

Greg Edds, Chairman
Jim Greene, Vice- Chairman
Mike Caskey
Judy Klusman
Craig Pierce



Aaron Church, County Manager
Carolyn Barger, Clerk to the Board
John W. Dees, II, County Attorney

Rowan County Board of Commissioners

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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING WORK SESSION OF THE ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 10, 2020 – 9:00 AM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROWAN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

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Present: Greg Edds, Chairman
Jim Greene, Vice-Chairman
Mike Caskey, Member
Judy Klusman, Member
Craig Pierce, Member

County Manager Aaron Church, Clerk to the Board Carolyn Barger, and Assistant County Manager/Finance Director Leslie Heidrick were present.

Chairman Edds convened the meeting at 9:08 a.m.

Chaplain Michael Taylor provided the Invocation.

Chairman Edds led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- Commissioner Klusman requested the topic at 1:30 p.m. be changed from Funding for Smart Start to Funding for Substance Abuse.
- Commissioner Greene commented that Craig Lamb with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC) was sick and someone from RCCC would be making a presentation on Mr. Lamb's behalf. Commissioner Greene said Mr. Lamb was scheduled to begin at 9:10 a.m. and he requested the Board consider moving RCCC's presentation to later in the day. The Board was agreeable to skipping to the next topic (STA 02-19: Subdivision Street Standards).

Commissioner Greene moved, Commissioner Klusman seconded and the vote to approve the agenda as amended passed unanimously.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF FACILITATOR

Chairman Edds welcomed everyone in attendance.

Chairman Edds introduced Julie Brenman, Facilitator, for the work session. Chairman Edds provided a brief biography for Ms. Brenman and welcomed her to the meeting.

Ms. Brenman said the better portion of the day would be spent going through the agenda topics and at the end of each presentation, she would capture the key takeaways. Ms. Brenman said the Board would prioritize the items at the conclusion of the day to help County Manager prepare the budget for the next fiscal year based on the Board's expectations.

At this point in the meeting, the Board moved ahead to discuss STA 02-19: Subdivision Street Standards.

STA 02-19: Subdivision Street Standards

Chairman Edds introduced the topic by noting at a prior meeting the Board had talked about adopting Appendix D into the Subdivision Ordinance. Since that time, meetings were held with experts and interested parties, as well as consulting with planning departments around the region. Rowan County staff from emergency services identified important issues for them:

- **Road width** is currently 18 feet and we are considering requiring 20 feet. We want to make sure maintenance of the proposed extra two feet (from 18 to 20 feet) is covered by NCDOT. Rowan County has limited water and sewer, so there are not many hydrants in the county for fire services and the extra two feet is important to emergency services.
- The other issue is related to cul de sacs. Our local emergency services staff says that 90 feet is adequate for cul de sacs.

Pat Ivey and his team from NCDOT came to talk about subdivision street design standards. NCDOT was invited to come help the Board better understand the issues and implications.

- 18 feet is the minimum in NCDOT code. Higher end subdivisions will have larger width. NCDOT will maintain whatever the county decides, as long as it is reasonable. 20 feet is reasonable. We have gone up to 22 feet. Sometimes speed increases with wider streets.
- The cul de sac would be quite large, but you will be fine. You will likely see more parking and basketball goals. Our current right of way will not encompass the full 90 feet to maintain drainage and driveways, etc. NCDOT doesn't own firetrucks, but for comparison, their dump trucks can turn in the standard 70 foot.



The Board noted the focus of this discussion is fire safety and access. We recognize there may be extra costs to developers; there are tradeoffs for living in the county with lower taxes and limited water utilities. We want to make sure our fire trucks can access and protect our county residents.

Key Takeaways:

- Rowan's proposal is reasonable for width of streets and cul de sacs
- NCDOT will pay for maintenance of streets
- Focus is fire safety and service

At this point, the Board went back to the first agenda item, Update For Better Jobs For Better Lives and also discussed the agenda topic for Education and Second Chance Training.

