

PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
SEPTEMBER 26, 2006 MINUTES

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a Special Meeting on Tuesday, September 26, 2006, at 5:00 PM in the Commissioners' Auditorium, Pitt County Office Building, 1717 W. 5th Street, Greenville, North Carolina. The purpose of this meeting was called to discuss Pitt County's 2006 Statewide Legislative Goals.

Commissioners present:

Jimmy Garris, Chairman
Beth Ward, Vice Chairman
Mark Owens, Commissioner
Eugene James, Commissioner
Melvin McLawhorn, Commissioner
John Minges, Commissioner
Glenn Bowen, Commissioner
Tom Coulson, Commissioner
David Hammond, Commissioner

Staff present:

Scott Elliott, County Manager
Trish Staton, Clerk to the Board
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney
Melonie Bryan, Deputy County Manager/Financial Services
Janis Gallagher, Assistance County Attorney
Phil Dickerson, Deputy County Manager/Public Service
Michael Taylor/Chief Information Officer
Thomas Lynch, PIO Officer

Call to Order

Chairman Garris called the meeting to order and welcome everyone. He said this is a Special Meeting to discuss 2006 Statewide Legislative Goals.

Roll Call

Invocation and Pledge

The Invocation was offered by Commissioner David Hammond.
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Jimmy Garris.

Approval of Agenda

Motion:

Approval of Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Melvin McLawhorn.

Motion seconded by Commissioner John Minges.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Items for Decision

Discuss Legislative Goals - Jimmy Garris

Meeting Notes

Chairman Garris said the board received a list of goals for discussion.

Ms. Burgdorff gave the board an explanation on number 7 from the previous list. This was previously presented on September 18, 2006. Ms. Burgdorff said Soil and Water had requested this item be added to the list of goals. They are requesting support of conservation of private and public entities. Staff removed this goal because it was not specific enough.

Chairman Garris stated public address are usually not allowed for special called meetings, but understands there is an interest by the realtors of Pitt County. He said he will one ask one person to speak for the group.

Chad Grimesland, 1415 Foster Road. Mr. Grimesland said he represents the Pitt Greenville Association of Realtors and the Home Builders Association. He spoke about the Land Transfer Tax. Mr. Grimesland said the associations are in support of continued growth and the education system. A transfer tax is not the proper path. He spoke about the impact the transfer tax would have on affordable housing. He thanked the board for their time.

Mr. Elliott said every two years the board of commissioners develops a proposed list of statewide goals as proposed by Pitt County. He gave the board a historical overview of how they voted on the goals list back in 2004. He said the primary goal for Pitt County has been the local sales tax. This list is similar to the list in pass years. He reviewed the list with the board.

2006

Statewide Legislative Goals

Proposed By Pitt County

Primary Goals:

- 1) **Sales Tax:** authorize counties to enact and additional sales tax with dedicated expenditure, subject to a citizen referendum (earmarked for/by purpose)
- 2) **Authorize Counties the option to enact any of the Alternate Revenue Sources:** Each item is optional on behalf of each county
Land Transfer Tax: authorize counties to enact a Land Transfer Tax without the current required citizen referendum.

Impact Fee: authorize counties to enact Impact Fees on new construction.

Sales Tax: authorize counties to enact additional sales tax.

- 3) School Funding: Support:
- (a) a statewide school construction bond referendum (K-12)
 - (b) statewide Community College construction funding;
 - (c) increase the level of state funding necessary to define and support and adequate basic education in all local school systems;
 - (d) fully fund the low-wealth school fund.
- 4) **Medicaid Funding**: Support the phasing out of the county share of Medicaid costs over four years.
- 5) **Tax Moving Permit for Mobile Homes**: Require a tax moving permit, showing property taxes paid, before hookups can be made at new locations for water/sewer or electrical when mobile home is moved from one location to another in county to another county.
- 6) **License plate purchase with motor vehicle tax**: Replace the current registered motor vehicle assessment/billing/collections process with one that requires the simultaneous purchase of the license plate with payment of the property tax.

Mr. Elliott spoke about number 4, Medicaid Funding. He said this has been a goal of Pitt County as well as the 99 other counties in the state of North Carolina. The goal is to phase out eliminate the state requirement to help fund in this Federally mandated program. He said North Carolina is the only state in the union required to participate at this time.

Mr. Elliott said number 5 would require all property taxes to have been paid before a permit is issued. Mr. Dickerson said counties would be required to collect the unpaid taxes due to other counties.

Commissioner Minges said if this board does not add the land transfer tax to the list the board adopts, will it make a difference? The State Association of County Commissioner has put it as a legislative goal. Mr. Elliott said yes, it has been for a number of years.

Commissioner Coulson said it does matter. He said you will pay the fee every time you buy or sale a house. He said he is against the transfer tax.

Commissioner Minges said he is not for the land transfer fee. What other options are out there? Mr. Elliott said the sales tax option.

Commissioner Owens said the board has some recommendations to make. He said he agrees with Commissioner Coulson, the legislators failed us.

Commissioner Owens motion:

Ask for the general Assembly to give Pitt County the Authority to ask for the 1 Cent Sales Tax to be voted on by the people of Pitt County. 2) School Funding 3) Medicaid Funding.

Coulson seconded

Commissioner Hammond said he does not support the land transfer tax.

Commissioner Bowen asked how much would the county receive if we had the land transfer tax. Mr. Elliott said \$7.5 million as identified by a document provided at

the recent NCACC conference. This equates to roughly 9 cent on tax rate.
Commissioner Bowen said he is for the land transfer tax.

Commissioner James said he is against all taxes. The county needs the money.
We need to work for the sales tax. It is the only way to get the money.

Vice Chairman Ward said she supports the motion. She asked to add number 6 to the motion. She said the board does not have any options. The board worked for 3 years on the 1 cent Sales Tax and she said the board will go after it again. The citizens should have the right to vote.

Commissioner McLawhorn said he concurs with the motion. He said he is not for regressive taxes on the citizens. He said he wanted to see the progress for people to buy homes.

Motion:

Support 1 cent sales tax for Pitt County, Items 3, 4, and 6 of the proposed statewide legislative goals list.

Motion made by Commissioner Mark Owens, Jr..

Motion seconded by Commissioner Tom Coulson.

Vote Record:

Melvin McLawhorn	Yes
John Minges	Yes
Jimmy Garris	Yes
Mark Owens, Jr.	Yes
Beth Ward	Yes
Glenn Bowen	No
Tom Coulson	Yes
David Hammond	Yes
Eugene James	Yes

Total Yes Votes: 8

Total No Votes: 1

Motion Passed.

Adjourn

Motion:

Motion to adjourn meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Motion made by Commissioner Melvin McLawhorn.

Motion seconded by Commissioner John Minges.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Staton
Clerk to the Board

10/5/2006 9:00 AM