

**ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT
FEBRUARY 21, 22, & 23, 2007 – 8:00 AM
FRANK T. TADLOCK SOUTH ROWAN REGIONAL LIBRARY
CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: Arnold S. Chamberlain, Chairman
Chad Mitchell, Vice-Chairman
Jon Barber, Member
Tina Hall, Member
Jim Sides, Member

County Manager William Cowan, Clerk to the Board Carolyn Athey and Finance Director Leslie Heidrick were also present.

1. OPENING SESSION

Call to Order

Chairman Chamberlain called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

Invocation

Commissioner Hall provided the Invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Mitchell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Chairman Chamberlain welcomed those in attendance. Chairman Chamberlain said there would be no time for public comment during the retreat and it was a scheduled work session. Chairman Chamberlain said there might be a few issues that would require the Board to vote.

Introduction of Facilitator

Chairman Chamberlain turned the meeting over to Larry Parks, Facilitator. Mr. Parks reviewed his ground rules as Facilitator and asked for a show of hands from the Board members who would support the ground rules. The ground rules were supported 4-1 with Commissioner Sides stating that he did not accept all of

the rules. Mr. Parks said he had no problem with Commissioner Sides not accepting the ground rules as long as he would respect Mr. Parks as Facilitator.

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

a. Presentation from EDC

Economic Development Director Randy Harrell provided a power point presentation, which covered the Economic Development Commission's (EDC) mission statement, accomplishments, projects, and inquiries for 2006. Mr. Harrell discussed business retention calls, ongoing programs and the job creation multiplier effect.

In response to a query from Commissioner Barber, Mr. Harrell discussed the job multiplier effect from Toyota Racing and Development's (TRD) decision to locate in Rowan County.

Commissioner Hall referred to TRD and asked an impact study was available and Mr. Harrell responded that the impact study had not been put together. Mr. Harrell said based on his conversations with Toyota, a lot of the information was conceptual and "Toyota is not one who likes to speculate." Commissioner Hall said the impact study was part of the Investment Grant Policy guidelines and should be provided up front. Mr. Harrell said that the investment grants are not awarded if the companies do not meet the criteria of the policy. Commissioner Hall said that before the Board held discussions for approval of any future investment grants, she would like to have the impact study in advance, as it was part of the guidelines.

b. Review of Investment Grant Program

Mr. Harrell discussed the Investment Grant Program and said the Board had approved the program as a working document with the understanding that it would need to be "tweaked." Mr. Harrell recognized the following EDC Board members in attendance – Bruce Jones, Bill Wagoner, Rick Hudson and John Casey. Mr. Harrell said the program was necessary due to the competition to attract business, for job creation, tax base and retention and expansion of business.

Mr. Harrell highlighted the investment grant's current 3 levels that are based on total project investment. Mr. Harrell used a power point presentation to show a comparative analysis of program details for other counties. Mr. Harrell said 80 of 100 counties have active investment grant programs.

Commissioner Sides questioned the effectiveness of the investment grants for Cabarrus and Iredell counties as compared to Rowan. Mr. Harrell said those counties have a graduating scale.

Commissioner Sides said it would be interesting to see figures from Iredell and Cabarrus counties to see what they were actually doing. Mr. Harrell said the figures were public information and that he would look into the request.

Mr. Harrell reviewed the EDC Board's recommendations for the Investment Grant Policy as follows:

- Reduce minimum requirements on capital investment to \$3,000,000
- Real property included in capital investment calculation
- Eligible industries to include:
 - Aircraft maintenance and repair
 - Company Headquarters
 - Customer Service call centers
 - Information technology and services
 - Manufacturing
 - Motor sports facilities
 - Motor sports racing teams
 - Research and development
 - Warehousing
 - Wholesale trade/distribution
- No additional requirements

Commissioner Sides asked why retail businesses were eliminated from the program and Mr. Harrell explained that retail was different for several reasons, including disposable income and demographics.

Commissioner Mitchell said incentive grants are a reality and that if the Board stopped the incentive grants, economic development in Rowan County would grind to a screeching halt. Commissioner Mitchell said he hoped Rowan County would not end incentives until all other counties had done so. Commissioner Mitchell said he did not know if he agreed with reducing the investment threshold or including real property as recommended but said he would like to start up loans/grants for small businesses.

Commissioner Hall said she would like for the Board to think more long-term and that economic development was more about good government. Commissioner Hall said businesses considering locating in Rowan County were concerned about the education system, physical infrastructure, essential services and the tax rate.

Commissioner Barber pointed out that strategic planning was exactly what Commissioner Hall was referring to.

c. Review & Discussion Regarding The Keith Corporation & Summit Corporate Center

County Attorney Jay Dees reported that the Option & Listing Agreement for The Keith Corporation (TKC) expires in August of this year. Mr. Dees said the Board

would need to start a planning strategy for what would occur after August 31st and he expressed hope that the strategy would focus on areas he felt were lacking in the initial agreement. Mr. Dees said TKC had a listing agreement to market sites in Summit Corporate Center (SCC) but at the same time they were also given an Option Agreement. Mr. Dees said he had a problem paying the broker fee on the optioned land when TKC was selling the land to themselves. Mr. Dees said the agreement doesn't require "much" in reporting requirements such as how many signs are posted, how many prospects there have been, etc. Mr. Dees said a breakdown of the industrial or commercial interest was critical to the discussion about the park. Mr. Dees said the Restrictive Covenants are currently limited to industrial uses. Mr. Dees said if the Board chose to go with a new agreement after August 31, his role would be outlining his concerns from the existing agreement and items the Board might want to consider for a new agreement.

Commissioner Sides referred to information in the agenda packet regarding Square D and payment of a brokerage commission to TKC. Mr. Dees responded that the brokerage fee was paid to a "related entity" of TKC. Mr. Dees said he had a problem in that at the same time the County granted the listing agreement the County granted options on certain properties in the park. Mr. Dees said those properties were not marketed to outside buyers and would ultimately be sold at the discretion of "some form of TKC to some form of TKC."

Commissioner Sides pointed out another problem was that the incentive was granted to a company that did not own the property. Mr. Dees said this complicated the process in that the end user was requesting the incentives but the end user wasn't the owner of the property. Mr. Dees felt the process worked "backward."

Commissioner Sides raised the question of whether the lease was a discounted lease. Mr. Dees responded that it created a need for further inquiry as to the relationship between the parties so that legally the group that was granted the incentives was the one performing to receive the incentive.

Mr. Dees said if the Board retains TKC, or entertains an agreement with a new company, these are the items that need to be considered for discussion before negotiations occur.

Mr. Harrell distributed a letter from Alan Lewis of TKC, which stated Mr. Lewis' interest in continuing with the agreement. Mr. Harrell then used a power point presentation to show renderings of a shell building for SCC that TKC planned to build. Mr. Harrell said the EDC and Rowan Jobs Initiative were working with TKC to help offset the costs of the building.

Commissioner Sides said it appears that TKC is marketing property to TKC. Chairman Chamberlain agreed and said it would be up to the Commissioners to address the issue in a new agreement.

Mr. Dees said the County is obligated to act in the best interest of its citizens and getting the maximum price for the land. Mr. Dees said option agreements where the Board locks in the price for 3 years in advance is hedging the bet that the property value won't go up significantly. Mr. Dees said the Board is locked in until August 31, 2007 and that he had wanted to alert the Board as to the issues that will need to be discussed with any listing agent. Mr. Dees said he would like to see a reporting mechanism requiring listing agents to provide the Board with a report on marketing efforts.

Mr. Dees suggested that the issue be put on a future agenda for the Board to establish a process for when the current agreement expires.

Chairman Chamberlain asked the Commissioners and the County Manager to put in writing what they would like to see happen with SCC. Chairman Chamberlain said the issue would be placed on the agenda "long before August 31."

Facilitator Larry Parks called for a short break at 9:50 am.