Better Jobs for Better Lives *and* Education and Second Chance Training

Commissioner Greene welcomed the attendees for the Better Jobs for Better Lives program. A team from Rowan Cabarrus Community College (Keri Allman - Director of Career Services, Tashina Mahatha, and a participant of the program (Cecilia) presented an update on the progress of the Better Jobs for Better Lives initiative. They noted that the needs had been changing across the county for career development services. The program started in 2013, using the **R3** model: **R**efocus, **R**etrain, and **R**eemploy. It is not one size fits all. 90% of what the program does falls in the refocus realm, helping participants understand where they are and how they can connect with other opportunities.



The unemployment rate went down to 2.4% in September 2019 from 5.3% in January 2017. In spite of low unemployment, there has continued to be a high demand for the program. Close to 2000 citizens have been touched by the program since the Commissioners began supporting it three years ago (1974 is the exact number).

2017: 415 participants

2018: 597 participants

2019: 962 participants

The most popular services offered include: career coaching; resume and interview clinics; foundational skills courses; adult basic education; GED prep; Work Keys Career Readiness Certification; Continuing Education Enrollment

The focus is on better jobs for people. Many were already working. We work with companies where there have been layoffs.

263 scholarships since 2017 – for healthcare, trucking, real estate, etc. (there are other sources of funding for additional scholarships). Transportation is also a need, particularly for people in outer parts of county. We have excellent partnerships for childcare.

The program received a 2019 innovation grant from the governor. We have been able to target individuals that are “justice involved” (recently incarcerated or have a criminal record). We have hired recruiters to reach out to target populations. We have over 200 Rowan County residents that are justice involved that have been receiving Better Jobs for Better Lives services. With the right message and right messengers, we have been seeing success and learning a lot.

The college has locations in some of our high schools to create awareness of our services, to understand the needs of high school students and to help them explore their career options as they are leaving high school. We also help the parents of high schoolers learn about their career options. The program is in multiple locations and is in demand. They are on the road and no longer have a storefront.

Cecilia, a program participant was laid off last year. She was able to be retrained as a real estate agent. She is a first-generation college graduate and has seen the benefit of the program.

Commissioner Klusman encouraged RCCC to partner with Teen Court – to reach out to kids that are just starting to get into trouble. This will help these kids get on the right track.

Chairman Edds noted we are all very busy building silos of excellence. He wants to make sure we are not duplicating efforts but building partnerships (school enrollment enlisted employed) – want RCCC to partner with the schools. This is related to recidivism in prisons. Odds are stacked against them. Almost 40% recidivism locally. Want to develop a plan to address recidivism to help them get connected and return to productive citizenship and gainful employment. Want to provide our residents hope. The work discussed in this program ties in with the idea of second chance training (originally listed on the agenda for discussion later in the day).

RCCC is planning for logistics training in the future. Correctional facility is offering training and we want to make sure the training matches the needs. Working to increase the number of second chance employers and looking at the “box” on employment applications to also help increase hiring of justice-involved individuals.

Commissioner Greene explained that when the Board had previously discussed the budget for FY 2019-20, he thought the Board had approved funding for the Better Jobs for Better Lives Program when in fact the Board had not allocated the funds. Commissioner Greene said the Commissioners now had a budget amendment before them concerning the funding.

Commissioner Greene moved approval of the budget amendment to fund the Better Jobs for Better Lives Program (the budget amendment was in the amount of \$100,000 to transfer funds for RCCC’s Better Jobs for Better Lives Program). Commissioner Pierce said he would like to amend the motion to make sure the program was funded as a line item in next year’s budget - and from now on - to make sure the funding did not get left out. Commissioner Greene was agreeable to the amendment and upon being put to a vote, the amended motion passed unanimously.

Key Takeaways:

- 1974 clients served in the past three years
- 263 scholarships – most frequent request is for healthcare needs
- Need to Continue to build partnerships with other like-minded organizations
- Want to provide opportunities to reduce recidivism
- Innovation award to reach justice involved individuals
- Want to provide *hope* for all

Chairman Edds called for a break at 10:24 a.m.

Chairman Edds reconvened the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Economic Development

Rod Crider, President of the Economic Development Commission, provided an update on the many economic development activities in the past year.

