

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
ROWAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 23-25, 1997
CHETOLA RESORT, BLOWING ROCK, NC

PRESENT: Jim Neely, Chairman
J. Newton Cohen, Vice-Chairman
Steve Blount, Member
Dave Rowland, Member
Frank Tadlock, Member

The County Manager and Clerk to the Board were also in attendance. Chairman Neely called the meeting to order and turned the floor over to Larry Parks to serve as facilitator for the meeting.

Mr. Parks reviewed the ground rules for effective meetings with the Board and asked the Board if they could agree to the rules. The Board agreed by consensus.

Review of Summit Corporate Center - Bob Goforth joined the Board and reviewed his role to date in developing the industrial park. He discussed the obstacles of competition from surrounding parks and the need for marketing. He added that the Board needed to sit down and develop a marketing strategy to keep the park visible. There was also discussion over incentives for the industrial park versus outside development.

EDC Review - Harry Whalen, Jim Morton, Jake Alexander, Gunnar Fromen and John Henderlite met with the Board to review their goals and progress made by the economic development commission over the past year. The Board discussed the water/sewer policy and the benefits of extending the service down the corridors. There was also a discussion about create a “warm fuzzy” feeling with visiting clients. Commissioner Blount suggested developing a group plan to meet with prospective industry. The Board also discussed better communications between the two boards. Chairman Neely stated he wanted the County Manager to be fully informed on every issue so that he could inform the Board as necessary.

Baseball Stadium - General Manager of the Bollweevils Todd Parnell met with the Board and updated them on the direction of the team for the upcoming season. He noted that the games would be carried on two local radio stations for the first time. He also reviewed some of the tentative promotion events scheduled for the stadium. The Board discussed working together to have promotions at the stadium to generate revenue.

Airport Review - The Board discussed using the airport as another portion of the industrial park. They also discussed construction of tee hangars and reevaluating the old hangar prices which are well below market now.

Strategic Planning - Bill McCoy joined the Board to review the strategic planning process. He reviewed the work that had been done to date and stated they were beginning to appoint task forces to look at issues and develop recommendations. Commissioner Rowland asked why the data for responses in favor zoning on the initial survey weren't given. Mr. McCoy answered he would get the information to the Board.

Land Use Planning - Marion Lytle and Don Conner reviewed the draft zoning ordinance with the Board. They discussed general and overlay zoning districts as well as corridor zoning. The Board agreed they wanted the least restrictive zoning document as possible. Members suggested beginning the public hearing process to have public input in development.

Education - Dr. Joe McCann, Superintendent and Reverend Stan Welch, School Board Chair, joined the Board in discussing the schools goals and implementation. Commissioner Rowland suggested using a standard school design that would be available for expansion. Chairman Neely stated he would encourage the two boards to meet in order to improve communications. Commissioner Blount discussed the necessity of developing a strategic plan for the schools to have a plan for growth and delivering the education necessary for success.

Health Building - The Board discussed determining the needs of the health department and what amount of money could be spent to meet those needs. A suggestion was made that perhaps a study of mandated services and the efficiency of delivering services should be made. The Board agreed to look at the old plans for expansion of the existing building to determine their feasibility. They also agreed to look at using an existing building as well as determining the cost of constructing a new facility.

DSS Facility Needs - The Board discussed the use of rental space to meet the office needs of DSS. They agreed that welfare reform may change programs and the needs may not be as great in the next few years. Commissioner Blount told the Board that DSS was in desperate need for record storage space and asked them to keep that request in mind.

Parking Plan - Commissioner Blount reviewed the past events leading to the purchase of property to be used for downtown parking and the current status of the project. He asked the Board to continue the project in order to work with private developers to aid in the renovation. He also asked the Board to commit to demolish the norman's warehouse and connector building.

GIS - The Board discussed allowing staff to study what portion of the mapping is attributed to 911 and which portion should be paid by other revenues. The Board stated they want the basic needs only for the system.

Water/Sewer Extension Policy - The Board discussed proceeding with a water/sewer survey of needs and how extensive the study should be. They also discussed the water/sewer extension and payback policy. They agreed the policy should be changed to a case by case basis instead of an automatic extension no matter where the industry was located.

Other Issues - Commissioner Rowland stated Clerk of Court Terry Osborne has contacted him and asked about the construction of two walls to extend the office space in the criminal division. The Board agreed that the walls could be built as long as Mr. Osborne could obtain the judge's approval and bring the plan to the County Manager for Board approval.

The Board then reviewed their goals and agreed to the following:

Summit Corporate Center - The Board agreed to extend options on houses on the outer edges of the Harry Heilig property if needed and to rollover the money from the sale of the Atlantic American Properties building into the purchase of the houses. An agreement was also reached to ask the economic development commission to develop a marketing plan for the park as well as to begin planning stages of incorporating the fairground and airport properties into the industrial park.

GIS - The Board agreed to continue with the telephone surcharge as long as the expense is 911 related. When the expense goes beyond 911 uses staff will bring recommendations for funding to the Board.

Economic Development Commission - Strive for continued communication improvements.

Baseball Stadium - The Board agreed to hire a marketing director, possibly under the parks and recreation department, whose primary responsibility will be marketing the stadium. As time allows the person would work on marketing other projects through parks & recreation.

Airport - Study quotes received for the construction of tee hangars. Once the hangars are built, the Board agreed to review the current hangar rental rates in order to update the charges.

Water/Sewer Extension - The Board agreed to a “realistic” study to determine the needs of the county. The County Manager is to seek proposal from engineers to return to the Board. The cost of the study will determine how in depth the study should be. Definitely study corridor water/sewer needs.

Strategic Planning - This goal is funded and in place. The Board agreed to fully support the planning process and to attend meetings to show their support.

Land Use Planning- The Board asked staff to develop the zoning maps in layers, with the first layer being the least restrictive rural delineation. The second layer would define the corridors and the third layers would define substantial existing subdivisions.

Education - The Board agreed to support the schools and to wait for their budget request to determine funding.

Health Building - The Board agreed to three options 1) review the plans for renovation of the current building; 2) review plans for use of an existing building to be purchased for use of the Health department; 3) Construction of a new building

Parking - The Board agreed to wait for offers from private individuals for development. They committed to demolish one building and walk way if money was available.

DSS - Continued use of rental space as a temporary solution to space needs in hopes that welfare reform will reduce those needs. The Board also agreed to look into alternative methods of record retention to aid in storage space needs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Dickinson,
Clerk to the Board