

Minutes
Catawba County Board of Commissioners
Regular Session, Monday, September 20, 2004, 7:00 p.m.

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The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, September 20, 2004, 7:00 p.m., at St. Stephens High School, 3205 – 34th Street Drive, NE, Hickory, NC. The change in the meeting location from the 1924 Courthouse in Newton was due to the Board's outreach to the community.

Present were Chair Katherine W. Barnes, Vice-Chairman Dan A. Hunsucker, Commissioners Glenn E. Barger, Barbara G. Beatty, and Lynn M. Lail.

A quorum was present.

Also present were County Manager/Deputy Clerk J. Thomas Lundy, Assistant County Manager Joellen J. Daley, County Attorney Robert Oren Eades, Staff Attorney Debra Bechtel, and Assistant Deputy County Clerk Avajeau M. Wickes.

1. Chair Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance. She thanked the departments for their displays and asked St. Stephens High School Principal Deanna Taylor if she would like to address the audience. Mrs. Taylor welcomed the Board of Commissioners and staff. She thanked the Board for choosing St. Stephens High to hold their meeting. Mrs. Barnes stated that the Board felt schools were the center of communities and expressed the Board's appreciation to the staff and faculty for all they do. She mentioned that a groundbreaking ceremony had been held for a new Maiden High School on Sunday, September 19, and that it was the first new high school built in the county since 1974.

2. Commissioner Lail led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Invocation offered by Commissioner Hunsucker.

4. Special Guests:

Chair Barnes expressed appreciation to all those in attendance. She especially thanked those in the Emergency Services area and commented on their preparations for Hurricane Ivan, noting that if the storm had hit as expected, we would have been well prepared

5. Public Comment for items not on the agenda. None.

6. Commissioner Barger made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular session of Tuesday, September 7, 2004. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Public Hearings:

a. Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

County Planner Mary George introduced Darrin Punchard, a planner with PBS&J, the consulting firm who partnered with staff on the development of the proposed Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mr. Punchard provided an overview of the process of development. He stated that in October 2000, President Clinton signed the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, in response to disaster costs being seen across the country. The legislation would encourage local communities to engage in hazard mitigation planning efforts and facilitate better cooperation between state and local governments. Local communities across the country are required to develop hazard mitigation plans in order to remain eligible for certain types of hazard mitigation funding plans, such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (for post-disaster funds available following a Presidential declaration to help communities recover). In addition, the Act established a new pre-disaster mitigation program. Local mitigation plans must be approved by FEMA by November 1, 2004, for communities to remain eligible for federal assistance. The North Carolina General Assembly, in conjunction, linked the development of the local mitigation plans to public assistance for state-declared disasters. Prior to PBS&J's involvement, a multi-jurisdictional mitigation planning committee was established in January 2002 and including county and city officials, along with representatives from the American Red Cross and Citizen Corps. In May 2003, the County, on behalf of all the

jurisdictions in the county, was awarded a grant from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to offset the costs of developing the Hazard Mitigation Plan. In October 2003, the County contracted with PBS&J to help facilitate the planning process. A capability assessment was done to document the efforts already in place with the county and municipalities to reduce future losses (i.e. participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, enforcement of building codes, etc.). A risk assessment was also performed to identify which of the high risk natural hazards for Catawba County should be considered. Following the assessments, the planning committee developed goals and actions. There were significant public participation efforts during the drafting of the plan. An open public meeting was held on December 12, 2003, and a public participation survey was designed to solicit input to the planning process. 239 citizens responded and the results were shared with the Mitigation Advisory Committee. The survey indicated that (1) the main concerns expressed by the citizens were severe winter storms, windstorms, tree failure and power outages; (2) 25% of respondents have taken their own mitigation actions; and (3) 79% expressed an interest in learning or doing more. In addition, several newspaper articles were printed about the hazards mitigation plan process. The risk hazards identified by the Mitigation Advisory Committee were:

High Risk Hazards: Hurricanes and Tropical Storms; Winter Storms; Flood
Moderate Risk Hazards: Severe Thunderstorms and Tornadoes; Earthquakes; Wildfire
Low Risk Hazards: Drought/Extreme Heat; Erosion; Dam/Levee Failure; Sinkholes and Landslides

Nine countywide goals were adopted by the Mitigation Advisory Committee as follows:

Goal #1 Design and implement regulatory policies that will prevent natural hazards from threatening life, safety and property in Catawba County.

Goal #2 Increase public awareness of the natural hazard risks in Catawba County while also educating residents and businesses on the mitigation measures available to minimize those risks.

Goal #3 Enhance emergency warning and outreach strategies for the timely dissemination of information to the public regarding imminent hazards, including the immediate preparedness steps or mitigation measures that can be taken to reduce their impact.

Goal #4 Protect the natural and beneficial functions of Catawba County's known floodplain areas through accurate mapping and land use management practices.

Goal #5 Eliminate the potential for flood-related damages throughout Catawba County by ensuring development standards meet or go beyond the minimum standards of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Goal #6 Improve local stormwater management programs and drainage maintenance practices to reduce the damage and disruptions caused by regular heavy rain events.

Goal #7 Enhance the ability of Catawba County to provide emergency power to critical facilities and shelters during widespread power outages.

Goal #8 Minimize the potential for widespread power outages through the protection of power lines throughout Catawba County.

Goal #9 Establish and sustain public-private partnerships between local governments, business and industry to advance hazard mitigation practices throughout Catawba County.

Note: A stated objective of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 is to improve the coordination of risk reduction measures between state and local government authorities. Linking local and state mitigation planning goals is an important first step. It has been

determined by the Catawba County Mitigation Advisory Committee that the above goal statements are consistent with the State of North Carolina's current mitigation planning goals as identified in the State Enhanced Mitigation Plan promulgated by the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management.

