followed on the budget workshops. Vice Chairman Hammond asked if the Fountain Wellness Center had requested to appear before the Board.

Mr. Robinson stated that in the notebooks provided to the Board, they would find the Budget Calendar, Financial Planning Forecast, and Debt Service Summary and some additional background information. He said the purpose of this meeting was to provide the Board with an overview of the budget and was mainly an informational meeting. He said they have projected no increase in property tax revenues for the next fiscal year due to Hurricane Floyd.

Ms. Bryan stated that the State has paid for a revenue loss this year. Some contract negotiations with the Board of Education have been worked out and the County is finally getting reimbursed. Ms. Bryan stated there are five FEMA projects that are being closed out and will be paid soon. She said she hoped to be able to report on FEMA overtime by the next regular

meeting of the Board. She stated that even though this has been a bad year, it does not appear that fund balance will need to be used.

Mr. Robinson presented 2000-2001 priorities. He reviewed major objectives, major changes in revenues, and impacts on ad valorem revenues. He stated that Pitt Community College may be in line for an appropriation of up to \$18 million for construction from the State. The County is doing a better job of collecting taxes so collections are up about \$200,000. There are higher fees coming in from legal services being provided for Social Services. He stated that the US Marshal Service agreement was to supply ninety inmates for housing at Detention Center but the numbers are down so the budget has been changed to reflect the decrease in revenue.

Mr. Robinson stated that there will be a \$957,000 loss in revenue this upcoming year from Hurricane Floyd.. There was a \$145 million loss in revenue this year but \$60 million was from the loss of the Procter & Gamble industry move. He noted there has been a change in the listing of vehicles and it costs Pitt County a loss of \$20 million. Mr. Robinson provided comparisons with State averages.

**FY 2000-2001 Priorities were:**

- Flood Recovery
- Improve Education
- Improve Growth Management
- Complete Current Projects
- Maintain Present Tax Rate

**Major Objectives**

General Government –

- Design, Bid & Award Contracts for:
- Administration Building
- Phase II Courthouse Improvements
- Storage Building
- Pay, Classification, Personnel System Improvements
- Monitoring State 7 Federal Flood Recovery Developments
- Assisting Public with Flood Recovery Activities

Culture & Recreation

- Secure Land: Design, Bid & Award Contract for Intergenerational Recreation Center
- Fund Furnishings for Sheppard Library Improvements

Public Safety

- Design, Bid & Award Contract for Animal Shelter
- Secure Land for Firing/Defensive Driving Range
- Study & Implement Communication System Improvements
- Study & Implement EMS System Enhancements
- Develop Enhanced Mosquito Control Program
- Strengthen Emergency Management Staff Capabilities

Economic & Physical Development

- Continue to Implement Hazard Mitigation Buyout Program
- Develop Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Complete Hwy 11 & Northwest Planning Area Land Use & Development Controls
- Update Comprehensive Development Plan
- Complete Water & Sewer master Plan
- Determine Site & Purchase/Option Land for Phase I Technology Park Development

Environmental

- Renew Waste Recycling Program
- Reduce Litter on Highways

Human Services

- Develop & Implement Mobile Dental Lab
- Form Task Force to Study & Develop Strategies to Reduce Poverty in County
- Monitor Direction of Mental Health Services within State
- Participate in Metropolitan Planning Area Study to Seek Possible Ways to Improve Rural Public Transportation

Education

- Design, Bid & Award Contract for New High School
- Implement Education Compact
- Plan for Pitt Community College Capital Needs
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Major Changes in expenditures and revenues were reviewed. The impact from Hurricane Floyd on Ad Valorem taxes was estimated at \$145 million. The total budget for all funds was provided. The changes in the pay plan study and new positions recommended were reviewed. Proposed fee increases were reviewed.

Revised Budget <u>FY 1999-2000</u> \$166,626,135	Proposed Budget <u>FY 2000-2001</u> \$180,453,529
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Mr. Robinson stated that \$2 million in fees can be used for the emergency 800 trunking system (radio communications system). He stated that this was a very lean year fiscally. The proposed budget is a balanced budget with no tax increase. Service levels have remained the same. Hurricane flooding will cause problems for years. Mr. Robinson noted that as the County moves forward in the next year or two, it will be hard to maintain the same tax rate.