Mr. Parks reconvened the meeting at 10:05 am.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING FIELDCREST CANNON STADIUM

County Manager William Cowan provided the history of the lease for Fieldcrest Cannon Stadium. Mr. Cowan also reviewed 2005 and 2006 expense/revenue details provided by the current Lessee, Smith Family Baseball. Mr. Cowan said the original agreement was extended to February 2008. Mr. Cowan also provided a breakdown of what the income would have been if the County had stayed with the original lease.

Commissioner Sides said 75% of the stadium ownership belongs to Rowan County and 25% to the City of Kannapolis. Mr. Cowan said Kannapolis is in agreement with the 75/25 ownership.

Chairman Chamberlain referred to the Equity Agreement in the agenda packet and said the County needed to proceed with getting the Equity Agreement signed. Chairman Chamberlain also said he would like to hire a professional to evaluate the stadium situation and the property and bring the information back to the Board. Chairman Chamberlain said if the professional could not assure the Board that the property value would increase, he would be willing to openly discuss a sale of the baseball stadium property.

Commissioner Sides questioned the County's legal options if it were to vote to sell the stadium property. Chairman Chamberlain responded that Kannapolis

would most likely have to agree to the sale unless there was a provision in the agreement for a divided interest.

County Attorney Jay Dees said the proposed Equity Agreement lacks in some areas that deal with controlling interest. Mr. Dees said the agreement did not deal with a buy/sell arrangement. Mr. Dees said Kannapolis had indicated that if the County would sign the agreement, they would be fine. Mr. Dees said he and the County Manager had wanted to present the agreement for the Board's consideration.

Chairman Chamberlain referred to an email in the agenda packet from Kannapolis City Manager Mike Legg, which stated that the Kannapolis City Council was interested in the Equity Agreement and also that Kannapolis realized the property could not be sold without their agreement.

Facilitator Larry Parks said it had been suggested to have the stadium property evaluated and the majority of the Commissioners were in agreement with the suggestion.

Mr. Parks also noted that the Chairman and the County Attorney had said the Equity Agreement should be executed. Mr. Parks asked if the buy/sell language could be incorporated into the agreement. Mr. Dees said the Board could operate with the Equity Agreement as an agreement in principal to move forward on the cost-share agreement subject to a more definitive agreement to be negotiated. Mr. Dees said the Board would be defining the limitation of Kannapolis' equity position.

Chairman Chamberlain raised the issue of a potential conflict of interest with Kannapolis Attorney Wally Safrit being involved beyond the Equity Agreement. Chairman Chamberlain pointed out that Mr. Safrit's wife is president of the North Carolina division of Castle & Cooke, which is developing the Research Park in Kannapolis.

Commissioner Sides moved to authorize the County Manager and County Attorney to meet with Kannapolis and have the agreement signed as is. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hall and passed unanimously.

Mr. Cowan reported that in the previous year, employees had been allowed to use the County's skybox at the stadium on a first come, first serve basis. Mr. Cowan asked if the Board wished to continue with that policy. Chairman Chamberlain mentioned the use of the skybox by teenagers and he said the use of the skybox should be monitored. Chairman Chamberlain said he felt the use should be limited to Department Directors as a reward, or that Department Directors could allow their Staff to use the skybox.

Commissioner Mitchell said he did not have a problem with anyone using the skybox as long as a department head or adult was present.

Commissioner Barber said he had no problem with continuing the policy.

Commissioner Hall felt it was a great idea to allow the employees to utilize the skybox.

Chairman Chamberlain said no one under 18 should be allowed to use the skybox without an adult present.

Commissioner Sides asked how much was in the Consortium Fund and Finance Director Leslie Heidrick responded \$420,000 in cash. With the Board being ahead of schedule, Mr. Parks called for a lunch break at 11:05 am.

The meeting was reconvened at 12:15 pm.

4. PRESENTATION CONCERNING OPTIONS FOR TELEVISIONING COMMISSION MEETINGS

Commissioner Hall discussed site visits that she and Staff had made to other municipalities and counties in an effort to learn about the feasibility of televising Commission Meetings. Commissioner Hall explained that the project would enhance the citizens' ability to remain informed regarding local government. The options would include televising of meetings and making the meetings available on the County's Website and via pod cast.

Information Systems Director David Boling and Network Administrator Randy Cress provided the Board with a power point presentation as they discussed the audio and video problems the Board and citizens currently encounter in the meeting chambers. Mr. Boling said more importantly the proposal was a way to provide unfiltered archiving of meetings.

Mr. Boling discussed the outdated equipment that is currently used for the audio system in the meeting chambers and he reviewed the options for the Board's consideration.

Mr. Cress said the end result is for the County to offer web accessible video and access on the cable channel. Mr. Cress reviewed the different components that would be required to tie the system together.

Mr. Cress said the total solution would provide:

- Citizens that come to meetings to be able to see and hear what is being presented
- Citizens can view past meetings or any part of a meeting on the Internet
- Scheduled playback of meetings on Access 16

- Can be downloaded to portable device from web
- Makes public meetings truly public

Commissioner Barber said the options are, 1) up fitting the meeting room, 2) channel access, 3) putting the meetings on the website, and 4) pod casts. Commissioner Barber said he would like to see the total cost of ownership for the next 5 years.

Mr. Boling said generalized costs for the total solution was approximately \$90,000 and initial maintenance costs of \$10,000 - \$15,000 annually. Mr. Boling said the costs addressed all of the problems and proposed solutions mentioned. Mr. Boling suggested that the County take an Information Systems employee that is currently working part-time (30 hours/week) and make him fulltime. Commissioner Mitchell said the room needed to be up-fitted and that he would like to see a price for the upfit of the room plus the additional television camera costs.

Finance Director Leslie Heidrick discussed changes implemented by the State regarding cable franchises. Ms. Heidrick said it appears that Rowan County will receive approximately \$10,000 for a Public Education Government channel.

Commissioner Hall emphasized the importance of introducing local government to students and the value of making government business accessible.

By consensus the Board agreed to visit the issue during the budget process.

5. DISCUSSION REGARDING FAIRGROUNDS PROPERTY & LEASE RENEWAL

Eric Ennis and Jody Everhart from the Fair Association were present to discuss the fairgrounds property. Mr. Ennis noted that there was one mistake in the copy of the power point that had been provided to the Board ahead of time. Mr. Ennis clarified that the Jaycees did not sign a bank note for \$50,000, as stated, to get the fair project operational.

Mr. Ennis introduced David Clay who was named the first Fair Manager 50 years ago. Mr. Clay provided the history of the fair and the community involvement and support that had led to the approval of the current 50-year lease between the Fair Association and Rowan County.

Mr. Ennis said he had been involved with the fair since 1971 and he highlighted the improvements that had taken place to accommodate the community events.

Mr. Everhart discussed his involvement with the Fair Association. Mr. Everhart distributed a handout that detailed the attendance and ticket sales for events. Mr. Everhart said the fair is not just about the funds collected but also about the

educational portion of the fair. Mr. Everhart said the funds that are made by the Fair Association go back into the community.

Chairman Chamberlain said he could not imagine the County not having a fair and that the current lease expires on November 7, 2007. Chairman Chamberlain said there were questions to be asked including if the County wanted to renew the lease; lease short-term to the Fair Association, or lease at all? Chairman Chamberlain asked if the County should participate in any improvements if the Board chose to lease the property or if the County should repay the costs of some of the improvements if it chose not to lease the property. Chairman Chamberlain referred to the 2004 Fairgrounds Study in the agenda packet and he read from item #13 regarding economic impact. Chairman Chamberlain was of the opinion that the study performed by the former administration was done to validate the fair.

Commissioner Sides expressed concern with the length of a lease that might tie up property or bind a future Board. Commissioner Sides said he preferred a short-term lease and he also said he would like to prohibit the sale of beer on County property in any future leases. Commissioner Sides read from a portion of the lease, which encourages the agricultural and industrial development of Rowan County. Commissioner Sides said he did not understand how a motorcycle rally added to the agricultural and development of the County. Commissioner Sides felt the fairgrounds property was too valuable and could be used for other purposes, such as commercial development.

