

AUGUST 4, 2009

MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

NORTH CAROLINA
MECKLENBURG COUNTY

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in Special Session in Conference Center Room 267 of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center located at 600 East Fourth Street at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 4, 2009.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Jennifer Roberts and Commissioners Karen Bentley, Dumont Clarke, Harold Cogdell, Jr. Neil Cooksey, George Dunlap, Vilma Leake and Daniel Murrey
General Manager Michelle Lancaster
Clerk to the Board Janice S. Paige

Absent: Commissioner Bill James

-INFORMAL SESSION-

Commissioners Cooksey, Dunlap, Cogdell, and Leake were absent when the meeting was called to order and until noted in the minutes.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Roberts.

The purpose of the meeting was to meet with other local elected officials and community partners to discuss the possibility of developing a Human Services Strategic Plan. Officials were present from the Board of Education, Charlotte City Council, the Town of Huntersville and the Town of Matthews.

Persons were also present from the Foundation for the Carolinas, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations, Mecklenburg Ministries, Council for Children's Rights, Community Building Initiative, and Anne Udall with the Lee Institute who facilitated the meeting.

Chairman Roberts said health and human services was an issue that should be addressed as a total community. Chairman Roberts said the need to address this issue as a community came about as a result of the economic downturn and the impact of that on the community.

Chairman Roberts then called on Commissioner Murrey, chair of the Board's Health and Community Support Committee to make comments.

Commissioner Dunlap entered the meeting.

Commissioner Murrey said in Mecklenburg County we tend to "compartmentalize" human services needs. He said it's something that's thought of as being only in the purview of the County and the non-profits.

Commissioner Murrey said, historically, a lot of issues have tended to be treated in a silo. He said the way we govern our county and region has also been compartmentalized, in order to make it manageable, which he said was understandable.

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Commissioner Murrey said some issues like human services, however, aren't easily compartmentalized and it's discovered that it's difficult to address those needs unless you start to "forge relationships and a common vision" on how and what we're trying to address.

Commissioner Murrey said human services issues cut across a lot of different sectors. Commissioner Murrey said it's not just about health care access, mental health or traditional social services, but it involves issues around housing, education, job training and creation, wealth creation and public safety.

Commissioner Murrey said some of these issues are not in the County's domain or likewise the City's or Board of Education, but everyone ends up finding that on the edges of their organization and mission, that they're unable to get all the way there in terms of finding the solution that's really wanted because authority is limited.

Commissioner Murrey said as a result of the community meeting held recently regarding a community conversation around meeting basic human needs, the County thought it would be meaningful to bring more entities around the table to discuss how human services needs cut across their area and the limitations faced with in achieving objectives.

Commissioner Murrey said it was recognized from the beginning that in order to integrate county services better and meet community needs better, that it couldn't be done just by the County, but that it would involve everyone, elected bodies, the business community, non-profits, the Foundation for the Carolinas, and others.

Commissioner Murrey said the focus of today's meeting was to have an initial conversation about "how we got here." What happened at the community conversation meeting in June and why was that sort of pivotal in initiating today's discussion. Also, is having a health and human services strategic plan something that everyone agrees is important to focus on. If so, the County would "naturally" be the convener of this and the group that would drive the schedule, but that the County can't do this alone. He said to do it properly, it's important that everyone has an opportunity to engage on the "front end" and at points along the way in order to be successful.

Commissioner Murrey said this has to be a broad community approach and focus. He said what was heard at a recent meeting was, "it's great to address the critical needs and that the community has stepped up and done that to a large extent, but where do we address the upstream issues." Further, what's being done as a county and as a community to try to prevent these kinds of things from happening. What's being done to try to reduce 1) the number of homeless in the community, 2) the number of students that can't keep up with grade level, 3) the number of those requiring public assistance. What's being done to create jobs and wealth and other things that are really the "foundation for a well functioning social network."

Chairman Roberts called on Maria Hanlin with Mecklenburg Ministries, Diane English with Community Building Initiative, and Willie Ratchford with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations to provide a brief summary of what occurred at the June 30, 2009 Community Conversation meeting.

Commissioner Cooksey entered the meeting.

The following was noted:

- Collaboration began the early part of 2008 between Community Building Initiative, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations, and Mecklenburg Ministries, per the turmoil that was in the community surrounding the appointment of a new sheriff.
- An "open letter" was sent to the community acknowledging that turmoil of this nature will erupt from time to time, thus, how can we as a community be more effective in dealing with these types of issues.