- 2019 new and expanded jobs: Chewy, Henkel, Innospec, Auto Group, Home Goods
- Expand Rowan Program continues – proactive initiative to



get out in front of our current employers. It is easier to keep a customer than gain a new one. We needed to do more to reach out to existing businesses in Rowan. We needed to demonstrate to existing businesses that we could provide value to them. We now have existing companies reach out to us when they have expansion opportunities so we can be a resource to them.

- Rowan County Manufacturing Network – help manufacturers get together to discuss common issues and to work together. Strengthen the local supply chain and access to employees.
- Have several hot projects in the hopper to bring more jobs and investment in Rowan County.
- Marketing initiatives: leverage membership in Charlotte Regional Business Alliance; market to site selection consultants; develop materials and attend trade shows. Add additional capacity to execute internal and external marketing campaigns
- Product development activities: developing Wallace Site in Landis – about to be certified by Electricity's; Rusher Site in East Spencer; High Bridge Development; Interest in other sites; National Brokers representing sites; Granite Quarry Spec Building
- I-85 improvements completed – will reduce travel time to Charlotte by 25% and spur additional development along the interstate corridor
- Workforce Development Activities: partner in Rowan County Education Collaborative. Workforce development is the number 1 issue in economic development.; Work in Rowan Wednesdays; pursuing ACT Work Ready Communities certification; MFG Day; Talent Attraction Guide
- Working with Networks – Charlotte, State, Centralina Workforce development board, NC Econ Developers Association; Working to enhance our partnerships to increase our impact
- Brand Identity and Story-telling: working with Your Rowan/Be an Original Initiative. About 30,000 visitors to the website. A lot of new people visiting the website to learn about Rowan County. Using social media and promoting a positive image.
- Will be doing a follow-up survey to our branding. Results will be ready in early February. 1300 responses received. Your Rowan will come do a report to the Board when the results are ready.
- Organizational Development: Forward Rowan, focusing on Increasing Prosperity, Reducing Poverty and Improving the Quality of Life. Branching out beyond government investment and seeking private sector to participate in our economic growth effort in Rowan.
 - 57% of businesses describe Rowan's economy as good. 37% as fair; 86% of businesses say community leaders are on the right track in terms of economic development
 - EDC effectiveness rated high by businesses

EDC's Strategic Focus Areas include:

- Targeted Economic Growth
- Talent Attraction and Development
- Brand Identity and Storytelling
- High-Performance Service (internally)

The EDC has a goal of 2500 new jobs by 2024; Goal of jobs paying wages exceeding \$33,000; attract \$350 million in capital investment by 2024. This produces additional secondary jobs and investment.

Chairman Edds noted the county wants to continue to raise the bar – continue to increase wages, work with education collaborative, increase prosperity.

Commissioner Greene noted new jobs help create secondary jobs. 2500 new jobs generate 1265 secondary jobs. Those are just as important as the new jobs.



Commissioner Klusman asked how the EDC helps address poverty and prosperity. Mr. Crider noted they focus on bringing higher income jobs, but also on entry level jobs for people that are just entering the workforce. They are also working with the City of Salisbury to address some transportation issues, for example adding a route to the Chewy facility and adjusting the schedule to the Fresh House facility. Childcare is another issue that keeps people from working. They are doing a lot to partner with transportation and childcare providers. By being collaborative, they hope they can address all of these interrelated issues that impact our economy.

Commissioner Caskey shared his optimism about the current attraction and expansion projects. He personally recognizes the benefits of I-85 expansion and reduced commute time. With the renewal at the school system, more housing ... do we think more people will start moving headquarters to Rowan? Mr. Crider noted headquarters are usually they are within city limits of Charlotte. Rowan is not quite there yet, but we are working toward it and have opportunities.