New Positions recommended by the Manager:

Tax Appraiser  
Elections Geographer (.60 to 1.00 FTE)  
Planner I  
Planning Technician (Soil Erosion Grant)  
Office Assistant IV (Recovery Center)  
Detective (Crime Commissioner Grant)  
Grant Writer/Crime Analyst  
Clerk Typist IV – Sheriff Satellite Office  
School Resource Officer  
Emergency Medical Services Coordinator  
Solid Waste Recycling Coordinator  
Health Mobile Dental – Project Coordinator; Dentist, Dentist Assistant, Hygentist,  
Processing Assistant

Total New Positions: 15.40

Human Resources Changes recommended:

- Pay Plan – Phase I Implementation
- Cost of Living Adjustment – 4%
- Health Insurance Increase – 15%

Proposed Fee Increases:

- Solid Waste
  - ◆ Tipping Fees from \$44 to \$45 per ton
  - ◆ Household from \$58 to \$62 per year

- E911 Surcharge Fees
  - ◆ Phone Surcharge from \$.50 to \$1.00 per phone line to cover 800 Trunking Debt Service
  
- Fire Inspection Fees  
(To recover 100% of costs of Existing Fire Inspector) (\$15,000)
  - ◆ From \$50 to \$60
    - Aged/Rest/Group Home Permit
    - Day Care Home/Center Permit
    - Fumigation & Thermal Insecticide Fogging
    - Range Hood
    - Tank Removal/Installation-Combustible Products
  
  - ◆ Fire Reports from \$2 to \$5
  - ◆ Foster Home Permits – from \$25 to \$35
  - ◆ Fire Inspections:
    - Minimum \$5,000 Sq. Ft. – from \$50 to \$60
    - Each Additional 5,000 Sq. Ft. from \$10 to \$15

Mr. Robinson stated the following challenges and unmet needs for the County:

- Growing County with Low Tax Base
- Loss of \$145 Million Tax Base in 2000-2001 (\$957 in Tax Revenue)
- Hurricane Flooding Impact felt for next 2 to 3 years
- Resources to Maintain Educational Priorities (Public Schools Operating & Capital Needs, Pitt Community College Capital
- Resources to Fund Other Priorities & Needs (Recreation, Sheriff's Building, Radio Communications)
- County Debt Increasing
- Need for Additional Revenue Above Current Projects in Next 1-2 Years if County is to Maintain Progress & Commitments

Joel Scales, Chairperson for Pay Plan Study Committee and Solid Waste/Garage, compensation and market survey. Mr. Scales introduced the following project team members: Mike Taylor, MIS, Peggy Chandler, Social Services, Tim Copeland, Detention Center, Jo Morgan, Public Health, and Fonda Pittman, Human Resources.

Mr. Scales stated that the objectives of the project were:

- To build skill capacity in Human Resources to maintain the classification and compensation system.
- To ensure a fair and equitable classification and compensation system that will attract and retain qualified staff.
- Identify a simplified performance evaluation tool.

Mr. Scales stated that the project team was to function as the coordinator and perform the research required to complete the study. There was a consultant hired to serve as a resource to train and validate the process and findings.

The Schedule for the study was as follows:

- Phase I Market Analysis – this phase addresses equity of the County's pay plan to that of external organizations, to be completed by June, 2000.

- Phase II Position Analysis – this phase addresses equity of the positions within the County’s pay plan, to be completed by December, 2000. Begin process to become substantially equivalent with human service agency positions.
- Phase III Enhanced Compensation System – this phase will evaluate alternative compensation systems and performance evaluation tools, to be completed by June, 2001.

Progress to Date – Phase I

- Developed a survey instrument to collect the required data.
- Identified survey organizations and solicited data.
- Compiled survey results.
- Completed preliminary analysis of data.

Results of Phase I

- Analysis demonstrated that, as a whole, the County is compensating 1% below the market average as of December, 1999.
- Some positions have been identified for adjustments to bring the entire pay plan in line.

**Recommendations:**

- Upon final evaluation of the positions, implement the proposed changes effective July 1, 2000. Cost of implementation is \$125,000.
- Proceed with Phases II & III.
- Initiate process with the State to allow for substantial equivalency for human service agency positions.

