

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for their monthly Workshop on Monday, March 3, 2014 at 5:14 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Patrick Cannon presiding. Councilmembers present were Al Austin, John Autry, Edmund Driggs, Claire Fallon, David Howard, Patsy Kinsey, Vi Lyles, LaWana Mayfield, Greg Phipps and Kenny Smith.

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Michael Barnes

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## **FOLLOW UP TO COUNCIL VISIONING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Mayor Cannon called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for being there. Of course, this is going to be a tie-in from our retreat that we had recently as we talked about the Vision and of course the Mission and strategic priorities as we look to move the community forward. I know there are some folks here that are under some tight deadlines so I want to be mindful of their time. I believe our Superintendent, Dr. Morrison has a community meeting at 6:00. His public service work never stops, never ceases; and so he is on these time constraints and I want to take advantage of his time as we get ready to move forward.

Councilmember Howard said before we get started Mayor I think it would not be appropriate to not start the meeting by congratulating you and Mr. Carlee as well as CRVA on the great job with the CIAA. I missed the announcement, but I've read about it, so to pull off six years and a headquarters move should be commended and I wanted to do so publicly.

Mayor Cannon said thank you for the acknowledgement.

Mr. Howard said it's a big deal to the community and I wanted to say something.

Mayor Cannon said thank you so much, really appreciate that. This Workshop goal process, what has it been about – well we have received briefings on the Vision and Mission and the priorities of Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, Mecklenburg County as well as the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce because we asked for that during our process. Number two, we want to take this information and have it as input as envisioning process on our side of the water so what we through would be good would be to have a 15-minute presentation, something short, from our partners with regard to the things we talked about but following that let's have some discussion if we might for another 15-minutes just to talk about what we've heard and at the end of the briefings let's have some general discussion as a body if you are okay with that about how we can continue to work together to improve the community where we are all a part of right here in Charlotte as well as Mecklenburg County.

**Dr. Heath Morrison, Superintendent Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools** I thank you for this opportunity; it is a pleasure to come in front of you again and to be with my colleagues Ron and Dena. I want to share with you; I don't know if you learn a lot about leadership when things are going great, when there are challenges you learn a lot about leadership and I can tell you what a pleasure it was when we were facing some serious weather challenges in the City and County to be partnering with Ron and Dena and I think it speaks to the collaboration and cooperation that all of our organizations are wanting to do to serve all of the citizens of Charlotte Mecklenburg at an even higher level. Thank you for this opportunity, very grateful to Ron and Dena for their friendship and support and let's keep going.

Dr. Morrison used PowerPoint for his presentation to Council, of which a copy is on file in the City Clerk's Office. As you know we have a brand new strategic plan in our Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and as I've shared with a lot of districts who have heard a lot about our strategic plan process, my words of wisdom to them have been if you want to do it quickly and in a short way don't do it the way we did it, but we gathered an impressive amount of community input and support and then went back and got more. We are focused on every child, every day and the title of our strategic plan is For a Better Tomorrow. I focus my efforts every day on every child in our school district. I wake up every morning and I go to sleep every night and I think about the incredible opportunity I have as Superintendent and also realize that incredible

opportunity is very much different than someone who has had by background because I grew up in poverty, my mother did not graduate from high school and I did not have access to early childhood. Those three things for most students who meet those criteria, they don't graduate from high school, they don't go on to college and they don't get this incredible opportunity to be in front of you tonight. What drives me every day is to how to make sure those three issues don't become barriers for children that every child in Charlotte Mecklenburg has an opportunity to walk across that stage and get a diploma that is a passport for a better tomorrow. When you measure just in terms of getting students through elementary, middle school and high school, getting the diploma and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools have been doing a good job for a long time. We have been graduating more students; students have been very successful. I was just meeting a citizen who graduated from Myers Park High School, so we have had success as a school district and there are lots of things that I can tell you that we are good school district. I believe the data has the ability to indict us about being a good school district. I can tell you about closing achievement gaps, better graduation results.

Our Board has been recognized as the best Board in the entire country so we've had accolades, but we don't want to be a good district, we need to be a great district because we have over 144,000 reasons to be great. Jim Collins, in the book, Good to Great said if you were going to try to be really great you can't settle for being really good and you also have to confront the brutal facts. As we try to go on this journey up from going to be just a good school district, but to be a great school district there are a lot of brutal facts that we have to put on the table. We also have to think about what is it going to take to be great in the future that is much different in education than the education that all of us have experienced. Because just as you were looking at change in leading the City and the County, there are huge changes going on in the field of education and it is preparing students for a vastly different workplace. When the workplace looked like the picture above, schools could look like the picture below. But workplaces don't look that way anymore and so we have got to change our instructional programs and practice. There is a fierce urgency of change as Dr. King once said and it is right here right now. The challenge that we have, and I think an incredible opportunity, is how do you create schools of tomorrow to meet the workforce needs that you were trying to attract in terms of businesses to come here and what are those workplaces going to look like. What we know about education is that the old model is simply not going to be sufficient because if you fail to graduate or if you only graduate, if you only have a finite amount of skills you are going to have those jobs that used to be there but were replaced by technology or outsourced. We know that it is going to require students to have much more than just a high school diploma. They are going to have to have a vast array of skills. Students will no longer be just looking for jobs; they will have to have the skillset to create jobs because that is what is going to make a difference. Also we know that students of the future will be changing jobs from 10 to 12 times. The bar has raised and our schools have to match what we know is going to be happening in the workplace of tomorrow. Twenty-first century skills; we don't know necessarily what those twenty-first century jobs are going to be; we have some really good ideas, we know some of the fields, but what we know is that these jobs will require a twenty-first century set of skills; critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, communication. These are the skills that are going to really give our students some benefit in a global enterprise. We are always having to fight this urge that people want to recreate the schools that they fondly remember; we've got to create the schools that our children really need for tomorrow.

Our goal in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools is to provide a customized educational plan for every child and to have every child be a champion of their own learning. When someone says well what does that look like, give me an analogy; it is the same thing that you expect of a good doctor. If you walked in the Dr.'s office and Dena and I both have a hurt elbow, Dena's might be because she plays a lot of tennis and she needs a less intensive medical support whereas I might have a total reconstruction that needs to happen. The goal is that we both leave the Dr.'s office with a prescribed course of wellness that will ultimately have us both having elbows that feel better and work functionally. We need to have every child in our schools to get the plan that they need; it will look different and will require different levels of intensive service, but we want every child graduating from our high schools ready for that next step. Indeed having a diploma that is a passport for a better tomorrow. That means that every day counts, every day is important and so we've been on this journey, we've had a strategic plan; we created a new plan called The Way Forward, which was our intention to go back out into the community and to listen even deeper so we have been very much seeking first to understand then to be understood. We've formed 22 task

forces and they range from everything from closing achievement gaps to college and career readiness, to workforce readiness to having one focus on African American males. We got tremendous insight from our community about what we need to do to truly make a great school district. We launched our plan in October entitled For a Better Tomorrow and that plan has six major goals. The first major goal is exactly what you would expect it to be and that is that we need to maximize the educational program for every student. Provide that customized 21<sup>st</sup> century way of educating students that are truly going to get them ready for all these great jobs that our Chamber is bringing to Charlotte. That means that we need to have the ability to customize learning environment. It means that we need to be able to commit to a higher level of rigor because just like I would say a rising tide lifts all ships so we need to make sure that students have that exposure to more rigorous programs and that we need to indeed close achievement gaps. The best way to do all those things is to have the best workforce that you can possibly have in public education and the higher effective teachers, great principals, support staff. I will tell you when people ask me what is the most challenging aspect of what we are trying to do, this is it. I am very concerned about what is happening in our state; I've very concerned about our ability to attract great teachers. Our teaching salaries right now are \$10,000 below the national average; they are \$7,000 below the regional average. We have put a lot of things in place and making it really challenging to attract great teachers to North Carolina as well as we are seeing great teachers in our own school district that love CMS; that love North Carolina, but they cannot even have to move and go to Tennessee, go to South Carolina, go to Georgia, go to Virginia and make a lot more. We've got to focus in terms of what it is going to take to compensate our exceptional educators, but also to create a culture that makes them want to stay in our school district.

Goal three is around partnerships. I think the best resource we have in this community is this incredible community that wants to help. Every time I go to a function people give me a business card and say how can I help the school district so we have to be very specific about what are things that will help us, what are partnerships that will help us achieve our desired results and that also means we have to tell people that what they are wanting to help us with is not going to be as supportive as they may think it is and then redirect them to another agency. We are getting very focused around partnerships that will really take us to the next level and also respecting our parents as the first teachers; building capacity of our parents to help support our children. I have yet to see a child we can't educate well when the parent and the school are working together.

Goal four is around culture and a lot of times people say well that sounds kind of soft, but an organization committed to cultural excellence; an organization that really focuses intently on cultures like a Southwest Airlines or even the US Military. They have gotten bang for their buck; they understand that it is about the physical safety of our teachers and our students come to school feeling physically safe. It is also about social emotional learning needs. We know so many of our students come with huge social emotional needs and I actually put this chart, and you might recognize this, but if you ever took any psychology courses in college you heard about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and I will confess I learned it for my teaching certificate, but then I thought I will never use it again, but that guy Maslow was pretty smart. What he said is before you get to that higher rung of critical thinking skills that really is what makes us exciting as human beings and that ability to create and innovate and to collaborate, you have basic needs that if they are not met then students are not going to be engaged at the level, no matter how good the teacher is and they are not going to learn as quickly as we need them to learn. We need to make sure that we are addressing the social emotional learnings needs of our students and then also to really get cultural competency right and simply put, we've got to meet each students where they are and take them to where they need to be and we need to respect the diversity of our students as our greatest strength, not in a deficit model of thinking that because a student comes with a certain background or a certain challenge that that is going to be a barrier to learn. Demography and destiny cannot be one in the same in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools.

