

MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FEBRUARY 2, 2007

8:00 A.M.

**NORTH CAROLINA
MECKLENBURG COUNTY**

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in Special Session at the Harris Conference Center on the Campus of Central Piedmont Community College West, 3216 CPCC West Campus Drive, Charlotte, N.C. at 8:00 a.m. on February 2, 2007.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Jennifer Roberts and Commissioners
Karen Bentley, Dumont Clarke, Bill James
Norman A. Mitchell, Sr., Dan Ramirez and
Valerie C. Woodard
County Manager Harry L. Jones, Sr.
Clerk to the Board Janice S. Paige

Absent: Commissioners J. Daniel Bishop and H. Parks Helms

Commissioners Ramirez and Woodard were absent when the meeting was called to order and until noted in the minutes.

The meeting, the Board's Annual Strategic Planning Conference, was called to order by Chairman Roberts at 9:10 a.m.

Note: The Strategic Planning Conference was originally scheduled for February 1st and 2nd, however, because of inclement weather the February 1st session was not held.

The Board received a welcome from Dr. Tony Zeiss, President of Central Piedmont Community College.

County Manager Jones gave an overview of the one-day Strategic Planning Conference agenda and the goals and expectations for the Conference.

Commissioner Ramirez entered the meeting at this time.

Note: The Strategic Planning Conference is a vital step in the County's Managing for Results efforts.

The expectations are 1) that the Board will reaffirm or revise its goals on the Community and Corporate Balanced Scorecard. 2) The Board will start the process of identifying the issues the Board would like to focus on in developing the County Manager's Recommended Budget and Work Plan for FY08.

Budget/Management Director Hyong Yi outlined the specific process to be followed for conducting the work session.

Chairman Roberts made opening remarks.

Next:

Board Members introduced and discussed their respective priorities/issues of interests.

Accessibility of County Services – Commissioner Bentley

Background – Location of County facilities downtown or in south Charlotte present a challenge for many residents who are not mobile or have access to transportation.

Goal and/or Request – 1) Improve accessibility of County services by developing a long-term plan 2) Direct the County Manager to follow up with additional research

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – Decisions to offer distributed services are done at an operational level rather than through a policy or overall strategy. The Board needs to decide whether current approach is acceptable or a distributed service strategy is needed.

Commissioner Woodard entered the meeting at this time.

Comments:

Commissioner Bentley said she was concerned and has had concerns expressed to her by constituents regarding the availability of services, particularly for the elderly, in the northern part of the county. She asked were there any long term strategies for providing services in the northern part of the county, such as, domestic violence services and the types of services provided at the Marion Diehl Center.

County Manager Jones said an additional analysis could be done with respect to what services may be applicable to Commissioner Bentley's concern.

Commissioner Bentley said she would be interested in knowing what County services currently exist in the northern part of the county.

General Manager John McGillicuddy said the Status of Seniors Report focuses on these types of things.

Park Equity – Commissioner James

Background - Sectors of the community perceive that Park and Recreation funds have not been spent equitably across all geographic areas of the County.

Goal and/or Request – Get an update from staff on how park and recreation resources are being used throughout the County.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – We have an agreement with the City of Charlotte, but not the six towns about roles and responsibilities of park and recreation. A similar agreement with the towns may prove beneficial in managing how park and recreation resources are being used.

Commissioner James made the following comments:

- He has been told by constituents in District 6 that Park and Recreation funds were not being distributed equitably.
- There is concern that the park districts do not mirror the political districts.
- He suggested that perhaps some type of Interlocal agreement needs to be developed with the towns and at the same time come up with some kind of equitable distribution process.
- Very little money goes into Matthews and Mint Hill for park services by the County.
- The concern was not so much for park land, but for park programming.
- He would like for staff to come up with something that could be shared with the towns for their input.
- The issue is equitable distribution of park and recreation operational money to support park programming.

County Manager Jones said this same concern has been expressed by town managers when the managers have met over the course of the last year.

He noted however, that many of the towns have their own Park and Recreation Departments,

thus, the County's ability is limited within the jurisdictions of the towns.

