

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Cabarrus met in recessed session for a board retreat at Camp T. N. Spencer, Helms Hall, 3155 Foxford Road in Concord on Friday, January 30, 2009 at 3:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman: H. Jay White, Sr.
 Vice Chairman: Grace M. Mynatt
 Commissioners: Robert W. Carruth
 Elizabeth F. Poole
 Coy C. Privette

Also present were: John Day, County Manager; Pam Dubois, Deputy County Manager; Mike Downs, Deputy County Manager; Aimee Hawkins, Communications and Outreach; and Kay Honeycutt, Clerk to the Board.

Note: David Baxter, General Manager for Channel 22 (Communications and Outreach) was also present for a short time.

Call to Order

Chairman White called the meeting to order at 3:39 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

UPON MOTION of Commissioner Privette, seconded by Vice Chairman Mynatt and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda as presented.

Report on Biannual Citizen Survey

Dr. Nancy Burnap, with MarketWise Inc., presented the results of the Cabarrus County Services 2008 Citizen Opinion Survey - a biannual random telephone survey of approximately 402 citizens. The survey consisted of approximately 100 questions related to the provision of county services, growth, school construction, voting, etc. Dr. Burnap also responded to a variety of questions from the Board throughout the presentation.

Survey conclusions were as follows:

- Bonds are a viable option for funding transportation improvements such as improving congested intersections and widening roads.
 - o A majority (73%) of residents support a bond referendum for transportation improvements (51% support strongly).
 - o Support for transportation improvements is stronger in 2008 than in 2006.
- The County should pursue opportunities to purchase land to maintain rural areas.
 - o A majority (68%) of residents support this option (50% strongly support).
- Although the majority of residents (62%) support a referendum for parks and recreation, there is not a strong context for success.
 - o Only a third of the residents show strong support.
 - o Almost a quarter oppose the bonds.
- Restricting the extension of utilities and services to control new construction could become a controversial strategy.
 - o Only half of Cabarrus residents support this strategy (only a third strongly support).
 - o More than a quarter oppose this strategy.
- There is strong support for the County to provide sidewalks, weaker support for bike lanes and greenways.
 - o The majority of residents support bike lanes and greenways, but most do not believe they are very important. For this reason, they are not as high a priority as sidewalks.
- Cabarrus residents are very satisfied with emergency services (fire, medical, law enforcement) and many other aspects of living in Cabarrus County.
 - o The problem areas are the pace of growth, opportunities for decision making, open space preservation, and employment opportunities.
- Almost all residents are aware of library services, but only 56% actually use them.
- Convenience and quality of services do not appear to be primary barriers to using the library.
 - o Most residents indicate there is a library branch located conveniently to them.
 - o Most residents have a positive impression of the library.

- As a source of revenue for new school construction, the majority of residents oppose an increase in sales tax.
- The majority of residents support (strongly or somewhat) the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance and impact fees as sources of revenue.
- Over half of the residents sampled report being only a little informed or are not at all informed on County issues.
 - The County Website is a significant source of information for many residents.
 - Residents who have visited the County Website are more informed on County issues than those who have not visited the site.
- Although most residents have access to the Internet, those who do not have access are less informed than those who have access.
 - This suggests that the County will need to continue to use multiple sources (in addition to the Website) to disseminate County related information.
- Very few residents recall seeing this year's, *Welcome to the Cabarrus Way*, or are aware of the County's email newsletter.
 - More publicity of the report and newsletter are needed to make Cabarrus County residents aware of these sources of information.

In addition, Aimee Hawkins, Communications and Outreach, responded to a variety of questions from the Board related to communication efforts and the County's website.

Recess of Meeting

The Board took a short break at 4:44 p.m. The meeting resumed at 4:57 p.m.

Board of Commissioners' Goals: Review and Discussion of Existing Goals and Progress Made

With the assistance of the Deputy County Managers, the County Manager facilitated a review and discussion of the Board's existing goals, including outcomes, progress and next steps. The "next steps" for some goals were revised during the process. The results are as follows:

Goal No. 1

Preserve and enhance the quality of life by addressing growth with sound public policies that sustain resources, provide high quality services, and fund infrastructure needs.