Mary George, County Planner, explained that Mitigation Actions were developed separately for the County and each municipality. The committee worked with the departments of Utilities and Engineering, Emergency Services, Fire Marshal, Parks and Recreation, the Forestry Service, and the Red Cross in the development of the strategies. The strategies developed are consistent with other strategies being developed across the state. The proposed Mitigation Actions are follows:

Catawba County Mitigation Action 1	Explore the concept of transfer of development rights and its application to preserving land susceptible to natural hazards. Included in this evaluation is a determination whether legislative authority is required or the County can adopt an ordinance by-right.
Category:	Prevention
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Flood and Wildfire
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Planning and Community Development
Estimated Cost:	Staff time
Potential Funding Sources:	General Fund
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High (as identified by the Small Area Plans)
Catawba County Mitigation Action 2	Coordinate with Red Cross to have shelter locations provided with suitable back-up generator provisions. Goal is to have at least 50% of the shelter sites provided with back-up generators within one year.
Category:	Emergency Services
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Multi-hazard
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services and Red Cross
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	Department of Homeland Security – Emergency Management Performance Grants, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-disaster Mitigation Program.
Implementation Schedule:	1-3 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High
Catawba County Mitigation Action 3	Conduct a disaster drill for a breach of the Catawba River dams, with emphasis on Oxford Dam. This includes providing information to the public on emergency preparedness. Drill to be coordinated with Duke Power.
Category:	Emergency Services and Public Education/Awareness
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Flood
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	General Fund (staff time); private sector (Duke Power); Department of Homeland Security – Emergency Management Performance Grants.
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High

Catawba County Mitigation Action 4	Purchase an early warning system where property owners are automatically notified of a pending event. Example would be the "Intrado" system where coordinates are provided to the system and property owners are automatically notified through an outbound calling system.
Category:	Emergency Services
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Multi-hazard
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services
Estimated Cost:	Currently being researched (monthly service fee)
Potential Funding Sources:	General Fund; Department of Homeland Security – Emergency Management Performance Grants, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-disaster Mitigation Program.
Implementation Schedule:	1 year
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High

Catawba County Mitigation Action 5	Install back-up generator along with ancillary facilities (transfer switches, hard-wiring, etc.) at the Government Center. The Government Center is a critical facility which serves as a back-up facility for the Emergency Operations Center and is the location for vital emergency operations: computer links, file server, plans, etc.
Category:	Emergency Services
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Multi-hazard
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services
Estimated Cost:	\$65,000
Potential Funding Sources:	General fund; Department of Homeland Security – Emergency Management Performance Grants, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-disaster Mitigation Program.
Implementation Schedule:	1 year
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High

Catawba County Mitigation Action 6	Install an "I-flow" system for monitoring of flood levels on high priority creeks/lakes in the County, such as Carpenters Cove along Lookout Shoals Lake. This will be used for notifying emergency personnel to initiate warnings or evacuation procedures.
Category:	Emergency Services
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Flood
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	Department of Homeland Security – Emergency Management Performance Grants, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-disaster Mitigation Program.
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High

Catawba County Mitigation Action 7	Create a special mountain protection zoning district for Bakers Mountain and Anderson Mountain which will require low-density lot sizes. Standards will also address fire breaks, preservation of trees around homes and other issues of urban/wildland interface.
Category:	Prevention
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Wildfires
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Planning & Community Development
Estimated Cost:	Staff time
Potential Funding Sources:	General Fund
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High (as determined in Small Area Plans and potential threat to development)

Catawba County Mitigation Action 8	Require new residential developments to provide a minimum percentage of open space with emphasis on the retention of natural buffers along creeks, streams and lakes. Also require tree preservation and/or plantings for residential and non-residential development to reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff.
Category:	Prevention
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Flood
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Planning & Community Development
Estimated Cost:	Staff time
Potential Funding Sources:	General Fund
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High (as recommended by Small Area Plans)

Catawba County Mitigation Action 9	Promote a standard hook up for emergency generators such that any portable generator can be simply connected to it for supply of power to vital circuits in homes and/or public buildings. Priority locations are hospitals, nursing homes, schools and government buildings.
Category:	Emergency Services
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Multi-hazard
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services with Red Cross
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	Department of Homeland Security – Emergency Management Performance Grants, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-disaster Mitigation Program.
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	High-Moderate

Catawba County Mitigation Action 10	Identify areas for alternative safe access to and from public properties, such as Bakers Mountain Park, Riverbend Park and the Wildlife Club (off Lynn Mountain Road). These areas will be maintained for access by emergency personnel in the event of wildfires or other events. This includes working with key property owners adjoining the subject properties, developing cooperative agreements and clearing/maintaining new or existing fire roads.
Category:	Natural Resource Protection
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Wildfires
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services, Forest Service and Park Personnel
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	Grants or community-service projects with organized groups
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	Moderate

Catawba County Mitigation Action 11	Provide education to the public during high fire hazard times and prior to peak seasons. This includes public service announcements on the Government Channel, radio spots, and a government sponsored-clean up date. Emphasis will also be placed on providing information to the public at the County parks to be aware of fire hazards as they use the facilities.
Category:	Public Education and Awareness
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Wildfire
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services, Forest Service and Parks Division
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	Staff time and grant for clean-up date
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	Moderate

Catawba County Mitigation Action 12	Evaluate the FIREWISE communities program and its application to develop communities and homes which are designed, built and maintained to withstand wildfires.
Category:	Prevention
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Wildfire
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services, Fire Depts. and Planning/Zoning
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	To be determined
Implementation Schedule:	2-3 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	Moderate

Catawba County Mitigation Action 13	Establish an on-going multi-jurisdictional Stormwater Committee to prioritize stormwater issues/projects within the area. Representatives may include Emergency Services, Fire, Rescue and Planning from each jurisdiction, NCDOT, Cooperative Extension, NCEM and NCDENR. This committee would meet regularly to develop an action plan and establish priorities for addressing stormwater issues which would minimize the impacts of flooding throughout the County. Examples of efforts would include coordination of stormwater review of subdivisions, public education on clearing stormwater drains and culverts, a stormwater plan to address flooding episodes at Carpenters Cove, and sharing of information with NCDOT regarding debris accumulation at bridge abutments, culverts, etc.
Category:	Prevention and Public Education/Awareness
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Flood
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Coordinated between Emergency Services and Planning & Community Development
Estimated Cost:	Staff time
Potential Funding Sources:	General Fund
Implementation Schedule:	1-2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	Moderate

Catawba County Mitigation Action 14	Coordinate with Social Services to provide back-up power at family care and adult care homes within the County.
Category:	Emergency Services
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Extreme heat/cold and Multi-Hazard
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services and Social Services
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	Department of Homeland Security – Emergency Management Performance Grants, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-disaster Mitigation Program.
Implementation Schedule:	2-3 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	Moderate

Catawba County Mitigation Action 15	Coordinate with local power companies (Duke and REA) to develop publicly-acceptable tree-trimming policies. Include public education for property owners on the benefits of proper tree-trimming around power lines and clearing of debris around homes.
Category:	Prevention
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Winter storms and High Winds
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services and Planning
Estimated Cost:	To be determined
Potential Funding Sources:	To be determined
Implementation Schedule:	2 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	Moderate