The Board of Commissioners then held a question and answer time. Mr. Robinson said Mental Health, Health, and Social Services must comply with the State and County Personnel policies. They cannot be treated the same as the rest of the employees. Substantial equivalency is a goal of the Project team so everyone can be on the same pay system.

Commissioner James asked about School Resource Officers and the differentiation in their salaries and road deputies. Commissioner James asked Mr. Taylor said that all positions were based on market data. He also asked why none of the counties adjacent to Pitt County were surveyed. Commissioner Owens reviewed the summary of the proposal stating that it would cost \$125,000 to bring the pay plan up to market level.

Commissioner Bowen asked how many employees have left because of low pay. Mr. Taylor stated that there is a consultant reviewing the findings for accuracy. He stated also that the majority of the positions being recommended for adjustments are law enforcement. Vice Chairman Hammond asked how much the consultant, The Mercer Group, had been paid. Mr. Taylor responded that the consultant was paid \$4,000. Mr. Scales said that the consultant was being used to validate the committee’s results. Commissioner Bowen said he would never have voted to have a group of county employees perform this study. Vice Chairman Hammond asked about employees that have left. Commissioner Ward stated that the consultant group was to add the balance to the survey of the 14 counties. She noted that three counties were larger, seven were middle range and three were smaller and it would take \$125,000 increase in the budget for all of these positions to be made more equitable.

Mr. Taylor noted that Office Assistant III positions were not included since they are being paid two percent above the market.

Commissioner Bowen said he did not agree with having employees that were living off of the taxpayers doing the research on the pay plan study. Commissioner Shank said this is an enormous amount of research and this is based on factual information and a thorough job was done. Commissioner Huggins said she did not see a problem with using information gathered by

employees and if employees did not do the research, then who would do it. Vice Chairman Hammond said the State had comparisons for all of these positions.

Commissioner Owens said the facts have been compiled and he appreciated the work of the committee. Mr. Robinson said this was an effort to get a better process. He said the last time this was done by a consultant, the County staff was highly criticized.

Commissioner Johnson asked how soon the County tax base will recover from Hurricane Floyd. Mr. Robinson said that Mr. John Chaffee has indicated that the upcoming year is going to be a strong year.

Commissioner Bowen said he did not believe he could explain to the citizens that the employees decided that they need a raise.

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Mr. Robinson reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan. He stated he needed the board to review the priorities for the projects that was provided in the Capital Improvement Plan.

		FY 00-01	FY 01-02	FY 02-03	FY 03-04	FY 04-05
	Funding	Proposed	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning
PROJECTS	Source	Budget	Year	Year	Year	Year
<i>Budgeted</i>						
MIS Projects Countywide	C	335,000	315,000	325,000	335,000	335,000
Courthouse - Phase II * +	COP	2,500,000	5,000,000	0	0	
Recurring Capital Outlay	C	1,425,000	1,450,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
Pitt County Schools - Current Annual Projects	C	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000
PCC - Current Annual Projects	C	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
Economic Development Water/Sewer/Gas Projects@	C,O	737,438	727,438	717,438	707,438	697,438
New Administration Building +	COP	1,100,000	2,000,000	0	0	
Animal Shelter	C	800,000	0	0	0	
Pitt County Schools - Pact/Whitfld/HS/Elem	COP	27,796,029	13,044,799	1,338,357	0	
Pitt County Schools - Belvoir	SB	7,200,000	0	0	0	
<i>Additional/Alternative Revenues Required</i>						
Communications Equipment - Emerg Svcs**	COP	4,100,000	0	0	0	
PCC - Mobile Units	C	400,000	0	0	0	
Firing Range Development	C	0	500,000	250,000	0	
PCC - Leslie Bldg Addition	COP, GO	250,000	2,000,000	0	0	
Recreation Complex	TBD	0	775,000	0	0	
Elections - Voting Machines	TBD	0	??	0	0	
Sheriff's Administration Bldg at Detention Center	COP	0	3,000,000	0	0	
<b>ANNUAL TOTALS</b>		<b>47,468,467</b>	<b>29,637,237</b>	<b>4,655,795</b>	<b>3,067,438</b>	<b>3,057,438</b>

\* Includes issuance costs for total 2000 bond package of approximately \$500,000.

+ Could all be included in same bond package to save on issuance costs.

@ Woodridge Project has offsetting acreage fee revenues.