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- Two community forums were held as a follow up to the “Open Letter,” one in April and one in June.
- Another meeting was held late November after the election because of the energy that was in the community.
- In looking at 2009 and what needed to be addressed from a community perspective, it was the economy.
- In March a forum was held entitled “Can we talk to each other about meeting basic needs.”
- The forum was successful and another one was held in June.
- The forum held in June was the seed that sparked today’s meeting.
- A summary was provided of the June 30, 2009 community meeting. (*A copy is on file with the Clerk to the Board.*)
- Two comments made at the June forum that again sparked today’s meeting were 1) “While our community has models for meeting needs in our city, we do not have the models for meeting the needs that are currently unfolding.” 2) “Our community has done four strategic plans for arts and culture, but we have no comprehensive strategic plan for human services.”
- As for next steps, the three entities (Community Building Initiative, Mecklenburg Ministries, and the Charlotte/Mecklenburg Community Relations) are considering holding another dialogue session on September 3, 2009 as a follow-up to the June 30th meeting, which will be entitled “Can we talk to each other about what should be included in a human services strategic plan.”
- The purpose of the forum will be to give the average person an opportunity to come and provide input on what they think should be included in a human services strategic plan, if it’s decided that one will be done.
- It was suggested that if a decision is made to move forward with developing a human services strategic plan, that there be a three - six months discovery phase before moving forward.

Chairman Roberts then called on Anne Udall with the Lee Institute to facilitate the remaining portion of the meeting.

Ms. Udall noted the following questions that input was being sought on:

- What efforts are you currently engaged in to meet the health and human services needs?
- What efforts are you familiar with in your community that are going on?
- What are some opportunities for better coordination that you see?
- What is your reaction to the idea of a coordinated, comprehensive plan?
- Who would need to be involved? Who could lead the effort?
- What would you like to see next as a result of this meeting?

Comments

Commissioner Cogdell entered the meeting.

Nancy Carter, Charlotte City Council, commented on how the faith community has “stepped up” and assisted people with needs, including holding job fairs.

Commissioner Dunlap also commented on how he’s seen organizations and individuals “step up” to fill the gaps because of the current economic conditions in the community.

Commissioner Dunlap said he’s concerned about what local government and other agencies are doing to do their part as well. Commissioner Dunlap said although there’s a funding responsibility, there are other things that could be done to assist in these areas. He referenced the summit on housing and how the school system had land that they were trying to develop or would be interested in developing for people who were below a certain level, but there were barriers prohibiting this from occurring. Commissioner Dunlap said he would like to find out

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if this is possible and help eliminate those barriers. He said, for example, if the school system can't negotiate with a private developer to develop the land maybe it means giving the land to the county and the county doing it. Commissioner Dunlap said if barriers could be eliminated, then assistance could be provided to those that are homeless, those who live below the poverty level or those that find it difficult to obtain affordable housing.

Commissioner Bentley commented on the successful work that's taking place in the northern part of the county. She noted the work of United Family Services; Co-Pals, which is a private non-profit charity that will soon open and provide assistance to women that have been in abusive situations; the soup kitchen, which serves all of north Mecklenburg; and the Ada Jenkins Center.

Commissioner Bentley also referenced Helping to Empower Local People (HELP) and how many churches in north Mecklenburg have become involved with HELP

Molly Griffin, Chairman of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education commented on CMS' primary mission, which she said was to "educate" children and making sure they get the best education available anywhere, so they can lead productive lives.

Chairman Griffin said in the process of educating children, CMS finds itself involved with others in the community because children come to school with various problems. Thus, CMS has to work with others in the community to address those problems.

Chairman Griffin said one thing CMS needs is a better way to evaluate how effective the groups are that come to CMS to help with addressing the needs of children.

Chairman Griffin said although CMS wants to focus on its primary mission, CMS is aware that it cannot escape the community problems that children bring to school.

John Lassiter, Charlotte City Council, said each entity present has tried to respond to the issue of after school care and other issues as they come to them, but there's not been anyone who's been the "after school specialist," because everyone felt compelled to solve the problem.

Council person Lassiter said this has resulted in there being a lot of "health and human services spaghetti," in the sense that there are "little pieces, all over the place." Council person Lassiter said there's no conformity of methodology, no clarity of purpose. Council person Lassiter said the question is how do you get organized, particularly in a tough economic environment, to utilize your resources in the best way and determine who is best served to meet a particular need.

