

March 5, 2015—Planning Retreat

The Randolph County Board of Commissioners met in special session at the Randolph Community College Foundation Conference Center for a Planning Retreat. Commissioners Frye, Kemp, Lanier, Haywood and Allen were present, as well as, County Manager Hal Johnson; Assistant County Manager/Finance Officer Will Massie; County Attorney Ben Morgan; Associate County Attorney Aimee Scotton; Amanda Varner, Clerk to the Board and Dana Crisco, Deputy Clerk to the Board. County Department Heads/staff were in attendance and made presentations where so noted later in these minutes.

At 12:45 pm, Chairman Frye called the meeting to order.

County Manager Hal Johnson advised that a bus day-trip to Greenville-Spartanburg, SC, to meet with their economic development individuals and to look at the BMW site is being planned by the Bryan Foundation. He said this would give the Board a chance to ask questions about what went right or wrong and what they would have done differently.

Mr. Johnson began the retreat by saying that a retreat is a great way for the Commissioners and staff to discuss and design a direction in which departments should go in planning their budget and capital projects for the upcoming fiscal year and beyond.

Update on Technology Options for Commissioner Meetings

Michael Rowland, IT Director, gave the Commissioners an update on technology that is now available at the Historical Courthouse and sought their thoughts on the possibility of a paperless agenda system in the future. The cost of printing and the time spent preparing and assembling agenda books would be reduced. The agenda and packets are already published digitally on the web for the public prior to meetings. Due to a weather event in the previous week, a couple of the agenda books were not delivered, but the agenda packet was made available to the Commissioners, before releasing it to the public, via a link that IT provided. Two Commissioners were able to review the agenda packet online. The paperless process would happen much the same. Mr. Rowland will look into the expense of software and tablets if the Commissioners decide they would like to go this direction.

Mr. Rowland discussed emails as public record and explained the county emails are archived to meet retention schedule requirements and the public records laws. The Commissioners have county email addresses and now have the option of checking those emails themselves instead of routing through the Clerk, if they wish to do so. They just need to let Mr. Rowland know they would like to do this.

Update on Regional Landfill

Paxton Arthurs, Public Works Director, discussed the new regional landfill milestones and what is anticipated. He said the NCDENR review will probably take around six months. An additional public hearing will be held by the State at the end of their review and will be held locally. Mr. Arthurs presented a timeline of the process with an estimated grand opening in August of 2016. He also presented a map of the layout of the regional landfill and said that Waste Management is working with the engineering firm Wooten Company regarding the best

location of water and sewer lines that need to be installed on the property. Waste Management began monitoring the closed landfill in June of 2014, took over operation of the transfer station and hauling in January 2015 and took control of the recycling operations.

Mr. Arthurs shared the following payment structure:

- \$3.5 million Upfront Payment (received)
- \$500,000 First Annual Payment (When non-appealable Permit to Construct is received)
- \$750,000 for Animal Shelter when Landfill opens
- \$1,000,000 Annually by July 31st until the end of the 30-year contract

Also discussed were the future landfill gas & timber in which revenues could be generated. Commissioner Lanier will be meeting with timber companies to access the course of action.

Mr. Arthurs then reviewed the actions that have already taken place regarding the closed landfill and the anticipated upfront cost of approximately \$36,000 from the Closure Fund for the Corrective Action Plan that had been contracted with Golder Associates.

Proposed Animal Shelter Surrender Fees

MiMi Cooper, Public Health Director, presented the number of dogs and cats impounded by jurisdiction from July 2014- January 2015: Randolph County- 2,278; Archdale- 77; Asheboro- 415; Ramseur- 9; Randleman- 68; Trinity- included in RC figure; Liberty- 37; Franklinville- included in RC figure. She said they do not charge municipalities to bring in strays, but inquired if there was interest in charging a small surrender fee to municipalities to try to offset costs the shelter incurs. They are providing services without any recoup of the expenses. Ms. Cooper shared the details from the 2014 Public Animal Shelter Report given to the Dept. of Agriculture, which included the operating expenses (\$510,760) divided by number of animal impounded (5,241) to equal a cost per animal of \$97.45.

