

**Pitt County Board of Commissioners
Greenville, North Carolina**

**Wednesday, January 24, 2001
8:30 a.m.
Goals Setting Workshop**

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a workshop session on Wednesday, January 24, 2001, at 8:30 a.m. in the Emergency Operations Center, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W. 5th Street, Greenville, North Carolina. The purpose of the meeting was to consider public business.

Present:

David Hammond, Chairman
Glenn Bowen, Vice Chairman
Tom Coulson, Commissioner
Mark Owens, Commissioner
Randy Royal, Commissioner
Terry Shank, Commissioner
Beth Ward, Commissioner

Absent:

Eugene James, Commissioner
Tom Johnson, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Tom Robinson, Manager
JoAnne Burgdorff, Attorney
Susan Banks, Clerk
John Bulow, Assistant Manager

Call to Order by Chairman Hammond.

Prayer was offered by Chairman Hammond.

Mr. Robinson said the purpose of the meeting is to determine five-year goals and establish this Board's priorities. He introduced Mr. Glenn Harbeck who helped the Board with this process in 1998.

Mr. Harbeck said that the plan for today is to accomplish determining some specific goals for the next five years for Pitt County.

Mr. Harbeck led the Board in a short exercise on personal priorities. Mr. Robinson reviewed the citizens surveys that were received from the public. He stated that public safety has risen in the commissioners priorities in the past year. He commented about the survey that each commissioner had completed prior to this meeting about their individual priorities.

Mr. Robinson said that Pitt County's tax rate is at the State average but per capita is very low which means that what services are provided would be below the State average. He said the County can not do anymore with the funding that is available unless there are ways to do things better.

Commissioner Shank said that this Board has been criticized for the perspective they have had on the budget in the past. There are so many needs that exist but have not been

accomplished because of lack of foresight. Commissioner Coulson said that the Board needs to find incentives for departments so they are rewarded when they save money.

Commissioner Ward said that today the Board should look at a plan, a vision, set goals and determine what the citizens want the Board to do for them.

Mr. Harbeck had each commissioner write their top five to ten priorities and then rank them by order of importance.

No. 1 Priority

Vice Chairman Bowen - Crime Control
Commissioner Owens - Education Compact and Buildings
Commissioner Shank - County facilities for schools, community college, social services, administration, animal shelter and others
Chairman Hammond - schools and redistricting
Commissioner Coulson - more efficient government
Commissioner Ward - improvement and support of Education Compact
Commissioner Royal - Education Compact and financial assistance to the schools

No. 2 Priority

Commissioner Royal - per pupil expenditures close to state levels
Commissioner Ward - Building needs - social services, administration building, school, animal shelter, recreation program office
Commissioner Coulson - develop 5, 10 and 20 year plan
Chairman Hammond - completion of courthouse Phase II, administration building, community schools center
Commissioner Shank - emergency services
Commissioner Owens - human services for old and young
Vice Chairman Bowen - emergency health care

No. 3 Priority

Commissioner Shank - revenue creation
Commissioner Owens - economic growth, government, water and sewer, public safety, trucking, and environmental protection
Vice Chairman Bowen - education
Commissioner Royal - social services - needs of indigent
Commissioner Ward - community safety, emergency needs/services
Commissioner Coulson - sensitivity to those who pay the bills
Chairman Hammond - technology incubator and workforce development (high tech)

No. 4 Priority

Commissioner Coulson - education - learn from business and industry what students need to know
Commissioner Ward - water and sewer - not in business but act as liaison for municipalities
Commissioner Royal - economic development to attract industries, more employment
Chairman Hammond - expansion of industrial base
Commissioner Shank - efforts to eliminate poverty
Commissioner Owens - revenues over expenditures
Vice Chairman Bowen - health and welfare, social services

No. 5 Priority

Chairman Hammond - jobs, jobs, jobs
Commissioner Owens - taxes - state, federal and local
Commissioner Royal - long range planning
Commissioner Coulson - county get involved in sewer and water
Commissioner Shank - recreation and environmental protection

Vice Chairman Bowen - recreation programs and facilities
Commissioner Ward - long range planning for countywide and recreation

Top priority - Education/Schools

The Board discussed their commitment to support the education compact. The Manager noted that this compact will really stretch the County's budget. Commissioner Shank said that she did not list the education compact as her number one priority because she thought it was a done deal. The Board is supportive of the compact but does not agree on all the aspects of the agreement.

