

## **MINUTES**

**Reconvened from Recessed Meeting of March 11, 2003**

### **RETREAT**

**March 14, 2003**

The Davidson County Board of Commissioners met at 8:00 A.M., Friday, March 14, 2003, in Room 226, Mendenhall Building, Davidson County Community College, for a Planning Retreat.

#### PRESENT

Commissioners: Chairman Fred Sink, Vice Chair Priscilla Hege, Cindy Akins, Billy Joe Kepley, Don Truell, Dr. Max Walser, Sam Watford

County Manager Robert Hyatt, County Attorney/Clerk to the Board Stephen Holton, Budget Officer Zeb Hanner, Tax Administrator Joe Silver, Finance Director Jane Kiker, Clerk of Court Brian Shipwash

The remaining department heads joined the commissioners at noon for lunch and the afternoon part of the planning retreat: Library Director Nancy Bates, Transportation Director Zeb F. Hanner, Parks and Recreation Director Charles Parnell, Solid Waste Director Charles Brushwood, Human Resources Director Keli Greer, Cooperative Extension Director Robert Lopp, Social Services Director Catherine Lambeth, Board of Elections Director Ruth Huneycutt, Planning and Zoning Director Guy Cornman, Assistant Maintenance Director Scott Rickard, MIS Director Joel Hartley, Soil and Water Director Robert Lopp, Veterans Director Bob Leonard, Inspections Director Ron Triplette, Health Director Diane Crouse, Mental Health Director Billy West, Purchasing Director Dwayne Childress, 911 Communications Director Lisa Martin, Senior Services Director Kathryn Gentry, Job Training and Employment Center Director Pat Everhart, Fire Marshal Perry Tyler, Emergency Medical Services Manager Doug Lowe, Lexington Area Chamber of Commerce Director Jim Simeon, Tourism Chair Jo Ellen Edwards

#### RECONVENE – CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Sink called the meeting to order and asked that the meeting be reconvened.

#### REVIEW AND AGREE ON AGENDA-ESTABLISH GOALS-ADOPTION OF AGENDA

County Manager Robert Hyatt extended the invitation for the addition of issues to the agenda.

The Board agreed on the agenda as presented and added items as follows:

*Steamlining Meetings by Commissioner Truell*

*Bid Process for Contracts by Commissioner Akins*

*Televising Meetings by Commissioner Truell*

*Non-Profits Request for Funds by Chairman Sink*

On a motion by Commissioner Akins and a second by Vice Chair Hege the Board voted unanimously 7-0 to adopt the agenda.

REVIEW CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

***Space Needs Study*** - Zeb M. Hanner, Budget Officer, reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan and Financial Update and noted the need for a Space Needs Study at a cost of \$30,000.

Mr. Hanner commented that the Tyro Ambulance Base is underway and the Denton Ambulance Base needs to be in the Space Needs Study.

Mr. Hanner noted \$72,000,000 on a five-year plan for capital improvements by borrowing or from the General Fund.

***Library Expansion***- Mr. Hanner noted the proposed library expansion for 2004-2005.

Commissioner Kepley, Vice Chair Hege, and Commissioner Walser questioned the need for library expansion. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hanner pointed out that the MIS/GIS Project is now seven years old and aerial photographs are needed.

***911 Surcharge Funds*** - Jane Kiker responded to a comment on uses of 911 surcharge funds and noted that it cannot be used for radios or radio consoles but can be used to purchase computers.

Chairman Sink stated that the surcharge rate could be considered at the time of budget.

***Landfill*** - Mr. Hanner noted the request for replacement of the high-mileage roll-off trucks with the 1989 and 1990 roll-off trucks being replaced first; there was discussion of fees at the boxesites.

***Recreation*** – There was discussion of the needs for Linwood Park, Denton Park and tennis courts, and the availability of the unused Boone's Cave Park Attendant funds. Chairman Sink noted that Charles Parnell has asked for a Master Plan for many years and that it is needed for grant applications. Robert Hyatt added that the recreational facilities are in bad shape and are a big liability.

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***Sewer Projects*** - The Board noted the status of the County on its sewer projects.

***Schools*** – The Board discussed the commitment to build four more schools in addition to the two under construction. Discussion continued relating to the \$8,000,000 requested for renovations and additions to Thomasville City Schools. The Board also noted the \$300,000 requested to repair bleachers. Commissioner Walser noted the need in the Lexington and Thomasville school systems and passed out information on the use of the athletic facilities with reference to the condition of the Lexington bleachers. Commissioner Walser continued with a request for a resolution from the Board to commit the money for the Thomasville Schools in July 2003. He further noted the immediate need for the Charles England Intermediate School in Lexington and the Liberty Drive School in Thomasville; Commissioner Truell and Chairman Sink agreed that both schools need a commitment from the Board and to be included in the 2003-2004 budget. Commissioner Truell requested that a resolution for the Liberty Drive School commitment be an item on the March 25, 2003 agenda. It was noted that a resolution for the Charles England Intermediate School can be done following the Lexington Board of Education meeting.