Goal five is around results. We know we need to be accountable; we want to be accountable so we can have good processes and systems; we want to have our process and systems be what drives our continuous improvement and we also need to be able to have a rapid response when we have schools that are not meeting the success that they need to meet, but then we also need to offer freedoms and flexibility when we have schools that are far outpacing the targets that we have set for them.

Goal six is around our transformation of our entire school district. Our commitment to transform every local neighborhood school so that every local neighborhood school is a school of choice; that we have a commitment of making sure that every parent in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools has at least two quality public CMS school opportunities. It is our commitment to going one to one with technology so that you can have everywhere anytime learning for our students and to really allow us to do exactly what I started off with, customize that learning environment through a commitment to transformation. A lot of this is already happening; just some of the brand new opportunities we are offering our parents and our students next year, including a new medical career academy at Hawthorne, tied to the 14 medical programs at CPCC; that is going to help with workforce development. A new aim high so that we can help do our part to help make Charlotte an intermodal hub and to be a place where entrepreneurship thrives, so that is a new offering. Two new middle colleges and a brand new early college of the two middle colleges in partnership with the Community College and we are very grateful about the shared collaboration with the Community College that showed up on our bonds referendums that were passed, both for the school district and for CPCC. I know I need to point out that Charlotte Mecklenburg's bond referendum passed a little higher than the Community Colleges but does it matter, the community supported both of those because there was collaboration at an unprecedented level and then a brand new early college with UNCC. Montessori Programs in District 1 because our District 1 offering for magnet programs has not been what it should be; brand new stem opportunities, science, technology, engineering and math but we want to make them seen because the arts are critically important for that creativity and that way that we need students to express themselves. Just some of the many, many new programs that we are offering.

Where are we now? Again, we are a good school district; we have rising graduation rates; we have rising test scores in many areas like SAT, but we know that there is much more work that we have to do. You are going to probably be hearing a lot more soon about the common core. The common core is a set of standards that 44 states have adopted; these are some of the rigorous challenging standards ever attempted in public education and we are now starting to see assessments that match those higher standards. Every state that has adopted the common core; Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, New York has risen the standards, assessed and seen anywhere from 40 to 50 point drops in proficiency as students are adjusting to those higher standards, but remember a rising tide lifts all ships. Last year was North Carolina's first attempt and this just gives you an example of what a math problem in 5<sup>th</sup> grade used to look like versus what a new common core math problem will be; (last slide on page 15) much more challenging, much more rigorous, requires students to not just think about math in isolation but to really be able to respond the way a 21<sup>st</sup> century learner would have to respond. I'll give you the answer, but I know everybody in this room got it. How did we do, well North Carolina took the same common core drop that every other state did and matter of fact North Carolina took less of a drop and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools actually for the first time in several years out performed the state, but we also experienced a drop. While I'm excited that we not only exceeded the state performance, we didn't do as well as we need to do so we've got more work to do. When people say well how do you know that Charlotte Mecklenburg is a good school district, well there is something called The Nation's Report Card and out of all of the large urban school districts in the country our Charlotte Mecklenburg performance put us right at the very top. I could tell you about we exceeded the state on the common core exams, that with NAEP results we are the best performing large urban school district in the country. That simply makes us a tall tree in a short forest. We've got to improve; we have to improve because this is our brand promise to provide that personalized program for education for every child that is going to allow them to walk across the stage and not only get a diploma, but a diploma that is a passport for a better tomorrow. We have 144,000 reasons why we need to be successful at this work; we have committed to this work; we know that we will do it better in partnership with our City and County partners. I believe that is my 15 minutes so I'm not exceeding that.

Councilmember Driggs said Dr. Morrison I wanted to know if the correct answer to the common core question was B. More important, there has been talk about Google coming to town; I wondering what CMS's position is on how big an impact that would have on our schools.

Dr. Morrison said I'm sorry I missed the second part.

Councilmember Driggs said how big of an impact with Google coming in with a high speed fiber network have on our schools?

Dr. Morrison said people get excited about technology and when I shared the question earlier about the type of jobs that are going to come in the future and when people say are you really sure that jobs are going to be replaced by outsource and technology I always ask this question, anybody in here ever shop at Blockbuster or Borders; they've been replaced by technology so there are going to be jobs that are going to come with technology advancements; there are going to be jobs that go away so I think that is an exciting opportunity, but here is the thing. The fun part of saying we are going to ramp up our technology efforts in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools is to put devices in the hands of every kid. That is the fun part and we are sitting right next to Mooresville and Mooresville with 4,000 students has done that so it is a little bit more challenging to do it with 144,000 students, but here are the other aspects of that. Do you have the technology infrastructure at your schools to do that? We are working on that. Do our teachers have the training to educate with those devices and we have a whole world of digital immigrants, trying to teach a whole world of digital natives. We're trying to get that part right. Even if we find the resources to put the devices in the hands of every kid in the school district, then here is the challenge and I think it is an "us" challenge. It is not a CMS challenge only; it belongs to the City and the County. Are we going to allow achievement gaps and opportunity gaps that are already huge in our City and County and across our country to widen when some students have anywhere anytime learning because they get to take those devices and they have the entire world at their disposal with the internet because they have connectivity at home where a whole other group of our students don't have that. We just did a budget survey and we asked the question do you have technology access and internet connectivity at home and the great news is that 95% of the people who responded to an online survey have internet connectivity at their homes. I have no idea how many people don't have it that didn't respond to our survey. We really believe that anywhere anytime learning we are going to have to work together to make sure that that doesn't become another thing that divides performance of our students.

Councilmember Lyles said I think when I read these things it is just making a really big difference. One of the questions I had, can you talk about little bit more about the disparities between race and income as you go through the goals. I notice there is another document here that says Goal 1 – accelerate academic achievement for every child and close achievement gaps so that every child graduates college or career ready. Can you talk a little bit more about your challenges and focus in that area?

Dr. Morrison said Ron, can I borrow you real quick – so if you think about education like a race, Kindergarten right here and the high school graduate is right before I get to you. We're getting ready to race; this is kindergarten so Mom and I start the first day and everything is cool. Remember what I said; if a student is impacted by poverty, a student whose mother didn't graduate and a student didn't get access to early childhood; we're starting the race and Ron has all things, not in poverty, Mom graduated and had great early childhood; I didn't have those things so we're ready to start the race and guess what; there is already a gap before we start the first day of kindergarten. So in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools our goal is every child ... and get at least one year's growth for one year in the classroom, but if we are ever going to close the gap then I need more than a year's worth of growth so we need to make sure that Ron gets at least a year but Keith is going to need a year and a half in order to ... So Ron takes a step toward and I take a step forward and I take a little baby step because we have a poor school program, after school programs and we do all these things to build up my ability. Everything is great, we close that gap then guess what, Summer comes, June, July and August, back in the bed, we used to go farm but no-one is farming anymore. But Ron during the summer, Mom is taking him to museums, making him read, summer camp so he takes a half step forward. What the research shows is that when students are impacted by poverty and they get June, July and August and they are having no academic stimulation then they lose half of what they learned. Think about having to repeat kindergarten, first grade, second grade, the gap is so stubborn because this one aspect of this, not being able to get quality pre-K to all children and two because we don't control the calendar for Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and we have to give all kids June, July and August off then we never get the chance to lessen what our kids in poverty are losing over the summer. That is just two aspects, if we could get more calendar flexibility and if we could find a way to get quality

early childhood to every child I believe that we would close gaps at a rate we've never seen in Charlotte Mecklenburg and indeed North Carolina.

Councilmember Fallon said how did you catch up?

Dr. Morrison said I had a father who was in the military who was just determined at this grit and stubbornness was better and more focused than any barrier that I could face and so he scared me to death but he kept me on the straight and narrow. What saved me was two extraordinary teachers; I was on my pathway to be a high school drop-out. I was going to be one of the 1.2 million kids who drop out of school every year, one every 26 seconds and two extraordinary teachers absolutely saved me in every way that you can be saved. So it was quality teachers.

Ms. Fallon said I ran a Montessori School for 26 years as a parent. I founded it and ran it for my children. That method is wonderful for kids who are behind; it is good for kids that are advanced but the kids that are behind, that special one on one at their own pace takes them so far and I must compliment you, my granddaughter goes to Cato Middle College –

Dr. Morrison said 100% graduation at Cato Middle College with kids earning high school diploma and college credits.

Ms. Fallon said it is wonderful; it is the challenge she needs and it is there. They are really advancing and they are a community at this point.

Dr. Morrison said that is why we are expanding to two middle colleges and expanding Montessori programs as well.

Councilmember Howard said John and I are over here taking bets; we think you could have caught Ron. You need that line up at the beginning but that summer time is still real ... inaudible

Dr. Morrison said I keep on making this pitch to our State Legislature for not one penny more, just calendar flexibility allowing me to reduce the total amount of time that students are out of school, not adding days although I would love to add days on top on this, but just being able to reduce that amount of time by thoughtfully scheduling the way we do breaks throughout the year, and even it was just my high poverty schools, we could increase academic performance because they wouldn't be out that entire time. You would have a gift of better more focused early childhood without having the learning gaps that are accompanying when students have June, July and August off. If I could just have that flexibility and I'm going to keep on working on that with our Legislature until they eventually get tired of hearing me and eventually give it to me, but just that one gift of calendar flexibility, especially with my high poverty schools, I believe we could see incredible results, any combination with improvement in our early childhood programs.

Mr. Howard said where have you seen states give districts that flexibility; did you have that in Reno?