?? Analysis to be completed Winter 2000 for inclusion in FY 01-02 budget process.				
** Funding would be split 50/50 between General Fund and E911 Surcharge Fees				
C = Current Funding COP = Certificates of Participation				
GO = General Obligation Bonds SB = State Bond Funds O = Other Funding Source TBD = To Be Determined				

Chairman Gaskins called for a recess at 2:45 p.m.

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Mr. James Rhodes reviewed the past year's accomplishments, overview of proposed FY 00-01 Work Program, and Presentation of Requested FY 00-01 budget. He stated they are trying to complete the NC 11 Project; trying to complete the draft land use plan, zoning ordinance and will need a recommendation from the NC 11 Planning committee. He stated he plans to present this to the Board of Commissioners by the end of the year. There is a draft land use plan and proposed zoning regulations of Northwest Planning Area.

Mr. Rhodes reported that Commissioner Johnson went with the Planning Staff to a meeting on the Southwest ByPass and 2002-2008 Transportation Improvement Study. He reported that very little damage was done to the Coastal Carolina Trail project from the flooding. The Northside Walking Trail has been established. On Census 2000, there were new census tracts created. The Complete County Committee worked to assure everyone was counted. More than 150 subdivision plans and plats came through for approval last year.

Flood Recovery is top priority and it will be on their plans for up to five years.

- Coordination of Damage Assessments for Residences
- Assistance with Development of Temporary Housing sites
- Management of County-Sponsored Elevation Certificate Program
- Establishment and Management of Recovery Operations Center
- Development of Applications for Hazard Mitigation Grant (Buy-Out) program, State Acquisition & Relocation funds (SARF), and Repair and Replacement Grant Program
- Initiation of Hazard Mitigation Plan Development
- Development and Maintenance of Project Database

### Land Use Planning Efforts

- NC 11 North Corridor Planning Area
- Northwest Planning Area
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan

### Other Accomplishments:

- Housing
  - CDBG
  - HOME Program
- Transportation Planning
- Regional Transit Study
- Recreation Planning
- Coastal Carolina Trail
- Bicycle Master Plan
- Northside Walking Trail
- Census 2000
- Development Review Administration
- E-911 Addressing

### FY 00-01 Work Program

- ❑ Flood Recovery
- ❑ Land Use Planning Efforts
- ❑ Housing
- ❑ Transportation Planning
- ❑ Recreation Planning
- ❑ Administration of Development Ordinance
- ❑ E-911 Addressing

### **Requested Budget for FY 00-01**

Budget Accounts for:

- General Planning – requested total increase of 3.5% and one new Planner I Position
- E--911 Addressing – requested total increase of 32%; transfer of Road Sign Coordinator; and City of Greenville Request for Funds
- Soil and Erosion & Sedimentation Control – requested 18 month Grant Program - \$23,500 and one new Planning Technician Position
- Community Development Block Grant – Rehabilitation or Replacement of 10 Residences and Administration Costs
- HOME Program – Supplemental Funding for CDBG Project – Supplemental Funding for CDBG Project and Administration Costs
- Recovery Operations Center – Requested one new Office Assistant Position and tracking of General Administrative & Facility Costs
- Housing Assistance Programs
- Recovery Operations Center
- Housing Assistance Programs
  - Hazard Mitigation Grant (Buy-Out) Program
    - ❖ Phase 1 - \$19.4 million (under review)
    - ❖ Phase 2 - \$1.3 million (under review)
  - State Acquisition & Relocation Funds
    - ❖ \$3.9 million (Awarded 3/29/00)
  - Repair Funds
    - ❖ \$1.3 million (under review)
  - Replacement Grant Program
    - ❖ \$5.2 million (under review)
- Elevated Tar River Bridge Feasibility Study was added as a request.

Mr. Rhodes reported that under the Recreation Planning he included the plans for Site Selection for Intergenerational Center and Coastal Carolina Trail as well as other activities.

Commissioner James asked about the Mumford Road area and if it is the County's responsibility or the City of Greenville's responsibility. Mr. Rhodes stated that this area is in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City of Greenville and it is the City's responsibility. Mr. Rhodes stated these people should go through flood recovery with the City of Greenville. There is also a trailer park in the area that has not been cleaned up. Commissioner Shank asked about the floodplain maps. Mr. Rhodes said that they have requested updated maps from the FEMA officials. He stated that the Mitigation Plan being developed will show this as a priority.