County Manager Jones said consideration could be given to entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the towns with respect park services or that there be some discussion about there being a true Mecklenburg County Parks Department with the County having responsibility for parks all over the county. County Manager Jones said this would eliminate the concern for equitable programming. County Manager Jones said this would also eliminate costs for the Towns.

County Manager Jones said he would continue to discuss this matter with the town managers and recommended that the Board discuss this matter also with their elected Town counterparts.

Commissioner James said this would be a good question to ask the Town boards to consider.

General Manager Bobbie Shields addressed a handout concerning park department funding by the County and the towns.

Commissioner Clarke said the towns were free to do what they like with their parks and that they were certainly free to go "above and beyond" what the County does.

Commissioner Clarke said it may be misleading to focus on the district boundaries because "we live in a highly mobile society" and residents take advantage of park facilities in and outside of their specific area of the county.

Commissioner Mitchell said he would support the total consolidation of park services, but the question is whether or not the Town boards would support it.

Commissioner James said if the County takes over the park services for the towns, that it would also acquire the debt that may exist.

Alternative Revenue Sources – Commissioner Clarke

Background – This Board has not had a discussion to determine: 1) Why the County might need additional revenue 2) What the scope of the needs is and 3) What sources are available to meet the need

Goal and/or Request – Have the Board provide direction to the County Manager and the Commission Working Group members on how to proceed with identifying and lobbying for alternative revenue sources.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation: The County is working with the City of Charlotte in examining alternative revenue sources to fund infrastructure costs. The County also supports the NCACC legislative agenda which supports alternative revenue options for all counties.

Comments:

Commissioner Clarke commented on the state's Fiscal Modernization Group that's studying the issue of alternative revenue sources.

Commissioner Clarke said he doesn't think the County will make much headway in this area until after this group concludes its study.

Commissioner James said he heard the NC Association of CPA's was not favor of a land transfer tax.

Commissioner James asked for clarification on the land transfer tax issue.

Commissioner Mitchell said the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) was in favor of a land transfer tax.

Commissioner Clarke said the NCACC have supported a menu that would authorize all 100 counties to have any taxing authority that they currently have.

Commissioner Clarke said some counties already have the option of a land transfer tax, perhaps as many as eight or nine, mostly in the eastern part of the state. The NCACC is supporting that if one county has this type of taxing authority or some other type that all 100 counties have that same authority.

Commissioner Woodard noted that when she attended the joint City/County Alternative Revenue Committee meeting she discovered that there were a lot of alternatives not even on the table for consideration, such as road tolls and payroll tax for those persons who work in Mecklenburg County but reside in another county.

Commissioner Woodard said she feels impact fees and land revenue fees are too much for those Mecklenburg County residents trying to buy a home.

County Manager Jones said the three top priorities of the NCACC were 1) Medicaid Relief, 2) School Construction, and 3) Revenue Options.

County Manager Jones said he feels school construction is what's driving the discussion of alternative revenues at the county level. He said if you were to remove school construction out of the equation and if the state took over this responsibility, counties wouldn't be discussing this matter.

Commissioner Clarke said having alternative revenue sources allows you to take some of the pressure off of the property tax. He said it doesn't necessarily allow you to cut taxes. He said it's also being driven by a lot of the smaller counties because of the need for Medicaid relief, and it's being driven by citizens and public opinion.

Commissioner James said a set meeting date for the joint City/County Alternative Revenues Committee had not been established. He noted that at the last meeting he and Commissioner Woodard threw out suggestions, but no action was taken.

Chairman Roberts noted the following with respect to summarizing this issue. "We can continue to increase property taxes to address school needs or the County can try to match some of the need for those new schools with the people that are causing that growth to occur.

Chairman Roberts reminded the Board that it did put forth a resolution supporting an examination of alternative revenues, which was supported by a majority of the Board.

Commissioner Clarke asked County Manager Jones to have the County's lobbyist to monitor this issue.

Commissioner Clarke said he would recommend that the County continue to work with the City on this issue, if the City has the desire to do so.

Chairman Roberts asked County Manager Jones to provide updates from Raleigh on this issue.

County Logo – Commissioner Mitchell

Background – Staff is contemplating a new logo for the County.