Dr. Morrison said I had more flexibility with calendar and matter of fact I just got a chance to see some of my folks in my prior school district and one of the major things we did was we changed the academic calendar. We did it with an unprecedented amount of community support and I've been accused sometimes of not being completely there with my mental mindset, but I had 75% of my community on a survey saying they supported the calendar change that I brought to the board. After listening to some of the people in the community we went back and tried to make a few more tweaks to it and went from 75% support to 82% support. What it did is exactly what I said; it took summer break, lowered it in terms of the overall amount of time students were out, added some time to spring break and to winter break and it has rejuvenated the teachers; they love it; families love it because they have additional time in terms of scheduling and more options for vacations, but most importantly and it is too early in that calendar development to see where this is going to land, but early information suggests that it is going to yield better academic results. I will say North Carolina is not the only state that has some times in terms of calendar inflexibility; it is just a little bit more stringent than most states. We have a pretty hard and fast; you have to start school here, you have to be ending school at this point and there is very little flexibility for traditional public schools. Now Charter Schools that are also public schools have a lot more

calendar flexibility than we've been afforded which is part of my argument; give us that same flexibility as public Charter Schools have.

Mr. Howard said there is also this economy for teachers in the summer time where they get 10 months ... Are the teachers union on board with this at all or is that an issue along with the 10 months and the 2 months that they do something else?

Dr. Morrison said we haven't been able to have that conversation because we don't have that flexibility. I don't want to start having those conversations with our teachers, but I will tell you in my prior state where we did have a pretty strong union presence and we had these conversations, it was the head of my Teacher's Association that I saw recently at a national meeting who was raving about it. But again, we didn't just do it, we didn't just say we know better, we took the time to do it well, to do it right to have a plan that was well designed, well deployed and we got that public buy-in from our employees and from our parents and community. If I were given that same flexibility we would take that same approach.

Mayor Cannon said Dr. Morrison, that you so much for being here. I know that you are concentrating a great deal on what is happening on all levels, but is there a greater emphasis that you would like to have on the middle school level, particularly where we start thinking globally where we've already started that but continue to help us move forward even educating more so or exposure I should say on that level?

Dr. Morrison said Mayor; school districts across the country have made substantive improvements in elementary education. Across the country you are starting to see some promising signs in elementary school. High school there have been a lot of different reform efforts and I look at our high schools right now, our graduation rate went up 5% last year and it has been going up for the last five years. More kids taking AP and honors courses; I'm excited about that. Middle school is this area that really is challenging and it challenges the entire country. I think that is where we start to lose students. Having been a middle school principal and a middle school teacher I will tell you there are two words that define middle school and they are hormones and puberty so it is a time of incredible change. I'm not sure that we've really gotten that right so we know that is one of the focus areas that we need to get right for Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, but we've got a lot of different ideas and we are engaged in our community. I want us to be the first large urban school district in the country that really gets middle education right. If you think about the way you transition, you start off as very dependent, then the goal is to get high schoolers to be more independent so I think middle schools is that area where we can get kids to really start focusing on being interdependent. We've got to tease it out and we won't have all the answers we're to look to our city and county partners to help us, but I know we can get that done.

Mayor Cannon said I asked that question largely in part because of what you said a moment ago; obviously if we lose them on the middle school level they are certainly lost by the time they get to high school if they get to high school. That is critical so thank you for your energy and your efforts on that.

Councilmember Smith said I am a proud graduate of Myers Park High School and my brothers were as well. My first two kids will be starting Selwyn Elementary next year so we are big proponents of the public school system and this may be a perception that is not matched in reality, but there appears to be a growing economic diversity within the public school system in which more and more kids of means now appear to be leaving and doing private school. Do we track that type of data and are there any retention efforts underway to try to keep those kids in the public school system?

Dr. Morrison said I will just share with you my first year as Superintendent and remember I'm the veteran of this group now; I don't know how that happened, but my first year which is only last year, I remember seeing a front page article in the Charlotte Observer that said private school enrollment booms. My heart drops and I'm thinking are we losing all these students to private school. I think the sub-text of the article was that private school enrollment was going up 232 kids, our enrollment last year went up over 2,600 kids. You didn't see that same front page article. I reminded our friends in the press about that and we had a good conversation but I think the point is that sometimes a perception and reality are not always one in the same. What I do

worry about, and I will put this out there, parents want choices and part of what we are trying to do in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools is to have quality choices, but there are parents who sometimes exercise choices to something because they think it is a better fit for their child and sometimes I think there are opportunities for a parent to get away from a perceived something that concerns them, worries them, makes them fearful. What we can't have parents fearful about is going to schools with students that look different than they do. Students come into schools that come from different backgrounds and our school district right now, the vast majority of our schools are local neighborhood schools so we need to have a commitment, as I said in Goal 6, that every local neighborhood school be a school of choice and quality. We need to offer lots of options on top of that, but what we want to do is to incentivize parents to want to go to something that is a great fit for their child. I am concerned about some of the things that are happening in school choice in North Carolina where there are some options that are public schools where not all schools are being equally focused in terms of serving all children or that the quality may not be there as well. I think there is lots of work, but I think sometimes the perception is not quite matched with reality.

Mayor Cannon said you have about 11 minutes until your next meeting.

Dr. Morrison said I drive fast.

Mayor Cannon said while you are driving, be thinking about how is it we can be a good partner with you. Obviously, we are in this together and we heard you around this table about some of the challenges that you are facing so inasmuch as we can be a partner with you we would love to have that involvement with you as well as your Board so please pass that along. If I'm speaking out of turn council please let me know, but I think I might be right on that in terms of us wanting to partner and to help our school system along the way as best we can, where we can in advocacy, especially with what we hear you are going through in Raleigh.

Dr. Morrison said I thank you for that partnership and I'm encouraged about a lot of the conversations we are having in Raleigh with our law makers. I think they are really responding to a lot of the challenges that we are having and we need to work together. I look forward to our continued partnership on the city and county governance and I know our Board is committed to that. I do apologize, I would love to hear my colleagues as I learn from them all the time, but I'd already committed to a public engagement process at Myers Park around our budget, but I have Ann Clark, the Deputy who is going to come up and take my seat so that as the conversation starts to be around how we collaborate in the future, our school district will have a presence at the table.

Mayor Cannon said Ann, welcome to the table; glad to have you here and of course we do have the President from Charlotte Chamber of Commerce with us in that of Bob Morgan. Bob we are honored to have you here and we thank you so much for the work that you and the Chamber have done and will continue to do in terms of making sure that Charlotte has what it needs in order for us to be a bright spot internationally as well as domestically. At this time we would like to hear from you. Council, one of the things I want you to think about, as we hear some discussion, is one; are there any overlap that we might hear coming out of what is being discussed today? Are there conflicts? Are there gaps and fourth how do we complement one another? I'll come back to that a little later on but be thinking about that.

**Bob Morgan, President of Charlotte Chamber of Commerce** said I have some flexibility in my schedule that I didn't have until a son went home sick today so I don't have to make a band concert. Congratulations for the CIAA news earlier today and I appreciate that. It is a great event and will be for the next 6 years so that is exciting.

Thanks for the opportunity to talk about the work of the Charlotte Chamber. I want to give you a little bit of an overview of who we are and what we do. We use the terminology Program of Work. That is Chamber lingo for here is what we are going to do in the given calendar year. We will walk you through that and then talk about something that we are engaged in; a conversation I think relates directly to this discussion here today and some opportunities to work together. We try to be very mission focused at the Chamber. I talk often about the three legs of the stool. We exist to grow the economy. That is what we do in economic development; we exist to be a voice for business and promoting not just a pro-business, but also a pro-Charlotte agenda; that is public



policy and then we engage our members through member engagement, products and services. We do all of that to give our members competitive advantage but also to create competitive advantage for the community. We are a 501C6, not for profit membership association. We have over 3,300 members; we have a budget of \$9 million. Important to note all of that money is raised privately, we don't take public tax dollars. There is a saying in our business, every town has a Chamber of Commerce, no matter the size of the town or the city and the saying is, if you've seen one Chamber you've seen one Chamber. We are all a bit different and some do take public dollars and some do economic development and some don't. This is who we are. We have a staff of 45; you all know many of our staff people. We talk a lot about diversity and inclusiveness and that all relates to the subject of growth of the numbers; we were the fastest growing metropolitan area in the first decade of the new century; grew about 32%. That was not driven by a white population that grew by 14% but in fact an Asian population 93%; African American population 46% and the Latino population exploded by 150%. We believe that that growing diversity is going to continue; we believe that if we as an organization don't understand how to relate to and be a part of that growing diversity that we are not going to be relevant in the future as an organization that reports to represent our economy.

Our projections; we are optimistic and you are not surprised to hear that, but we really believe based on past experience and what we know about Charlotte that a metropolitan area today, a population of two million people, we think in 20 short years we are going to be something north of four million and if you want to see what that looks like, think Boston, San Francisco, Seattle. We are probably 30 to 35 years behind Atlanta at 5.3 million people. The first leg of the stool, growing the economy. Most of you know Jeff Edge our Senior VP for economic development.

Mayor Cannon said was that metro Atlanta?

Mr. Morgan said correct. The City of Atlanta as you all know is smaller than the City of Charlotte so the Atlanta Metropolitan area is 2 ½ times our size. Economic development, we are into recruitment; we work in retention of existing companies and the bottom line, we're in sales. We go through the process of generating leads that turn into what we call prospects, companies that we are working with to help make sure they have the information they need to make a good business decision to either expand or relocate to the Charlotte market. Some of the specific things we do here and you see some company logos of companies we've seen make a major announcement in the last year of so, but we are very aggressive in recruiting the new business, very aggressive in partnership with the City through Business First Charlotte in retaining companies and listening to and learning from those businesses. We are very internationally engaged. We have one developer who is a native of Shanghai, she speaks Mandarin as a first tongue; she is in Asia on a regular basis; she is on the west coast recruiting Chinese companies that need an east coast presence. She will soon be in Atlanta recruiting Japanese companies that have a strong presence in Atlanta. We have another developer who is a native of Munich, spends regular time in Europe; we still have more business from Germany than any other country on the planet.