Catawba County Mitigation Action 16	Evaluate the provision of rapid access facilities for tenants of manufactured home parks to provide safe shelter during hazard events. This includes exploring funding options for constructing facilities within the area of the park or potentially on-site.
Category:	Emergency Services
Hazard(s) Addressed:	Multi-hazard, especially tornadic events
Lead Agency/Department Responsible:	Emergency Services
Estimated Cost:	Staff time
Potential Funding Sources:	General Fund
Implementation Schedule:	3-5 years
Priority (High, Moderate, Low):	Low

The final draft plan was submitted to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management in May 2004. The North Carolina Division of Emergency Management and FEMA jointly reviewed the plan, providing feedback and comment to staff. Our draft plan was one of the first in the state and it provided a good model for the State and FEMA. Official State approval was issued in August 2004. The Planning Board conducted a public hearing on August 30, 2004, and recommends the plan for adoption. Once the Mitigation Plan is adopted, the next phase is implementation. Some funding issues for the various strategies will be addressed by grant funding. In addition, staff will be preparing ordinance revisions to encompass the strategies. The Board was asked to adopt a resolution adopting the Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, but was not being asked at this time to commit to funding. The Hazard Mitigation Plan must be evaluated, updated and resubmitted every five years to the State Hazard Mitigation Office. Status reports will be provided to the Board on a regular basis.

Chair Barnes asked if there were any questions from Board members. There being none, Chair Barnes asked Emergency Services Director David Weldon to provide an update on the recent storm situation. Mr. Weldon stated that recent hurricane activity caused some damage to the County, including street damage in the Hickory Woods area, which caused the evacuation of number of residents. In addition, about 30 residences experienced floodwater damage in the Carpenter's Cove area, just below Oxford Dam. Mr. Weldon expressed his appreciation to all the departments and personnel that worked diligently to prepare for the storm. During the two recent storms, Catawba County emergency service agencies sent personnel to work in Western North

Carolina communities to help with the damage there. Currently, FEMA is working with citizens who had flood damage and also with local governments to provide assistance.

Chair Barnes thanked the Emergency Services department for all of their hard work.

Chair Barnes announced this was the time and place advertised for a public hearing regarding the Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and asked if anyone wished to speak either for or against.

No one spoke.

Chair Barnes closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Beatty made a motion to adopt the Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and accompanying resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION #2004-25
ADOPTING CATAWBA COUNTY'S
MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

WHEREAS, Catawba County is vulnerable to an array of natural hazards that can cause loss of life and damages to public and private property; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to seek ways to mitigate situations that may aggravate such circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the development and implementation of a hazard mitigation plan can result in actions that reduce the long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Board of Commissioners to protect its citizens and property from the effects of natural hazards by preparing and maintaining a local hazard mitigation plan; and

WHEREAS, it is also the intent of the Board of Commissioners to fulfill its obligation under North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 166A: North Carolina Emergency Management Act and Section 322: Mitigation Planning, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to remain eligible to receive state and federal assistance in the event of a declared disaster affecting the County; and

WHEREAS, Catawba County has prepared a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan with input from the appropriate local and state officials;

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management has reviewed the hazard mitigation plan prepared for Catawba County for legislative compliance and has approved the plan pending the completion of local adoption procedures;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of Catawba County hereby:

1. Adopts the Catawba County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
2. Agrees to take such other official action as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the proposed actions of the Plan.

ADOPTED, this the 20th day of September 2004.

/s/ Katherine W. Barnes, Chair

ATTEST:

/s/ Avajeon M. Wickes, Assistant Deputy Clerk

b. Second Public Hearing for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Infrastructure Hookup Grant

County Engineer Antonia Norton stated that at its regular meeting on August 16, 2004, the Board of Commissioners held an initial public hearing to receive citizens input in the development of the Community Development Block Grant application to be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Commerce and endorsed the application for a CDBG infrastructure hook-up grant. Funds from the program could be used for many different activities, including installation of infrastructure for businesses that will create jobs for low and moderate income persons, neighborhood revitalization, and housing development and rehabilitation. A second public hearing was required by the grant guidelines and that this was the time and place so advertised. In addition, staff was recommending that the Board of Commissioners approve the waiving of the water capital fees associated with connections that will be made through this grant. The infrastructure hook up grant funds cannot be used to pay the County's water capital fee of \$1000 for a residential connection and requiring the targeted low/moderate income households to pay this fee would counteract the grant's purpose.

Chair Barnes stated that this was the time and place advertised for a second hearing on this matter and asked if anyone wanted to speak for or against.

No one spoke.

Chair Barnes closed the public hearing.

Following a brief discussion, Commissioner Barger made a motion that the following authorizing resolution and certification and approve waiving the County's water capital fee for residents that qualify for connection in accordance with the grant guidelines. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2004-26
CATAWBA COUNTY
AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION AND CERTIFICATION
FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
INFRASTRUCTURE HOOK-UP TAP CDBG PROJECT

WHEREAS, various State and Federal agencies provide for funds to municipalities to meet the needs of local governments in financing the cost of eligible Community Development;

WHEREAS, the Division of Community Assistance will be the State administering agent for the Community Development Block Grant Program whose funds are designed to improve the living condition and environment of low and moderate income households; and

WHEREAS, Catawba County has solicited and received citizen input regarding the Community Development Block Grant Infrastructure Water Hook-up Project which will provide water taps and connections up to 30 LMI households as part of the grant; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CATAWBA COUNTY BOARD COMMISSIONERS:

That Catawba County will substantially comply with all Federal, State and local laws, rules, regulations and ordinances pertaining to the project and to Federal and State grants pertaining thereto.

That, Katherine W. Barnes, Chair, and successors so titled is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate governmental agencies may request in connection with such applications for the project; to make the assurances and certifications as contained above, and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the construction of the project.

That this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Adopted this 20th day of September 2004, at Catawba County, North Carolina, by a vote of the Catawba County Board of Commissioners upon a motion by and unanimously carried.

/s/ Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Avajeon M. Wickes, Assistant Deputy Clerk

c. Rezoning Request of Mike Kennerly to rezone two contiguous parcels

Mr. Jacky Eubanks, Planning, Development and Parks Director, stated that Mr. Mike Kennerly had requested the rezoning of two contiguous parcels, totaling approximately 2.04 acres, located at 5206 and 5220 Slanting Bridge Road, from C-2 Commercial and R-2 Residential to Planning Development-Shopping Center. The section currently zoned R-2 Residential is a 0.29 acre section within a Duke Power transmission line easement and does not contain structures. The properties are located in the Sherrills Ford Small Area Planning District and are 250 feet from the Lincoln County line. The Parcel ID numbers are 4606-04-61-3144 (1.1 acres) and 4606-04-61-2031 (.94 acres). The adjoining property to the south is split between C-2 and R-2 zoning. The property to the southwest has an existing bar and grill and is zoned C-2, a parcel across the road to the north is currently vacant and zoned R-2, while parcels to the northeast are zoned C-2 and R-2.