Goal and/or Request – What is the status of the evaluation of the new logo?

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – We are nearly finished researching the logo issue with focus groups.

Comments:

Commissioner Mitchell said since placing this matter on the Conference agenda, he realized that this was not a strategic planning conference type of matter. Therefore, no discussion of the County's logo was needed and that the matter was being handled by staff.

CMS Operating Budget – Commissioner Ramirez

Background – The County has explored several methods of determining funding for CMS.

Goal and/or Request – Have the Board adopt as policy a set percentage of County revenues for CMS based on historical averages.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – It is up to the Board to decide how to fund CMS. It can adopt the per pupil based funding evaluation guidelines, what is proposed here, another method, or use an ad hoc method.

Comments:

Commissioner Ramirez asked the Board to consider providing the Schools with a fixed percentage of revenues that the County receives from taxpayers in the form of taxation. He said this would eliminate a lot of the politics that goes on in funding the Schools. He said by doing it this way the Schools would automatically know what to expect. He said this would make it more equitable.

Commissioner Ramirez said he would like to see staff come up with a proposal.

Commissioner Clarke said this has been proposed in the past and what it resulted in under the leadership of former Chairman Tom Cox was a guideline or framework for funding schools.

Commissioner Clarke said the Board's Education Budget Advisory Committee (EBAC) reviewed this framework and per their analysis of it they presented a revised version.

Commissioner Clarke said what the Education Budget Advisory Committee came up with was very sophisticated and that it took into consideration inflation, the growth in the number of students, and other factors that drive the school system's operating budget. He said it provides a guideline to the Board with respect to what its increase, if any, to the schools should be.

Commissioner Clarke said what EBAC established was a very helpful tool for the Board and he supports the continued use of EBAC's school budgeting process.

Commissioner Ramirez said his recommendation was simpler. The Schools would know specifically what they would be receiving because it would be a set percentage of revenues.

Director Hyong Yi clarified that the Board never formally voted to adopt EBAC's recommended process, although this is what the Board has used in the past. He suggested placing it on a future agenda for formal consideration, which would again allow this matter to be discussed and other Commission suggestions to be brought forth.

It was the consensus of the Board that this occurs.

County Manager Jones said it should be placed on a future Budget/Public Policy meeting agenda.

Elderly and Disabled Residents Homestead Exemption - Commissioner Ramirez

Background – Rising assessed values of homes present a significant financial challenge for those on a fixed income. Currently, a homestead exemption program exists run by the State.

Goal and/or Request – Can we expand the program to either expand the pool of beneficiaries or the benefit?

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – This would require legislative changes at the State level and may be appropriate for our legislative agenda.

Commissioner Ramirez said he understands that Homestead Exemption is a state issue, but he wants the County to study this. He said the elderly have been feeling the negative affects of the growth that continues to occur, many of whom are on a fixed income. A change in this exemption would benefit this population. He would like the Board to send a resolution to the local delegation requesting that the amount be increased to \$50,000 for those in Mecklenburg County.

Commissioner Clarke said per his recall in 2001 it was \$18,000 and that it increases annually by some type of factor. It's believed that the current amount is \$20,500.

Commissioner Clarke said he would be interested in knowing what the loss would be financially if the amount was to increase as proposed by Commissioner Ramirez. He would also like to know what the tax rate would need to be in order to make up this difference.

Chairman Roberts suggested this go to a Board committee for review.

County Manager Jones said staff could do a fiscal impact analysis with respect to this matter.

Commissioner Woodard said she would like to know how many people in Mecklenburg County take advantage of this exemption and how is the public made aware of the availability of the exemption.

It was the consensus of the Board to send this matter to the Effective and Efficient Government Committee.

Aging Out of Foster Care – Chairman Roberts

Background – Youth who have aged out of foster care often struggle to live independently without a support system.

Goal and/or Request – 1) Raise awareness of the needs of these children 2) Ask the Board to make this a priority 3) Advocate for a system of care for these youth

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – DSS have developed an aging out of foster care strategic plan. The County has also funded a pilot program through Youth Homes, Inc.