Law Enforcement Restricted Funds

Col. Fred Rutledge said there is no such thing as a bullet proof vest any longer; therefore the staff has completed a lot of researched on a tactical vehicle. He said he was very appreciative to the volunteers from his force and other emergency personnel who have trained for the emergency response team that would use this vehicle.

Jane Leonard, Assistant Business Manager, stated Sheriff Reid is requesting the expenditure of \$363,817 in law enforcement restricted funds. The funds will be used to purchase a Lenco BearCat tactical response vehicle, which is built on a Ford F550 chassis with four doors and a four-wheel off-road upgrade package. Col. Rutledge said parts are readily available unlike military tactical vehicles. It has an open floor plan that can comfortably accommodate a fully-equipped ten to twelve man tactical team. In addition, this BearCat features run-flat tires, roof mounted spot lights, back up camera system with monitor, intercom system (inside to outside), hydraulic ram, thermal image and color camera with flat screen color monitor, and ballistic plating to defeat any threats commonly encountered.

Ms. Leonard said the tactical response vehicle will be used in emergency situations when there is an active threat against the public, while providing the response team with ballistic

protection. This vehicle could be used in hostage situations, when there are barricaded subjects, or in downed-officer/civilian rescue. With the thermal image system, it can also assist in search and rescue operations.

This BearCat will replace two old vehicles that are severely outdated and will greatly enhance the tactical response and rescue capabilities. Col. Rutledge noted that their first vehicle they obtained to use as transportation for the team has no ballistic protection. It is a converted 1997 ambulance from Emergency Services. The other vehicle, with protection, is a 1969 model peace-keeper military vehicle in a non-running state and is not street legal.

The BearCat they wish to purchase is manufactured and sold by Lenco Armored Vehicles, Inc. The vehicle comes fully equipped with all components installed. The total cost of the BearCat is \$349,336. Additional costs are the exterior spray for \$4,000 that will keep the vehicle body from rusting; and the DMV vehicle tax of \$10,481. Ms. Leonard said there are sufficient funds in the Law Enforcement Restricted Fund Balance for this request. Balance on hand as of 12/31/14 was \$370,428.05 and additional revenue received through February 2015 equals \$243,522.42.

Chairman Frye asked how many incidents involving gun fire have been recorded. Col. Rutledge gave the following statistics gathered since 1993:

- 13,265 total firearm related calls
- 50 homicides involving firearms
- 2,163 assaults w/ firearm, armed person calls
- 6 assaults with a firearm on a law enforcement officer
- 10,858 discharge of firearm calls

Capital Improvement Plan

Assistant County Manager/Finance Officer Will Massie said that the objective of the Capital Improvement Plan was to coordinate the planning process, identify critical capital needs for county government, public schools, and the community college, evaluate proposed projects, set priorities, plan for future budget impacts, finance projects and manage the debt load. Mr. Massie reviewed the criteria used to determine priority status of a project.

Update on Current Projects

➤ Animal Shelter: MiMi Cooper, Public Health Director, stated that the Commissioners felt the first proposal for a completely new facility that was presented at the prior year retreat was beyond the needs and that a renovation of the current facility may be a better option. The shelter recently went through its state inspection. Issues were noted that needed to be fixed. An extension was granted to make repairs to the shelter because some of the repair needed has to be done in a specific temperature range in order to properly adhere. Ms. Cooper said the problems are not going away and they are unsure of total renovation costs. She would like to begin the design process and work with a firm to make the best use of the existing facility and any addition. She also said the shelter had received \$25,000 from a will and would like to use those funds to hire a firm.

Public Works Director Paxton Arthurs said they are surveying the current location for options to add to and renovate the building. The property borders the landfill and they wish to remain in the vicinity, but can't expand into the footprint of it.

Ms. Cooper also relayed information that they have fewer animals in the shelter than in past years and less euthanasia actions have been necessary. Commissioner Allen asked what she attributed this to and she replied that the attitude about animal ownership has changed over the years. Animals are now considered a part of the family.