Mr. Eubanks stated that Planned Developments Districts are intended for specialized purposes where tracts, suitable in location, area and character for the uses and structures proposed, are to be planned and developed on a unified basis. Consideration is given to the existing and prospective character of surrounding development and the adopted land use plan. Planned Development Districts provide for the comfort and convenience of residents; facilitate protection of the character of surrounding neighborhoods; and reduce automotive traffic congestion by reducing trips.

The zoning ordinance allows for a Planned Development (PD) when either more than one use or more than one principal structure is proposed on a parcel. This planned development consists of one structure with multiple tenants. The proposed uses are retail, offices and personal service businesses and would be allowed under the current C-2 Commercial zoning classification. A PD requires a rezoning application and a project site plan (attached), which allows more specific review of the request. A new common driveway is proposed and will serve as access for all uses. The driveway will be landscaped along with landscaped islands within the parking lot. Trees will be planted along the front of Slanting Bridge Road. A landscaped sidewalk will front along the building separating the parking lot.

Rezoning history of the area is as follows:

- July 20, 1987, parcels #7-#10 rezoning case R-258, were rezoned from the then Residential-Resort District to a Commercial District. The public noted the need for commercial uses in the area to serve the growing residential population.

- December 19, 1988, parcel #4 rezoning case R-288, was rezoned from the then Residential-Resort District to a Commercial (Highway-Business) District. The public noted the need for commercial uses in the area.
- April 21, 1997, parcel #6 rezoning case R-420, was rezoned from the R-2 Residential District to the C-2 Commercial District.
- September 17, 2001, subject parcels #1 and #2 and a portion of parcel #3, rezoning case R-459, were rezoned from the R-2 Residential District to the C-2 Commercial District. The adjoining Duke Power transmission line and the adjoining commercially zoned parcel made this less than a desirable residential location.
- April 21, 2003, parcel #11 rezoning case R-472, request to rezone a 3.6-acre portion of 16.8-acre tract, (corner of Slanting Bridge Road and Independence Lane), from the R-2 Residential District to the C-1 Commercial District was denied.

There is no public water or sewer planned for the immediate area, therefore septic tanks and wells will be installed.

Slanting Bridge Road is not classified on the Catawba County Thoroughfare Plan and therefore is considered a secondary road. The pavement width of 22-feet is similar to a road designed to handle 12,000 – 14,000 Average Daily Trips (ADT). Traffic counts are 5,600 ADT along Slanting Bridge Road south of Keistlers Store Road. Therefore, the proposed development should not negatively impact transportation.

The Board of Commissioners adopted the Sherrills Ford Small Area Plan on February 17, 2003, which serves as the current land use plan for this area. This plan is used as a guide for development. The plan shows this area to retain its current zoning classifications. The plan recognizes the current commercially zoned parcels and looks for the vacant residential parcels to develop with housing with a density of 1 lot per 2-acres. The plan also recommends a Rural Commercial node 400-feet to the north encompassing the intersection of Slanting Bridge Road and Keistlers Store Road.

The request does not propose to change the classification of use but rather proposes to develop in accordance with a more unified, predictable standards. This request is in conformance with the current development pattern for this area.

The Planning Board conducted a public hearing on August 30, 2004. No one from the public addressed the Board. The Planning Board unanimously recommended rezoning the properties from the C-2 Commercial District and the R-2 Residential District to the PD-SC (N) Planned Development-Shopping Center Neighborhood District and requests that the Board of Commissioners approve the rezoning of two (2) contiguous parcels totaling 2.04 acres located in the Sherrills Ford Small Area Planning District at 5206 and 5220 Slanting Bridge Road in the Mountain Creek Township and identified as Parcel ID numbers 4606-04-61-3144 (1.1 acres) and 4606-04-61-2031 (.94 acres).

Commissioner Beatty inquired as to how far Lincoln County sewer was from the subject parcels. Mr. Eubanks stated that it was several miles away and that significant upgrades would have to be made in order to bring sewer to the property. Utilities and Engineering Director Barry Edwards commented that it would be very costly to bring Lincoln County sewer to the subject area.

Chair Barnes announced this was the time and place advertised for a public hearing regarding the rezoning of the two parcels referenced above and asked if anyone wished to speak either for or against.

No one spoke.

Chair Barnes closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to amend the zoning map as follows and the motion carried unanimously.

AMENDMENT TO THE CATAWBA COUNTY ZONING MAP

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that the Catawba County Official Zoning Atlas is hereby amended by rezoning the following described properties from the C-2 Commercial District and the R-2 Residential District to the PD-SC (N) Planned Development-Shopping Center Neighborhood District.

Two (2) contiguous parcels totaling 2.04 acres located in the Sherrills Ford Small Area Planning District at 5206 and 5220 Slanting Bridge Road in the Mountain Creek Township. They are further identified as Parcel ID numbers 4606-04-61-3144 (1.1 acres) and 4606-04-61-2031 (.94 acres).

This the 20th day of September, 2004.

/s/ Katherine W. Barnes, Chair

Attest:

/s/ Avajeon M. Wickes
Assistant Deputy Clerk

d. Piedmont Wagon Transit System Proposed Fare and Service Changes

Cynthia McGinnis, Transit Manager of the Piedmont Wagon Transit System (PWTS), asked that Larry Pope be given an opportunity to address the Board before she continued. Permission granted, Mr. Pope stated he had spoken to Ms. McGinnis and was aware that she had received quite a few phone calls regarding the public hearing because the users and riders of Piedmont Wagon are not able to attend a 7:00 evening meeting which is 3.5 miles from the nearest bus stop. Mr. Pope requested on behalf of the Piedmont Wagon users that the Board postpone the public hearing until the Board's next meeting of Monday, October 4th, 2004, when users of the bus system can be present because there is a bus arriving in downtown Newton at 8:45 a.m. Mr. Pope stated it was important that users of the bus system see Ms. McGinnis' PowerPoint presentation and for the Board to hear personally about any concerns riders have about the items being proposed. Mr. Pope stated he had also requested that Ms. McGinnis see that transportation to other public hearings be provided for individuals who would like to attend. In response, Chair Barnes suggested since the public hearing had been duly advertised that it move forward as scheduled, but be held open and continued until the Board of Commissioners' next meeting on Monday, October 4th.