We continue to focus and think there are tremendous opportunities in health care and life sciences and we market on a regular basis to industries, aerospace, automotive, energy, financial services, health care, life science and minority owned firms. We launched an initiative last year, we have targeted 150 of the largest minority owned firms in the country and I don't know if any other economic development agency that targets that group as a specific cluster, but we've produced marketing materials and we are now in regular contact building off some of the success we've seen from the CIAA, people who come here for a basketball tournament and decide they need to be here in some way by either moving here or putting a business here.

We are trying to figure out how do we engage our younger members and the young professionals in the community in the process of economic development. Most of you are pretty familiar with what we do in advocacy where we are active in all levels of government, particularly at the local level. We create programming for our members and we offer ways for our members to connect with you all and hopefully for you all to connect with our members. Some of the things that we are getting into specifically, we are all living in the reality of a state that is more red than ever, a city that is more blue than ever and that is a changed dynamic that we are dealing with. We saw it happening first in other states and we are now dealing with it here and we are trying to play the role as an organization that does not have a political action committee, we do not make

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endorsements as you all well know. We like to think of ourselves as a honest advocate for a pro-business, pro-Charlotte agenda and we will work with whoever gets elected and think that we have good credibility in doing so.

We will have major events around four summits this year; healthcare, energy and IT. We are going to help you all and the state and others celebrate the opening of the completion of I-485 either late this year or early next year, how exciting that will be. Our Transportation Summit actually takes place Wednesday and Thursday of this week; it is focused more broadly than just transportation, it is our P3 summit. We've got folks coming in from Washington, Raleigh, many folks in this room, over 20 speakers over two days. One of the opportunities to promote public/private partnerships to build infrastructure; transportation is an obvious example that can apply in other ways as well.

Work with the City to manage the 2014 Bond Campaign resulting from the capital improvement program that we presume will be on the ballot in November and I'm so disappointed that Dr. Morrison did not give the Chamber credit for the bond campaign last fall. How great it was as a community to be back in the business of investing in the future. We went a number of years without bonds and I was a little worried that we were getting out of practice because I believe to be a citizen in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County means we do every couple years make investments in our future through the passage of bonds at the ballot box and we are very pleased to see 71% and 74%, incredible support there.

Other initiatives, we've launched our quarterly elected officials meeting to give you all opportunities to talk with elected officials on a Monday morning or Friday morning whatever it is over breakfast with the County Commission and the Legislative Delegation. Other things here that are pretty standard of what we do; utilize business first, again it is a great partnership to have with each other. We train over 300 Chamber member volunteers annually who call on and conduct a survey of 300 businesses of all sizes, all variety, you get the aggregate benefit of what they are telling us of what is keeping them from growing or keeping others in their industry from being here. You get what I call the case work, Company X thinks there is something wrong with their water bill; they don't know who to call, we help put them in touch with CMUD perhaps and it turns out they might get a refund. That is a real life example that has happened so it is a good practice for our community.

We talked about education and here the broader subject is workforce development. We are an advocate at all levels supporting the work of Dr. Morrison and others as it relates certainly to K-12. We view it broadly, UNC-Charlotte, Central Piedmont, key assets as we go about trying to recruit companies for expansion and relocation. MeckEd is an organization that we partner with on a regular basis and as it relates to UNC-Charlotte, we see particular opportunity around big data. That is the marriage of the Belk School of Business with the College of Computing and Informatics to create competitive advantage for companies across all industries. Companies have more data at their fingertips than ever before and they don't always know how to use it. If you think about that, if they can be successful the brilliance of that is it cuts across every industry in our economy. It is not specific to the energy sector or the banking sector, but in fact banking and energy companies and hospitals and retailers and others can benefit from the better management of the big data they have access to and we think has tremendous potential.

The third leg of the stool, member engagement. We try to help our members to be connected to each other, to the rest of the community; some of the specific initiatives, Charlotte Minority Economic Development initiative; wonderful program, great story behind it. When Bob Johnson sold the Bobcats to Michael Jordan on his way out the door he was pretty critical of Charlotte's lack of friendliness to minority owned firms. Some people said, don't let the door hit you on the way of town and others said there is a message in there that we need to listen to and many of you around this table and CMEDI (Charlotte Minority Economic Development Initiative) brings together 20 majority firms with 20 minority firms for a two-year intense deep dive with each other to help build capacity in those minority owned firms. These are not start-up companies; the original 15 or so minority firms that came into the deal employed 1,000 people at that time; today they employ over 1,300 and those companies would give CMEDI the credit for helping them to build that capacity and to land contracts and the like. So we are off to a good start with that.

Many of you are familiar with our Chapter – Seven Geographic Clusters of our members; it is a key way for us to touch base with a large membership and we think there is opportunity a power of women networking opportunities will be launching this year. Those are the three legs of the stool and that is kind of the nuts and bolts of what we say we are going to do in 2014. It is a whole lot more than what I just shared with you, but I would now like to segway over to Economic Development and Strategic Planning. We last conducted an Economic Development Strategic Plan back in 1998. It turned into Advantage Carolina which was a body of research; it was a set of industry cluster focus groups and there was then ask of are we as a community prepared to fund initiatives. In fact over \$15 million was raised over a five year period. The City was a partner, the County was a partner, the private sector picked up the rest in initiatives that were supportive of an Intermodal Yard out at the Airport. There was support of things happening in education at Central Piedmont, UNC-Charlotte, CMS were all part of that. Advantage Carolina has long since played out, spent down the money. We do not see the need to reinvent the work of the CCOG that has just done a said study; wonderful work has been done by the Centralina Council of Governments to help us understand some of the data and research. That piece of the process is complete; we have completed in the second half of last year industry cluster groups or focus groups where we've brought the different targeted sectors together, 9 of them; what is keeping you from growing; what is keeping others in your industry from being here; how can be better brand ourselves to your particular cluster. All of that work has been done working with the folks at the Lee Institute. Some of the research and I'm glad to share this with you; it is really the first time we've shared it. We haven't even had the chance to share it with our own leadership. You are not going to be surprised by any of these – keep the Airport growing, keep it efficient, cost effective right at the top of the list. Infrastructure investments – the CIP of course, the bonds from last year play right into that. We need more venture capital particularly for the entrepreneurs amongst us. We need greater ecosystems, clusters within an industry that are better connected with each other. We hear entrepreneurs talk about that in particular. Skilled trade and technicians for our high end manufacturing folks; they will say quite bluntly if we can't find the talent we need for the jobs of today and tomorrow we will have to move those jobs elsewhere and the work done by the CCOG gets very specific around some of those needs. For example, we are producing X number of electrical engineers in a given year but the market demands is X plus something, what are we going to do to fill that gap. It is pretty good research that we have. We have a great culture that is pro-growth, very welcoming and we heard loud and clear that companies think we need to continue that. Continue to support education, continue investments in our quality of life particularly as it relates to arts, culture, recreation, entertainment so that people want to continue to live here and then finally be more definitive in the marketing of a brand or a culture as we go about selling Charlotte, a tremendous opportunity there.

Mr. Howard said is that in order of importance?

Mr. Morgan said that is the order of importance out of the aggregate of the nine different focus groups with the Airport being at the top of the list.

Where we go from here with this work, the next step and we will have a consultant in town this week, we are suggesting the need to benchmark Charlotte and those topics with other peer cities who we compete with. What are they doing that we are not doing; what are the good ideas they have that we can borrow from? One of the key questions we are going to be asking on Wednesday with leadership from the public sector, this could be a purely Chamber of Commerce exercise, perhaps there is opportunity for this to be a joint public and private sector opportunity. We will look forward to that conversation. We are hopeful all of you will be going; the invitation is coming out later this week and hopefully our annual intercity visit will take us back to Minneapolis June 18<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>. Transit – our plan calls for light rail, commuter rail and BRTs. Minneapolis has all three and we are going to learn about that. Minneapolis is considered the most healthy city in America; Charlotte is 35<sup>th</sup>. We are in the process of learning and we are going to learn more while we are there on how we can move up in those rankings. The question about achievement gaps – interestingly Minneapolis has one of the largest achievement gaps in the country and that gap is growing faster there than elsewhere. I don't know how much we are going to learn from that but we are taking Stick Williams to talk about project LIFT so this may be a reverse learning lesson that we can share with them but certainly there will be things that we can learn and then uptown retail, Minneapolis not only has an over street mall of seven miles of linked networks but also a significant street level retail.

Another next step I've already mentioned the community investment plan and the bonds will be on the ballot. You are not surprised to hear the Chamber of Commerce guy suggest we have a positive future. This is fun little rendering, some of these buildings are real, some are imagined and we see tremendous opportunities with the kind of growth that is coming for job creation, wealth creation, a lot of upside to our economy and to our growth. We are also sobered by the reality that there are a lot of challenges to the growth that is coming. Do we keep up with the public infrastructure, particularly in transportation so that people and product can move in and around this region in a way that maintains the attractive quality of life that we enjoy here today? We take that very seriously and so we appreciate the opportunity to share all of this with you here tonight and hope it is helpful in the context of your dialogue. We appreciate the great partnership that we have with all of our friends at the public sector.

Councilmember Lyles said I really like the fast rapid transit in the picture.

Mr. Morgan said I used not know how I was going to explain how I was going to make that work, but now as we see that drones are delivering books and stuff from Amazon who knows what they will be doing in 20 years.

Mr. Howard said that helps me a lot and one of the things I wanted to ask Dr. Morrison before he left and it plays right into what you just presented, I read recently that one of the number one things that companies are looking for right now is talent pools. Could you talk a little bit about that and how it relates to our educational system from pre-K and all the way through it and do you have anything to add to it? Is that one of the things you are looking for?

Mr. Morgan said absolutely and there is a debate or a discussion in the economic development world, do people follow companies or do companies follow people. I don't know what the answer is but they both go hand in hand. If your population is growing companies are going to be attracted to that and if you don't have the skills, as I mentioned earlier, companies are going to have to go where those skillsets are. We hear it more than anything and members say look, workforce development is absolutely more important than anything except the Airport and the connectivity.