Goal No. 1 - Year 1 Outcomes:

1. Approve a financing plan to fund the school systems' five-year critical needs.

PROGRESS: Completed. See FY 2009 Budget, Five-Year Financial Plan.

NEXT STEPS: Review and update for FY 2010 budget. BOC to consider accelerating construction of Northwest area elementary school currently scheduled for 2013 funding.

2. Develop a long-term financial model for providing for the capital needs of schools with a minimum of 10% to be "pay as you go" (meaning 10% of the cost will not be financed). This will work toward a long-term goal of paying for new schools with 20% of construction funds designated as "pay as you go".

PROGRESS: Minimum exceeded. FY 2009 Five-Year Financial Plan uses 16% "pay as you go" funding.

NEXT STEPS: Maintain or exceed minimum in updated FY 2010 budget.

3. Set the tax rate at a level that raises sufficient revenue to meet County needs and goals.

PROGRESS: Tax rate of 63 cents maintained in FY 2009 to meet needs and goals identified by BOC.

NEXT STEPS: Review in FY 2010 budget process.

4. Begin a comprehensive, sustainable community initiative, with the N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund grant proposal as the centerpiece. This initiative will include a plan to "green" County

government operations and regulations by employing environmentally friendly practices.

PROGRESS: County was awarded NCADEFPTF grant of \$675,000.00 in late 2008 and a Cannon Foundation grant of \$150,000.00. Staff is also participating in a related statewide effort led by the Center for Environmental Farming Systems. A sustainability manager was hired in December. Several efforts have already been implemented.

NEXT STEPS: Sustainability action plan is being developed by sustainability manager and other staff. Draft to be completed 1st quarter of 2009. Initiated discussions to form a sustainability council at the Chamber. This initiative received a favorable response from EDC board and will be presented to the Chamber board in February. Perform community food assessment and form food policy council by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2009. Begin construction of Cruse harvest facility by 3rd quarter of 2009.

Review of Sustainability Progress Report

County Manager Day reviewed the following report:

County Web Page: Currently developing the Environmental Sustainability portion of the web page. This will provide information and education to County employees and citizens about sustainability efforts within the County and to provide guidance on establishing a path towards a sustainable Cabarrus County.

Incubator Farm: Initial clearing of land has been completed. Cover crop has been planted. Cannon Foundation Grant received. Green house materials have been delivered and stored for later construction. Participation in Center for Environmental Farming Systems "Farm to Fork" initiative.

Energy Conservation: Installation of motion sensors to turn on and shut off lights. Installation of computer controlled lighting and HVAC systems. Developing energy usage spreadsheet to develop benchmark energy use and track energy savings by building / area. Greenhouse gas emission tracking spreadsheet is being developed.

Water Conservation: (Storm Water Pollution Prevention): Installation of rain storage tanks at Governmental Center, Senior Center, and grounds maintenance.

Sustainable Buildings (LEED): Cabarrus is now a member of U.S. Green Building Council. General Services Director and Sustainability Manager are attending LEED workshops in preparation for taking LEED Certification test. Work is ongoing towards constructing a LEED certified building at Old Fairgrounds location. Several minor LEED principles have been discussed for the soon to be designed Mt. Pleasant Library addition.

Air Quality (CO2 emissions, carbon footprint): Developing spreadsheet to track carbon footprint created from all County vehicles. Joining "Cool Counties" once several benchmarks are determined.

Recycling / Purchasing Plan: Work being conducted to better enforce County Recycling Plan. Modifying the recycling portion of the County web page to provide more information and education concerning recycling. Purchasing policy has been established that as of January 20, 2009, there has to be a minimum order of \$50 when placing orders with Corporate Express. This will reduce the number of deliveries which will reduce fuel use (and subsequent greenhouse gas emissions) and reduce the number of boxes required for deliveries. Working on a purchasing policy to purchase products and supplies that are more environmentally friendly.

Solid Waste and Recycling: School white paper recycling program (conducted in conjunction with City of Concord) to be kicked off in February.