***Landfill*** – The Board discussed the hauling of rainwater and storage of leachate at the landfill. Commissioner Kepley advocated a gravity sewer line from the landfill, tapping on to the City of Lexington, and providing sewer to other facilities in need of sewer.

***Budgeted Increases*** – Zeb Hanner noted the provision for the 1/5-1/10 increases, health insurance increases, school funding increases, and Medicaid increases. Mr. Hanner noted that everytime you open a school you spend \$400,000 a year. He noted the impact of a \$.03 tax increase to the 2003-2004 budget with no increase next year with a revaluation, then a \$.01 decrease in tax rate in the next year 2005, and end up with a \$.58 tax rate. He further noted that it would add 11.3 cents to the budget and the County needs to borrow in order to fund the school construction projects.

Commissioner Akins suggested setting the box sites up on an enterprise fund to get \$2,000,000.

Commissioner Kepley noted the impact of the loss of furniture industry on other industries, like a domino effect.

Joe Silver stated that he does not see a revaluation occurring in 2005 with the present stagnant economy and also stated the County could sustain until 2007. He noted that values are not increasing now but remaining the same at 99.24%.

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***Commissioners' Recommendations*** – Robert Hyatt asked for the wishes of the Board.

Commissioner Watford advocated a slow-down in school construction and renovation.

Commissioner Walser asked if there is a time line for building of the six schools; Robert Hyatt replied that there is not. Commissioner Kepley advocated building and borrowing now due to the low interest rate and cheaper labor. Commissioner Akins suggested looking at box site user fees and not increasing taxes; Chairman Sink and Robert Hyatt suggested referring the box site user fees be referred back to the Solid Waste Advisory Board and a look at what other counties do. Commissioner Akins recommended fees for day camps and recreational events. Commissioner Walser noted that a decision needs to be made on fees or a tax increase or reduce services. Commissioner Truell suggested a look at user fees. Commissioner Watford pointed out the standing of Davidson County compared with the rest of the State and the low standing in education.

***Streamlining Meetings*** – Vice Chair Hege stated that she did not feel the Thursday morning informational meetings are very productive. Commissioner Walser stated that Davidson County Board meets twice as much as some of the other counties. Vice Chair Hege stated that some options are (1) to meet early to accommodate information from department heads or to (2) to receive the department head information at the end of the meeting. Commissioner Truell stated that cities meet once a month and have a planning/working meeting which does not require attendance and he suggested adding the Planning and Zoning Public Hearing to a regular meeting and suggested two meetings a month, one day meeting and one night meeting. Chairman Sink commented that he felt it would be a mistake to add the Planning and Zoning Public hearing to a regular meeting. Commissioner Walser recommended two night meetings and one day meeting. Commissioner Akins noted that there is often a time frame for time sensitive issues. Robert Hyatt suggested the need to have a policy in place designating a time for presentation of each item. Commissioner Kepley stated it is not good to mix zoning issues with a regular meeting and noted that the informational meeting in the morning gives 2<sup>nd</sup> shift people a chance to attend. Chairman Sink noted that the informational meeting speeds up the night meetings. Commissioner Watford suggested three meetings a month. County Attorney Holton stated that the County has a good procedure now and advocated setting a time for presentation of each item and not allow everyone to speak on an issue but have a representative to speak. The Board agreed with Robert Hyatt that a policy is needed to set a time limit on presentations.

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**Televising Meetings** – Robert Hyatt advised the Board that Time Warner has certain requirements, production costs, and it would be expensive to the County to televise the meetings. Commissioner Truell stated that televising the meetings would allow people who cannot attend to see what going on. Chairman Sink requested that Robert Hyatt contact the cable companies.

**Crisis Ministry** – The Board discussed the request for funding from Crisis Ministry and the precedent it might set for opening door to other non-profits to request funding from the County. Chairman Sink apprised the Board that the United Way (three-county regional) has given \$35,000 to Crisis Ministry.

**Library** – Nancy Bates referred to the Capital Improvements Plan and stated that the Denton Library is stretched to the limits. She noted that the lease on the Family Dooar Store expires in 2004 and advocated using the 14,000 square feet building for administrative offices. Mrs. Bates further noted the need for expansion at the North Davidson branch in the future and commented on the need for more staff.

**Transportation** – Zeb F. Hanner noted the need for a relay or pick-up station in Thomasville. He noted that the County has 24 buses with 600-650 trips per day. He noted the need for another bus for the Davidson County Community College run and advocated the replacement of two buses and one van this year. He stated that 90% funding on buses and vans comes from the State with the other 10% from the County.

**Tourism** – Jim Simeon presented a request for a Master Plan for Tourism which would also include Recreation and noted that it is required for grants. He suggested the RFP's for the plan could be circulated in the Fall of 2003 and complete by the Fall of 2004. He further noted a maximum cost of \$150,000 and stated he would go to private resources if needed to get enough funding. He noted that a Master Plan would help get a *complex* for multi-purpose events in the area.

