

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
ROWAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MARCH 21, 1996 - 8:30 A.M.
STANBACK AUDITORIUM, ROWAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

PRESENT: J. Newton Cohen
Jim Neely, Vice-Chairman
Tom Webb, Member
Todd Arey, Member
Steve Blount, Member

Chairman Cohen called the meeting to order and stated that the Board was undertaking its budget review. Mr. Russell then explained the budget review process for fiscal year 96-97 and restated the Boards five major goals.

UPDATE FROM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Joe McCann and School Board Chairman Stan Welch along with other members of the School Board reviewed with the Board their two major initiatives for the past year. The initiatives were to recognize and deal with behavior issues which were recognized by the start of the alternative school. The second initiative was one of technology which was realized with the implementation of the school of technology at Salisbury High School. They discussed the various funding requests for the upcoming fiscal year. Commissioner Blount stated that they needed to sell the community on the request for increased funding for the schools and the schools still needed to develop a strategic plan to address all the needs for the school system as well as establishing a timeline for implementation. The Board also discussed the elementary retention policy and thanked the School Board for their presentation.

LAND USE PLANNING:

Marion Lytle addressed the Board discussing land use issues which had been initiated in 1995/96. He noted the Salvage yard/junk yard ordinance, the thoroughfare plan as well as the mobile home park ordinance, watershed protection ordinance and the subdivision ordinance which adopted prior to that period. The Board also discussed the effects of the ordinances on staff time.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Economic Development Director Bill Wagoner and members of the Economic Development Commissioner presented a list of accomplishments for the past year to the Board. Some their goals achieved were new marketing brochures, targeting industry groups, promotion of specialized building construction and the industrial park. They noted that 8 new industries had been recruited to Rowan County.

INDUSTRIAL PARK:

Mr. Russell provided the Board with an update of the current plans and developments concerning the industrial park. He reviewed events to date for the department heads in attendance so that they too would be familiar with the process.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Mr. Bill McCoy from the Urban Institute, presented the Board with several documents to bring the Board up to date on the strategic planning process. He reviewed a survey of county residents and the findings it contained. He stated he had been working with the executive committee and they were ready to work with the steering committee which would be comprised of approximately thirty people.

EMPLOYEE SALARY & BENEFIT PROGRAM:

Human Resources Director Ken Deal presented information to the Board of Rowan County's current salary ranking. He stated the County was 95th out of 135 districts and over a six month period had a turnover rate of 6-7%. He noted that Rowan was 3% below state average for salaries. The Board agreed that this program had been a three year commitment and numbers were improving after only one year of implementation.

HEALTH REFORM:

Health Director John Shaw discussed with the Board Medicare and Medicaid reform and what effect it might have on health services. He stated he would like to establish a community based task force to determine funding sources and reorganization options for local health departments to deal with the reforms.

HEALTH FACILITY NEEDS:

Mr. Shaw introduced Richard Atkinson who reviewed a plan of the Health Departments current needs and the needs for the next 5-10 years. He stated the Health Department currently had just over 12,000 square feet and the proposal was for a space of 39,246 square feet. Commissioner Blount and Mr. Russell asked about a site location or a timeline for information and implementation of the study.

Mr. Shaw stated he did not want to continue with the architects until the county made a commitment.

COUNTY ORDINANCES - STAFFING

Marion Lytle again reviewed the accomplishments of the planning department of the past year and the new or expanded ordinances they were now enforcing. He reviewed a chart showing how much staff time was dedicated to each of the current ordinances.

PARKS MASTER PLAN:

Parks Director Jim Foltz briefly reviewed the parks master plan that had been presented to the Board several months earlier. He then introduced Mr. Steve Brown, Parks Board Chairman, who gave the Board a proposal to either purchase or lease a carousel and the cost of maintenance as well as building a building to house it. They stated they would also like to turn the depot into a food service facility and might be able to receive a 50/50 state grant to implement that project.

SOCIAL SERVICES:

Mr. Rick Travis stated his department would certainly be effected by Medicaid and welfare reform. He added that there would be no way of knowing how they would effected until later this year when congress acts. He discussed his need for space with the Board and asked if there was a masterpan for facilities for county government. He briefly discussed several possibilities he had to provide additional space through leasing.

Commissioner Blount moved to enter closed session in order to discuss economic development. Chairman Cohen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Upon conclusion of closed session, Commissioner Webb moved to return to open session. Commissioner Neely seconded and the motion carried. There being no further business Commissioner Blount moved to adjourn until March 22, 1996 for the Board's planning retreat. Commissioner Arey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Dickinson,
Clerk to the Board