➤ **Emergency Services Headquarters:** Donovan Davis, Emergency Services Director reviewed the summary of probable cost prepared by Little Diversified Architectural Consulting, which is estimated near \$10 million dollars. Mr. Davis said the 9-1-1 Board issues grants for back-up centers and wants to see if they would make this eligible, since they would be leaving the current building as their back-up location.

Mr. Arthurs asked if the Commissioners could meet with Little Diversified on Tuesday, March 10th, regarding the design and to give input. They agreed to attend and a special meeting notice will be issued and published.

Commissioner Lanier spoke about the community acceptance of the Uwharrie Ambulance base and how grateful the people are. Mr. Davis said that residents had even prepared meals for the crews on duty. He reported there had been 34 patients transported by an ambulance dispatched from that base since January.

Mr. Davis also handed out a "state-of-the-department" report for the Commissioners to review later. It covered call volume, new program implementation, goals, upgrades, upcoming budget requests and Fire Marshal's Office statistics.

➤ **Social Services:** Beth Duncan, Social Services Director, thanked the Board and county administration for what has been afforded her department in recent months. She said, due to the implementation of the NCFAST automation project, coupled with open enrollment in the federal health care marketplace, work performance has been bogged down to a slow crawl and overtime and additional staff were needed. For years now, adequate staffing has been a primary concern. Now, she is at maximum office capacity and says before Medicaid expands, Randolph County must have a proactive plan in place to accommodate that expansion. Whether it is to build a building, expand existing DSS building, or renovate an empty building, DSS must prepare for the growth needed in order to meet the federal and state mandates required to serve the citizens. Ms. Duncan urged serious consideration to some type of facility expansion, as well as some renovation to existing facilities before Medicaid expands, not during or after expansion. She said it is "certainly not helpful to attempt to build the train while we are going down the track."

Ms. Duncan mentioned that Child Protective Services will also get a lot of attention in the legislative session. The state is discussing trends in child welfare services and the child protection system. There have been cuts to child welfare funding in past years and only recently has money been partially restored to pay for child protection. She is concerned that growth could happen in this area as well.

During the discussion of what could be done to expand the space, the following ideas were suggested: relocating JDRC (3,800 sq. ft. office located next to DSS), adding to the current building, or finding a larger facility than they currently have in Archdale to accommodate the northwest portion of the county.

Ms. Duncan and Maintenance Director James Chriscoe shared the urgency to update the current DSS restrooms and find a way to add additional ones. Mr. Chriscoe said his facilities budget doesn't have the funds. Chairman Frye asked Mr. Chriscoe to bring a plan to fix those to the Commissioners at the April meeting.

➤ Sheriff's Office: Col. Fred Rutledge presented a conceptual layout for a 19,675 square foot jail expansion that would allow for 80 beds, add a vacuum plumbing system to existing dry cells, create a new transport corridor at existing booking area, upsize the laundry facility and integrate the new housing into the master control room. The estimated budget for the expansion is \$5,583,088.58.

Break

At 2:54 p.m., the Board recessed for a short break.

Retreat Resumed

At 3:07 p.m., the retreat resumed.

Extension of New Century Drive

County Manager Hal Johnson informed the Board that the City of Asheboro is looking at extending New Century Drive to Veterans Loop by the jail. Commissioner Frye had concern about the additional traffic and the possible issue that traffic could cause once the Emergency Services headquarters and ambulance base was relocated to New Century Drive. He didn't want ambulance response time to be delayed.

Capital Replacement Plan

Assistant County Manager/Finance Officer Will Massie stated the Capital Replacement Plan needs a dedicated revenue source and gave a summary of needs from county departments. He said a decision has been delayed on ways to obtain revenue for capital replacement, but the County should prepare now to fund its future needs. He suggested that it could come from a percentage of sales tax or additional monies budgeted on each department for capital replacement.