Mr. Howard said that is why I asked you about the order. Education was definitely ...

Mr. Morgan said education and workforce development come up in different ways. A company doesn't necessarily care if the person they are hiring is a product of CMS or a product of a school in the county or – I tell my counterparts in Milwaukee and Buffalo and Cleveland, you all need to get your education right because your people are moving here and they become our workforce. It matters that we are attractive; that people from everywhere want to move here because they bring skills with them; it matters what are the skillsets that we are producing through education at every level; University, Community College and K-12 because those are skills that help keep us competitive also.

Councilmember Driggs said you talk about advocating on all levels of government and issues that affect the cost of doing business, the ease of doing business and the quality of life; since we also have a Legislative agenda I wonder if you could tell us what a couple points of yours are and maybe how we coordinate those efforts.

Mr. Morgan said the process we have is, Councilmember Kinsey has been around it and seen it quite a bit; we have a neat process that before every Legislative Session, whether long or short, we invite over 30 groups around the community including the public sector, the City, including clusters within the Chamber, manufacturers, bankers, others to come put your wish list on the table. Luther Moore has chaired the committee for more than 25 years and many of you know Luther. We then take those and out of those distill the Chamber's agenda. Ninety-nine percent of the time we are on the same side of an issue with the public sector or others, but it is the question of prioritization so we try to identify those priorities and to identify the issues where we can make the most impact. We are getting ready to kick that process off in the coming weeks as we look to a May start of the short session. If you looked at our agenda and if in a given year there were 10 items, 2 or 3 of those are going to be related to transportation typically. Go back to two million

people today, four million people in 20 years; the gas tax is not enough. We were with the City pushing for the ½ cent sales tax for transit, we've been pushing for P3s through the form of toll roads for Garden Parkway for Monroe By-Pass, we need additional tools to fund transportation to handle the population growth that is coming. If we have 10 issues there are 3 or 4 that are related to workforce development; UNC-Charlotte figures prominently as they kind of fight and compete with the 16 other Universities in the UNC system, both at the Board of Governors level and over in the Legislature. UNC-Charlotte needs money for BigData, they need money for what they are doing in energy and for them to realize their full potential. With CMS it would relate to these issues of flexibility; don't give others flexibility that the public schools systems don't have and then expect them to compete on a fair basis. I have that conversation with our Legislators regularly and then in economic development most often we play a lot of defense around your least favorite subject that we talk about with you which is incentives. There are those who would like to do away with incentives at the state level altogether and yet we know that even in states that don't have corporate taxes, they still have to use incentives to land many of their projects. As we would say that to you all at the local level, both city and county, that is a regular part of our conversation at the state level. Over the years we've spent a lot of time shoulder to shoulder fighting off efforts to cut back your ability to annex and that is less and less of an issue as we run out of unincorporated areas, but it is something that we have worked with you on as well.

Mr. Driggs said specifically the film incentives, are you lobbying for those and also the proposed cut for the privilege license tax, are you engaged on that subject?

Mr. Morgan said we are monitoring those issues. The film tax credit, we've long supported and the business privilege license tax, we are looking at the bigger context of tax reform and how that fits in, what the trade-offs are and what the impacts are.

Councilmember Austin said as you are talking with major corporations around the country what is the thing they feel that Charlotte is kind of lacking? Or is it that someone else has made a better offer?

Mr. Morgan said you don't know what you don't know and who eliminates us before we ever get to see them and what the reasons are. We have long had a higher corporate and personal income tax rates than the states around us and we think that has affected some business that we might have otherwise competed for. We know when it comes to the really big mega projects North Carolina has never played the incentives game at the level of other states so the Boeing type projects of the world had that gone somewhere other than the State of Washington, I don't have any doubt that whatever North Carolina would have been willing to put on the table, other states would have gone far beyond that and it would have kept us from being competitive for that project. The whole issue of incentives, to kind of reverse the answer, what are the most common things that are attractive? Every project is different, there are issues unique to their business, but the three most common things that we hear that attracts people include cost of living, cost of doing business that is 94% or 95% of the national average, the overall cost of living here is critically important; workforce, a workforce that is large, it's growing, it's skilled it is increasingly young and increasingly diverse and third connectivity, our transportation infrastructure and in particular the Charlotte Airport, 19<sup>th</sup> largest city, but the 6<sup>th</sup> busiest airport. Those are the issues that we hear most often from the positive perspective.

Mr. Smith said thanks for coming tonight and sharing with us. I've seen some data recently that seems to suggest that we are losing higher wage paying jobs to other areas and the folks that are coming into the area are coming in at lower wage scales. Does the Chamber have any concerns about that trend and what can the private sector do in collaboration to sort of fend that trend off if it is indeed something that we see escalating over the next 10 years?

Mr. Morgan said I'm not familiar with such research.

Mr. Smith said Hyong and I had talked about it at the Council Retreat.

Ms. Fallon said was it the wages and the type of people coming in?

Mr. Morgan said the last study that I'm aware of which is now 5 or 6 years ago, there was some high profile projects that had left Mecklenburg County to go just across the border looking at those South Carolina counties.

Mr. Smith said Ms. Fallon brought up a point; it is the incoming citizen is coming in at a lower wage scale.

Ms. Fallon said not wage, lower income to begin with.

Mr. Smith said then higher income people are leaving the City.

Mr. Morgan said where I was going with the data was the issue of jobs leaving Mecklenburg County to go just across the border into South Carolina. The study that was done then proved that for every job that we lost we were creating 2 or 3 jobs and they were higher paying. In terms of people moving here and where they might choose to live, maybe the dynamic you are talking about, maybe it applies in that case. I will tell you that there is actually a reverse trend of companies from the regions moving some of their higher paying headquarters type jobs into Charlotte, maybe leaving manufacturing or operations outside in the rest of the region. I would say to you, pick for an example, Electrolux or a MetLife, both significant in the salaries they are paying, Electrolux in particular, 800 new jobs average salary of \$100,000. They considered going elsewhere outside of the Charlotte region, but they didn't look at any options within the Charlotte region, it was Charlotte or again elsewhere. My sense is for job attraction we are very competitive and we land the higher paying jobs at a pretty significant rate relative to the rest of the region.

Ms. Fallon said why are the auto manufacturing not coming here; why it is South Carolina?

Mr. Morgan said that one goes back 20 years; South Carolina at the time put a quarter of a million dollars on the table, which was unheard of at the time, and about two years later it looked like a steal. Just two years later they had about \$400 million in investment from suppliers to BMW and I don't remember the number, but North Carolina was no where close to that. Alabama came out a couple of years after that, then Governor Hunt put a quarter of a million dollars on the table and Alabama put a billion dollars on the table. There some issues we have fewer sites if you are just looking for several hundred acres of land. We certainly don't have many such sites in Mecklenburg County or in the City of Charlotte and that is an issue, but it is primarily the incentives game.

Mr. Howard said over the years I've heard a lot about how Charlotte competes with research and development dollars and mainly going to conferences that your agency has sponsored. I've been beating that drum with Council so my first question is what is it the City could do to help in that conversation and from what I understand with the folks out at UNCC in addition to you advocating at the state level for money for buildings and infrastructure you guys have also taken on some of their research and development needs when you advocate in Washington as well. One, what can the City do and then what has been your role and what do you think your role is?

We've had a very limited role in helping to recruit R & D dollars. We might play a very complimentary role once in a while; for us it has been more helping UNC-Charlotte with legislative appropriations to build a program whether it is EPIC, Energy Production Infrastructure Center, or now Big Data. I think the benchmark study we are about to launch is a perfect opportunity to ask what more can the Chamber do to help bring those research dollars, what are other cities doing that the City of Charlotte could be doing to help with those? We know that the cities in America that produce the most and the highest paying job also happen to be those where the PhD level research is being conducted in higher education and that while it is great that 10 years ago UNC-Charlotte got into that business, it is great that the trend line is that the number of PhDs they are graduating is growing, the last time we looked 10 years ago, we are still a fraction of the PhDs being produced in Raleigh/Durham, Atlanta, Tampa, St. Louis, Richmond, the other southeastern cities that we compete with and so the opportunity there is tremendous and I would like to say fast forward some number of decades and UNC-Charlotte has the potential to stand alongside the Charlotte Airport as equal drivers of economy in this region. Part of that is, and I'm a Liberal Arts Major, that the PhD work that is being done at UNC-Charlotte is not being done in Political Science or English or philosophy. It is Metrology and it is Optoelectronics so it is

research that finds its way into the economy through patents, start-ups or applied technology within our existing industries.

Councilmember Phipps said you are aware I know of the changes that are occurring in the way that North Carolina is going to be recruiting business going forward through the changes that the Department of Commerce is going to embark on. What upside potential do you see in that whole process or do you see any downside risk for the way you do business in recruiting going forward as a result of this change?

Mr. Morgan said we had a longstanding positive working relationship with the state; they are a major source of leads for us. We work with them often and they of course can bring whatever state incentives to a project and they are part of the overall sales when we are given that opportunity. We certainly hope and expect that to continue. We had a presentation recently from John Lassiter, Chair of the North Carolina Economic Development Board. The general goals of the new plan are very in line with our agenda of reducing those personal and corporate income tax rate, funding, workforce development, technology transfer is a part of what they are speaking to. There is still a lot of details to be worked out and we don't know what those details are going to look like. We don't know how the working relationship, the handing off of leads, the work in projects together; we are with everyone else waiting to see what that looks like and what our role will be in that. My answer is we are staying tuned on that and trying to stay close to it, but there is some work done and I think we are going to see the Legislator weigh in on that subject this summer. For companies, and particular this whole issue of the privatization of the Department of Commerce, there is a lot of interest of what is the expectation of the private sector so we are anxious to learn more about that.