Commissioner Hall agreed that Commissioner Sides had legitimate concerns. Commissioner Hall said Commissioners had requested financial information from the Fair Association and she expressed concern that the information had not been received. Commissioner Hall said there were people in the community that were offended by the beer sales on county-owned property.

Chairman Chamberlain proposed a year-to-year lease for the Fair Association and for Rowan County to market the property during that time for commercial use. The understanding would be that if the property were sold at commercial rates, the County would purchase industrial property to relocate the fair. Chairman Chamberlain said maybe the time had come to have an annual agricultural showcase.

Commissioner Barber felt it was inevitable that the County would receive an offer on the land. Commissioner Barber said the Board must decide on the highest and best use for the land, and secondly, the event itself. Commissioner Barber asked if there were contracts with organizations that had scheduled events at the fairgrounds and the response was yes. Commissioner Barber touched on the violation of the lease for events other than agricultural and industrial uses.

Chairman Chamberlain said since there were contracts with the other organizations, the Fair Association should fulfill the contracts but that after 2007 “it won’t happen again.”

Commissioner Sides emphasized again that he preferred that there be no alcohol sales on county-owned property.

Commissioner Mitchell said he wanted the County to have a fair and he expressed hope that the fair could be moved in a manner that would not cause it to miss a year of operations. Commissioner Mitchell said he had not received any complaints regarding the events held on the property. Commissioner Mitchell said he wanted a contract negotiated so that the County could have the fair and not have to talk about it at the retreat each year. Commissioner Mitchell said he was willing to support participating with the Fair Association, as the fair benefited a lot of citizens.

Chairman Chamberlain summarized the discussion, stating that he felt it safe to say there would be no long-term contract; the Board wanted the fair to exist; and if someone makes a “big offer we’re not going to turn it down because we don’t want” the fair to miss a year. Chairman Chamberlain finished by saying that the Board should instruct Staff to begin working on a proposed contract. Chairman Chamberlain said he agreed with Commissioner Mitchell as to participating in infrastructure but he encouraged the Fair Association not to spend funds on projects other than infrastructure.

Commissioner Sides said he would like advance notice prior to the Fair Association spending money.

Chairman Chamberlain instructed Mr. Everhart to get figures to the Board regarding water/sewer infrastructure and he said the Board would have Staff begin work on a proposed contract.

Mr. Parks called for a short break at 2:25 pm.

Mr. Park reconvened the meeting at 2:35 pm.

6. DISCUSSION REGARDING EMERGENCY SERVICES AND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Emergency Services Director Frank Thomason, Fire Marshal Tom Murphy and Darrell Nichols, President of the Rowan County Fire and Rescue Association provided a power point presentation and discussed the history of fire service. Mr. Murphy said fire service had grown to 32 districts, 29 departments and 41 stations.

The presentation included a review of the types of taxing districts, increased calls for service, response times and total personnel. The presentation also

highlighted meeting standards and needs, and listed the insurance rating for each department. Mr. Nichols explained that the rating system reviews the capabilities of a fire district to deliver fire protection services. A class 10 effectively has no fire protection services in an area while a class 8 and below is given to districts who have increased abilities to provide enhanced levels of protection in three rated areas. Mr. Nicholas said in order to have a rating of class 8 or below means that having water available is imperative.

Commissioner Barber mentioned a proposed ordinance for water point sources that will be coming before the Board for approval in the future. Mr. Thomason discussed the water supply issue and meeting the demands for growth. Mr. Thomason said to his knowledge, there is no other entity in the nation that has gone through the process of developing the proposed ordinance for water point sources. Mr. Thomason said other local governments are looking at Rowan County and asking for a copy of what is adopted by the Board.

Mr. Nicholas continued with the power point presentation and discussed the training requirements.

Mr. Thomason reviewed recruitment/retention and said while the dedication of firefighters is the same, the departments no longer have the luxury of having pools of people willing to serve. Mr. Thomason said it was hard to retain staff and the options were for paid staffing or paid-per-call staffing.

Mr. Thomason said departments continue to need funding to provide the services in the County that the citizens expect. Mr. Thomason said there would be continued requests for increases in district tax rates as related costs continue to rise. Mr. Thomason said key-funding issues would be replacement and upgrading of equipment.

Mr. Murphy said future goals are for all departments to achieve a class 6 or below, complete the development of the water point source ordinance, ensure adequate staffing and improvement of the fire inspections process.

Chairman Chamberlain discussed budget requests and said he would like for the fire departments to submit line item expenses that show exactly what county funds are being utilized for.

Commissioner Sides said the Board wanted the needs of the fire departments to be met. Commissioner Sides said the information being requested by Chairman Chamberlain assisted the Board in justifying the decisions that it must make. Commissioner Sides said the Board also needed to be aware of any grant funds that were anticipated.

Commissioner Hall said if there were a need for a tax increase in a particular community, she would like to see a public hearing held in the community and that she would like to attend the public hearing process.

Commissioner Barber felt Emergency Services was a good place to start with building a strategic plan for Rowan County. Commissioner Barber said the Board could map what it wanted the service levels to be and what impact it would have on the tax rate and volunteerism, etc.

Commissioner Hall expressed appreciation for the fire departments and the services they provide.

Mr. Nichols provided the Clerk with a copy of the information on the fire departments insurance rating system so that copies could be provided to the Commissioners for their future reference.

Chairman Chamberlain recessed the meeting at 3:55 pm.

Thursday, February 22, 2007

Chairman Chamberlain reconvened the meeting at 8:00 am.

Commissioner Sides provided the Invocation.

7. UPDATE & DISCUSSION ON FACILITY NEEDS/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Public Schools

Superintendent Dr. Judy Grissom and Assistant Superintendent of Operations Jim Christy recognized the Board of Education members that were in attendance.

Mr. Christy cited growth statistics for the Cabarrus County school system and discussed the projected growth for Rowan County. Mr. Christy then provided a power point presentation and outlined a summary of projected capital projects for Rowan-Salisbury Schools (RSS) for the next 10 years that will require Rowan County Financing. Mr. Christy said the projects were not listed in order of their priority but that all projects are needed. The project totals were listed as follows:

1. Elizabeth Duncan Koontz Elementary Addition	\$ 1,913,374
2. South Area Elementary School	\$ 15,652,298
3. Replacement School for Cleveland Elementary School	\$ 16,591,435
4. Replacement School for Woodleaf Elementary School	\$ 14,766,319
5. Southwest Area Middle School	\$ 22,663,629
6. Replacement School for Knox Middle School	\$ 24,023,446
7. Instructional Gyms for 6 Middle Schools	\$ 8,299,740
8. Instructional Gyms for 6 High Schools	\$ 8,299,740
9. Technology Infrastructure	\$ 2,000,000
10. RSS Maintenance Building	\$ 3,000,000
11. RSS Administration	\$ 7,020,000

County Manager William Cowan said the 2008 projected needs were \$54,029,048 and adding in the technology and the maintenance/administration building raised the 2008 projected needs to \$66,049,428.

Mr. Cowan reviewed school revenue sources and said the Board needed to resolve the unspent \$2 million in construction money in March.

Commissioner Hall asked if RSS had preliminary figures for program needs in the school system. Dr. Grissom estimated \$1.2 million based on the mandatory requirements and the opening of Shive Elementary. Dr. Grissom said there is an evaluation committee that is analyzing programs in the schools to see if they are making a difference. If the programs are not, funding will be put to work in another program.

Chairman Chamberlain said his number one priority is buying property to build schools on and his second priority is technology. Chairman Chamberlain asked Dr. Grissom to have the Board of Education recommend which programs should receive funding.

Commissioner Barber said the Commissioners were faced with a lot of funding requirements through the schools, law enforcement, judges, etc. and he expressed concern that the County would be overwhelmed by population growth that would put the County “on the course for a train wreck.”

