

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DECEMBER 15, 2003 – 3:00 PM
J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

Present: Gus Andrews, Chairman
Frank Tadlock, Vice-Chairman
Leda Belk, Member
Chad Mitchell, Member
Steve Blount, Member

The County Manager, the Clerk to the Board, the Finance Director and the County Attorney was also present.

Chairman Andrews called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

Chairman Andrews announced the following proposed additions:

- 3a. Presentation from the schools for the approval of the Steel Bids for Erwin Middle School
- 4. Approval of request from Piedmont Behavioral Healthcare to sub-lease property

Chairman Andrews asked the Board if there were other additions.

Commissioner Mitchell provided the Invocation and Commissioner Belk led the Pledge of Allegiance.

REQUEST TO APPROVE THE BID FOR ISENBERG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jim Christy of the Rowan-Salisbury Schools thanked the Board for calling the meeting. Mr. Christy introduced Ed Watson of Construction Control Corporation (CCC) and asked Mr. Watson to present the information regarding the recommendation for the contract award for Isenberg Elementary School.

Mr. Watson said seven (7) bids had been received on December 2, 2003 for the general construction contract for Isenberg. Mr. Watson said the bids were competitive in range as indicated in the agenda packet.

Mr. Watson recommended the award of the base bid and all alternates in the amount of \$2,044,974 to Farley Associates with the understanding that Alternate G-5 may be revised or not accepted. Mr. Watson pointed out that the project was under budget in the amount of approximately \$254, 312.

Mr. Watson verified to Commissioner Belk that the Alternate G-5 was included in the bid. Mr. Watson explained that the original intent of the Alternate was to make the control system at the school compatible with the other schools on the system. Mr. Watson said the price was high due to the designer including equipment that should have been in the base bid. Mr. Watson said that after reviewing the Alternate, it was found to be a fair price.

Commissioner Blount said he was not familiar with Farley Associates and asked if CCC had “checked them out.” Mr. Watson said there were three (3) people within CCC who were familiar with Farley Associates and that good reviews had also been received about the company from two (2) architects. Mr. Watson said Bill Burgin had also “contacted some people” and also received good reviews.

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the request as presented. Commissioner Tadlock seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION FROM THE SCHOOLS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE STEEL BIDS FOR ERWIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ed Watson of CCC said bids had been received on the structural steel package for Erwin Middle School. Mr. Watson said it was advantageous regarding time and money to bid the steel packages early.

Mr. Watson reported that three (3) bids had been received, with two (2) of those being competitive. Mr. Watson said the low bidder was Carolina Steel Corporation in the amount of \$109,968. Mr. Watson said the budget was \$112,000.

Mr. Watson said CCC recommended proceeding with the contract with Carolina Steel Corporation.

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the bid from Carolina Steel Corporation for the steel in Erwin Middle School. Commissioner Belk seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Andrews commended the Board of Education, Dr. Doby, Mr. Christy and staff, as well as CCC for their diligent work at receiving bids well under budget.

REQUEST TO APPROVE SEEKING ADDITIONAL SITES FOR THE NEW SOUTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ed Watson of CCC said the site for the new south elementary school had required much deliberation. Mr. Watson said that after extensive review and further design, CCC had reached the conclusion that another site would be less expensive to develop.

Mr. Watson highlighted the following key concerns previously discussed:

- Cost of additional fill
- Compactness of the site
- Vehicular Traffic
- Ball field relocation

CCC recommended the Southeast Middle School site location for the New South Elementary School be abandoned for a more favorable site.

Mr. Watson felt that finding a more attractive site would save money.

Mr. Christy mentioned that there was excess property on the site that could possibly be sold and the funds could be put back into the building program.

Commissioner Belk commended Mr. Christy for suggesting to sell the excess property and “putting it back on the tax books.”

Commissioner Blount asked if other sites had been found. Mr. Christy said he had contacted two (2) property owners and that he had also looked at property that is owned by the county on Ritchie Road.

Chairman Andrews suggested that Mr. Christy contact the County Manager to discuss the issue.

Mr. Russell said the property in question is on the left side of Ritchie Road and is not part of Phase I for the proposed industrial park. Mr. Russell said water/sewer is available to the site and the property lies contiguous to the Stafford Estates subdivision. Mr. Russell said the Board could consider the site for the school.

Commissioner Blount said it appeared to be a great opportunity to provide a buffer between industrial uses and Stafford Estates. Commissioner Blount echoed Mr. Russell’s sentiments that the site should be seriously considered and suggested that the Board try to “work something out with the school system.”

Commissioner Tadlock was in agreement to explore the issue.

Commissioner Belk felt a school would be a better neighbor than an industrial complex.

Commissioner Blount recalled comments from the public hearings concerning the quarter midget racetrack where citizens were quoted as saying “they would love to have the high school there.”

Chairman Andrews said the issue would be explored with the Manager and Mr. Christy.

Commissioner Blount questioned the timeframe and Mr. Watson said the first of next year around March or April.

Commissioner Blount verified with Mr. Watson that the deal would need to be closed in February.

Commissioner Belk suggested that a committee be formed to work with the Manager and the Board of Education on the issue.

Chairman Andrews asked Commissioners Belk and Mitchell to serve on the committee, working with the Manager and school staff to see if the property would be an appropriate for a new school.

Commissioner Mitchell moved to decline the site at the Southeast Middle School for the new south elementary school and allow school staff to begin the search for a more suitable site. Commissioner Tadlock seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF REQUEST FROM PIEDMONT BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE TO SUB-LEASE PROPERTY

County Attorney John Holshouser said the proposed lease was for a house located on South Main Street. Mr. Holshouser said the lease was in the same format as previous leases with Piedmont Behavioral Healthcare (PBHC), except for the fact that the other leases had been for eighteen (18) months.

Mr. Holshouser said that officials with PBHC had requested a five-year commitment to enable the agency to sub-lease the facility.

Mr. Russell mentioned that the county had never had a lease for the house in question.

Mr. Holshouser pointed out the “escape provision” within the lease agreement that would allow the Board to terminate the lease for various reasons.

Mr. Holshouser verified to Commissioner Belk that PBHC would have to inform the Board if the agency deviated from the proposed uses.

Commissioner Blount moved for approval of the lease as submitted. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no citizens present who wished to address the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Before going into Executive Session to discuss an Economic Development Issue, Chairman Andrews called for a short break at 3:25 pm to honor Commissioner Blount and Mr. Russell for their upcoming birthday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADJOURNMENT

Upon resuming to Open Session, there being no further business brought before the Board, Chairman Andrews adjourned the meeting at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rita K. Foil, CMC
Clerk to the Board