Ms. Lyles said thank you very much Bob. We are going to begin with our closest partner, location wise at least, our new County Manager, Dena R. Diorio. I don't know that I've ever had a presentation by the County Manager at a setting like this so this is a first.

**Dena R. Diorio, County Manager** used PowerPoint for presentation to the Council. A copy is on file in the City Clerk's office. She said I'm happy to be here and look forward to talking to you about our Vision and Mission. Mecklenburg County actually started developing its strategic vision in 2001 and it was at that time that the Board of County Commissioners really believed that the community was at a turning point and it really needed to take us to the longer term view of what the community would look like over the course of a number of years. They created this Community Vision 2015 which is what they felt the community should look like over that timeframe. You can see here it is to be a community of pride and choice where people can Live, Work and Recreate and that is still our vision today. We also accompany that with the Mecklenburg County Government Vision and a Mecklenburg County Mission Statement. On the heels of developing the Strategic Vision, the Board then went ahead and started to implement our balanced scorecard approach. A balanced scorecard is really designed to make sure that we have a way to track our progress toward meeting our 2015 Vision; it also includes a lot of accountability so that department directors from the County Manager down to the lowest level of staff in the County is held accountable for some form or fashion of pieces of the scorecard.

This is what our scorecard looks like today. There was an effort in 2010 to update it to have a 2020 Vision to make sure that we are keeping pace with what was going on, post-recession so you can see we have our four perspectives on the left and we have our focus areas across the top and we have all of the 21 desired results that the County is interested in achieving and these all align to our Vision 2020 Statement. At this point the Board decided that we wanted to undertake an 18-month strategic agenda. We wanted to give the Board an opportunity to focus their efforts on certain things that they thought were important going forward in the next year or year and a half. We started this process on October 2013 and these are really the steps that we undertook in order to achieve and develop our strategic agenda. The first part of the plan was to do an extensive interview process; we had a lot of community and stakeholder input into the development of the strategic agenda because the Board really felt it was important to make sure that the strategic agenda had that perspective in it as they went forward.

We had a series of events that we went to; we had people attending the Festival in the Park; staff went to a number of community meetings across the county; all of the Board districts were

represented; we utilized our MeckConnect website which is an online survey that people can take. Then at the end of the process we had another sort of big ask where we went out to all the libraries across the county and ask people a series of questions. There were also interviews with the Board of County Commissioners with the County Executive Team, Department of Directors and employees. These are the four questions we asked when we developed the agenda, what you believe is working well in our community; what you believe is working well with government; how could we improve our community and how can we improve our government.

By the time we were done with that process and all the data was analyzed, we ended up with what we call 13 themes that became fairly evident when they went through the data and what they did was they looked at all the responses to the surveys and sort of grouped them into categories that I would call consistent. We went to the Board in November and we asked the Board to look at all of these 13 themes and just try to group them into sort of larger themes that we could use to develop a more broad strategic agenda. We went down the 13 themes and we ended up with really 5 themes at the end; we have one around economic development, one around service quality and accountability, effective and efficient government, quality of life and cost of living and then strategic planning in core service areas.

Mr. Howard said I got this report and I was fascinated by the fact that I've ever seen economic development on the county's list. Is this new?

Ms. Diorio said it is and our Board is really starting to take a close look at economic development and what their role is in economic development. It is a priority for the Board which I think has not been evident in the past.

Mr. Howard said I have never seen the County put economic development on anything which is really interesting. I just wanted to make sure that was something and I hadn't missed something.

Ms. Diorio said we asked the Board to take a look at the service quality and accountability and effective and efficient government and we felt that they were pretty similar so those we got consolidated into a high performing organization. These are the four strategic themes that were ultimately included in the strategic agenda. Once the themes were developed then we went back to our Department Directors and we said now that we've got these four themes how is it that we are going to execute and how are we going to implement the themes as we move forward. We incorporated their work and they came up with goals and objectives, proposed strategies and then really key tactics and key elements that we would incorporate into the plan so we would have a way to get these things accomplished. These are the four strategic agenda themes and these are sort of the key things that the Board has agreed to work on over the next 18 months. So in the area of economic development, they really want to have an economic development policy and plan which guides our work around economic development so we are going to be having over the summer one full day economic development summit where the Board really gets to decide what they want their role to be in the economic development space.

Councilmember Mayfield said when we are looking at the economic development bullet 4, are we also looking at how the County and City work more closely together so that as we are creating the process of how we make this a stronger community between city and county, trying to streamline some of the process or are we also still looking at keeping the process siloed out?

Ms. Diorio said we are actually looking at both. On the county side, I can't speak to the city side but on the county side we are going to look at our processes, we're doing a deep dive into our process because we want to make sure that what we are doing is the most efficient that it could be. Then we are also working with the City to look at where people have to navigate between organizations and where those touch points are and where those pain points are to make sure that those are efficient and that we can streamline that and it is really seamless to the customer. That is really the ultimate goal, so yes.

We are also going to be looking at our investment grant program; we want to make sure that we are still feeling like we are getting the most out of money with that regard and we are going to start to develop measures on our community and corporate scorecard that we can tract our efforts around economic development. In the area of quality of life and cost of living, the strategies there



is to sort of work with the livable communities plan, which is the big effort that is going on across the entire community and use that as a benchmark to see how we can incorporate some of that into the work that we do. Our Chairman, in his State of the County address, has launched a task force on poverty and economic mobility and we are starting to pull all of that together and we think that by pulling the best and brightest minds in our community together to look at those issues will hopefully be able to put together some recommendations and try to move the needle in those areas. We are also looking to accelerate our ten-year plan to end homelessness. That is one of the other strategies under the quality and cost of living strategy.

High Performance Organization; website redesigned and we get a lot of feedback about our website not being as great as it can be, not being accessible, not being user friendly. We are going to look at our compliance program; we have this huge focus on the compliance in the County and want to make sure the way we do our work is compliant as possible. Looking at workforce and succession planning, we have a lot of people who are in the baby boomer era and we don't have a good succession planning effort in place and that when they retire we don't have enough bench strength in the County to be able to pick up that work. We are going to start to incorporate three-year business strategic plans in all of our departments to make sure that we are focused all the time on what a strategic agenda will be. Finally in the health and human services area our Board is really interested in this whole consolidated human services agency and this area will really look at how we put this strategic plan together and how we start to look at consolidating those functions so that when somebody comes for services they have a single point of entry and they can get triage when they walk in the door and not have to go from agency to agency to get what they need.

Mr. Howard said this is the first time I've heard that. Will you explain what would that look like? Is that the Health Department, DSS all in one?

Ms. Diorio said it is unclear but what we do know is we have DSS, we have Public Health, we have provided services organization which provides some behavioral health services; we also have community support services which does all our homelessness and veterans and domestic violence; child support enforcement as well as part of that bucket and so it doesn't necessarily mean that we would consolidate all of those agencies, but is there a way to make it easier when somebody enters and you have the same customer going to the same agency; is there a way to make it more seamless for that person so they don't have to go from agency to agency, can we provide some case management on the front end and make it easier for that person. That is the idea now the plan is to try to figure out how we put that into practice.

Mr. Howard said my very first committee was Human Service Council and I know you did away with that some time ago and the whole point of that council was to see where there were ways to keep those things monitored and it was done away with some years ago, just maybe something to look at again.

Ms. Lyles said when the Superintendent was three steps behind the City Manager, a large part of that was around Health and Human Services and I was wondering between CMS, the Health and Human Service Agencies and I'm wondering if in this Human Services planning there is a connection, even if you haven't established how it should work; is there a connecting factor between those two things, foster care, homeless children?

Ms. Diorio said Anne can give you an example.

**Anne Clark, Deputy Superintendent, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools** said I was going to jump in earlier; I actually have a great example of that. Michele Lancaster and I have been working to look at all the social workers the County has and the School District has to see if we can be more strategic about the assignment of those social workers across out county. Obviously the county has many more social workers; we only have 44 in the district and so perhaps thinking through a new oversight where we could put all those social workers on the table and think about how we cover children and families in our community. That is an effort that is just underway but is very exciting to me to think about not having a family with 6 social workers as they move from a Child's Place to the School System to Communities and Schools, to the county to be as best to the Health Department. In that case management model we've really learned from the Reid Park collaborative as well around having one agency own the coordination of the services.

Ms. Lyles said just to add to that I think in mental and behavioral health that is like another area where there are 3 or 4 psychologist often working with a family and providing the basic services of food and housing. I really appreciate that effort and I would applaud anything that makes it easier for having a woman who needs an appointment to take off from her hourly job to go somewhere one day and have to take off another hourly job to go somewhere the next day and the next day. I think we've got to figure that out.

Ms. Diorio said just for a more long-term focus we are looking to do a longer-term strategic planning process over the next couple of years and we are going to look at the results of the Livable Communities Plan and start to build the results of that into our longer-term strategic planning and we are going to be looking at our goal strategies and measurers and try to get a new framework together. We are also looking at our balanced scorecard to determine whether or not we think that is the best model for us from performance management perspective going forward. I've asked staff to research whether or not we want to look at a different way to measure our performance over the long-term.

Ms. Lyles said just looking at your economic development area and I know that you are working on a plan and a policy; can you describe your Business Investment and Grant Program and how that works with the City's various investment programs as well?

Ms. Diorio said we actually follow that the City does. I guess the Board really wants to see whether or not we should be doing other things in the way of economic development to help support other things.

Ms. Lyles said so that is the plan and policy to determine if there are other opportunities for the County to impact economic development?

Ms. Diorio said that is correct and also looking more broadly within the County and the towns because they have a lot of interest in economic development as well and is there a way for us to partner with them to try to do some interesting things outside the borders of the City of Charlotte.

