

Special Session, 8:00 a.m.  
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Monday, October 5, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. at the Catawba Valley Community College Workforce Development Innovation Center, 2601 21<sup>st</sup> St. Drive, SE, Hickory, North Carolina. The purpose of this special meeting was to hold a Board Retreat.

Present were Chair Randy Isenhower, Vice-Chair Barbara G. Beatty and Commissioners Katherine W. Barnes, Sherry E. Butler and Dan A. Hunsucker (who joined the meeting at 8:20 a.m.)

Also present were County Manager J. Thomas Lundy, Assistant County Managers Dewey Harris and Mary Furtado, Counsel to the Board David Hood and County Clerk Barbara Morris.

Chair Isenhower called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m

Agenda:

8:00 Emergency Management – Emergency Services Director Bryan Blanton updated the Board on activities already completed, underway and planned during this year toward meeting the Board’s goal of “review the County’s emergency management program for improvements designed to provide efficient and effective pre-hospital emergency service, reduce loss of life and human suffering, minimize property damage and protect areas from disasters.”

Staff will complete these follow-up items which were identified in discussion by Board members:

- Provide information to the Board to advocate for EMS reimbursement for ambulance services
- Accreditation – what counties have it? What options are out there (i.e. bring in Wake or Mecklenburg vs. the expensive formal process)
- What is the \$ value of volunteerism
- Flight pattern from Charlotte – what is the emergency response plan for a plane crash – what does Charlotte have in place – Kitty needs a fact sheet for citizens
- Call volumes at the EMS bases day vs. night – stats on the last six months
- Update the EMS maps on the website to indicate all bases, trucks, etc.

9:30 The Board conducted its Regular Meeting.

10:30 Economic development incentive concepts were discussed with Economic Development Corporation President Scott Millar.

- Follow-up items for EDC after Board discussion: give the Board a more final outline of the proposed point system and give points for hiring local people.

11:12 The Board discussed a vision statement for the County.

- Follow-up after discussion: explore vision wording – in-house vs. outside marketing firm. Also, staff/commissioners would have a discussion with Sandy Porter.

The Board discussed their goals for FY2016-17. The following goals were proposed:

**Catawba County Board of Commissioners**  
**Annual Goals – Fiscal Year 2016/2017**

1. Lobby private providers and State and Federal government to expand broadband internet availability throughout County, connect key community assets, and work to address geographic areas with deficient service.
2. In partnership with the private sector and assistance from state government, support the creation of jobs and property tax base and the development of the County’s workforce. Specific strategies include:

- a. Support the enhancement of workforce development programs and efforts, working with educators and the private sector to train the workforce for jobs from existing and new employers that will be available through the efforts of the EDC.
  - b. Partner with the private sector to aggressively implement Innovate Catawba strategies.
  - c. Review incentive guidelines to ensure they are competitive but reasonable in terms of return on investment.
  - d. In partnership with the EDC and Hickory, develop and aggressively market Park 1764.
  - e. Continuously monitor County regulations to ensure they support orderly growth and business development.
3. Collaborate with the Economic Development Corporation, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, Innovate Catawba partners, and others as appropriate to brand and market key community strengths:
- a. Location: proximity to major airport, ease of highway access, short distance from other attractive communities with strong amenities
  - b. Community arts, culture, and recreational amenities
  - c. Overall quality of life: cost of living, availability of health care, low crime rate, quality of education, etc.

Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to adopt the above goals. The motion carried unanimously.

12:30 Board of Commissioners Meeting Space.

Purchasing Manager Debbie Anderson presented an overview of the issues/costs of having the Board of Commissioners Meeting Space remain in the 1924 Courthouse vs. constructing a meeting room in the new Justice Center Expansion. Commissioners Isenhower, Hunsucker, and Barnes thought upfitting the new Justice Center would be the best option; Commissioner Butler thought the 1924 Courthouse was the best location and Commissioner Beatty liked the security of the Justice Center but the historical aspect of the 1924 Courthouse.