Ms. McGinnis stated that the Board was not being asked to take any action and that her presentation was for informational purposes.

Ms. McGinnis stated that it had been quite some time since any changes to fares or bus routes had been made and it was important that public comment be solicited. She stated that any changes ultimately decided upon would be effective January 3, 2005. Public comment would be heard through a series of public hearings held throughout the county over the next month and that any changes would be approved by the Piedmont Wagon Managers Consortium and announced December 1, 2004.

She stated that the goals of modifying the fee structure were to:

1. Provide a simple, equitable fare structure that rewards the frequent rider;
2. Simplify the current ticket program and reduce the use of unauthorized or fraudulent tickets;
3. Produce and pre-sell tickets in order to improve accountability; and
4. Introduce a reduced fare for disabled or elderly persons (a photo id card

would be issued for program eligibility).

Fare changes were proposed as follows:

Current	Proposed
Adult fare \$.75	Adult fare \$.75
\$6.75/10 tickets	\$3 one day bus pass
	\$7.50/10 tickets
Student fare \$.45 (18 yrs)	Eliminate student fare and tickets
Tickets \$4.05/10 tickets	
Elderly/Disabled \$.35	PW photo id card - \$3
No id card	No charge until March 2005
\$3.15/10 tickets	No change to tickets
Paratransit Van \$.75	Paratransit Van \$1.00
\$6.75/10 tickets	\$10.00/10 tickets
Children under 5 free	Max 2 children per adult

Currently, passengers paying a fare for one route can transfer to another bus to complete their trip free of charge. Under the new proposal, transfers would be eliminated and passengers needing to transfer to another bus would pay the full fare boarding each bus. The \$3 one day bus pass would help frequent riders.

Proposed service modifications would:

1. Provide service to highly requested areas
2. Eliminate service to non-productive areas
3. Make routes easier to understand
4. Reduce transfers; more direct service
5. Rename routes to reflect service areas.

Proposed service modifications include eliminating mall and sale shuttles, improving work runs, and would define a trip as "a passenger may travel to the point where he/she boarded the bus on one fare; once a passenger passes the point where he/she boarded, the passenger must exit the bus or pay another fare."

Proposed routes would include:

1. #10 Viewmont/Malls – From Union Square turn right on 3rd St, right on 2nd Ave, left on 2nd St, to 5th Ave NW turn right to 127/2nd St. Travel 127 turn right on 26th Ave NE and turn left back to 127, reverse route to return to Union Square via 2nd St. From Union Square the bus travels Center St to US70W to Hickory Corners (Food Lion); reverse route back to Union Square.
2. #12 West Hickory/Springs Road – Routes serves current Red Route, at Union Square turn left on 3rd St, left on Government Ave, left on 2nd St back to Main/8th St to 12th Ave left to 12th Ave NE to 5th St NE, go right to 21st St NE, go right on Sandy Ridge Rd continue on Springs Road to 20th St NE to 9th Ave to Union Square.
3. #14 Tate Blvd/Canova – From Union Square take Main St turn left on 4th St SW, turn left at 2nd Ave SW continue to Tate Blvd. Turn left on 18th St SE circle by service road, back left to Tate, turn right at Fairgrove Church Rd, serves CVMC, turn back left to Fairgrove turn right on 1st St SE to Canova Shopping Center; route reserves back to Union Square.
4. #16 Malls/Northwest Blvd – From Hickory Corners Food Lion cross Catawba Valley Blvd to Target service road, return to Catawba Valley Blvd turn left to Valley Hills service road to US 70, to CVCC main campus eastern entrance, exit the main entrance cross US 70 to Wal-Mart service road to CVCC East Campus to Sweetwater, turn left on 21st St Dr SE to DSS, exit CVMC right on Fairgrove Church Road, left on US70, right on Boundary St to BiLo service

road, left on US321, right on US70 to Villa Park Shopping Center. Reverse route to Food Lion.

5. #18 – Newton/Conover – From Canova Center to Conover via 1st St services YMCA and Goodwill, travels to Rankin via 20th St E to East 1st St to N Caldwell to D St/NC16, serves Catawba County Justice Center, Downtown Newton, Main to Boundary to Villa Park Shopping Center, route reverses to Canova Center.

Ms. McGinnis stated that notices have been published in the paper regarding the establishment of the PWTS DBE utilization goal for FY 2005 and the supporting documentation has been available for review by the public.

Commissioner Beatty commended Ms. McGinnis for the proposed Tate Boulevard route. She said she had talked with bus riders who had expressed a need for this route to get to doctor's appointments.

Linda Gross, Director of Goodwill and Econoforce inquired if one of the proposed routes included a stop in front of Goodwill and Econoforce. Ms. McGinnis stated one of the routes would stop at Goodwill and Econoforce as well as the YMCA in Conover. Ms. Gross commented favorably on the work of the Piedmont Wagon Transit System and expressed her appreciation for the planning of the proposed routes and fare changes.

Chair Barnes stated that this was the time and place advertised for a public hearing on the proposed fare and service changes of the Piedmont Wagon Transit System and asked if anyone wished to speak for or against.

Hearing and seeing no one wishing to speak, Chair Barnes stated that the hearing would be held open until Monday, October 4, 2004, at 9:30 a.m., the time of the next Board of Commissioners' meeting, and stated that Ms. McGinnis would be asked to return and repeat her presentation.

8. Consent Agenda

- a. Urgent Repair Program Project Budget Ordinance Amendment from Interest on Grant Funds Received.

Catawba County received a \$75,000 Urgent Repair Grant from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency in January 2003. The County is allowed to earn interest on the funds. During the last nineteen months, a total of \$800 in interest has been earned on this project. The Finance and Personnel Subcommittee recommends the Board approve a budget amendment to appropriate these funds. The funds would be used to complete the repairs needed for the last house identified for the grant project. A total of twenty-six homeowners across Catawba County benefited from this grant.

ORDINANCE #2004-18

AMENDMENT #1

CATAWBA COUNTY'S PROJECT BUDGET ORDINANCE
FOR THE 2003 URGENT REPAIR GRANT

Be it ordained by the County Commissioners of the Catawba County that pursuant to Section 13.2 (e) of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following grant project ordinance is hereby amended.