Key Takeaways:

- Successful job expansion and investment in Rowan
- Enhancing Networks and Partnerships to improve our impact and success
- 86% of businesses say community leaders are on the right track; 57% say economy is good
- Expand Rowan is helping us keep existing businesses

Long Term Goal for Water System

Chairman Edds introduced the topic. We have been discussing bringing water to northern and southern ends of the county for several years. Duke Energy ended up paying for the northern extension as part of a coal ash settlement. Once we recognized the exorbitant cost to reach the southern part of the county we developed an alternate solution with Kannapolis. We have about 150 customers on the northern water line and that is all. We vowed to the customers on the northern line that we are not seeking to profit off of them. We just returned a \$150 check to each of the customers there. Duke Energy is out there and talking about water line extension. They have expressed interest in taking some of this water. It did not make financial sense for Duke Energy to get water from the County but Duke may be interested in taking some capacity from SRU. Probably good for all of us – generating commerce and profits.

What do we see as the future of the northern water line? There are reasons why we wanted to control this line, especially controlling growth outside of municipalities.

Options for the Board to consider:

- Maintain this line (run by the City of Salisbury)
- Give this line over to Salisbury Rowan Utilities – but maintain our interest in growth in this area

Commissioner Pierce noted the big concern is not the water line itself but also drainage and sewer so industry can build their plants. Turning it over to SRU is not a problem; if it is financially feasible for Duke to tie on, then that is good. But I am interested in getting septic tied in as well. Need to identify the full scope of what we would like to see over the next 10 years.

Chairman Edds added that we have never had sewer on the east side of I85. We have had water there. Chewy hooked on to the water line before the county meter. (They are on city water.) When we talked about septic across I85, we came up with a price of \$1.55 million. If we have a deal, CDBG will help pay for it. County is paying \$50k; CDBG is paying the balance (\$1.5 m). By March, sewer will for the first time ever be on the east side of Long Ferry Road. So, our next decision is do we extend sewer or wait for the next deal? Then we could wait for a new deal and more CDBG funding.

Commissioner Greene clarified that Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU) is a city department of the city of Salisbury. He does not have interest in having a small line that is essentially run by SRU. We know we are not going to invest in a water processing plant. Water is the most important asset in terms of economic development. Decisions are often about rate. I do not want to take over the water system, but want to work hand

in hand with them about this important asset and how it will work in the future. This will drive development. We need to work with Salisbury for the future of Rowan County.

Manager Church noted when we started the northern line, we were also looking at doing a southern line. Now that we are not doing a southern line, High bridge development has been asked to be annexed by Kannapolis. So, some of the circumstances have changed.

Commissioner Caskey asked if there is an advantage to us having a water system if we want to expand. Manager Church said it helps us to extend to other places because we have already established that we have the ability to operate a water system.

Commissioner Caskey requested more information before making a decision today.



Jim Behmer, SRU Director, provided some clarification about how the systems are treated from a state environmental and financial perspective.

Rowan's northern customers pay twice the rate of all other users on SRU system and the County had zero capital costs since Duke Energy paid for the line. If we expand, we will have capital costs in addition to operational. If we want to be competitive, we need to make decisions about the water line.

By consensus, the Board was agreeable to allow staff to begin conversations with SRU regarding the water line and to share findings with the full Board. Want to understand their plan if growth comes to the northern portion of the county, what will they do. This is our only opportunity to finance this moving forward. A possible end product will be to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SRU.

Key Takeaways:

- Competitive water prices are key for economic development
- Would like to talk to SRU about future of our water lines

LUNCH

Chairman Edds recessed the meeting at 12:34 p.m. for lunch.

Chairman Edds reconvened the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

EDUCATION AND SECOND CHANCE TRAINING

The Board discussed this topic earlier in the day during the Update for Better Jobs for Better Lives presentation.

Naming Policy for County Buildings and Rooms

Manager Church introduced the topic of a Naming Policy for County Buildings and Rooms. Individuals have come forward wanting to donate to have a room named after them. Most rooms or buildings that have names were named after public servants. County Attorney Jay Dees has done research on the topic. There are some precautions to take when naming facilities. The County currently does not have a policy. Would the Board like a policy created?

Attorney Dees shared that naming rights are a creative way to have private public partnerships where there is a private contribution to public facilities. The policies need to be designed so they are fair and open. We need to be able to navigate situations where a “bad actor” comes to donate and wants something named after them. The idea of a naming policy came up with the West Rowan Library fundraising efforts. Need to do it in a way that we do not end up with names we do not want associated with Rowan County.