Commissioner Sides commented that he wished the State would do its job and pay for instruction, which would leave the County with \$30 million to use for building schools.

Commissioner Mitchell expressed appreciation for the information that had been provided.

Judicial Facilities

Sheriff George Wilhelm, Major Tim Bost and Architect Paul Bonsall discussed the needs of the Sheriff’s Department and the Detention Center. Sheriff Wilhelm proposed relocating the Sheriff/jail complex outside of the city limits. Sheriff Wilhelm discussed using the current facility to house female prisoners, more violent offenders and those that have scheduled court appearances.

In response to a query from Chairman Chamberlain, Sheriff Wilhelm said the property around the Emergency Operations Center would be the ideal location and would also be very accessible to the citizens.

County Manager William Cowan discussed the jail facility needs.

Mr. Bonsall discussed a downtown facility that would be multi-story. Mr. Bonsall also discussed a parking deck. Mr. Cowan pointed out that an alternative facility would not have a parking deck but regular parking.

Major Bost said he favored taking the main compound outside of the city. He highlighted the merit of keeping various duties of the Sheriff’s Department downtown.

Sheriff Wilhelm said by 2008 to 2010 the County would “have to build something somewhere.”

Commissioner Sides asked Mr. Bonsall if it was cheaper to build up or build out and Mr. Bonsall said “out.” Mr. Bonsall said, “If you have the room, use it.”

Chairman Chamberlain said he favored taking the Sheriff's Department out of town but in the meantime the County should pursue the purchase of the entire block for parking and future uses.

Mr. Parks called for a short break at 9:30 am.

Mr. Parks reconvened the meeting at 9:40 am.

Judicial Facilities

County Manager William Cowan discussed the current courtroom facilities. Mr. Cowan also reviewed a plan that would alleviate much of the overcrowding situation by converting space on the third floor of the Justice Center into 2 district courtrooms.

John Cappers and Jim Powell of ADW Architecture provided drawings of the current layout as well as the proposed layout. Mr. Powell discussed the costs for the proposed conversion and stated that the bulk of the costs would be mechanical and electrical.

Commissioner Sides said the plan would alleviate many of the problems in the Justice Center and that it was the least expensive option.

Commissioner Mitchell felt it was a good plan as it provided 2 additional courtrooms.

Commissioner Hall questioned the space for the probation offices and asked Mr. Deal if probation had adequate space for their needs. The Director of Administration, Ken Deal, responded no. Commissioner Hall asked if the County was doing anything to address the probation spacing situation and Commissioner Sides said not at this point.

Chairman Chamberlain said the Board was reviewing its priorities and that the judges had put the Board on notice as to their courtroom needs.

Emergency Services

Frank Thomason, Director of Emergency Services, and Beth Connell distributed a handout and discussed the average response times for the 5 current ambulance stations. Mr. Thomason said the average response times in the metro-areas of the county are 9 minutes or less and in the rural areas, 12 minutes or less.

Ms. Connell provided maps that indicated the response times for the various districts. Ms. Connell referred to West Rowan District 84 and said that area is under-served. Ms. Connell said average response times in the area were 20 minutes, which were completely unacceptable. Ms. Connell said she was present to advocate for the citizens and their well-being. Ms. Connell said

additional resources were needed to either relocate or place additional EMS resources into western Rowan.

A brief question/answer session followed the presentation. Mr. Thomason said the department was more than amenable to any joint efforts for costs sake.

Library

Library Director Phil Barton and Library Services Manager Jeff Hall reviewed 2 projects in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The 2 projects were an expansion of the east library branch and a possible expansion of the history room. Mr. Barton said the east branch had probably reached its maximum growth in 2000 and that the Library Board and Facilities Committee were reviewing options to build on another site in the Rockwell area.

Mr. Barton discussed the history room and its significant collections and said it was one of the best tourism sites in the County. Mr. Barton said the history room would reach capacity next year and that unlike any other part of the library, materials were rarely withdrawn from the room.

Chairman Chamberlain said the Library would always have his support as long as the funds were available.

Commissioner Sides said he was a member of the Library Board and a real advocate for the Library. Commissioner Sides said he believed the Library had needs but those needs would be a lower priority based on the needs the Board had already heard discussed at the retreat.

Mr. Parks called for a short break at 11:00 am.

Mr. Parks reconvened the meeting at 11:10 am.

Rowan Transit System

Senior Services Director Clyde Fahnstock provided the background regarding the Rowan Transit System (RTS) Operations Center. Mr. Fahnstock said the current lease for the facility expires June 30, 2007.

Mr. Fahnstock reviewed the RTS facility options and said the NCDOT would pay a percentage of a shared facility as recommended in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) submitted to the Board. The NCDOT will pay for leasing costs for a freestanding public or private transit operations center. NCDOT is advocating for Regional Transit Systems and therefore recommends Regional Facilities.

Mr. Fahnstock finished by reviewing the RTS facility components including specifically designated areas for RTS administration; large parking area; garage

bays; and shared space in the proposed central warehouse and maintenance facility.

County Manager William Cowan said the County could have possibly found a site for the operations center and that it would be discussed later during the retreat.

Mr. Parks recessed the meeting at 11:30 pm for lunch.

Mr. Parks reconvened the meeting at 12:30 pm.

8. PRESENTATION CONCERNING ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE

Jonathan Marshall, Director of the Cabarrus County Commerce Department provided the Board with a handout and provided the background of how Cabarrus County arrived at an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). Mr. Marshall said the APFO establishes a capacity, and establishes through policy, a capacity for schools by which they are either considered adequate or inadequate. Mr. Marshall said the APFO is part of their subdivision and zoning regulations and is directly tied to the Capital Improvement Program that the schools put together for their 15-year plan. Mr. Marshall said without the 15-year plan, the APFO doesn't work. Mr. Marshall said the APFO is a way to measure whether the public services and facilities included in the APFO are adequate and available at the time development is approved.

Mr. Marshall explained the structural components of an APFO. Mr. Marshall said the APFO addresses when it will apply to a development and the County applies the APFO when conducting a subdivision review.

Mr. Marshall said an APFO is not a comprehensive plan amendment, a rezoning, an exaction, impact fee or a moratorium.

Commissioner Sides asked how much Cabarrus County had collected to date and Mr. Marshall said over \$3 million in land and contributions. Mr. Marshall said the funds are designated for schools.

Mr. Marshall said Cabarrus County adopted the APFO due to rapid residential growth that made it increasingly difficult to pay for new schools.

In response to a query from Chairman Chamberlain, Mr. Marshall explained that having a committee in place helped when the APFO was first introduced. Mr. Marshall said the committee consisted of a broad range of individuals who reviewed the different alternatives available. Mr. Marshall said 2 other alternatives, the transfer tax and sales tax were defeated, and it was realized that the APFO was the only option left. Mr. Marshall said Cabarrus County still had Commissioners that felt development should be delayed, which was in effect a moratorium and had raised legal issues.

Commissioner Mitchell questioned the level of services goal for Cabarrus County and Mr. Marshall responded 110%.

Mr. Marshall said Cabarrus County had also been addressing growth management by trying to limit the expansion of new public water/sewer lines. Mr. Marshall said 2 of the largest districts do not allow for the extension of water/sewer and the extension must be obtained by the issuance of a conditional use permit.

Commissioner Barber said he had asked for the APFO presentation. Commissioner Barber said Rowan County was at a crossroads and he felt it was important for the County to hear from other counties as they experienced population growth. Commissioner Barber questioned how Rowan County would manage the anticipated growth and address infrastructure issues. Commissioner Barber said the County does not currently have a Land Use Plan (LUP). Commissioner Barber said he had not been sold on an APFO because he had been unable to find that the ordinance pays for the infrastructure costs it is supposed to. Commissioner Barber said counties are also in this position because they don't get the needed assistance from the State. Commissioner Barber pointed out that developers would pass on any fees to the homeowners.