Fleet Replacements: Presently we have twenty three (23) four (4) door hybrid sedans and five (5) hybrid SUV's. We have proposed three (3) hybrid SUV's and two (2) four (4) door hybrid sedans for next budget year.

GC Multi-Purpose Room Renovations: All new carpet will be a 100% recycled content. All adhesive for carpet application will be "formaldehyde free". All paint is LOW or NO VOC content. Dishwashers are Energy Star certified. Kitchen finishing materials are all constructed of recycled content.

Facility Services Purchased Supplies: Have initiated Green Seal Certified Roll Paper Towel in 50% of our buildings and are expanding to all buildings. Green Seal Certified multipurpose cleaner being used in GC cleaning and this will be the only multipurpose cleaner purchased moving forward. "Environmentally Friendly" toilet bowl cleaner tested and being used in all buildings now.

Compost Application: We have ramped up our use of compost fertilizer at FLP to include not just the soccer complex but other suffering areas around the park. We have identified the compost facility that has the "mix" that works the best for our locations and have visited the operation as well as reviewed all sample analytical data.

County Location Recycling Container Additions: We have added 58 paper recycling containers and 63 bottles and cans recycling containers to the county operated locations.

Local Food Update

County Manager Day briefly reviewed the following report:

Cabarrus County received the signed grant contract with North Carolina Department of Agriculture Farmland Preservation Trust Fund on November 12. This includes money for the Cruse Meat Processing Facility in Rimertown, the creation of a Local Food Policy Council, and the development of a marketing plan for local foods. The \$675,000.00 we received was the largest award given and distributed by the Trust Fund Advisory Board. The project completion date was extended to June 30, 2010 for the Cruse Meat Processing Facility Kill floor addition.

The RFQ for Wastewater Management plans was released in June, 2008. We received 3 packets. Individual interviews were completed and a tentative decision made about which company to use to prepare the Waste Management Plans. In the meantime, it was decided we needed an aquifer study and Kyle contacted Orion Engineering (already working another project with the county) and the study was completed with the water quality looking good. However, there will need to be another well drilled to accommodate the quantity of water needed and used by this operation. We will be meeting with the county's environmental health and Orion Engineering to discuss options for the new well and the permitting required by the state. In the meantime, I hope we will be able to move forward and work on getting the Waste Management plan done and the permit submitted to Raleigh, Division of Water Quality with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. This permitting process with DENR can take as long as 6 months to complete.

Next steps: well and wastewater management plans, construction for the facility; apply for Rural Development grant since we're going to be creating more jobs at this facility.

The Cannon Foundation, along with Cabarrus County Government has invested \$400,000.00 in the Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm Park on Atando Road. Cooperative Extension has partnered with several other county departments to create an advisory committee comprised of individuals from Park and Rec., General Services, farmers, horticulturalists, and local businesses. The advisory committee has met nine times and discussed and agreed upon program goals, equipment needed, educational program plan and conceptual ideas of what will happen and be grown out there.

The greenhouse materials have been purchased and they were delivered. We've "hired" a mentor farmer to work every day with the beginning farmers in the program. This mentor farmer is going to build the greenhouse. It will be up and functional by March 1. There have been vegetables planted out there on site to

test the soil fertility and such. The spinach is delicious and the garlic will be ready by May. There are 9 beginning farmers, 4 resource gardeners, and 1 mentor farmer on site beginning February 1. The educational classes begin January 22 and the topics include: Business Planning, Economics of Fruit and Vegetable Production, Farm Resources FSA and NRCS, Crop Planning and Scheduling, Marketing, Display, Insurance, Transplant Production, Planting, Record Keeping, Taxes, Soils and Fertility, Groundwater, Irrigation, Measuring Quality of Fruits and Vegetables, Post Harvest Handling, Cultural practices (Mulching, Staking), Insects and Disease, Pesticide Handling, Storage, and Disposal, Safety, and Business Plans Presentations. WK Dickson is currently working on a layout and grading plan for the greenhouse and parking.

Next steps: continue educational program, get the farmers on site and started with the growing process based on their business plans, develop the post harvest handling facilities, and apply for the grant from the NC Tobacco Trust Fund.