Mr. Howard said we've asked a lot of questions of you all tonight and it was to get information I know, but I was wondering Mr. Carlee if you had anything to add about how we should be involved, especially with economic development. Are we partnering economic mobility when it comes to housing and after school and even in human service, a lot of the issues in addition to what Ms. Lyles said about human services is actually what happens when they go home with public safety and housing. We need all these together and then of course the job creation how do we fit in with some of what we've heard tonight?

**City Manager, Ron Carlee** said obviously there is a lot of overlap. We are an integrated system where we all connect with one another and this is a program that I actually would have liked to have had at the Council Retreat but we just didn't have enough time to do it. We committed at the Retreat it would not be two days check off the list, but we've continued to work on it so this is an opportunity to have this supplemental presentation really addressing the question Council asked at the very end; how does this connect with what other people are doing within Charlotte; where do we overlap and where do we need to coordinate? What we will be doing on the staff side is pulling together the obvious overlap areas to look at a little more deeply. Carol Jennings is working to try to find a half day for us to do an in City Retreat to follow up on the visioning work, factoring in what we've learned from our presentations tonight and identifying the areas where we specifically need to work together more closely. The one where we have the most conversations right now is on the permitting side of it and we've had a number of conversations there, but I had a pretty good idea of each organization has done, but I learned some new things tonight that I think gives us a pretty good agenda to coordinate on. I think demonstration that we are all pretty much aligned in several areas in terms of what is important across all four organizations.

Mr. Howard said I know Bob you are really good about pulling the elected together, but it just seems to me that looking around this table that I would hope people among these group you guys get together and you all break bread and talk about two Managers, two systems. It seems like

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there is some synergy that could happen. You guys are going to have to do it, just talk through it. What you should bring back to us then as the elected bodies. A lot of times we do depend on you guys to give us direction.

Mr. Morgan said we do meet regularly with all three. We do a separate meeting with CMS and MeckEd and the Chamber and then we do a City/County Chamber monthly meeting.

Mr. Driggs said Manager Carlee you already alluded to what my question was going to be about. I think I would only comment that I would strongly encourage you to pursue those opportunities to streamline the City and County's process. I've heard from so many places about how that obstructs the progress of projects and that is a jobs issue; that is a competitiveness issue and it seems like it ought to be relatively low hanging food in the sense that it doesn't cost anything to do that better. My question is for Manager Diorio, the county apparently is going to have a surplus this year and one of the points of interaction between the City and the County is on tax rates because citizens pay the total of the taxes that we charge. You had mentioned the possibility that the County might actually be in a position to lower its tax rate this year, would you be able to judge the likelihood of that because you are going to end up with an over allocation to your debt service fund.

Ms. Diorio said yes, when we set up our debt service fund we allocated 21 cents of the property tax rate in order to fund our current CIP and future CIPs and it turned out that that was more money than we think we need in order to accomplish what we need to accomplish. We also have been very disciplined over the last few years in terms of how we put our budgets together. We've been very conservative and we've generated some fairly significant surpluses in the general fund as well. In light of the large surpluses that we are generating one of the things we are thinking about is whether or not we should start looking at reducing the tax rate and start giving some of that money back to the people who paid it. Having said that you know there are extreme needs in our county; we have a lot of folks who need and want a lot of things so it is really about trying to balance what the needs are versus people's ability to pay. That is kind of where we are; we had a really great conversation with our Board about that and I think the direction the Board gave me is that they would consider a reduction in the tax rate if the needs of the community were met in some form or fashion. That was the direction I got, again I can make a recommendation and it all depends on what the Board feels like it wants to do when I recommend my budget.

Mr. Driggs said I can say certainly from my part of the town that if the County were able to make any reduction in the rate and demonstrated a willingness at a time like this under these circumstances to revise the rate downward instead of just looking for new projects, I think it would send a great message to the taxpayers.

Councilmember Phipps said with respect to legislative agenda for all of the areas, when you all get together is there an effort to try to synchronize those legislative items that you would go over for the federal and our state representatives or is it every person for himself or whatever?

Mr. Morgan said speaking for the Chamber we try to be coordinated and there are some issues where it helps for the Chamber to be engaged. There are some issues where it is not a factor so we pick and choose but we stay in very close connection in putting each other's agendas together to find opportunities where we can jointly advocate.

Ms. Clark said I see a great opportunity that has been mentioned earlier around behavioral health because it intersects all three of the sectors with law enforcement, our juvenile court system, our school system and county services. That could prove to be an interesting and maybe not so obvious coming from the school system, to put mental health issues on the table, but it cuts across all these government agencies to deal with that and if you had to ask our principals today one of the biggest challenges they are facing, they probably wouldn't say literacy; they should be saying literacy but I think they would say mental health issues for our children, particularly our young children.

Ms. Lyles said the opportunity that I see in a lot of this is in the data and informational exchange that is available. I know that we have some proprietary things when you are doing your recruitment for example, or when you are dealing with an individual family, but one of the things

that I saw most important in coming up with a strategic agenda and each of you talked about, was the way that you had taken data in your particular areas and had come to a strategic plan. The studies, the information on populations, demographics and all of those things and I'm just hoping that as you are having your meetings collaboratively that there is some actual thinking around how can that shared data exist where appropriate for some of the programs that might work best together.

Mayor Cannon said Madam Manager one of the things that I hope we can look, and I've had some conversation with the Chairman about it and I guess we will need to get budget together around this as well, but it has been made mention of the committees that you all have, you have one in the way of Public Safety, one in the way of Economic Development and you have a few others that pretty much match up with where we are on our side of the water. One of the things that we would like to do that we've been talking about is that a minimum right now adding each other to our own respective distribution lists so that with the different things that are coming up I suggested to the Chairman that where there are like interest or no interest, but around the same subject matter that it is important I think for the members of the Board of County Commission to know what we are doing and vice versa because any member of this body, if they felt compelled to want to go to the meeting, they are invited and I think that helps us to continue open dialogue, it allows us to come together and I think the same thing can be applicable even to the School Board. So where there might be some synergies there for us to be able to do that I'm asking Manager Carlee that we go ahead and get all of you together and see how we might be able to do that, Chamber included because they too are a part of that. As you talk about especially issues around mental illness, you go into the jails and look at the jails and the percentage over there is relatively high. Some 65, almost 70% so you wonder who are we housing or why are we housing folks with that problem there. We need to find a way to work on that along with re-entry; those persons that are coming out. We are having some conversations I know with the Police Chief, the Sheriff and I see you have an entity called Morn and Morn is the agency that basically allows or works on getting people back into the community. Again where there are like interest between there and economic development, especially as we talk about global competitiveness there are some real synergies there and I think we need to be working better together around that than what we have been. Does any of that make sense to do; if it doesn't let me know. I'm okay with being told not.

Thank you so much, I really appreciate each one of you being here this day. Mr. President I do want to have some conversation more around this whole idea of the business privilege license piece that we are having to experience on the state level.

You all are excused and Council if you like we can continue to have some discussion around this even more or if you are fine where we are we can move forward. What is your pleasure?

Ms. Lyles said I think we've gotten a lot of information and I absorbed a lot, some very new to me, some overlapping. It is just a lot and I wonder if the staff, as they are planning the half-day retreat could engage perhaps one of our existing committees in planning and thinking through some of this. The Mayor asked us to think about what we would like to say about the entire city and it would be great for every child, every business, every household would be successful which I see across the line. I don't know that I'm ready to comment on it tonight but I think as the Manager and staff plan it they want to engage with us a little bit more if they can figure how to do that prior to that it may be helpful.

Mayor Cannon said very well stated and I support that.

Ms. Fallon said I suggested to Chairman Fuller that the Council and the Commission get together for a dinner where we got to know each other better so we could communicate better and it would be on an easier basis and they understood more of what we did and we understand more of what they did and where we could coordinate and he was very willing.

Mayor Cannon said how about having the Planning Retreat Committee catch up with management and have some discussion about how we roll that out for the mini retreat. You've got some place in mind already I'm sure?

Councilmember Austin said we do.

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## CITIZENS' FORUM

### Water Fluoridation Program in Charlotte

**Phillip Alexander, 426 Marsh Road** said I am here tonight on behalf of Fluoride Free Charlotte. I spoke several weeks ago against adding hydrofluoric acid to the water supply. I thought that the members of the Council would be alarmed that toxic waste was being added to the water but their response has not been as I hoped. I am continually told that the science proves the safety of fluoridation and referred to government health agencies. I called the FDA and the FDA has never done any studies on the safety of fluoric acid and has never approved fluoride as a medication. The EPA classifies fluoric acid as a toxic waste deemed too dangerous to be dumped into rivers and oceans. The CDC says that fluoride's affect are toxic and at best told me they do not test for safety or effectiveness. The American Dental Association warned parents in 2006 that children under one year of age should not have any additional fluoride. None of these agencies could provide me with one study that proves fluoric acid is safe to ingest. If none of these agencies can provide prove of the safety of fluoric acid how can Charlotte Mecklenburg Utilities tell me this chemical is safe. On the other hand there are 36 different studies from countries that link fluorinated water to lower IQ, one of the latest out of Harvard last year. There are studies linking Fluoride to bone cancer, thyroid malfunction and weakening of bones. It was easy to find numerous studies on the harmful affects of fluoride dating back to the 30s. The fact is hydrofluoric acid is toxic waste that is hazardous to human health and is being added to the water without the consent of the public. Other things like vitamin C are good for health but not added to the water for the simple fact that people should be allowed to choose what they want in their bodies and not have it forced upon them. Doctors are not allowed to force someone to take a medicine against their will so what qualifies the Utilities Department to do something that no other person or agency has the authority to do. There needs to be a public discussion on the subject of fluoridation and the facts about fluoric acid need to be made available to the public. If fluoric acid is so safe then mail out the material safety data sheet to the customers that use tap water and let them decide if they want it in the water. The Council is supposed to work in the interest of the public that elected them; you have a duty to inform the public of the dangers of fluoridation. By ignoring the evidence provided to you, you are failing to work in the best interest of the people you represent. If there was just one study linking fluoride to adverse health affects it should be enough to stop this practice and there are 36 studies linking fluoride to lower IQ. Is this really a risk we are willing to take with the people of Mecklenburg County? Once again I am happy to provide any of this information to any members of the Council or City government.