Maintenance

Maintenance Director James Chriscoe gave an update on some pressing projects. He stated that the elevator in the Walker Street building will soon need to be replaced and that parts for the Historic Courthouse elevator will soon be impossible to obtain. The McDowell Center roof is due to be replaced as well as other roofs on county buildings. The newer courthouse has HVAC problems they continue to repair, but soon will need to be replaced. Mr. Chriscoe said there are issues that have been pushed aside and new things that have come up that his building maintenance budget of \$55,000 cannot cover.

Employee Compensation and Benefits Update

Jill Williams, Human Resources Director, presented compensation and benefits for the Commissioners to consider. Randolph County Sheriff's office uses the Step/Grade system, while all other County Departments are on open range. She explained the different options for pay increases: Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), market adjustment and merit bonus or merit increase.

- The COLA adjusts salaries based on changes in a cost-of-living index. Pay ranges and/or employee pay rates be increased.
- Market adjustments bring individuals or the organization to approximate market values. The Springsted study recommended adjustments to the pay plans based on the market. Pay ranges or employee pay may be adjusted or both. There is a positive impact on recruitment when the minimum of the range increases.
- Merit increase is an adjustment to an individual's hourly rate or salary due to his performance.
- Merit bonus recognizes employees due to their performance. It is a one-time bonus rather than an adjustment to their pay.

Ms. Williams said that in 2014, employee turnover was 13.4% which is the lowest it has been since 2011 and feels we are making a little progress.

She asked the following to be considered as they decide how to respond to her budget request she will be making:

- What are our strategic goals? Hire qualified applicants who meet the minimum education and experience but need six months to two years training in order to perform independently; or hire fully qualified applicants who not only meet the minimum job requirements but who have multiple years of experience and need little training (six months or less to work independently).
- What is our market competitiveness? Do we want to be an employer who pays "market" rate or midpoint of the range? Or, will we be an employer who pays below the "market" but a certain percentage above the minimum with emphasis on our excellent benefits package?

She said that our market position should balance what it takes to attract new employees and to retain skilled employees (in other words eliminating high pay as the reason employees leave the organization) with the organization's financial resources. A pay philosophy should be developed that establishes a compensation program based on individual employee performance as a key feature (Merit increase).

Ms. Williams listed monetary options to consider:

1. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and Merit Increase (not Merit Bonus).
2. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and Market Adjustment. (Piedmont Triad Regional could conduct market survey.)
3. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and implement pay philosophy or plan to start moving employees from minimum of range.

Ms. Williams also mentioned the following options to employee benefits to consider:

1. 401k contribution increase to non-sworn law enforcement officers. 51 counties responding to the School of Government Survey contribute to the 401k of non-sworn employees. 34 or 68% responded that they contribute 3% or more.
2. Dental insurance. 82 counties responded to School of Government survey. 60% either cost share or pay 100% of employee coverage as follows: Six cost share and 43 pay 100% of employee coverage.

Finance Officer Will Massie said management is trying to plan and implement the right balance so that we keep valuable employees that can maintain quality services to the citizens.

Strategic Planning

County Manager Hal Johnson advised the Board that he felt there was a real need for the County to begin a countywide Strategic Planning process. Johnson said that the mega site was just one indication that Randolph County was at a crossroads in its history. Regardless of the final development of the mega site, the county needed to strategically plan for social and economic changes that would be experienced. He gave the Commissioners a copy of the last Strategic Plan conducted by the County in 1995. Johnson said the 1995 plan had been a very successful process that gave citizens from across the county the opportunity to become aware, and have input, into some of the challenges that the county might face in the future. He mentioned that Growth Management and related zoning was just one issue, and that a Strategic Plan would also address other community issues such as Education, Workforce development, and potential recruitment of regional and state health care facilities. Johnson said that there was a cost in conducting a strategic plan, and he would put this request in the new budget being developed. Johnson said, if approved by the Commissioners, that he expected to request assistance from the Piedmont Triad Regional Council to facilitate a Strategic Planning process.