Comments:

Chairman Roberts said with respect to her item that she accepts the County Manager's feedback, therefore, a lot of discussion was not needed at this time.

Commissioner James asked Chairman Roberts what age group was she thinking of with respect to her issue of Aging Out of Foster Care. Chairman Roberts said ages 18 -21.

Commissioner James asked would these persons be required to be in school or to get a job.

Chairman Roberts said there were requirements, but she can't recite them at this time.

Commissioner James said he thinks there needs to be some positive changes in behavior.

Commissioner James said another question or concern would be how would you know if the

person was in school or had gained employment.

Commissioner Woodard asked about partnering with the Charlotte Housing Authority with respect to this matter. Chairman Roberts said that could be an option.

Environmental Summit-January 2008 – Chairman Roberts

Background – The last environmental summit was in October 2004.

Goal and/or Request - Gauge Board interest in participating in another environmental summit in 2008.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – N/A

Comments:

Chairman Roberts said she was presenting this matter to the Board as an FYI.

She said the Environmental Summit was in the early planning stages and that it would be coordinated by the Environmental Policy Council. Also, that regional representatives would be invited to participate.

Commissioner Clarke said he supports the Environmental Summit and that the County should take the lead on this.

Commissioner James said he would like to know what it would cost the County to sponsor the Environmental Summit before he could commit to doing anything.

Status of Women – Chairman Roberts

Background – A study on the status of women is currently being conducted. Does the County want to take a leadership role in supporting this endeavor?

Goal and/or Request – 1) Make the Board aware of the status of women project and the women's summit. 2) Gauge the Board's interest in making this a priority.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – County staff are active participants in the working groups collecting data.

Comments:

Chairman Roberts said a Women's Summit was being discussed.

Chairman Roberts said the Board needs to think about what level of support it wants to provide to the Women's Summit other than the current participation role of certain staff.

Commissioner Clarke said he feels the County should provide "modest" support. He said this type of summit was a more grassroots initiative.

Director Hyong Yi said staff would report back to the Board regarding both of these summits with respect to costs.

Commissioner Ramirez noted that a group he's affiliated with, a regional organization, might be willing to assist in sponsoring the Women's Summit. He said he could not commit to this on their behalf, but that he would check with respect to their interest.

Regional Resource Issue – Chairman Roberts

Background – What role should Mecklenburg County play in regional resource issues?

Goal and/or Request – Have the Board set policy to provide direction to the County Manager on this issue.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation: N/A

Chairman Roberts said the Regional Resource Issue was an on-going discussion and therefore there was not a need for detailed discussion at this time.

Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Court System – Commissioners Woodard/Roberts

Background – The efficiency of the Court System remains an issue. It impacts the jails as well as other County services.

Goal and/or Request – Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the court system and reduce jail overcrowding by taking several actions.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – The staff is currently developing short and long-term strategies around jail overcrowding including temporary facilities, diversion programs, and a facilities master plan.

Comments:

Commissioner Woodard said part of the problem with jail overcrowding is because the docket is over loaded, specifically District Court dealing with misdemeanors.

Commissioner Woodard said something needs to occur to move cases through the court system faster, especially those victimless crimes. She said a lot of people are in jail because they can't afford bail.

She wants to ask the State to help subsidize a court to deal with DWI cases and other victimless crimes.

Chairman Roberts said she put this matter on the agenda because it continues to be an issue of concern.

County Manager Jones said staff would be reporting soon on the issue of jail overcrowding and diversion programs.

It was noted also that with respect to efficiency gains in the court system, that the County cannot do it alone, that assistance is needed from the State.

HIV/AIDS – Commissioner Woodard

Background – HIV/AIDS continues to be a concern with the number of cases being reported increasing 50% over five years. The lifetime costs are high for individuals (\$600,000). Total cost of all cases (3,292) total \$1.9 billion.

Goal and/or Request – Raise awareness of this issue.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – The Health Department is actively trying to manage this issue through its many programs.

Comments:

Commissioner Woodard in addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS said that she was particularly concerned about the youth.