The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete this Project:

Revenues

North Carolina Housing Finance Agency-URP

NCHFA-URP Grants Revenue	280-420105-627205	\$75,000
Interest Earned on Revenue	280-420105-680300	<u>800</u>
		\$75,800

Section 4. The following Expenditures are appropriated for the project:

Expenditures

North Carolina Housing Finance Agency-URP

Rehabilitation-URP	280-420105-849120	\$65,800
WPCOG/Administration	280-420105-849117	<u>\$10,000</u>
		\$75,800

Passed and adopted by the Catawba County Board of Commissioners, this 20th day of September, 2004.

/s/ Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

/s/ Avajeon M. Wickes, Assistant Deputy Clerk

- b. Donation of Personal Property to Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility (BCDCF)

The Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility is jointly owned and operated by Catawba and Burke counties. The BCDCF has two high mileage vehicles with mechanical problems and needs a replacement vehicle to transport inmates who need medical attention and for staff to use as transportation to training. Catawba County has a 1998 Ford Crown Victoria, which was used as a patrol vehicle and, for the past couple of years, has been used as a transportation/spare vehicle. This vehicle is in generally good condition, but has high mileage. North Carolina General Statute 160A-274 authorizes the sale, lease, exchange and joint use of governmental property. The Finance and Personnel Subcommittee recommends the Board adopt a resolution donating the vehicle to the BCDCF with the stipulation that if the vehicle replaces one of the existing two vehicles owned by the BCDCF or if one of the two existing vehicles is sold, it would be given to the County to sell or the proceeds from the sale be given back to the County.

RESOLUTION NO. 2004-27
DECLARATION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY AND DONATION
TO THE BURKE-CATAWBA DISTRICT CONFINEMENT FACILITY

WHEREAS, the County has the authority to transfer property no longer needed as surplus and donate said property to another governmental unit according to the precepts of NCGS 160A-274; and

WHEREAS, the following property is no longer needed for any governmental use by Catawba County;

1998 Ford Crown Victoria

WHEREAS, said vehicle shall be given to the Burke-Catawba District Confinement

Facility to be used for a governmental purpose and, should this vehicle be replacing a vehicle in use now by the Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility, the vehicle being replaced should be given to Catawba County to sell or if sold by the Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility, the sales proceeds be remitted to Catawba County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners hereby declares said property as surplus and authorized the vehicle to be donated to the Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility, with the stipulation that if this vehicle be replacing a vehicle in use now by the Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility, the vehicle being replaced should be given to Catawba County to sell or if sold by the Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility, the sales proceeds be remitted to Catawba County.

This the 20th day of September, 2004.

/s/ Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/ Avajeau M. Wickes, Assistant Deputy Clerk

b. Refund Requests.

Two tax refund requests were made to the Tax Office. The records were checked and the refunds verified. The Tax Collector requested approval of the refund requests. According to General Statute 105-381, a taxpayer who has paid his taxes may request a refund (in writing) for the amount that was paid through error.

Refund Requests – September 2004

United Sewing Machine Sales LLC
Attn: Ilka
PO Box 3055
Hickory NC 28603-3055
Account No. 71168500

In 2003 this company was incorrectly billed in the wrong taxing jurisdiction. Their 2003 tax bill reflected the jurisdiction as St Stephens Rural Fire when it should have been taxed in Conover City. A supplemental tax bill was prepared for the City tax, and a refund has been requested for their payment of fire tax.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>St Stephens Fire</u>		<u>Late-List</u>		<u>Total</u>
		<u>Rate</u>	<u>Tax</u>	<u>Penalty</u>		
2003	169,885	.050	84.94	10%	8.49	\$ 93.43

Sam Caldwell Properties LLC
PO Box 2610
Hickory, NC 28603-2610
Account No. 000145194

For 2003 Parcel 3731-09-06-0254.0000 was appealed to the Property Tax Commission. Pursuant to the appeal, a representative of the PTC inspected the property and reviewed the appeal with the owner, Ms. Glenda Schenck, and the Catawba County tax office. Following this review, an agreement was satisfactorily reached. Per Change Order 2003 PTC 110 dated July 27, 2004 the total real estate valuation was adjusted from 913,000 to 844,900. A refund is requested for the amount of overpayment in taxes.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>County</u>		<u>Interest *</u>	<u>Total</u>
		<u>Rate</u>	<u>Tax</u>		
2003	68,100	.480	326.88	10.90	\$ 337.78 **

* Interest is @ 5% per annum figured from date of tax payment (12/31/03) through August, 2004.

** This is in the City of Conover.

Vice-Chair Hunsucker made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion unanimously carried.

10. Departmental Reports

a. Utilities and Engineering

1. Option to Purchase Mauser Property dated November 18, 2002.

County Engineer Antonia Norton stated that on November 4, 2002, the Board of Commissioners approved an Option to purchase two tracts of land in the Jacobs Fork Township, near the Blackburn Landfill from Robert T. Mauser, Sarah K. Mauser and Charlotte E. Mauser. Under the terms of the Option to Purchase the County had six months to determine whether the land could be used for landfill expansion. The County could then exercise the option on January 1, 2007, or upon the death of Robert, Sarah, or Charlotte Mauser if that occurred before January 1, 2007. The cost of the 135 acres is \$1.5 million plus an amount equal to the interest earned by Catawba County on \$1.5 million from the effective date of the Option Agreement (November 18, 2002) to the date that Catawba County exercises its Option. (see file in Utilities and Engineering Department for background)

Following Charlotte Mauser's April 29, 2004, death, on August 2, 2004, County Attorney Robert Eades notified Robert T. and Sarah K. Mauser in writing of the County's intention to exercise its option. In accordance with the Option to Purchase, the closing of the transaction must occur within sixty days from the date of notification.

The Policy and Public Works Subcommittee recommends that the Board of Commissioners exercise the Option to purchase the Robert T. Mauser, Sarah K. Mauser and Charlotte E. Mauser property dated November 18, 2002, and approve a budget revision in the amount of \$1,530,830.

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Barger and unanimously carried, the Board authorized the exercise of the Option to Purchase the Robert T. Mauser, Sarah K. Mauser and Charlotte E. Mauser property dated November 18, 2002, and approved a budget revision in the amount of \$1,530,000 to appropriate the funds to purchase the property.