Council person Lassiter said when you look at what everyone is engaged in, you'll find everyone is engaged in "someone else's business" to the degree that "we've unraveled things.

Commissioner Cooksey said there are a lot of agencies with similar missions that may be duplicating services. Commissioner Cooksey said the County looked at this during budget deliberations and encouraged some agencies to combine forces because it's possible they could be more effective by doing so and/or reduce their costs.

Commissioner Cooksey said there's no overall guidance about who should be in what service areas. Commissioner Cooksey said "we talk about filling gaps and that sometimes maybe we're filling gaps that aren't there or we don't know where the gaps are."

Brian Collier with the Foundation For the Carolinas said the Foundation has started the consideration of a fund to look at the non-profit sector. He said the purpose would be to help and not threaten or force organizations figure out who does what and who does what best. It would also look at what organizations might be in a position now, because of the economy, to start looking at either partnering or other ways of collaborating, up to and including mergers. He said a community scan is taking place and that will look at the community sector by sector, including arts and culture.

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Mr. Collier said the Foundation is also looking at housing and whether there's a comprehensive way of looking at it. They are also funding the United Agenda for Children. They are also looking at local stimulus dollars coming primarily for health and human services and what's available. Also, what are the opportunities for collaboration around those funds. How can those dollars be leveraged. Mr. Collier said this was a voluntary exercise with the non-profits and they hope they will join in with them.

Mr. Collier said later this year they also plan to roll out a site where everyone can place their task force reports, surveys, and things that are important to the daily life of the community. He said this was being done so that you don't start from the point of saying what exist, but rather, you can actually go and look and say this has been done; we can dust it off or move forward from that point. Mr. Collier said they're doing this because they've found that one of the gaps in the community is information sharing. He said there are a lot of task force reports, many of which would be beneficial to this process but no one knows where they are or they're gathering dust somewhere.

Brett Loftis with the Council for Children's Rights said as a result of some national research on the implementation of "big" strategic plans about big health and human services issues, a group came together and discussed how do you do planning on a big scale. Who, then, approached the Council for Children and said we now have a funded mechanism that is in the process of working around, bringing in the data and research about what works for kids, evidenced based practices. Mr. Loftis said it also looks at how you leverage what you know about and what works. Thus, bringing a community conversation together around implementing those changes and driving the plans forward and bringing those services to the community.

Chairman Roberts asked Mr. Loftis about the scope of services he spoke of for children, was it from pre-natal care to at-risk youth and gang prevention. *The response was yes, because children's lives don't exist in silos. Thus, you have to plan holistically, but you have to start somewhere. Further, the initial priority they're looking at are the ones that were identified in about four different studies over the last ten years that the community has done about children's needs. This includes school readiness, prevention and intervention around child abuse and neglect, and access to affordable health and mental health care.*

Kaye McGarry, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education said education is key and should be the number one priority in Mecklenburg County across the board, however, she doesn't think that it is at this moment. Further, she feels the community could do more. She noted that Mecklenburg Ministries has done wonders, but that there are lots of churches in Mecklenburg County.

Board member McGarry said she's attended conferences where they speak about churches doing more but maybe in a different way, more strategically. She said the ones that are doing it, are doing a good job, but more partnerships are needed.

Board member McGarry said although she doesn't know the answer of how to do it, the community needs to take interest in getting a child prepared and ready to learn. She said whether that means a parent, a mentor, a neighbor, a friend, a minister, somebody needs to take responsibility for that child, bringing them to school. She said children should be kept safe within the schoolhouse doors, and if they're hungry feed them; if they need to take a nap, let them take a nap. She said whoever the principal is in that school, knows that community. She said the learning should be brought to them at a pace where they can take it and then "teach them."

Commissioner Dunlap posed the question of should one agency or organization be responsible for dealing with educational issues. Commissioner Dunlap said he raised this question because of recent conversations with some individuals who feel large agencies and systems of

government would "squeeze out the small people." Commissioner Dunlap said there's concern about who's making decisions and whether they will consider the "mom and pop" organizations.

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Anne Udall said based on the order of the questions outlined, the assumption was there are ways that coordination could happen regardless of whether or not everyone thought it was a good or viable idea to have a comprehensive plan. Thus, the idea of where you might coordinate or connect is separate, that it can inform the conversation, but it could be helpful regardless of your opinion on that next question.

Commissioner Leake entered the meeting.