The next consideration is related to facilities and buildings such as social services, animal shelter, administration building, community college, courthouse phase II, and recreation center. Chairman Hammond stated that the county services are spread out in the County. These would be considered capital needs.

Mr. Harbeck stated that the Manager is concerned about the mandated programs by the State government. Mr. Robinson said that the plan today is to talk about the overall County perspective whether capital needs or operational.

Second priority would be facilities/building needs, in general.

Mr. Harbeck suggested the schools facilities should be separated from the other facilities. Commissioner Ward said that the building needs need to be under the top three priorities. Mr. Robinson said that the County really needs facilities and it may need to be listed as one of the main priorities. Mr. Harbeck stated that emergency services seems to be brought out in many ways.

Third priority would be Community Safety/Emergency Services.

Mr. Robinson spoke about the Board of Commissioners role in education and what the Board of Education's role is in education.

First Priority Issue and Discussion

Issue as given: Education/Schools

What concerns drive this issue?

- ? improving local scores, improving local teach pay supplement, classroom size
- ? per pupil expenditure is better but still way to low
- ? redistricting may effect building needs
- ? ability to meet revenue commitments
- ? needs for classroom space for middle and elementary school
- ? reduced classroom size (Goal from Raleigh)
- ? potential school administration building

Additional comments:

- ? hope to be in top 1/3 counties in the State within four years
- ? education compact funding - revenue
- ? not meeting goals
- ? report twice a year on how they are meeting goals
- ? up to school board to meet goals
- ? joint goals established
- ? jump start funding

- ? committed increased funding- \$2.4 million initially then \$1.7 million, \$1.8 million \$1.9 million increases annually (figures are inclusive of regular funding plus building program)
- ? ADM increases
- ? schools need additional middle school and elementary school, but there is only funding for one school
- ? redistricting schools with new information needed

Mr. Robinson stated that sixty-two percent of the property tax dollar went to schools and thirty-five percent of local option sales tax goes to school capital outlay. In addition, the six percent sales tax allows two percent to come back to the County for schools. He said this Board will be giving seventy percent within the next few years. However, Commissioner Ward stated that the funds from the interest on the hospital funds would be used for the increase in schools for the education compact.

What information would help people better understand these concerns?

- ? Where and how much money is going for schools and how much is projected to go to the school system.
- ? A five year financial plan

Who else needs to be involved?

The School Board and the general public. Industry is demanding that the students coming out of schools are prepared.

Issue as Understood:

- ? Funding necessary over the next 5 years to meet educational compact

Mr. Robinson stated that the Board has indicated that they would like additional feedback on other areas such as teacher supplements and other indications of how the school system is performing.

Second Priority Issue and Discussion

Issue as Given: Facilities/Building Needs

Mr. Robinson stated that if the revenues come in as they have historically, there would be enough revenues to cover the Courthouse Phase II.

Courthouse Phase II - space needed and OSHA needs, Register of Deeds, Clerk of Court - \$10 million

Administration Building - County Government - to give Social Services additional space and get them under one roof - \$3.5 million

Animal Shelter - \$800,000 - disgusting conditions for animals and staff

Community Schools Headquarters Phase I - recreation administration - \$500,000 - to get them under one location

Sheriff's Department - locate operations center under one roof - currently scattered offices

Pitt Community College - \$6.2 million minimum - additional classrooms

Storage/Maintenance Building - \$300,000 (budgeted) Phase I; 300,000 for Phase II - Technology Incubator pushing storage out of building, e.g. voting machines, maintenance, etc.

Mr. Robinson stated that Dr. Priddy, School Superintendent, has indicated that there may be a request within the next five years for a school administration building.

Middle School - \$13-15 Million (see education/schools)

Schools - Potential Administration Building

Chairman Hammond recessed the meeting at 12:45 p.m. for lunch.

Chairman Hammond reconvened the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Commissioners Present were:

Chairman Hammond
Vice Chairman Bowen
Commissioner Royal
Commissioner Shank
Commissioner Ward

Absent were:

Commissioners James
Commissioner Owens
Commissioner Coulson
Commissioner Johnson

Mr. Harbeck began on the Facilities Issue.