Commissioner Woodard said there needs to be a way to get awareness information to adolescents with respect to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Commissioner Woodard addressed the testing of inmates. Commissioner Woodard said if the Ryan White grant is received, then perhaps this can occur, but it's something that needs to be discussed with the Sheriff.

Commissioner Woodard said as the Board of Health, the Board needs to address this issue.

Commissioner Bentley said the Board needs to find out what the Schools are doing in this area.

Employee Retention – Commissioner Woodard

Background – This measure has been a red light for the County.

Goal and/or Request – Consider private sector employee retention programs to improve the County's retention rate.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – The County has examined its data on employee retention and is adjusting strategies to take it into account.

Comments:

Commissioner Woodard said she placed this matter on the agenda because it is a concern of hers. She referenced a coaching for success program that she recently found out about that's being used in the private sector aimed at retaining those that have been trained.

Diversity Management – Commissioner Woodard

Background – Would like some awareness on the demographics of the County's employees

Goal and/or Request – Understand diversity within County government.

County Manager Comment and/or Recommendation – The County does have a diversity management plan which examines the data and sets goals for managing diversity.

Comments:

Commissioner Woodard she has always had a concern for minority representation when it comes to the County's supervisors and managers.

Commissioner Ramirez asked were there any statistics relating to why employees leave?

Planning & Evaluation Director Leslie Johnson said the most prevalent reason is pay.

Commissioner James noted some differences in the Diversity Study Report with respect to the minority percentages and the definition of minority. He referenced pages 6, 15, 22, 23, 25, & 26.

Commissioner James said the items in the report regarding Stakeholders and Customers should not reference sexual orientation.

General Manager McGillicuddy noted that the differences exist because the focuses or desired results in many cases are different.

Commissioner James said he has received e-mails from employees who are concerned that they cannot express how they feel with respect to voicing their opinion regarding sexual orientation.

County Manager Jones informed Commissioner James that if he's receiving e-mails from employees with concerns that he should forward them to him and those employees should be directed to the County Manager's Office.

Commissioner James said some employees have expressed a fear of being retaliated against.

County Manager Jones said he does not support any form of discrimination.

It was noted that the Board would be receiving a presentation on the Diversity Management Plan at a future Budget/Public Policy Workshop.

The Board recessed for lunch at 11:39 a.m. and reconvened at 12:13 p.m.

Strategic Business Planning

Brian Cox, eGovernment and Customer Service Director gave an overview of the strategic business planning process with a focus on the Strategic Impact Issues that present the greatest challenge over the next three years.

General Manager Janice Jackson addressed the Strategic Impact Issues falling under her purview, the focus area of Community Health & Safety: Health Risk Behaviors and Jail Overcrowding (with Alcohol & Substance Abuse and Mental Health Problems as components).

Commissioner James said he feels adolescent pregnancy should be tracked the same way as HIV/AIDS, breaking it out by groups. Commissioner James questioned whether adolescent pregnancy is really a green light.

Commissioner James asked what percentage of people that get arrested, get convicted. Staff said it would report back on this.

Commissioner James asked if the District Attorney's Office still needed the \$10 million they talked about needing last year and asked would the County Manager be placing this in his budget. County Manager Jones said he had not received anything.

Commissioner Clarke commented on the wording of the goal and measure with respect to jail overcrowding.

Commissioner Clarke suggested having an annual percentage increase in the pre-trial population.

Commissioner Clarke said the measure should be placed in the goal.

Planning & Evaluation Director Leslie Johnson said the arrest rate has declined but pre-trial has increased. She said staff could revisit this to make it more transparent in the goal, however there's a staff recommendation forthcoming to eliminate this measure and to adopt another one.

General Manager Jackson said the Board would be receiving a presentation on Jail Diversion at the February 20, 2007 meeting.

General Manager Bobbie Shields addressed the Strategic Impact Issues that fall under his purview, the Focus Area of Growth Management & Environment: Environmental Stewardship, Recreation Space & Facility Deficit, and Economic Development.

Environmental Stewardship

It was noted that a report was forthcoming in March concerning Environmental Leadership and the County's Environmental Policy Action Plan. Also, staff is in the process of developing a new comprehensive park and recreation space master plan.