The Commissioners agreed the Manager and Attorney could draft a policy for consideration. Commissioners noted a policy should:

- Give priority to generous benefactors.
- Policy would address the unique circumstances when someone wants their name on a building.
- Take into consideration past practices. For example, a park shelter is already named after someone. Think about what already has a name on it.
- Funding may be raised or donated. Amounts have to depend on what you are naming (e.g. shelter would require a different amount than a building).

Key Takeaways:

- Manager and Attorney can develop a policy for Board’s consideration.

Funding for Substance Abuse

Commissioner Klusman provided two (2) handouts and shared information from United Way seeking support for a 6-8 bed detox center in Rowan County, noting it is very much needed. The County needs-assessment identified substance use as the number one issue for the county. The majority of our children in foster care are impacted by parental substance abuse. Overdoses are going down for opioids. We are getting really good at using Narcan to address overdoses but continue to see addiction to heroin and meth at high rates. There are more addicted babies – about 6 per month. Looking to work with United Way, Healthy Rowan, Health Department, Social Services Department to come up with ways to serve folks that are substance addicted.

Long term options:

- Detox center; Looking for grants in addition to government funds
- Substance abuse residential treatment programs for mothers and infants. Current treatment center cannot house mothers with babies.

Short term:

- Enhance peer support group employees with 2 FTE

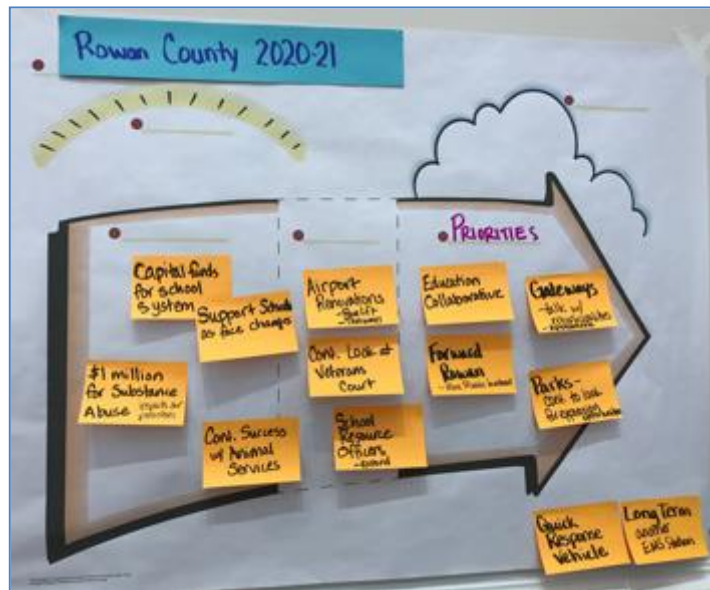
Key Takeaways:

- Need additional funding for substance abuse treatment

Commissioner Priorities and Direction for FY 2020-21

The Commissioners shared their individual priorities for the coming year. They noted support to continue in the successful direction the County is currently taking. The individual priorities were not weighed against each other. The Manager will consider their priorities as he prepares the next fiscal year's budget.

- Capital funds for school system
- Support schools as they face challenges
- \$1 million for substance abuse: impacts all of our priorities
- Airport renovations: facelift, taxiway
- Continue to look at Veteran's Court
- Expand School Resource Officers
- Continue success for Animal Services
- Lead Education Collaborative
- Forward Rowan: seek additional private investment
- Gateways: talk with municipalities; appearance is important
- Parks: continue to explore expansion opportunities



Longer term:

- Look at success of Quick Response Vehicle; will need an additional EMS station

Chairman Edds thanked Ms. Brenman for facilitating the work session.

ADDITION:

At this point in the meeting, Commissioner Caskey asked Chairman Edds if it would be possible to add a discussion concerning a ***Resolution to Preserve and Defend the Constitutions of the United States and North Carolina (Resolution)***. No objections were voiced to adding the discussion.