### **Farmville Development Partnership - Judy Ruggie, President**

Ms. Judy Ruggie presented the Board with information on the Farmville Development Partnership which includes the Farmville Chamber, Downtown Farmville Historic District, and others. She gave an overview and provided the Board with background information. Mr. Robinson stated they have requested over \$100,000 in financial support. Mr. Robinson said that he did not fund this request.

Projects that the Farmville Development Partnership are working on are continued development of the Technology Center, develop new industrial park, and they are working on a two county industrial park which will go into Green County. The Historical District is being promoted. She stated that they are trying to upgrade the downtown Farmville. Over \$400,000 grant is being received. The Town is giving them a building for \$1.00 a year. The Development Commission has come up with \$75,000. A small business complex is one goal. She said she is looking for the County for funding assistance with the small business complex.

Farmville has a goal of a population of 5,000. They have started an incentive program to build a house in Farmville. There have been 28 new houses built since the incentive program was started. The Town of Farmville has offered to the Economic Development Council, the Florence-Mayo Building (27,000 sq.ft.) for \$1.00. This building would be used to encourage start-up businesses or expansion of existing small businesses in the area with emphasis on the service or light industry sectors, i.e. electrical, plumbing, heat and air, etc. Renovations and upfitting will be necessary to prepare the building for occupancy. USDA has approved a pre-application for a \$99,000 grant, and \$75,000 has been pledged by the Farmville Economic Development Council, which provides Farmville with a total of \$174,000 so far. They have requested \$75,000 for start up. She spoke about Pitt County needing to place signs on the highway noting that you are entering Pitt County.

Commissioner James said Farmville is a wealthy town. Ms. Ruggie said the County has helped the Town of Farmville with water, sewer, and roads. They now have a two-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. Ms. Ruggie said that the County should take advantage of these projects. Commissioner Owens said she had made a fine presentation.

#### **Pitt-Greenville Convention and Visitors Authority - Debbie Vargas, Executive Director**

Ms. Vargas said updated the Board on the Convention and Visitors Bureau. She provided advertisements that they have published. She explained that they are funded with 6% occupancy tax. She reported on the two proposals being entertained for a convention center. One cent of the occupancy tax is going into marketing which will be used for the convention center. Hotel occupancy tax is collected across the County. She stated that \$111 million annually generated by travel and tourism. Pitt County is 19<sup>th</sup> out of 100 counties known for an impact of travel and tourism. She said that their function is to solicit for travelers to come into the area and then provide them with services while they are visiting Pitt County. The Convention and Visitors Bureau brings in ninety groups per year and then they help with establishing contacts with hotels. In 1998-1999, they brought 107 groups to the area. She provided additional statistical information.

In their proposed budget, there was a 24% increase for this year which was a reflection of the economic impact of the flooding. They lost some groups during this time but for 45 days they had all the hotel/motel properties full with FEMA and Red Cross workers. There have not been too many significant changes in their budget. The annual budget includes four staff members. They estimate 100 family reunions will rotate into this area next year. They experience from 125-150 people per month of walk-in traffic. They offer information on the entire eastern part of the State. They are adding a half-salary this year and plan to increase a part-time person to a full-time person by next year. They are consistently increasing in services. The Board is looking to open a grants program. She stated that the Convention and Visitors Bureau is a marketing agency for Pitt County. She stated that the Convention and Visitors Authority motioned to put the funds for the convention center in a separate account. The funds are in a separate account to retire the debt on the convention center.

Commissioner Bowen spoke about Greenville not being on the travel and tourism map for the eastern part of the State. Commissioner Shank said Ms. Ruggie noted that there is no "entering Pitt County signs" on Highway 264.

Mr. Robinson asked Mr. Rhodes about the proposal to enhance the signage into Pitt County. Mr. Rhodes said that they did not put the signage proposal into effect because of vandalism and maintenance required on the signs.

**UPON MOTION** by Commissioner Bowen, seconded by Commissioner Shank, to approve the proposed Convention and Visitors Bureau 2000-2001 budget. The motion was passed unanimously.

Commissioner James motioned to recess until Thursday morning at 8:00 a.m. Vice Chairman Hammond seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Banks, CMC  
Clerk to the Board