Recreation Space & Facility Deficit

Commissioner Mitchell asked was there money available to buy more land. General Manager Shields' response was no.

Commissioner Mitchell asked does this mean the County would need to have another land bond referendum. General Manager Shields' response was yes, probably so.

County Manager Jones noted the following:

- The Board needs to think about land acquisition in its totality.
- What is it that you will need land for, and what services are you going to need land for in the future.
- There will be strong competition for what might be limited resources.
- Schools will drive much of the demand for more land, and then there are parks and potentially libraries.
- The challenge is how does the County engage in stronger partnerships to have more joint use of space.

Commissioner Ramirez suggested the Board consider purchasing farmland and that it remain as such by leasing it back to the owner, for open space purposes and for environmental reasons.

General Manager Shields said a referendum and the purchase of farmland were both options that would be looked at when developing an overall strategy.

Commissioner Clarke noted that farmers in North Carolina received a "big" subsidy from counties because their farmland is taxed based on fair use and not fair market value.

General Manager Shields said there will be a request forthcoming in response to the issue of Recreation Space and Facility Deficit.

Economic Development

General Manager Shields said the County does not have a very clear strategy as it relates to Economic Development, that the County has taken a "piece-meal" approach. He said a clear strategy is needed.

It was noted that in FY 05 the Business Investment Grant Program represented about 1.5% of the total assessed value and that in FY06 the grants that were issued represented .5% of the new growth in total assessment. Also, since 2001, the County issued 22 Business Investment Grants, \$400 million of new private investment, 2500 jobs were retained, and 4000 new jobs were created. Also, the County's maximum exposure between now and 2017 is \$12 million.

General Manager Shields said the MTC and Charlotte Area Transit System will be making a request for assistance with running light rail north, such as being a partner in the financing of this.

General Manager Shields said in conjunction with having a clear economic development strategy that there will also be a need for staff resources to adequately do the analysis to determine if the project is a "good" deal for the County.

General Manager John McGillicuddy addressed the Strategic Impact Issues that fall under his purview, the Focus Area of Effective & Efficient Government: Debt Management and Capital/Infrastructure Investment, Employee Resource Management, Public/Employee Communication, and Public Involvement/Public Support

Public/Employee Communication

Commissioner James said he heard the City was contemplating having a Cable 16 program, whereby each district representative and at-large representative would take turns hosting some type of show.

Commissioner James said there's not a very effective way for the Board to communicate with the

public compared to how it's done in other places such as Chicago, Miami, and Atlanta.

Commissioner James referenced a past effort that involved producing district booklets but he said there has to be a better way for communicating with the public on the part of individual board members.

He asked staff whether what the City was contemplating something that they may want to consider.

Commissioner James said at some point in the future the Board needs to discuss how it communicates with the public. He noted that there have been some Commissioners who could afford to hire someone to assist them in communicating with public, but that this was not the case for most elected officials.

Chairman Roberts said in addition to improving communication with the public, the Board also needs to find ways to improve communication with other elected bodies.

Debt Management and Capital/Infrastructure Investment

Commissioner Clarke addressed debt management and Capital/Infrastructure. He said this was going to be a huge challenge for the County in the next three years.

Commissioner Clarke said the Board needs to think about having a dedicated revenue source for debt service, other than the property tax.

Planning & Evaluation Director Leslie Johnson addressed the Key Strategic Impact Issues in the Focus Area of Social, Education, and Economic Opportunity: Poverty and Literacy.

Literacy

County Manager Jones informed the Board of an after-school program in Manchester, Pennsylvania near Pittsburg, ran by Bill Strickland, the Manchester Craftsman Guild. In this program, art is used as a means of capturing the creativity of children to increase or enhance their interest in learning. County Manager Jones said the program has been very successful. Visual arts and performing arts are used and there's a horticultural center on site and a recording studio.

County Manager Jones said Mr. Strickland was in Charlotte, per his invitation and talked with him, City Manager Pam Syfert, representatives from the Arts and Science Council, Time Warner Cable, Bank of America, Chamber of Commerce, Foundation For The Carolinas and others about the possibility of bringing this program to Charlotte/Mecklenburg County.