Commissioner Caskey said the Commissioners had been receiving emails and phone calls from citizens inquiring as to what was occurring with the Second Amendment. Commissioner Caskey referred to changes implemented by the Governor in the State of Virginia and the concern over those changes. Commissioner Caskey said both Virginia and North Carolina were in the same court circuit and things that are upheld in one state could affect the other state.

Commissioner Caskey continued by saying he had reviewed similar Resolutions adopted by other counties and as far as he was aware, the Board was in agreement with the Resolution in principle.

Commissioner Caskey provided a copy of the proposed Resolution, which he read as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO PRESERVE AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTIONS
OF THE UNITED STATES AND NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the United States is the Supreme Law of our nation; and

WHEREAS, the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution states, "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed;" and

WHEREAS, Article 1, Sec. 30 in the North Carolina Constitution states, "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed;" and

WHEREAS, it is further recognized that the Second Amendment to the Constitution guarantees that individuals have the right to keep and bear arms in a manner that shall not be infringed; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States has, through multiple rulings, upheld an individual's right to keep and bear arms when federal, state, and local laws have sought to restrict this right; and

WHEREAS, the right to bear arms is a fundamental right for self-defense, the defense of others including family members, the protection of individual liberty, and for the preservation of our United States and the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, it is acknowledged that the right of individuals to keep and bear arms is under attack in the United States of America by elected officials from multiple levels of Government; and

WHEREAS, the illegal misuse of firearms is not a reason to infringe upon the Constitutional rights of the law-abiding citizens of Rowan County; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners have taken an oath to defend and uphold the Constitutions of the United States and of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the Rowan County Board of Commissioners wishes to express its deep and abiding commitment to protecting all Constitutional rights of Rowan County Citizens and stands opposed to any law, regulation, or other act that would unconstitutionally infringe on the citizens' second Amendment Rights.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Rowan County Board of Commissioners declares that it stands as a county that will respect, protect and defend the Second Amendment rights of Rowan County's Citizens. The board will oppose, within the limits of the Constitutions of the United States and the State of North Carolina, any efforts to unconstitutionally restrict such rights, and to use such constitutional means at its disposal to protect the rights of its citizens to keep and bear arms.

FURTHERMORE, the Rowan County Board of Commissioners implores the United States Congress and North Carolina Legislature to preserve, uphold, and protect the rights of all law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms under the United States Constitution and reject any provision, law, or regulation that may infringe, have the tendency to infringe, or place any additional burdens on those rights.

Adopted this 10th of January, 2020, by the Rowan County Board of Commissioners.

After reading the Resolution, Commissioner Caskey moved approval of the Resolution followed by a second from Commissioner Pierce.

Commissioner Klusman wanted to make it clear to her friends who worked in the domestic violence area, that under the law if someone was convicted of domestic violence and the judge ordered the removal of all firearms, the order would still be legal.

Chairman Edds said the Commissioners were staunch supporters of the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and also Article I Section 30 of the North Carolina Constitution. Chairman Edds said the Commissioners believed, "We are a free people and that as such we have a right to defend ourselves as a free people." Chairman Edds continued by saying, "We are for the lawful use of firearms and do not defend in any way unlawful use." Chairman Edds said on behalf of the Board, Rowan County wanted to be a community that valued the right to self-defense, valued the Second Amendment under the Constitution and Article 1 Section 30 of the North Carolina Constitution.

Chairman Edds stressed the decision had been an easy one for the Commissioners. Chairman Edds recalled the issue also came up in Rowan County in 2013.

Commissioner Caskey referred to the 2013 resolution and said the Board had also passed a resolution during that timeframe to take the position the Board did not think it was proper for concealed carry holders information to be made public.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Pierce moved to adjourn at 2:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Greene and passed unanimously.

The above summary was prepared by Julie Brenman, Facilitator, of Fountain Works, with contributions by the Clerk to the Board, and is hereby adopted as the official minutes of the Board of Commissioners Annual Planning Work Session held on January 10, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carolyn Barger".

Carolyn Barger, MMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board