**Recreation** – Charles Parnell addressed the Capital Improvements needs for the parks and presented slides showing the poor condition of the equipment and facilities, particularly in Denton, Southmont, and Linwood. He noted that the parks were built by the County, operated by the County and used year around.

**Landfill** – Charlie Brushwood suggested an increase in tipping fee to \$34.00 and noted that the actual cost is \$31.00. He apprised the Board that Phase 2 construction at the Landfill has been started and that Phase 1 will last until 2005. He noted the need for leachate tanks, ponds, and sewer. Mr. Brushwood

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further noted that when Phase 2 is active the County will not be in compliance with the Clean Air Act. He further stated that \$75,000 would accommodate a study.

**Cooperative Extension** – Robert Lopp informed the Board that Cooperative Extension can do studies, research, and education. He stated the need for training and travel and noted the 50% funding from the State with the other 50% from the County.

**Social Services** – Catherine Lambeth addressed space needs in the future. She discussed the status of Medicaid dependency in the County and the cost to the County. She asked if the County Social Services Department would want to become “substantially equivalent,” which would require Human Resources to perform functions now provided by the regional office.

**Elections** – Ruth Huneycutt apprised the Board of the *Help America Vote Act* coming up in April and stated that the Board of Elections is looking at satellite voting.

**Planning and Zoning** – Guy Cornman presented information gathered in the last census and noted that 19,587 more people are projected for Davidson County by 2010. He noted the average income in Davidson County is \$26,292 per year and stated that 44% of the citizens commute out of the County to work. He further commented that the information shows a need for the Transportation Improvement Plan projects involving Highway 109 and the Westside Thoroughfare.

**Tax** - Joe Silver noted that the Davidson County Tax Department is *number one tax collector* in the State. Mr. Silver further commented that he has the best staff.

**Maintenance** – Scott Rickard informed the Board of the generator needs and noted that it takes the City’s generator two to three hours to get in operation.

**MIS/GIS** – Joel Hartley advised the Board of the upgrades needed, especially for the Tax Department (\$300,000). He further commented that the aerial photography is needed for the GIS program at an estimated cost of \$357,000.

**Soil and Water** – Bruce Wilson noted the use and value of the Pilot Views, Inc. program and noted that the dues for the program are \$500.

**Inspections** – Ron Triplette informed the board that Inspections is now “self-sufficient.” He further commented that the needs are cars and centralized permitting.

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**Health** – Diane Crouse apprised the Board of the need for a generator to accommodate the whole building. She noted the possible need for smallpox vaccines for first responders. She discussed the status of rabies in the county and noted that there are only three or four animal control officers and more are needed. She noted the concerns about the presence of West Nile Disease as mosquitoes are already prevalent in the County. Mrs. Crouse further stated the need for an Environmental Health Specialist.

**Mental Health** – Billy West gave a *Power Point* presentation and discussed the impact of the new Mental Health program on the County and the positives and negatives associated with the funding to be received.

**Purchasing** – Dwayne Childress discussed the plans to arrange for bids to be awarded at the time of budget adoption.

**911 Communications** – Lisa Martin apprised the Board of the space needs for 911 Communications and advocated an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Mrs. Martin noted the need for radios and a security system. She further advocated an increase in the surcharge.

**Senior Services** – Kathryn Gentry presented information on the history of Senior Services and the growth of the aging population. Mrs. Gentry further accounted for the (Home Care Community Block Grant) HCCBG funding. She noted the efforts to retain the present funding and programs and to enhance the “grandparents raising grandchildren program.” Mrs. Gentry gave an update on the “home-delivered meals” program and noted the need for more containers to keep the meals warm. She advocated expanding the Group Respite Program. Mrs. Gentry also apprised the Board that a Community Needs Survey is being completed.

**Job Training Employment Center (JTEC)** – Pat Everhart gave an account of the services available at JTEC. She advised the Board that the average wage in Davidson County falls below the average for the state of North Carolina. Mrs. Everhart noted that the County needs responsiveness and further noted that her staff is presently analyzing what jobs are needed for the area.

**Fire Marshal** – Perry Tyler advocated the need for a full-safety complex in the next new years to include 911 Communications and also advocated amending the fee schedule.

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**Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** – Doug Lowe noted the need to construct a new building for the Denton Base and further noted the lease on the present building is approximately \$1,000 per month. Mr. Lowe apprised the Board that the County’s EMS is a model system under new re-written regulations.

Commissioner Akins asked if the County is prepared for bio-terrorism? Perry Tyler and Doug Lowe agreed that the County is 70% prepared and working on it.

**Clerk of Court** – Brian Shipwash sent a request for consideration of space for the Clerk of Court Office and Courthouse within the next five to ten years and noted that some adjoining real estate may be for sale.

**RECESS**

The Board then agreed by consensus to recess until 8:00 A.M., Saturday, March 15, 2003, Room 226, Mendenhall Building, Davidson County Community College.

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Fred C. Sink, Chairman

Davidson County Board of Commissioners

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Stephen C. Holton, Clerk to the Board

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