County Manager Jones said he would like to see this program come to Charlotte/Mecklenburg County, not that it would be funded through the County, but that he, as County Manager, could be a leader in getting others involved to get this program here.

County Manager Jones said plans were being discussed regarding trying to schedule a trip to Pennsylvania of elected officials and community leaders to see the program. He will keep the Board informed.

Commissioner Woodard noted that a similar program at the Blumenthal under its educational component. Commissioner Woodard said unfortunately it's not in all schools.

County Manager Jones said he thinks this type of program would assist with lowering the drop-out rate.

The Board recessed for a break at 2:00 p.m. and reconvened at 2:15 p.m.

Three-Year Strategic Focus Setting

Director Hyong Yi and Planning & Evaluation Director Leslie Johnson addressed the process of

setting the three-year strategic focus for the FY 2008-2010 Strategic Business Plan.

The Board went through a process of ranking the County's desired results on the Community & Corporate Scorecard based on which ones were the most important ones to emphasize over the three-year planning cycle. The Board was split into two groups. (Group 1) James, Mitchell, and Bentley and (Group 2) Roberts, Woodard, Clarke, Ramirez

At the conclusion of this process the Board placed matters into three categories: 1) Immediate Critical Action Needed 2) Action Needed, and 3) Maintain Momentum.

Immediate Critical Action Needed

Improve Air, Water & Land

Reduce Diseases & Mental Illness

Increase Literacy & Workforce Preparedness

Maintain Affordable & Competitive Tax Rate

Increase Efficiency of Criminal Justice Services

Increase Citizen Self-Sufficiency

Reduce/Avoid Costs

Reduce Violence, Injury & Emotional Harm

Increase Respect/Appreciation of Ethnic Cultural Diversity

Improve/Expand Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways & Recreational Opportunities

Action Needed

Enhance Workforce Recruitment & Retention

Increase Customer & Stakeholder Satisfaction

Enhance Citizen Involvement

Increase Employee Motivation & Satisfaction

Increase Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Improve Financial Management

Maintain Triple-A Bond Rating

Increase Employee Access to Information

Improve Technology-Related Capacities

Improve Access to Public Facilities

Maintain Momentum

Increase Economic Development & Job Opportunities

Preserve Historic Sites & Landmarks

Improve Employee Efficiency

Increase Citizen Awareness

County Manager Jones said per the Board's above results it appears that there are three top categories of concern: Financial, Health, and Education.

County Manager Jones noted, per comments made regarding Literacy, that he has sent letters to CMS and CPCC, and the Library regarding forming a literacy consortium as a partnership because of limited resources.

Managing for Results

Planning & Evaluation Director Leslie Johnson gave a brief report on the recommended revisions to the Board's Community & Corporate Scorecard goals, strategies, and performance measures.

Due to time constraints, the Board was not able to discuss this matter in as much detail as needed.

It was the consensus of the Board that this matter be placed on the Board's February 13, 2007 Budget/Public Policy agenda for discussion and action.

FY 06 Financial Status Report

Interim Finance Director Sarah Heasley reported on the County's financial status for FY 07/08. It was pointed out that the numbers noted with respect to revenue projections were preliminary.

The update addressed property taxes, sales taxes, investment income, lottery proceeds, expenditures, bonds, and certificates of participation.

A copy of the report is on file and included as part of the Strategic Planning Conference Agenda Book.

Commissioner Bentley left the meeting and was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

Comments:

Commissioner Mitchell said he would like to receive a report showing what's spent out monthly or paid out through the year with respect to debt service.

Wrap-Up

Commissioner Clarke suggested that future Strategic Planning Conferences start on a Friday and that the Board stay over night at a hotel and conclude on Saturday. He also suggested that there be a set time annually as to when the Conference would occur, rather than the date varying every year.

Commissioner Clarke said it should be placed on the Board's agenda the first meeting in November for consideration.

Note: The above is not inclusive of every comment and/or question asked but is a summary.

A copy of the Strategic Planning Conference agenda is on file with the Clerk to the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Roberts declared the meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Janice S. Paige, Clerk

Jennifer Roberts, Chairman