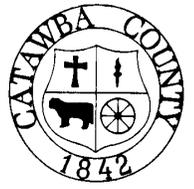




**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2014, 9:30 A.M.
ROBERT E. HIBBITTS MEETING ROOM
1924 COURTHOUSE, NEWTON, N.C.**



The Board adopted a resolution and associated funding commitment of \$20,000 per year for five years, for a total of \$100,000, to facilitate the development by Lenoir Rhyne University (LRU) of a Health Sciences Center under certain conditions. This project is in partnership with Catawba Valley Medical Center, Frye Regional Medical Center, the City of Hickory, and Catawba County EDC Committee of 100 and the conditions require LRU to develop certain medical programming and undergo rigorous analysis in the consideration of further medical programming, including the consideration of a potential medical school.

Lenoir-Rhyne University Health Sciences Center (LRUHSC) will be a comprehensive, full health services center offering advanced training for medical and healthcare professionals. The Center will allow LRU to significantly expand its current graduate studies in health sciences and establish building tracks for undergraduates to matriculate into these programs, including a new 24-month Physician Assistant Program beginning in January 2016. The program will be open to 30 students, with that number increasing to 80 after the second year, and include the employment of 5 to 6 full-time faculty and staff members; establish clinical training centers for the Physician Assistant Program at LRU's three campuses in Hickory, Asheville and Columbia, S.C. (for second year studies); begin feasibility studies to review expanded options to possibly include Doctorate-degree programs in pharmacy, optometry, physical therapy, nursing and osteopathic medicine; and provide high quality internship and student practitioner opportunities to supporting partners on a priority basis.

The LRUHSC will be located near the campus at the corner of Highland Avenue SE and 8th Street Drive SE (across from The Crossing at Hollar Mill). Development of the Center will begin in February 2015, with a scheduled opening in January 2016 with the graduation of the first class of students in the physician assistant studies program. The development of the Center will provide numerous benefits to the students of LRU, the community and surrounding area and healthcare industry. The Center will help centralize and support current and future healthcare opportunities (an Innovate Catawba priority); create jobs for the City of Hickory, Catawba County and surrounding areas; attract business investors to the community as well as families and retirees; and establish Hickory as the preferred provider of trained healthcare professionals in Western North Carolina. The development of the LRUHSC will help position the area as a premier healthcare careers center, working in cooperation with current medical and training assets in our area, and provide support for the future redevelopment of the L-R Boulevard area south of Highland Avenue, the University City and Inspiring Spaces programs.

The Catawba County Property Development Corporation (PDC), a property holding entity developed by the Catawba EDC, will acquire and hold the real property housing the facility until lease payments and community support has funded the total cost of the facility. At the end of the lease, if it is determined LRU has diligently pursued the development of the medical programming and other conditions of the contract, the PDC will sell the facility to LRU for \$1.

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