Economic Development Strategies

Finance Director Will Massie, said that the Economic Development Reserve reflects our existing strategy to promote job creation through site development and incentives. By November 2014, the County had utilized \$1,559,800 from the fund for performance-based incentive payments, with outstanding commitments on sixteen projects of another \$1,028,614. These projects represent 1,999 additional jobs throughout Randolph County, and will have added \$510,395,225 in original real and personal property investment to the property tax base. The projects have leveraged \$4,185,520 in grants to fund public infrastructure. Mr. Massie gave the following summary:

Summary of Economic Development Reserve

Transfers from General Fund		\$ 2,570,940.00
Interest Earnings		298,264.03
 Disbursements		
Incentives – Reserve only	1,590,954.99	
Industrial Parks	<u>626,031.57</u>	
Total		<u>2,216,986.56</u>

Currently Available Cash	652,217.47
Remaining Commitments (without MOM)	<u>997,459.00</u>
Remaining Reserves	\$ (345,241.53)

Mr. Massie had the following questions for consideration:

- ▶ Does Randolph County still need the Economic Development Reserve for future initiatives? (It was funded three of four years.)
- ▶ If so, how should we fund it?
 - How much?
 - What revenue do we use to fund it?
- ▶ Do we need to develop a formal, written economic development screening policy to guide incentive decisions?

Mr. Massie suggested taking the \$1 million annual payment from the Waste Management to fund the Reserve. Chairman Frye suggested half of that amount. Commissioner Allen liked the screening policy and case by case decisions on incentives. Commissioner Haywood said the Board needs to have a plan on funding existing commitments and any future that may arise.

The Greensboro – Liberty Mega Site

County Manager Johnson presented a press release by the Piedmont Triad Partnership (PTP) stating that a new 501c-3 non-profit entity will be created. He, Associate County Attorney Aimee Scotton, County Attorney Ben Morgan, Chairman Frye, and Commissioner Kemp attended a meeting at the Bryan Foundation on Monday and received this. It will be called the Greensboro-Randolph Megasite Foundation. The new entity will acquire from Piedmont Triad Partnership (PTP) all of the existing options to purchase. Upon PTP's completion of the sale of 255 acres to Randolph County, the PTP's involvement will cease and it will return to its more traditional role of advocating for various economic development projects and sites in the Piedmont Triad region. The new foundation will be supported financially by the Greensboro-based non-profit that supported PTP's initial efforts. It states that the Megasite Foundation will work closely with Randolph County to pursue funding for the acquisition of the properties currently under contract and to purchase additional properties if any are deemed desirable. In conjunction with the County and the NC Department of Commerce, the Megasite Foundation will also seek to develop the site and to market it to potential users.

Ms. Scotton said by-laws for the Foundation board are being drafted to send to the Secretary of State. It will have a five-member board; Bryan Foundation will have three seats, City of Greensboro will have one seat, and Randolph County will have one seat.

Chairman Frye reminded the Board that the contract with Archdale for treated water expires this year and the 1.25 million gallons could be sold to the City of Greensboro for this site.

Manager Johnson said the County needs to see how we can promote two sites in close proximity to our advantage and also consider how development of both sites will affect the eastern side of Randolph County.

Open Discussion

Chairman Frye said the Julian fire tax was an issue that was brought up during the public hearing, but that the incentives would not affect the tax they were receiving because that would still be charged. In regards to the possibility of their increased needs for equipment, he felt the Board could address that when needed.

Commissioner Haywood referred back to the mega site and inquired to what their plan B and C is. It is very marketable with the rail for plan B. He suggested a healthcare facility for a portion of the property on plan B or as plan C.

Commissioner Haywood urged the Board to prioritize the needs of the County, its employees, departments, and schools so that Mr. Massie has some direction in planning the budget.

Commissioner Kemp suggested that Mr. Massie throw all the needs into the budget and see where they are, what they would need to do and then start the prioritizing.

Adjournment

At 4:55 p.m., there being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

 Darrell L. Frye

 Phil Kemp

 Stan Haywood

 Arnold Lanier

 David Allen

 Amanda Varner, Clerk to the Board