Planning and Development Director Ed Muire asked if the money from the developer goes into the school that is being affected in a particular area. Mr. Marshall said the funds go into new school construction and that everyone ultimately has some positive affect from the funds. Mr. Muire asked how the build-out schedule is enforced? Mr. Marshall said permits are issued countywide and a schedule is attached to the permit.

Commissioner Sides felt the APFO was another tax and that the County should only tax its citizens for the necessary services.

Mr. Marshall said the APFO would allow Cabarrus County to purchase more school sites in advance.

Mr. Muire noted the difference between an APFO and a Land Use Plan. Mr. Muire said he had seen firsthand in working with Rowan-Salisbury Schools where the population growth in the County is occurring. Mr. Muire said Planning Staff does not know when a project is coming until the plat walks in the door and that Staff did not have the ability to limit the permits. Mr. Muire said the Board could look at whether to "make people pay to join our community."

Airport

Director of Administration Ken Deal, Carl Ellington and Andy Shook, Engineers from Talbert & Bright Engineering, and Bill Maslyk, Staff Engineer with the

Division of Aviation in Raleigh discussed the Rowan County Airport and an expansion of the runway.

Mr. Maslyk said there are roughly 74 publicly owned, public use airports in the State, with approximately 65 of them being general aviation. Mr. Maslyk referred to the handout that he had distributed and he highlighted the airports competing with Rowan. Those airports included Monroe, Lincoln County, Concord, Asheboro, Davidson County, Smith Reynolds and Statesville. Mr. Maslyk said these airports were already doing some of the projects that would be discussed during the retreat. Mr. Maslyk said these airports had experienced tremendous growth because of the steps they had taken and he said if the Board chose not to take action on what he planned to discuss, then “you can’t go any further.”

Mr. Maslyk said future projects would involve a partnership with the Division of Aviation, Rowan County, the federal government and congressional representatives. Mr. Maslyk said Bill Williams is the Director of the Division of Aviation and he encouraged the Board to schedule a future meeting with Mr. Williams and also with Dudley Humphrey who is the aeronautical representative for Rowan County. Mr. Maslyk also reported that Nancy Dunn is the Division 9 member for the Board of Transportation. Mr. Maslyk also suggested that the Commissioners meet with his immediate boss, Rick Barkus.

Mr. Maslyk provided a short movie regarding airport development and economic impacts on North Carolina Airports.

Mr. Maslyk said Rowan County has a wonderful airport but is missing the next piece to accommodate the people who want to fly beyond the Mississippi or overseas. Mr. Maslyk said the 3 pieces to the “puzzle” are, 1) Airport Layout Drawing (ALD); 2) Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA); and 3) Feasibility Study.

Mr. Ellington agreed with Mr. Maslyk that Rowan had a wonderful airport. Mr. Ellington said what Rowan had would attract business whether the airport was expanded or not. Mr. Ellington said competing airports are expanding their facilities in an aggressive manner and were extending their runways to 6,000 – 6,500 feet to allow jets to fly from this area to the west coast.

Mr. Ellington explained that North Carolina is a block grant state and that Mr. Maslyk’s office is a funding arm of the federal government for North Carolina. Mr. Ellington said in order to line up for funds, the County must submit an application, which it had done every year.

Mr. Ellington said the amount of the package for the ALD, BCA, and Runway Feasibility Study is \$292,500. Mr. Ellington said this was required by the federal government to show what is needed in the County and to justify the runway extension.

Mr. Ellington reviewed the purpose and process of the master plan.

Chairman Chamberlain asked Mr. Ellington about the next step for Rowan County and Mr. Ellington said, "Get us started on this study, and this BCA, the package." Mr. Ellington said if the County fronts the funds, they are reimbursable.

Mr. Maslyk explained that because of limited funds, the FAA doesn't provide money up front. Mr. Maslyk said the County would need to pursue the numerous funding sources available, as the most his department could provide would be 30%.

Commissioner Sides said the airport was the best economic development tool Rowan County possessed and that Rowan County wanted to do what was necessary to move the airport forward. Commissioner Sides moved that the Board authorize the \$292,500 for the initial phase. The motion was seconded by Chairman Chamberlain and passed unanimously.

County Manager William Cowan asked how the County planned to pay for the initial phase.

Mr. Maslyk said the program that pays for airport development is the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and he discussed possible funding of approximately \$166,000 to put towards the \$292,500. Mr. Maslyk discussed other possible funding sources that could be used towards the \$292,500.

Mr. Ellington commented that Rowan County was getting a lot of attention at the state level and he said he felt the Board was very wise in its decision to proceed.

Information Systems

Microsoft Enterprise Subscription Agreement

Information Systems Director David Boling reviewed the Enterprise Agreement (EA), which is a volume-licensing program designed for large organizations that have 250 or more desktop personal computers. Mr. Boling provided a power point presentation as he discussed the background and current status of the County's desktop software. Mr. Boling reported that the County has 650 desktop and laptop computers. Mr. Boling highlighted the County's 3 options for upgrading its current products. Mr. Boling discussed the EA benefits and reported that as a subscription customer, the County could subscribe to, rather than purchase, Microsoft software products and obtain licensing at volume pricing based on 3-year agreement terms. The estimated cost for the upgrade was \$470,900 for 3 years for 650 computers.

Building Inspections and Planning Software

Mr. Boling explained that the Planning and Development Department software system was developed in-house approximately 15 years ago primarily for the

issuance of permits. Mr. Boling said the software was not designed to handle the current needs and it did not provide access for public interaction.

Mr. Boling discussed the new software benefits.

Planning and Development Director Ed Muire talked about the efficiency of the software, including the benefit of inspectors being able to remain in the field.

Mr. Boling said the estimated cost for the new software was \$280,000.

AS400 Upgrade System

Mr. Boling said the AS400 was last updated in 2003. Mr. Boling said in order to maximize operations, the system will need to be upgraded in the 2009 fiscal year. Mr. Boling said the current service contract is with IBM. Mr. Boling said as the system gets older, there will be more “down time,” which costs the County money. Mr. Boling said it was too soon to have a quote in hand for replacement costs but he estimated the upgrade at \$30,000.

Mr. Parks called for a break at 3:45 pm.

Mr. Parks reconvened the meeting at 3:50 pm.

Social Services

Department of Social Services (DSS) Director Sandra Wilkes reported that DSS employees currently operate from 4 locations. Ms. Wilkes highlighted the inefficiency and lack of cohesiveness for employees to operate from various locations.

Ms. Wilkes discussed the Capital Improvement Plan, which calls for a new facility to house the 184 DSS employees and provide space for growth. Ms. Wilkes discussed the advantages of locating DSS near the Health Department since both agencies serve many of the same clients. Ms. Wilkes said it might be possible for the Health Department and DSS to share some common staff, such as receptionists/switchboard operators.

Ms. Wilkes estimated that the number DSS employees would increase from 184 to 244 by the year 2027.

Ms. Wilkes estimated the cost to be \$10,212,955 for a new building of approximately 44,500 square feet. Ms. Wilkes said federal and state reimbursement is available for a portion of the costs based on services provided.

County Manager William Cowan said the County currently leases 20,000 square feet of the Health Department facility to Daymark Recovery Services. Mr. Cowan said if there were enough space for the County to add an additional 24,000 square feet to the Health Department facility, it would provide DSS with the

space needed. Mr. Cowan also said the move would free up the DSS building on Mahaley Avenue as possible space for the Board of Elections Office. The DSS facility on West Innes Street could then be used as space to lease to Daymark Recovery Services and other agencies.

Chairman Chamberlain said he would like for the Board to provide Mr. Cowan with the opportunity to proceed and present additional information at a future meeting.

Mr. Cowan said he would need professional assistance and a small amount of funds in order to provide the Board with accurate information.

Commissioner Sides felt the suggestion was a great idea and he said that the Board should probably move the project up on the priority list.

Commissioner Hall agreed with Commissioner Sides and she also complimented Mr. Cowan for the excellent suggestion.

Mr. Cowan said he would get some proposals for the Board.