525-350150-987000 Purchase of Land	\$1,530,000
525-350050-690100 Fund Balance Applied Solid Waste Fund	\$1,530,000

b. Social Services

1. Work First County Plan 2005-2007.

Social Services Director Bobby K. Boyd requested that the Board of Commissioners inform the North Carolina Department of Health and Human

Services that Catawba County intends to pursue Electing County status and appoint members to serve on the Planning Committee. Mr. Boyd explained that in 1996 as part of the new welfare reform program, Work First, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted legislation to allow counties to compete for Electing County status – in essence offering a limited number of counties the opportunity to have greater control over local welfare policies, as well as greater control over available funding. Every two years counties are required to submit a Work First plan to the State by November 1, 2004. In addition, each Board of County Commissioners must designate whether its county wishes to be a Standard or Electing County for Work First by September 30, 2004. Only a limited number of counties may compete for Electing County status.

In prior years, there were numerous advantages to being an Electing County. Electing Counties are given greater flexibility in establishing eligibility policies (who is eligible to receive assistance and under what conditions). However, through the years, the state has gradually adapted the state plan to mirror the policies recommended by counties vying for Electing status. At this time the primary advantage for Catawba County in pursuing Electing County status is that it keeps the option open until critical information is received from the state regarding funding opportunities. It appears there may be a financial advantage to becoming an Electing County at this time. It seems reasonable to position this community in such a way as to allow us to take the approach that is to our best advantage since we can change our position if needed. The primary advantage for Catawba County in pursuing "Electing County" status at this point is that it keeps the option open until critical information is received from the state regarding funding opportunities.

In addition, North Carolina General Statute (NCGS) 108A-27 requires county commissioners to appoint a committee of local leaders to assist in the development of the County Work First Block Grant plan. Membership of the committee must include, but is not limited to representatives of:

- Board of Social Services
- Board of the area Mental Health Authority (Local Management Entity)
- Board of Public Health
- Local School Systems
- Business Community
- Board of County Commissioners, and
- Community-based organizations (that represent the population to be served)

Other groups that are recommended (but not required) to be a part of the planning process include: the local child care providers, child welfare staff, and Work First recipients.

Following discussion, upon motion duly made by Vice-Chair Hunsucker and unanimously carried, the Board of Commissioners voted to inform the state that the County intends to pursue "Electing County" status and appointed the following persons to serve on the Planning Committee:

Glenn Barger, Board of Social Services / the Board of County Commissioners
Crystal Leathers, Board of the area Mental Health (Local Management Entity)
Susan Witherspoon, Board of Public Health
Ed Gurley, Local School Systems
Pete Miller, Business Community
Sandy Gregory, Director of Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry
Kathy Clay, Cognitive Skills Connection
Lori Hughes, Vocational Rehabilitation Case Manager
Henry Steele, Vocational Rehabilitation Manager
Lynda Gross, Goodwill Manager
Laurie George, First Step Manager
Barbara Degen, Legal Aid

Donna Trado, HRD Director
Ron Valentini, JobLink Manager and Dean of Continuing Education at CVCC
Glennie Daniels, NC Cooperative Extension
Joy Mease, Social Security
Patricia Meredith, Family Net
Renee Morgan, Qualified Substance Abuse Professional (QSPA)
Cyndy Benson, Child Welfare Program Administrator
Melissa Rhyne, LME
Amy Herman, Prevention Unit Supervisor
Allen Mackie, Employment Security Commission Manager
Gloria DeVane, ESC Job Placement Counselor/NAACP
Diane Thompson, Child Support Unit Supervisor
Susan Parrish, Day Care Unit Supervisor
Cynthia McGinnis, Piedmont Wagon Manager
Karen Heffner, Work First Program Manager
Jo Sloan, Family Support Program Administrator
Bobby Boyd, Social Service Director
Beth Smith, Work First Supervisor
Deanna Singleton, Work First Supervisor
Via Burgins, Work First Participant
Diann Slaughter, Work First Participant
Susan Starnes, Work First Participant

c. Facilities:

1. Request for Funds – St. Stephens High School Renovation/Addition Project.

Budget Manager Judy Ikerd introduced Rick Sherrill, Assistant Superintendent, and Ernest Williams, Project Manager, and asked them to provide an overview of the renovation/addition project at St. Stephens High School and the funding request.

Rick Sherrill, Assistant Superintendent, requested on behalf of the Catawba County Schools System that the Board approve the transfer of funds from various sources, including completed capital projects, interest and funds originally set aside for the purchase of land, for additions and renovations to St. Stephens High School. The County's fiscal year 2004-2005 budget included \$2.9 million for renovations and additions to St. Stephens High School. Bids have been received for the project, with the low bid being from Matthews Construction Company, totaling \$2,254,000. The addition of four alternates including four additional classrooms, renovations to the front entrance, rearrangement of traffic patterns, upgrades of hardware to meet Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions, and new keying brings Matthews' bid to \$3,175,000. After adding contingency, cabling and phone, design fees, and other soft costs such as insurance, the grand total of bids on the project is \$3,476,529.

Funds available for transfer total \$3,244,808, including \$110,000 in County funds for design fees appropriated in 2002; the \$2.9 million set aside in the current year's budget; \$76,008 in NC sales tax refunds on materials, and \$158,800 in ADA and capital outlay funding, to be used for the ADA upgrades. The school system requested the remaining \$231,721.47 be transferred from completed projects, which will provide the \$3,476,529 needed to complete the base bid and alternates identified above. Mr. Sherrill also stated the need for additional funding from fund balance, or as part of the FY 2005/2006 capital outlay request, in the amount of \$277,600 for two more alternates to complete renovations in the existing building, and air condition the gym. In order to obtain this extra funding, the School System agreed to close other budget line items that had balances and transfer \$33,356.19 from these projects to help make up the additional \$277,600 still needed. The school system has also asked that funds from two projects approved in the current budget, \$80,000 of \$280,000 approved for design of an expansion at Bunker Hill, and \$35,000 for the

purchase of land at Banoak Elementary, be moved to the St. Stephens project. The school system will also transfer \$35,000 from interest income from capital outlay funds, leaving a balance of \$94,243.34 needed to complete the two additional alternates.

Project Manager Ernest Williams stated the project would include 13 new classrooms. Renovations would be made to two existing classrooms and there would be some shuffling of classrooms within the school. Plans included renovations to the traffic area coming from Springs Road. The North Carolina Department of Transportation worked with the School System to develop a traffic pattern that would help to reduce the congestion and significant traffic problems. While the traffic pattern renovations would be an improvement, it would not be a total remedy of the problem. In the future, the School System hopes to obtain an additional entrance to the school off Sulphur Springs Road. Finally, there would be some renovations to the front of the school.