Councilmember Mayfield said Manager Carlee have we looked into the financial costs is for us to add fluoride and what if any impact it will have if were not to use fluoride in our water? I asked the question because what I am noticing, especially in the last few years, you are seeing more of the healthy grocery stores, healthy home market other stores that have an area where they have purified aquiline water where they are getting away and you have more people buying BRITA water filters to try to clear the water even though we constantly receive awards on the quality of our water. Have we ever actually just looked at what if any the impact would be if we did not have fluoride and what is the financial cost of having it?

**City Manager, Ron Carlee** said Barry Gullet, Director of our Utility is here. Could you come join me and if you don't have that information available it is fine.

**Barry Gullet, Director, Charlotte Mecklenburg Utilities** said I'm pulling a number off the top of my head which is always dangerous, but I believe that our cost of fluoride is about \$300,000 per year. The fluoride is added in consultation with the Mecklenburg County Health Director who strongly supports adding the fluoride. In terms of the water treatment process fluoride is not a water treatment chemical; it is added for the public health benefits.

Ms. Mayfield said are there are communities that do not automatically have the fluoride in the water and if so are any of those communities comparable to the size and looking at the growth impact of the City of Charlotte and surrounding area?

Mr. Gullet said yes ma'am there are a number of cities who choose not to fluoridate their water just as there are many, many cities that choose to fluoridate their water. In fact if you look across the nation I believe there are more that do than don't, but I don't have the statistics to back that up. It is a choice that cities make. I will also say that in some cities fluoride is a natural occurring mineral in the water and in some cases it is present in such high concentrations that it has to be reduced down to the levels that are considered appropriate for tooth protection. In our water there is some fluoride in the water naturally occurring, but it is not enough to meet the standards that are set for tooth protection.

Councilmember Lyles said I know that Mr. Alexander has come up several times and I've always been confused about who makes the decision on fluoride because I know the County has the public health responsibility and fluoride, unlike other cities that have to reduce it down or the natural occurrence, we add it. How does the decision come about and who makes the decision now?

Mr. Gullet said the decision was originally made in the 1940s and Charlotte has been fluoridating its water continuously ever since. We have consulted with the County's Health Director on a number of occasions in recent years and had consistently been advised that it is a practice that we should continue to do.

Ms. Lyles said when he advises, I just want to be sure, is it just something that the Health Director for the county advises or is he following guidelines of the CDC; is there any national organization that sets recommendations around fluoridation?

Mr. Gullet said he has reviewed the information that Mr. Alexander has provided and he has reviewed the information from the dental profession and a couple of years ago there was a recommendation and I'm not clear in my head right now whether it came from CDC or from someone else, that the City should reduce the level of fluoride and it had to do with exposure that people are getting through other avenues of fluoride so the recommendation was to reduce from a concentration of one part per million in the drinking water to 0.7 parts per million and we did that. We consulted with the County and he suggested that would be an appropriate thing for us to do so we did that. They have reviewed the information and the literature and are familiar with standard industry practices and their very strong recommendation has been for us to continue.

Ms. Lyles said I think Mr. Alexander, for me I'm probably not qualified to make a decision around this issue and it has always been to me that the City's water system is delivering water to us and there is a public health issue here and I often think that this is a question that has to be resolved, while we are the delivery system the recommendation is made by the County for public health reasons. I understand that there can be differences in opinion but for a governing body to make this decision without the advice and consent of the Public Health Director will be pretty difficult to do. I just say that because I know that you are appearing before us, but I see this as a Health Department issue that ought to be resolved in that arena versus the person that is taking the recommendation and implementing it.

Councilmember Fallon said there are numerous cities that have discontinued it. Do you know why and what does the national health say?

Mr. Gullet said you are correct in that cities from time to time start and stop and I don't know exactly what triggers that in those cities. I can tell you that it struck me a few months ago that in the same week, if you read the internet there were headlines in two major cities in the US, one was bragging about the benefits and singing the praises of starting, another was talking about why they were stopping. Those were two major cities in the US the same week so it is an issue where there are differences of opinion, but again I believe the main stream opinion in the industry at this point is that fluoridation does help provide dental protection and the Health Director here in Mecklenburg County has reviewed this, we've discussed it with him a number of times and he believes it is something we should continue to do.

Mayor Cannon said or just buy the toothpaste with fluoride in it.

Councilmember Autry said have we had any recent consultation that you aware of with the Dental Society on this matter?

Mr. Gullet said that is part of the Health Director's review that he did consult with them. It has probably been a year or two since I talked with him about it, but it has been that recent.

Ms. Mayfield said we say we are averaging around \$300,000 for this cost. I would like Mr. Manager for us to request a presentation to come back to Council that actually does a comparison for those comparable cities that have stopped using this particular product and if there has been any health impact to it. If we are still moving forward based on a 1940s idea and if today because we have so many other options of obtaining fluoride through so many different ways, is this something that we need to continue to do, whereas there was a time when we did need to do this, just so we have the information and that information is available for the community to let them know based on comparison, which we love to do, of other cities around our size, if there are cities that have stopped using it would be nice to have the full information that is unbiased of the pros and cons. I think that is a conversation we need to have especially when overall we are constantly looking at ways to be more financially transparent as well as physically responsible when we are looking at how we are spending tax dollars.

Councilmember Austin said my questions goes back to the basis of fluoride was supposed to added as a way to prevent tooth decay so in the cities that don't have it, and you may or may not know this, are they seeing now a higher rate of tooth decay in those cities and the ones that are now just adding, are they seeing few cases of those. I think the whole point back in 1940 was to prevent tooth decay, but if that is not happening or if we are seeing that people are stopping it and not seeing a higher rate of tooth decay then there is no point to add.

Mayor Cannon said we know you are a Utilities Director, but if you can answer that then we are not paying you enough.

Mr. Gullet said I can't answer that.

Mr. Austin said is there data out there that supports that?

Mr. Gullet said perhaps the Mecklenburg County Health Director could address that.

Mayor Cannon said I think you can put a service request in for that. As a matter of fact count that as a request from Councilmember Austin and have that for all of us. I think the question too is it doing anything to prevent any kind of safety or health risk?

Mr. Austin said or doing nothing at all.

Mayor Cannon said I think the question is why does it have to exist if it has to.

Ms. Mayfield said wouldn't that tie into basically what I just ask for if we get the report back.

Mayor Cannon said absolutely, so let's look forward to that.

Ms. Fallon said and maybe we could find out what the NIH says. They would be a defining body of what we need to know.

Mr. Gullet said there are a number of bodies that probably have information out there that would be helpful.

Councilmember Phipps said 1940s notwithstanding; as I understand that you have indicated that since that time we've had recommendations from health officials that strongly suggest that we retain fluoridation in our water. Is that correct?

Mr. Gullet said yes, that is correct.

Mr. Phipps said I would think that we are not looking at a 1940s process that has been updated; it has been vetted and you have health experts recommending fluoridation. I would strongly era on the side of public health experts in this situation.

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Mayor Cannon said anything else on this matter? If not we will look forward to the reports we will get back and make a more informed decision as we go forward.

**Wells Fargo Fraud Department and Homeless Problem**

**Willie Bee Simpson** said my face is not a strange face at this podium. I was here at a previous meeting talking about Wells Fargo. I received a letter from my P. O. Box today and I brought it with me. They are trying to resolve the problem I had with them with a bank fraud. I was missing about \$10,000 out of my account and they seemed to not want to resolve that issue that I had with fraudulent withdrawals. Within one month of April, and I know it is way back because they have drug this along for about 4 years and in doing so I was unable to pay the mortgage on my home. By this fraudulent withdrawals coming from the bank account it caused me to lose an investment of \$134,000 in my home, so American Bank has that property now. They told me they are going to do something about this on March 4<sup>th</sup>; they said they are going to resolve this problem, the \$10,000. I have yet to see that happen and it has been 4 years. One would think they are dragging it because maybe I have the wrong face, I'll just put it like that. This issue has gone on and gone on for about 4 years Mayor and in doing so I did lose some property and I don't want to lose my integrity behind this issue, but \$134,000 is not nothing to them. I don't know what their money is like today; I'm sure they are over billions and billions but my issue with them is to solve this case. I did pass a few information about, and maybe those of you who like to write me or contact me you can do it P. O. Box 16537 Charlotte, NC 28297 and that is Rev. Willie Bee Simpson.

Mr. Simpson said I don't have enough time to say something about the homeless issue, but I do want to deal with that because it put me in that problem.

Mayor Cannon said come on back at some point. We would love to hear from you.

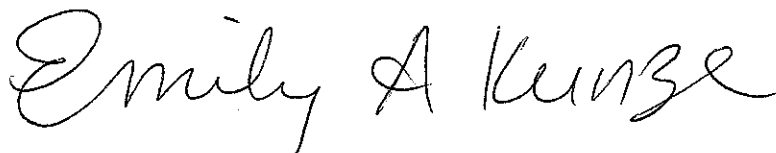
Mayor Cannon asked if speaker Abigail Adams has arrived. Since Ms. Adams is not here we will have to wait until 7:30 to make the ask for her and if she is not here at that time then Council can be excused.

**The meeting was recessed at 7:19 p.m. and reconvened at 7:30 p.m.**

Mayor Cannon called for speaker Abigail Adams. Ms. Adams was not present.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayfield, seconded by Councilmember Austin, and carried unanimously, to adjourn.
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The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m



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Emily A. Kunze, Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 2 Hours, 16 Minutes  
Minutes Completed: March 19, 2014