Health Department

Health Department Director Leonard Wood, Animal Control Supervisor Clai Martin and Health Board Chairman Dave Roberts were present to discuss the Animal Shelter expansion.

Mr. Wood said Staff was proposing to double the current workspace and capacity at the Animal Shelter. The expansion would provide an additional 1,800 square feet of work area for employees and 2,000 square feet of kennel area. The additional kennel space would allow for the isolation of sick animals and provide a more customer friendly shelter. Mr. Wood said the expansion would also include a 1,500 square foot drive-through garage for a safe and secure entrance/drop-off area for individuals bringing animals to the shelter. Mr. Wood estimated the costs for the project at \$80 per square foot for approximately 5300 square feet, including a drive through garage space. Mr. Wood said the total estimated cost was \$472,000 if completed by June of 2009.

In response to a query from Commissioner Mitchell, Mr. Wood said if the Animal Shelter had the proper facilities, it could contract with a veterinarian or a group of veterinarians to perform spay/neuter procedures on site once an animal has been adopted. Mr. Wood said the arrangement would eliminate some of the current issues the Shelter is facing.

Remaining Projects

County Manager William Cowan discussed the remaining projects for the Board's input.

Community College

Mr. Cowan said the Board committed \$3,659,365 in 2006 to Rowan Cabarrus Community College (RCCC), of which approximately \$80,000 had been appropriated. Mr. Cowan said the funding would occur in 2007-08.

Economic Development

Mr. Cowan said in 2006 the Board allocated \$3,250,000 for the Town Creek / I-85 Interceptor Sewer Extension. Mr. Cowan said \$500,000 had been appropriated and financing for the project would occur in 2007-08 and beyond.

Elections

County Manager William Cowan said the Board of Elections was requesting a new building of 10,000 square feet for office space, storage of equipment, records, ballots and a loading area. Mr. Cowan referred to an earlier discussion and he pointed out that the DSS facility on Mahaley Avenue was 10,000 square feet.

Fairgrounds

Mr. Cowan said the Board had already discussed the fairgrounds property and the direction of the Board had been for a year-to-year lease. Mr. Cowan said he would undertake efforts to market the property and that he would contact the developer working in the area of the fairgrounds.

Commissioner Sides also asked that Mr. Cowan have the property advertised for commercial use on the Economic Development Commission's website

Commissioner Sides referred to the information in the agenda packet regarding the relocation of the fair. Commissioner Sides asked if the \$6,634,000 listed was for the purchase price of land only. Mr. Cowan said the fairgrounds study indicated that it did include structures but he added that the fair study was old since it was performed in 2003.

Commissioner Barber felt that the Fair Association did not need 50 acres if the fair was strictly an agricultural fair.

General Government

Mr. Cowan said that if the Board of Elections were able to relocate, it would free up space in the Administration Building for the Finance Department and the basement space would not need to be renovated.

Central Warehouse and Maintenance Facility

Mr. Cowan said the Board had discussed these facilities extensively at the 2006 retreat. Mr. Cowan pointed out the steep cost increase and said it was due to price increases in concrete and steel.

Parks

Mr. Cowan said the request was for additional parking and camping at Dan Nicholas Park (DNP), replacement of putt-putt golf course and purchase of property adjacent to the park, second entrance to DNP, expansion of Eagle Point Preserve and establishment of South Rowan Park.

Senior Services

Mr. Cowan said the Senior Services Department currently rents space in the Ruffy Holmes Building on South Boundary Street and was requesting to build a new center to meet the needs of seniors. Mr. Cowan pointed out that if DSS were to be moved and consolidated, it might be possible for Senior Services to utilize one of their facilities.

Enterprise Funds

Emergency Telephone System

Mr. Cowan said there is a need to replace the telephone system, as it is 5 to 6 years old. Mr. Cowan said the County was currently in the process of replacing the software. Mr. Cowan said Telecommunications Director Rob Robinson was requesting to replace the system this year but Mr. Cowan said he was uncertain if there were adequate funds to cover the project.

Finance Director Leslie Heidrick said it did not appear the County would not have the money when the software upgrade is completed in 2008.

Aerial Photo and Planimetric Update 2009

Mr. Cowan said the County had just completed its aerial photography project but in order to remain current, another flyover would occur in 2009. Mr. Cowan noted that the new orthophotographs would be in true digital color format.

Landfill

Equipment Purchases

Mr. Cowan said there was a proposal to buy an additional 80 acres of property at the landfill. Mr. Cowan said Phase IV would open up a new cell and was projected to begin in January 2008.

Ms. Heidrick said the cell being used was projected to last until 2011 but because the volume has increased, the expansion must take place sooner. Ms. Heidrick said with the increase in volume, comes an increase in revenues. Ms. Heidrick said when she reviewed the project it was projected that the County would have enough cash for the project. Ms. Heidrick said the engineers felt it would be more economical to combine Phases IV and V and build one much larger cell.

Commissioner Sides questioned the amount of out-of-county trash being accepted and the length of the contract terms with Davie County. Mr. Cowan said he was uncertain. Commissioner Sides said the County should stop accepting out of county garbage.

Methane Gas Plan

Mr. Cowan said to comply with state and federal Environmental Protection Act requirements, the County must put in place a plan to mitigate methane gas at the landfill.

Ongoing Projects

Mr. Cowan highlighted the following projects:

- T-Hangar Project at Airport - completed
- EMS Ambulance Station – in design phases
- Detention Center Cell Block – in design phases
- Dunn's Mountain Park - Complete

Chairman Chamberlain recessed the meeting at 4:49 pm.

Friday 23, 2007

Chairman Chamberlain reconvened the meeting at 8:00 am.

Commissioner Mitchell provided the Invocation.

Chairman Chamberlain referred to a discussion held earlier in the retreat and he clarified that detainees under \$10,000 bond are not normally released through the Pretrial Release Program. Chairman Chamberlain said (2) detainees under \$10,000 bonds had been released but only because of medical emergencies.

10. PRESENTATION REGARDING LAND USE

Recently Initiated Land Use Plan Process

Joey Raczkowski, Planning Director of Wilson County shared the process Wilson County had undertaken to arrive at the point of initiating its growth management plan and land development ordinances. Mr. Raczkowski said Wilson County had planned to codify all of the ordinances into a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), which combines zoning, subdivision, watershed ordinances, etc. into one document but the UDO was never approved. Mr. Raczkowski said Wilson County had approximately 80,000 citizens, with 30,000 of those citizens living in the rural areas. Mr. Raczkowski said the City of Wilson was Wilson County's main municipality with approximately 50,000 citizens.

Mr. Raczkowski discussed the community-wide strategic planning process and its 2020 Vision Plan. Mr. Raczkowski said the County was now at the point where everyone was "on board" and moving forward with the land use plan (LUP) element of the project. Mr. Raczkowski said the County had secured professional assistance with Benchmark CMR from Kannapolis. Mr. Raczkowski said the County wanted a lot of public involvement in the process and planned to hold 4 – 6 public meetings. Mr. Raczkowski said it had been a struggle to reach this point in the process because planners had to sell the plan.

Mr. Raczkowski explained that land use planning at the County level is very different from the municipal levels. Mr. Raczkowski said a LUP is a critical tool for a community to identify itself, its future growth and "who" it wanted to be. Mr. Raczkowski said in order to accomplish its planning goals, the County was being divided into planning areas for the LUP.

Commissioner Barber asked if there would be any discussions as to how to preserve the past for the different communities in Wilson County. Mr. Raczkowski responded yes and said the County was trying to preserve the rural heritage/farmland while balancing the growth. Mr. Raczkowski said a committee had been formed to work on the voluntary agricultural district. Commissioner Barber said he believed in strategic planning and he asked Mr. Raczkowski's opinion about Rowan County developing a LUP without a Strategic Plan in place.

Mr. Raczkowski said he felt Rowan County could still accomplish a LUP without a strategic plan in place.

Chairman Chamberlain commented that Rowan County did have an older Strategic Plan but he said the County might need to discard portions of the plan. Commissioner Barber added that a lot of the data in the Strategic Plan was from a 20-year old census plan.