What information would help people better understand these concerns?

? best talked about as a package. Introduce to the public as short, intermediate, long term projects.

Mr. Harbeck asked when the tough choices will be made on these items? Mr. Robinson said that when the CIP is brought back to the Board, then the Board will give the Board a five year plan in March. In February, staff will provide scenarios to the Board at the next workshop.

Who else needs to be involved?

? Department Heads
? Manager
? Finance Officer
? Public Input - informational guide for next five years for distribution and feedback.
? Include grassroots and professional community in providing information such as Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Robinson said he needs the Board to come to an agreement on the next five year plan because he only gets approval for one year at a time.

Issue as Understood:

? Building Facility needs of the County and its agencies over the next 5-10 years, combined with effort to inform/educate the public.

Third Priority and Issues

Issue as Given: Community Safety/Emergency Services

Discussed concerns:

- ? 911/Communications - 800 trunking system
- ? Communications
- ? Communities that are using volunteers that don't have time to continue the service
- ? Inequities in funding between volunteer communities
- ? losing deputies to the City of Greenville - job security (political) (OK by
- ? 911 - Phase I and II (funding by State) - Enough revenue but it is restricted by General Assembly; requires legislation (50% is allowed in 911 fund, the other 50% is not allowable in 911)

Options on 911 Trunking System

- ? buy now with 50% of funding available from the State and 50%; or
- ? press forward with the Legislature to get the State to turn loose the 911 fee money

EMS Efficiency

- ? Franchises, Proximity due to another, responsibilities
- ? EMS Master Plan

Cable Interconnectivity

Centralized Phone System

What concerns drive this issue?

- ? scarcity of volunteers
- ? inequity in funding
- ? 50 year old technology
- ? restrictions on use of 911 fee revenue for 800 trunking
- ? need system operator
- ? location/responsiveness of franchises
- ? Cable system interconnectivity/centralized phone system
- ? Hurricane problems could help us lobby

What information would help people better understand these concerns?

- ? one page briefing sheet on the restricted legislation and why it needs to be changed

Who else needs to be involved?

- ? Local Legislative Delegation
- ? Lobbying by Rescue Squads, Fire Departments, Sheriff's Departments, Police Departments, and Ambulance Services.

Commissioner Ward was excused from the meeting at this time.

Issue as Understood:

- ? Consultant determine the needs
 - a. Funding 50% - 911 and 50% - County
 - b. 100% 911 fees requires Lobbying and Legislation required
- ? EMS Master Plan Study - addresses, inequities, service response, etc.
 - a. Funding
 1. Fees for Service
 2. Countywide tax or tax districts
- ? Cable Interconnectivity - separate channel can be used for emergency services

Mr. Harbeck asked what the Board wanted to do next? The Board responded to let the Manager fill in the next issues and instruct the Manager on what to move on.

Mr. Robinson stated that this Board needs to look at long range planning and establish a vision. Other priorities mentioned for discussion were economic development, water and sewer, recreation, social services and revenue generation. Commissioner Shank stated she could provide an outline on how some grassroots groups identified the needs for the community.

Mr. Robinson spoke about other issues going on within programs in County government that the Board still needs to discuss such as teenage pregnancy for the Health Department. Commissioner Shank said that transportation and childcare are needs in Social Services but is never mentioned here. Chairman Hammond spoke about the needs in the Workforce program. Commissioner Royal stated that the intergovernmental concerns are normally left for the County Manager and Social Services. He said he would not want to micromanage the programs but welcomed the opportunity to look at these programs.

Mr. Harbeck stated that the issues looked at all fall within the following six categories:

- ? Long range planning - Vision
- ? Economic Development
- ? Water and Sewer
- ? Recreation
- ? Social Services
- ? Revenue Generation

Mr. Robinson said he could develop a packet for the Board by taking some liberty for the Board and then the Board could review and give him feedback. Commissioner Royal suggested a work session with the department heads responsible for these six work areas meet with the commissioners. He asked for the meeting to be upstairs for public access.

Mr. Robinson asked if the Board wants to switch Community Schools to the County government area instead of Public Schools.

Chairman Hammond adjourned this meeting at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Banks, CMC
Clerk to the Board