Anthony Foxx, Charlotte City Council said with respect to looking at opportunities, there were three categories that came to his mind: 1) government and whether there are better or more effective ways and perhaps even more efficient ways to deliver the human services that government delivers, 2) Are there ways that government can better assist non-profit agencies in better and more efficient ways to deliver services, 3) Are there ways to help the community activate itself to help deal with some of these issues that bare on the public domain; but also involve issues that have more general costs. He said there are three areas where he sees opportunity for collaboration. The first he said was housing. Council person Foxx referenced several programs the City was involved in with respect to housing, such as the housing trust fund, the neighborhood stabilization program; also that the City was involved in a rapid housing business now because of the receipt of stimulus funds.

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

Council person Foxx said although the City has housing programs, are there ways to offer wrap around services that help families stabilize and deal with the issues that got them into a crisis in the first place. Council person Foxx said this is an area where he feels there needs to be some further discussion of collaboration.

Council person Foxx said economic development was another major issue in the community that has not been adequately addressed. He said there are huge disparities in economic conditions from one part of the city to another. He said the City was involved in a business corridor revitalization strategy. Council person Foxx asked are there ways government and non-profits can work jointly to amplify that effort.

Council person Foxx said the final matter was education. He said the City was involved with some after-school programs, but one of the things he thinks needs to happen as elected officials, the non-profit community, as well as, the community in general, is to “attack” the school readiness issue. Council person Foxx complimented CMS for the Parent University Program.

Council person Foxx said he thinks there are ways that we can act internal to government; ways that we can play a facilitative role with non-profits; and ways that we can act to help trigger community action in a way that he thinks would also help.

Commissioner Cogdell addressed the issue, from the public sector side, of having a single point of contact to deal with all health and human services issues, educational issues, and hard infrastructure issues. He suggested perhaps this was one place to start looking at, realizing what each entity’s core functions are.

Commissioner Cogdell said with respect to the private sector, the community was fortunate to have things like the Duke Endowment, United Way, Foundation for the Carolinas and others that have made resources available to the non-profit community. Commissioner Cogdell said he’s not sure, however, to what extent there’s communication and collaboration amongst these groups and that perhaps even with the private sector that there be a single point of contact regarding those resources. He said it would be good to have a single point of contact that would be aware of what’s been done and what’s available.

Commissioner Cogdell referenced a quality of life index, which he said was something the City of Charlotte use to do long time ago. He said the study involved assigning categories to

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communities such as stable or threatened. Commissioner Cogdell said he often thought that if you put in street lights and sidewalks and add extra police to the streets for a given neighborhood, but don't deal with what's going on in the household, such as, nutrition issues, educational issues, and emotional issues, does it truly stabilize the quality of life in that particular community. Commissioner Cogdell went on to say, for example, if the City of Charlotte decided it wanted to put resources into this corridor or community, one would think that there would be some communication with the school board and with the county, to say "we want to partner with you to target that particular geographic area; and say we want to take a wholistic approach to addressing everything in a particular neighborhood or corridor and "lets see if we can take it one neighborhood at a time" and do a "real holistic, meaningful approach."

Maria Hanlin with Mecklenburg Ministries addressed the possibility of doing a discovery phase, which would include bringing elected officials together, particularly district representatives to look at their districts comprehensively and strategically to see the overlaps and gaps and look to see how to "connect the dots;" to see how can we work better together as a community. She said this may be one way to build more opportunities for better coordination.

Tom Tate, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education said he was glad officials have come together with respect to this issue, because they all touch the health and human services needs of the community.

Board member Tate said when it comes to education and even with the great collaboration that's taking place and the great partners that CMS has, there are times when CMS can't wait for a partner because there are things that have to be done and done quickly. He said this was why CMS has the variety of people it does in schools in addition to teachers to make sure that children are as ready as they can be.

Board member Tate said he would not want to do anything to keep people out of schools, because he thinks CMS needs all the help it can with tutors and lunch buddies and all sorts of things. He said there are people in the community, however, with particular skills that could do what Commissioner Cogdell talked about with respect to neighborhood development. Board member Tate said maybe it would be better for that person not to be in a school reading to a student, but rather, go into a neighborhood and help them; help neighbors to develop what they need for safety and security for their own neighbors and children. He said there are those that can help rebuild houses and do all sorts of things so that neighborhoods can really be a big focus. Board member Tate said this would help the schools, since they end up with assignment plans that mostly provide schools for children to live around the school, although not always as near the schools as they would want them to be. He said somehow "we need to get those neighborhoods up and going better."