Chairman Chamberlain questioned the “buy-in” from the municipalities. Mr. Raczkowski said the process had been very difficult. Mr. Raczkowski used the City of Wilson as an example and said he felt there could be compromise on the fringe areas (extraterritorial jurisdiction) and where growth is occurring.

Planning and Development Director Ed Muire highlighted the similarities between Wilson and Rowan counties. Mr. Muire said the UDO concept could be a lot better. Mr. Muire said he and his Staff had discussed combining documents to create one administrative development code. Mr. Muire said the LUP would not be easier for one jurisdiction over another. Mr. Muire also said the County should not be “scared” of a LUP. Mr. Muire said Mr. Raczkowski had provided a perspective of what the County was facing to get to the point of a LUP.

Commissioner Sides questioned Mr. Raczkowski as to how Wilson County had pushed development towards one particular area. Mr. Raczkowski responded that the process is done through density control and where services are available to “feed” that type of density.

Commissioner Hall referred to the beginning of the process in Wilson County and asked how the public meetings were facilitated. Mr. Raczkowski said that Wilson County was almost through with its strategic process and was just beginning its LUP. Mr. Raczkowski said property owners would be notified of the community meetings so they could provide their input as to what they wanted their community to look like. Mr. Raczkowski said Wilson County had found that they receive more citizen input by not limiting the meetings to just land use topics and by allowing all issues to be presented. Mr. Raczkowski said a good facilitator would limit the amount of time regarding the other issues raised.

Commissioner Hall asked how all of the citizen input was compiled once the public meetings had been held. Mr. Raczkowski said a committee had been appointed to work with staff and the consultant to go through the information and divide it out according to land use versus other subjects. Mr. Raczkowski said staff would be limited as to how much could be included because all subjects would not apply. Mr. Raczkowski said Wilson County had selected a consultant that would be the facilitator and help staff in compiling data to create a plan. Mr. Raczkowski said the physical text is done by the consultant and that Wilson County planned to work one planning area at a time and finish it before going to the next one.

Commissioner Mitchell said in principle, he did not mind the County having expectations for certain areas but he questioned the balance between what the landowner wants as compared to what the County wants. Mr. Raczkowski said private property rights are a struggle and he felt that no LUP would be perfect. Mr. Raczkowski said what might be approved today might not be applicable in 10 years and that the documents must be updated periodically. Mr. Raczkowski pointed out that a LUP is not a rule but a “guide.”

Commissioner Barber said the LUP was a guide for where the County was going in the future. Commissioner Barber said Rowan was the only county along the I-85 corridor that did not have LUP.

Chairman Chamberlain said the County had a zoning document. Chairman Chamberlain emphasized that a LUP was only a plan. Chairman Chamberlain said he could not imagine why a progressive county would be afraid to plan. Chairman Chamberlain said the school system is expected to plan and he said planning “is good business.” Chairman Chamberlain said he was prepared to implement a LUP if and when the time came.

Facilitator Larry Parks called for a short break at 9:20 am.

Mr. Parks reconvened the meeting at 9:40 am.

Recently Completed Land Use Plan

Bill McCarter, Planning Director of Cleveland County, said the County was approximately 300,000 acres in size with 15 municipalities. Mr. McCarter said 3 of the municipalities had zoning while the others were rural and had virtually no staff or regulations.

Mr. McCarter said the County’s first Land Use Plan (LUP) was done in 1975, with an update prepared in 1995. Mr. McCarter said in 2005 a new LUP was prepared by Centralina Council of Governments.

Mr. McCarter said the first step for a LUP was the appointment by the Commissioners of a task force consisting of 25 citizens. Mr. McCarter said 4 public forums were held throughout the County.

Mr. McCarter explained that a LUP is a guide for growth and a map for desired future growth patterns. Mr. McCarter said the LUP is a source of policy recommendations but is not a zoning ordinance or a “law.”

Mr. McCarter said a new plan is developed with:

- Input from County leadership
- Public meetings to identify concerns and desires
- Input and oversight from Steering Committee
- Text and map drafted by subcommittee and staff

Mr. McCarter said public input was taken back to the committee, put into categories, a plan was drafted and then taken back to the public through forums. Comments were again taken back to the Steering Committee and revised, with recommendations going to the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners.

Mr. McCarter said the Cleveland County residents had felt that rural character was important, jobs were needed and quality growth was wanted.

The 8 focus areas were:

- Residential Development
- Commercial Development
- Industrial Development
- Open Space/Greenways/Rural Character
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Cities/Towns/Villages
- Coordination and Enforcement

Mr. McCarter said the major highlights of the LUP were:

- Protecting rural character
- Expand areas for job growth
- Upgrading development standards
- Create greenways and bikeway networks
- Adding scenic byways and supporting rural character thru development standards
- Encouraging coordination among utility providers
- Linking land use and transportation planning
- Enhancing code enforcement

Mr. McCarter highlighted the residential, commercial and industrial recommendations, as well as the residential, commercial and industrial growth areas. Mr. McCarter also reviewed the open space rural character recommendations, scenic byway expansion, open space features and transportation, utility and cities/town recommendations.

Mr. McCarter discussed the timeline for the project and said a priority action list had been developed to track the progress of the LUP.

Chairman Chamberlain asked Mr. McCarter to explain any details that he would change if Cleveland County were repeating the process. Mr. McCarter said he felt there had not been enough public participation even though the process had been heavily advertised and that meetings had been made accessible to everyone.

Ed Muire, Planning & Development Director, explained that a LUP has 2 components: a map and a policy. Mr. Muire explained that the LUP process provides the citizens the opportunity to provide feedback as to whether they feel the County is focusing on the issues of importance. Mr. Muire felt the County should be more focused on the “big picture” and the end result, as opposed to the day-to-day issues.

Commissioner Hall said it was important to realize that a LUP was a set of guidelines. Commissioner Hall said citizens had expressed fear to her that they wouldn't be able to make use of their property due to restrictions that might be imposed by a LUP. Commissioner Hall said everyone must understand that the LUP would not be preconceived but rather what the citizens say they want for their county.

Chairman Chamberlain said his ideas for a LUP included a well-defined area for the western and southern portions of the County. Chairman Chamberlain said the LUP would be purely a guide for planning purposes.

Commissioner Hall said she agreed with Chairman Chamberlain, as long as there were no preconceived notions about the LUP and that the LUP was developed from the citizens' ideas. Commissioner Hall suggested using a facilitator to assist in gathering information.

Chairman Chamberlain suggested having someone from Cleveland involved in the LUP process since the Town of Cleveland was already developing its own LUP. Commissioner Barber reported that Cleveland was using Benchmark to facilitate their process.

The Board discussed the possibility of using Benchmark to facilitate the County's land use planning process.

Commissioner Barber said citizen involvement would assist the County because of the citizens' insight into their local communities. Commissioner Barber said citizen input was critical for the LUP to have a chance at success.

Commissioner Sides said he would not vote for a LUP because in future years it would be interpreted differently from what the citizens had been told.

Chairman Chamberlain contended that Commissioner Sides' comments would apply to any Board action, as future Boards could change any policies, as long as they were within the law.

Commissioner Hall said she wanted to give citizens the opportunity to be a part of the process. Commissioner Hall pointed out that the community might overwhelmingly say no to any plan.

Commissioner Sides said even though he would vote against a LUP, he would still be involved in the process.

Commissioner Mitchell said he tended to agree with Commissioner Sides however, he felt that a future group might potentially make the process worse. Commissioner Mitchell said the only way to keep the topic from continually resurfacing was to give the property owners the opportunity to provide feedback.

Mr. Muire said it was important for the County to educate the public and explain the options regarding a LUP.

Chairman Chamberlain moved to formally initiate the LUP process in Rowan County based on the startup of a southwest area plan, to be defined at a later time, and the first step is to take applications and to appoint this committee to go forward. Commissioner Barber seconded the motion.