The Board instructed staff to proceed with the upfit of the Justice Center meeting room – the 98 seat version – and include a dias. It should be upfitted completely with recording and televising capabilities.

- Follow-up – poll other counties to see how much seating their meeting rooms have.

1:10 Code Enforcement.

Utilities and Engineering Director Barry Edwards, Assistant Utilities and Engineering Director Jack Chandler and Landfill Project Manager Jonathan Greer presented a summary of the County's code enforcement policy. After Board discussion, the following items were identified for staff follow-up:

- What other counties have minimum housing standards in place (check with COG); look at these policies and provide the Board with a copy of the Alexander County policy.
- No more than one extension on solid waste cases.
- Update the Board on the scheduled moving the of the Potato House.
- With legal staff, monitor caseload with the restriction of one extension.

1:40 Board and staff introduced to new Historical Association Director Dr. Amber Clawson and Historical Association Board Member Sybil Stewart. Construction Manager John Cameron and Purchasing Manager Debbie Anderson summarized the meeting space discussion for them.

1:50 Chair Isenhower left the meeting; Vice-Chair Barbara Beatty resumed the meeting.

2:00 Update on Mountain Creek Park Schedule and Preliminary Plans.

(Note: Chair Isenhower returned to the meeting at 2:10 p.m.)

Planning and Parks Director Jacky Eubanks updated the Board on plans for the park. After discussion by Board regarding what amenities should be constructed first and the possibility of other park uses, the following follow-up items were identified for staff:

- Schedule tour of Mt. Creek Park property for Board members to see possible amenities (i.e. a dog park location; horse trails). Have Robin Nichols come to a BOC meeting to do a presentation on Duke

amenities from FERC Relicensing.

3:00 Sharing between Commissioners about respective boards:  
WPCOG John Marshall Planning Director John Marshall reviewed the NCDOT dollar amounts estimated for various configuration/options for a multi-use path on the HWY 150 bridge. After discussion, Board stated any agreement should include the statement that the County's cost should not exceed \$160,000.

CVCC President Garrett Hinshaw joined the meeting. Commissioner Hunsucker left the meeting for another commitment. Dr. Hinshaw presented a summary of where the Furniture Academy Program has been and can grow based upon the current 10,000 square foot space versus a 38,4000 square foot facility. Based upon CVCC's evaluation of the assessment and program needs, any "upfits" can be phased with minimal initial investment. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> facility that has been evaluated as a potential site. CVCC's furniture partners have been pushing the College aggressively to come up with a solution for expansion. New construction on the East Campus was also evaluated at a cost of approximately \$3,000,000 for a 40,000 square foot addition. All the other facilities that have been assessed required "upfit" of a minimum of \$1.8 million. This facility and 7.2 acres of property would be purchased for roughly \$23 per square foot. The final offer from the owner is \$875,000. CVCC has a private commitment from the furniture industry of \$200,000, which leaves approximately \$675,000 needed to execute a purchase. An environmental assessment of the property has been ordered to assure that no issues are current and that should be completed this week. CVCC's attorney, Ellie Bradshaw, is working on a contract for purchase with the property owner's attorneys and realtors in case funding is secured for the purchase. CVCC Board of Trustees met on September 30, 2015, to consider this matter and voted to support the college in moving forward with the building acquisition.

A Board discussion on the financing followed. County Manager Lundy indicated requested funds would come from the General Fund. The Commissioners all stated it would be money well spent. Commissioner Barnes made a motion to allocate the \$675,000 from fund balance and subject to due diligence completion, enter into a sales contract for the price of \$675,000. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board was updated on activities of the WPCOG Policy Board, CVCC Board of Trustees and CVMC Board of Trustees.

3:45 Commissioner Butler made a motion to adjourn at 3:45 p.m.; the motion carried unanimously.

---

Randy Isenhower, Chair  
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

---

Barbara E. Morris  
County Clerk