Board member Tate said it's important for everyone to work together. He said having a strategic plan discovery phase was a good idea to find out what's needed. He said without a plan, something would be left out. He said it may be possible to find out what other communities have done with their various councils, commissions, and boards to work together, which would be helpful.

Board member Tate said although this issue came about as a result of the economy, that when the economy bounces back, this issue needs to continue to be addressed. Board member Tate said it needs to be realized that education is a lot more than teaching, reading, writing, and arithmetic. He said it's about getting children, young people, and their families engaged and ready to learn and to work together.

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

Commissioner Bentley referenced the community scan that's being done by the Foundation of the Carolinas. She said she can see the government sector moving in that direction as well and ultimately having an overlay of what the elected bodies have discovered in their silos and

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paralleling that and laying that on top of what the Foundation of the Carolinas is doing. She said this is something that should be considered, as well as, using what the Foundation is doing to discover that. Commissioner Bentley said if they have a good process in place that's looking at the same thing then we should collaborate about that.

Commissioner Leake said her concern was the "grassroots" people. Commissioner Leake said it's important that "grassroots" people are involved in any process that takes place.

Commissioner Leake said education is the number one problem. Commissioner Leake said education represents economics.

Commissioner Leake said everyone knows what the problems are, education, housing, and health care.

Commissioner Leake said she likes the idea of having a designated agency that would point us to where we ought to go without having "x" number agencies doing things haphazardly; and to make sure they do something in the community, other than saying "I'm a contributor."

Commissioner Leake said "if you're not connected politically in this community, you don't get money, you don't get anything done." Commissioner Leake said that's the part that disturbs her.

Commissioner Leake said "people who have, get, people who do not have, do not get." Thus, what we're trying to do is to "open the doors to give life more meaning to all of our people in Mecklenburg County."

Commissioner Leake said when funds are available and we designate it to one body, then "everybody is begging" that one body for funds and especially funds for children. Commissioner Leake said this concerns her as well. Commissioner Leake said "9 out of 10 that one agency is not going to distribute those funds and the programs where they ought to be."

Commissioner Leake said she agrees that district representatives from the various elected bodies should be communicating.

James Ross, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education gave his definition of "help," which he said was "energy flowing in a balanced condition." He said bureaucratic organizations tend to, by nature, "stop energy flow." He said one thing he wants done, as things move forward, is to make sure that as bureaucratic institutions "we don't stop energy flow."

Board member Ross cited as an example, his affiliation with an organization a few years ago that gave out small grants. He said the idea was to give small innovative grants to community groups to try and find innovative and creative ways of doing things. He said that has metamorphasized into this year when the grants were given out, that out of the 13 grants that were given, the majority was given to established organizations. Board member Ross said he feels that's a bureaucratic way of doing things. He said when you give grants to an established organization, they already know how to fill out all of the paperwork; they don't have any problems. He said a neighborhood organization may not know all of the procedures and that they get some things done but they just don't get the bureaucratic stuff done. Board member Ross said people who are getting some things done but perhaps in a "messy" way, should not be penalized because they don't know the process.

Board member Ross referenced his experienced with sitting in on school suspension hearings. He addressed how you often see common patterns of behavior that exist or is in the process of developing. He said CMS can't always take care of that pattern of behavior they see developing.

He said it would be nice if CMS could collaborate with other agencies on an innovative basis, in order to identify students with or developing these patterns of behavior. He said CMS is doing some things but could use some help.

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Board member Ross referenced Commissioner Cogdell's comments regarding categories being placed on neighborhoods, stable or threatened. Board member Ross used the analogy of going to a hospital and being told that someone is stable, he said you don't feel very well, because that means the person could die in the next five minutes. He said if the highest label that can be placed on a community is stable, what does this say. He said he's been saying for years that other terms should be used such as dynamic or outstanding. He said there needs to be another level, so communities can move from stable to something higher. He said neighborhoods should be given an incentive to do something bigger.

Board member Ross encouraged continued dialogue amongst the elected bodies.

Council person Nancy Carter said she supports the idea of a comprehensive plan. She said as a result of some of the larger umbrella agencies cutting back, that "grassroots" organizations and smaller networks start springing up. Council person Carter said the community needs to be polled to see where these smaller networks are and then funnel them up into the discovery process. She said it's important to include economic development in the process. She said groups like the Community Relations Committee, Mecklenburg Ministries, Community Building Initiative, and the Foundation of the Carolinas, are the folks that can pull this process together, administer it and given direction. She said it's good to have elected officials involved, but it's important to involve the people that can say what's going on in the community and that are doing the work. She also commented on the unemployment rate and how there are people in the community that need to network, who have real talent and insight on the community. She said they should be involved as well.