Goal No. 1 - Year 2 Outcomes

1. Work with the school boards to determine any advantages in offering more distance learning classes.

PROGRESS: Issue has been raised in Chair/Vice Chair meeting. No additional progress.

NEXT STEPS: Ask BOEs (Board of Educations) to study technology improvements, to include costs, space impacts, benefits, etc. Could then be funded separately like other current expense items.

Dinner Break

Dinner was served at 6:00 p.m. The Board resumed its discussion of goals, progress and next steps at 6:54 p.m.

Goal No. 1 - Year 3-5 Outcomes

1. Develop and implement a single comprehensive plan which defines areas for future utility extensions, land uses and densities, consistent, high quality development standards; water use and conservation; annexations, road and other transportation and transit improvements, school construction and other public improvements in a collaborative effort involving the public, the county, all municipalities, the school systems and WSACC.

PROGRESS: Interlocal agreement with Concord and adoption and implementation of Central Area Land Use Plan and zoning results in lower densities, controls utility extensions and pushes development into municipal controlled areas with existing infrastructure for 15 years. This successful effort could serve as a model for replication with other municipalities. The success of this strategy depends on willingness of other local governments to participate.

NEXT STEPS: Approach other municipalities in 1st quarter of 2009 about replicating planning process used with Concord. Consider a community town hall/summit on sustainable development. Seek dynamic speakers. Use multiple approaches: book readings, etc.

Next, the Board reviewed and discussed the following news articles as published recently in THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER: "What not to build: Rethink big road projects", "Use transit, travel smart", both by Alex Marshall; "Nurture existing neighborhoods, boost quality of life", by Alex Marshall and Neal Peirce; and "'Green' eggs and ham? Perfect place to start" and "Steps for a greener tomorrow" by Neal Peirce.

Goal No. 2

Achieve community-wide preparedness to protect public safety, respond to routine and catastrophic events, and maintain and restore the well-being of all residents.

Goal No. 2 - Year 1 Outcomes

1. Complete the National Incident Management report, assess the fire suppression response in the unincorporated areas, identify short comings and provide recommendations for improvement.

PROGRESS: The National Incident Management Annual Assessment was submitted to the Department of Homeland Security in September 2008. Cabarrus County completed 100% of the requirements for FY2008. The Fire Marshal's Office continues to monitor rural fire response, all departments are experiencing a decline in recruitment of volunteers, the staffing grant program has greatly assisted the departments in achieving response goals.

NEXT STEPS: Ensure all new employees/Board Members complete required National Incident Management training. Continue monitoring response levels of volunteer fire departments.

2. Ask all public safety agencies in the County to assess training facility needs and develop a plan to meet those needs.

PROGRESS: All public safety agencies (Law Enforcement, Fire, EMS & Rescue) were polled and provided input into what they would like to see included in a county public safety training facility.

NEXT STEPS: Perform feasibility study in 2009 (funds are budgeted) and have master plan developed for county public safety training facility.

3. Hold an extensive work session for information gathering and strategy development in the area of emergency management.

PROGRESS: Work session held October 8, 2008. Thorough presentation of emergency management responsibilities, capacity, efforts to date and future plans provided. Discussed gaps as related to staffing emergency shelters, emergency power for shelters and registering our special needs population.

NEXT STEPS: Continue to work with school officials in identifying and placing emergency power on specific school sites during design of new schools, prepare public safety preparedness messages for Channel 22. Work with local physicians to help identify special needs individuals.

Goal No. 2 - Year 2 Outcomes

1. Develop a systematic way to provide a centralized 911 call center.

PROGRESS: Representatives from Concord, Kannapolis and Cabarrus County have met monthly since September to discuss feasibility of consolidated 911 services. The group has studied existing combined centers as well as analysis of our existing systems. While a combined system could be feasible if planned correctly, questions still exist on how the combined system would be governed.

NEXT STEPS: Determine cost of hiring consultant to perform consolidation study, assess interest of cities, bring findings to BOC for action in FY 2009.

Recess of Meeting

The meeting recessed at 8:00 p.m., until 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 31, 2009 at Camp T. N. Spencer, Helms Hall.


Clerk to the Board