Commissioner Mitchell asked if the committee would be an area committee.

Mr. Muire said Staff could provide the Board with a map in order to define the district. Once the boundaries are established, the Board should look at advertising and accepting applications from people within those boundaries.

Chairman Chamberlain clarified his motion to include the hiring of Benchmark as the consultant, and any fees that would be set would be pre-approved by the Board. Commissioner Barber seconded and the motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner Sides dissenting.

Commissioner Barber expressed appreciation to the citizens who had attended and participated during the retreat. Commissioner Barber also expressed appreciation to the Clerk for her assistance with the retreat.

REVIEW OF 2006 COMMISSIONERS GOALS / DISCUSSION OF 2007 GOALS

- The Board briefly discussed ranking their priorities for the upcoming budget and opted instead to place one or two items on each upcoming Commission agenda leading up to the budget work sessions.

Commissioner Sides suggested that the Commissioners be notified in advance of which topics would be on each agenda so that each Commissioner could be ready to make recommendations at the appropriate time.

- County Manager William Cowan distributed two resolutions for the Board's consideration. Mr. Cowan explained the first resolution, which dealt with a local real estate transfer tax. Mr. Cowan said the tax could generate \$4.9 million to help meet the demands for new classroom space and classroom

improvements, as well as fund other critical infrastructure needs for Rowan County.

Mr. Cowan said the second resolution was for a ½ cent sales tax option and part of the purpose was to offset the cost of Medicaid. Mr. Cowan asked if the Board would be interested in having him seek legislative authority to introduce this resolution and have a local bill filed on behalf of the County.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner Barber moved that the Board consider exercising the rights to have our local legislature submit a local bill for us on our behalf relating to a local option real estate transfer tax of 1%. Commissioner Hall seconded and upon being put to a vote, the motion passed 4-1 with Chairman Chamberlain dissenting.

Commissioner Sides moved not to accept the resolution for the local-option sales tax. Commissioner Hall seconded and the motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner Barber dissenting.

- Mr. Cowan stated the next source of revenue is the restricted school revenue funds. Finance Director Leslie Heidrick explained that the schools have always determined their needs and then filled out an application to be signed by the Chairman of the Board of Education and the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. The application is then forwarded to the state to receive the funds.

Mr. Cowan gave a summary of what money is available and how it can be used, as well as the money that has been spent in reference to the schools. Mr. Cowan requested direction for the Finance Director regarding the funds. Ms. Heidrick added that there was \$4 million coming to the County from the schools that had not been requested yet. Ms. Heidrick said if the County is going to use the loan proceeds and not draw down the school proceeds, the County must use the school system's funds first because it was the only way to reduce the amount of the loan.

Commissioner Sides moved to use the \$2.5 million lottery proceeds to pay down on the bond debt and to leave the other \$1.5 million for technology. Commissioner Barber seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Cowan discussed the restricted school construction funds and noted that the accumulated amount had reached \$800,000 in restricted sales tax. Ms. Heidrick said that in the past this money has been left as emergency funds that may be requested. The Board decided to leave the money as is.

- Mr. Cowan asked if the Board wished to use property tax as a source of revenue for capital projects. Mr. Cowan speculated that the Board has no money currently set that could be dedicated to capital. The Board decided not to dedicate any money from the property tax towards capital.
- Mr. Cowan noted the runway extension and layout plan and the land acquisition for the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ). Mr. Cowan said the County would have to front some of the money to acquire the land but could be reimbursed from the Vision 100 Plan over a 4 to 5 year period. Mr. Cowan requested a decision on whether the County should go ahead and purchase the building.

Commissioner Sides moved to proceed with the purchase of the building at the airport for the RPZ. Commissioner Barber seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Cowan asked if the Board wished to take action in regards to the animal shelter and the Board agreed to wait on this project.
- Mr. Cowan inquired if the Board wished to purchase the MS enterprise and inspection software. Ms. Heidrick stated that the board had the option to pay a specified amount for 3 years instead of financing.

Mr. Cowan asked if the Board wished to purchase the MS enterprise and inspection software. Ms. Heidrick stated that the Board had the option to pay a specified amount for 3 years instead of financing the project.

The Board decided that the inspections software would be brought back to the Board for a final decision at a later date.

Commissioner Sides suggested the MS software to be put off for one year and the Board agreed.

- Mr. Cowan suggested renovating the upper level of the justice center to create 2 new courtrooms. The Board instructed Mr. Cowan to gather further information and report back to the Board.
- Mr. Cowan offered the subject of the east branch library property acquisition for discussion. The Board agreed to discuss this topic at a later date.
- Mr. Cowan discussed the Department of Social Services design costs and asked the Board to make a decision on whether to go ahead with this project. Mr. Cowan explained possible options for renovating the current offices to work for other uses. The Board instructed Mr. Cowan to gather additional information and report back to the Board.

- Mr. Cowan said the telephone system (Fund 202) would be brought back to the Board when the funds become available at the end of the fiscal year.
- In response to a query from Commissioner Mitchell regarding Landfill phases IV and V (Fund 601), Mr. Cowan said the County is considering several options. Ms. Heidrick informed the Board finishing phase IV this year would completely deplete the funds.

Commissioner Sides suggested that the Board consider increasing the tipping fees. Ms. Heidrick said if the Board chose to increase the fees, the County would need to notify Davie County in writing by March 1, 2007.

- Mr. Cowan stated that if the state bond referendum passed, it would bring the County an estimated \$35 million from the state.

Facilitator Larry Parks asked the new Commissioners if there was anything they would like to discuss that had not yet been covered. Commissioner Barber responded that he had enjoyed the retreat and considered it as a learning experience. Commissioner Barber thanked the Commissioners for a wonderful job, as well as the Clerk to the Board.

Mr. Cowan stated that he had been pleased with the quality of presentations from the Staff.

Mr. Parks added that in his experience this was the first time he didn't have to keep his own notes because everyone was so well prepared. Mr. Parks thanked the Board for being kind and courteous to one another. Mr. Parks then asked the Board to critique their experiences.

Commissioner Hall responded that she thought the retreat was well organized and that everyone had been given the opportunity to provide input.

Chairman Chamberlain stated that he thought the Facilitator had done an excellent job and that the Board had been able to make good decisions for the County as a group.

Commissioner Mitchell agreed that Staff and the Facilitator had done a good job keeping things on schedule.

Commissioner Sides requested that the Commissioners receive their retreat packets a week earlier next year in order to allow members ample time to digest the retreat materials. Commissioner Sides said the packets were well prepared but that he needed more time to review the materials.

Chairman Chamberlain recognized the Clerk for her hard work and efforts in preparing for the retreat. Chairman Chamberlain agreed with Commissioner Sides that receiving the agenda packets earlier would allow the Board more time to prepare for the retreat.

(Representative Fred Steen arrived to address the Board)

Commissioner Barber relayed to Representative Steen the results of the Board's earlier vote to move forward the real estate transfer tax option resolution. Commissioner Barber also mentioned that the Board had discussed Medicaid costs for the next year. Commissioner Barber asked Representative Steen to comment about the discussions currently taking place in Raleigh.

Representative Steen responded that the subjects mentioned by Commissioner Barber are "hot button issues" and he stated that he would take the information forward. Representative Steen said the burden on counties to pay for schools was getting tougher. Representative Steen said he would like to help the Board and that he would entertain suggestions with the delegation.

Commissioner Barber asked what the next step would be in the process and Mr. Cowan responded that the county would provide the delegation with a letter from the Chairman for Representative Steen to introduce to legislation for adoption.

Commissioner Hall questioned Representative Steen regarding the chances for receiving Medicaid relief this year. Representative Steen explained that a lot of relief was given last year and he couldn't really say what was going to happen this year.

In response to a query from Commissioner Barber, Representative Steen briefly discussed the Yadkin River Project and some of the projections for funding.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Chamberlain provided a prayer before he adjourned the retreat at 1:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Athey
Clerk to the Board