Warren Cooksey Charlotte City Council said he was not sure, per today's discussion, if any progress has been made on how the change will take place. He said he's not sure if the issue of a single point of contact versus multiple points has been settled.

Council person Cooksey said in dealing with this issue and if the perception is that the needs that are out there can't be addressed with the current structure, not to lose site of the fact that perhaps the current structure can't address everything but it is still the best way to address matters.

Council person Cooksey said he typically frowns upon any city expenditure that is geared towards what he perceives as the primary responsibility of the County Commission in terms of health and human services issues. He said he really wouldn't consider going to the County Commission to help hire police officers because that's a city responsibility. He said if you start to "erase those lines" too much, as "the cliché goes, when everybody's accountable for everything then nobody gets anything done."

Council person Cooksey said there are some fundamental services that government provides to all citizens, "not simply select populations" that are very vital and serve considerably important functions. He noted police and fire protection as examples. He said the role the City plays with public health involves the operation of the utility system that carries away and treats waste water and the City's collection of the garbage.

Council person Cooksey said he thinks it's worth exploring the metaphor that came up about the four arts plans that the community has had but no human services plan. He said with respect to developing a human services strategic plan, goals and targets will have to be set. He said in setting goals and targets, some people will have to be left out if you want a plan that's going to work. He said you can't "waive the magic wand" and solve everything all at once. He suggested moving forward with a comprehensive plan that focuses on coordinating and working with

existing departments, existing resources, and existing budget line items. He said "if we go in a comprehensive plan route, we will set ourselves up for either failure or setting it on the shelf to collect dust; if it cost us additional money than what we're spending on things now." He stated further that "if we stick with what we're doing now; what we're funding now, and simply find better ways of measuring the performance and coordinating the performance, we will actually

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accomplish something.”

Annette Keller with the Town of Matthews said the Town also recognizes the need to think outside of the box. Further, the town wants to help define the needs of the community and figure out the best way to meet those needs. She said the comprehensive plan should have short and long term strategies. She said what they’re seeing in Matthews is that there are a lot of people that need help who’ve never needed help before; and also a lot of people who say they want to help that have never helped before and want to know what can they do.

Brian Sisson, Mayor Tem of Huntersville said he echoed Council person Cooksey’s comments.

This concluded the discussion.

Commissioner Murrey thanked everyone for their comments. He said what he gathered from the conversation was everyone recognizes that these issues crossover into the realm of what everyone is responsible for; and that there’s some need for collaboration and communication, that will ultimately lead to an impact on budgets. He said all the steps between the collaboration, communication and the impact on the budget is unclear at this point.

Commissioner Murrey said the next step will be to regroup and to have smaller conversations on what the process needs to look like.

Officials were encouraged to contact either Commissioner Murrey or Chairman Roberts with any additional thoughts respect to this issue.

Chairman Roberts also thanked everyone for their input. She said at this point it’s not known if we’re talking about a plan or a process or regular conversation. She said coordination could be a lot of things, that it doesn’t have to be written down somewhere. She said part of what they want to continue to talk about is that maybe coordination is about better collaboration around meeting or connecting some of the groups that are already doing things. She said things that are data driven are important. She said she’d love to have folks hear more about best practices that have been discovered through the Foundation for the Carolinas work and the Council for Children’s Right. She referenced the model by United Family Services, specifically their building where there are eight non-profits, who all share one human resources staff and one accounting department. She said you have eight non-profits doing eight different missions that interact well and share things well.

Chairman Roberts said the fact that everyone recognizes that we’re all interconnected and not operating in a vacuum, is a step forward.

Board of Education member Tate suggested as many elected officials as possible attend the September 3, 2009 community conversation meeting.

Council member Lassiter said currently there’s not a common strategy, nor does everyone have their arms around all of the data and programming and the resource allocations and the process that begins to pool that information in a way that, in the interim, entities can re-assess themselves, but then collectively begin to talk about what we’re going to do. He said this could be a common action that begins to make a difference.

This concluded the discussion. No action was taken or required.

Note: The above is not inclusive of every comment but is a summary.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was declared adjourned at

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1:35 p.m.

Janice S. Paige, Clerk

Jennifer Roberts, Chairman