The Finance and Personnel Subcommittee recommends that the Board of Commissioners approve

1. The transfer of funds from existing capital projects to the St. Stephens High School project as requested by Catawba County Schools totaling \$231,721.47
2. The transfer of \$148,356.19 toward \$277,600 needed to fund the two described alternate bids for a total transfer of \$380,077.66; and
3. The appropriation of the balance needed, \$94,244, from Schools Capital Projects fund balance.

Upon motion duly made by Commissioner Barger and unanimously carried, the Board approved the transfers and appropriation set forth.

Supplemental Transfer:

From:	
420-750100-863200-31106-3-03 Asbestos Bunker Hill	\$ 32,184.85
420-750100-863200-31115-3-01 Media Materials	53.20
420-750100-863200-31150-3-07 Roof Replacement	9.59
420-750100-863200-31150-3-13 Asbestos Removal	3,182.38
420-750100-863200-31150-4-05 Exterior Bleachers	6,338.00
427-750100-863300-31125-2-01 Construct Lyle Creek	189,953.45
420-750100-863200-31114-3-01 Re-roofing	19,208.08
420-750100-863200-31150-3-05 Garage clean-up	11,033.13
420-750100-863200-31122-3-01 Startown Elem. Sewer	1,385.00
420-750100-863200-31122-3-02 Startown Pump Station	1,729.98
420-750100-863200-31101-1-01 Banoak Land	35,000.00
420-750100-863200-31106-3-04 Bunker Hill renovations	<u>80,000.00</u>
	\$380,077.66

To:	
420-750100-863200-31121-3-03 St. Stephens High	\$380,077.66

Supplemental Appropriation:	
Increase 420-750100-690100 Fund Balance Applied	\$ 94,244
Increase 420-750100-863200-31121-2-03 St. Stephens High	94,244

d. Economic Development Corporation

1. Joint Economic Development Agreement between Catawba County and Hickory Chair Company

Economic Development Corporation President Scott Millar asked the Board of Commissioners to consider a Joint Economic Development Agreement with Hickory Chair Company, which will result in an investment of \$1.5 million in Catawba County and keep between 550 and 580 jobs in Catawba County.

Hickory Chair Company (HCC), a division of Furniture Brands International (FBI) and a long term Hickory and Conover employer, has been implementing Lean Manufacturing principles in its operating processes for some time. As a result of operating more efficiently, significant floor space in its Hickory and Conover plants was opened. The Parent Company (FBI) analyzes capacity utilization among its many facilities in order to optimize the distribution of jobs, production, and facilities. In this analysis, it became evident that the Hickory and Conover plants could be absorbed into either Morganton, High Point, or out of state facilities, with the cost being 150-180 jobs at the Conover Case Goods Plant and 400 jobs at the Hickory Upholstery Plant.

In meetings with Jay Reardon, President of Hickory Chair, the most feasible option to retain the jobs in Catawba County was to encourage FBI to consider the option of consolidating the Conover jobs and production into the current Hickory facility. This would save both of the Catawba County facilities from closure and create a modern and efficient facility using lean manufacturing, globally competitive processes. This might be facilitated with the assistance of improvement grants by the City of Hickory and Catawba County. These grants, specifically to be used for the relocation and installation of equipment from facilities, would result in \$1.5mm in investment and the retention of a significant number of Catawba County jobs.

The Catawba County Joint Economic Development Agreement will provide a grant in the amount of \$125,000 for these improvements and will result in the specific training and retraining of Hickory Chair employees in concepts and skills that are transferable to other companies, such as:

- Enrollment of HCC employees at the Hickory Metro Higher Education Center, Lenoir Rhyne, or Catawba Valley Community College
- Apprenticeship Programs through the State Department of Labor
- Successful completion of GED Curriculum
- Successful completion of a recognized "Lean Training" program
- Achievement of "Master Craftsperson" Status

In addition, HCC will be serving as a "Lean Business Incubator" for any Greater Hickory Metro company interested in learning globally competitive practices in order to survive and retain jobs. The successful completion of any of these efforts will be credited toward fulfillment of the repayment of this grant.

Terms of the grant include the maintenance of these jobs in the Hickory facility and the promise of aggressive pricing and marketing of the Conover facility as well as other contractual obligations. As in all agreements with Catawba County, should these obligations not be met, there are requirements for repayment.

In order to induce the Company to facilitate this project within Catawba County, and pursuant to all NC General Statutes, the Board of Commissioners may consider the proposed Joint Economic Development Agreement. The City of Hickory considered and unanimously approved a similar grant of \$175,000 at its September 7, 2004, meeting.

Commissioner Lail commented that this was a positive step to provide assistance to existing industry.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to adopt the following Resolution authorize a Joint Economic Development Agreement with Hickory Chair Company. The motion unanimously carried.

Resolution No. 2004-28
Authorizing Joint Economic Development Agreement

with Hickory Chair Company

Whereas, increased industrial development, the retention of existing industries, and the attraction of new industries is beneficial to the citizens of Catawba County; and

Whereas, North Carolina General Statute 158-7.1 provides a mechanism for counties to encourage the location and expansion of manufacturing enterprises and industrial and commercial plants in or near its boundaries through economic development incentives; and

Whereas, Catawba County proposes coming to an agreement with Hickory Chair Company, whereby that business organization will increase the value of its investment in Catawba County through construction, renovation, and/or expansion and occupancy of an industrial facility in Catawba County by at least \$1.5 million; and

Whereas, in exchange for assistance by the County in the granting of economic development incentives for the contemplated improvements, Hickory Chair Company agrees to make the above described investment; and

Whereas, based upon the assurances of Hickory Chair Company, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners has determined and found that the Hickory Chair Company investment will result in the creation of a modern and efficient facility using lean manufacturing, globally competitive processes, save one or more Hickory Chair Company facilities located in Catawba County from closure, and retain Catawba County jobs; and

Whereas, at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 20, 2004, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners resolved as follows:

1. That upon execution of a Joint Economic Development Agreement expressly binding Hickory Chair Company, the County shall assist Hickory Chair Company by granting economic development incentives preliminary to the contemplated new improvements, which will result in at least \$1.5 million in investment and the retention of a significant number of Catawba County jobs as provided in the Joint Economic Development Agreement.

Whereas, the County Attorney and Counsel for Hickory Chair Company will draft a Joint Economic Development Agreement and will present the same to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners to reduce to writing the understanding of the parties regarding completion of the planned investment;

Now, therefore, let it be resolved as follows:

1. That the Chair of the Catawba County Board of Commissioners is authorized to execute and deliver the Joint Economic Development Agreement.

This the 20th day of September, 2004.

/s/ Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Attest:
/s/ Avajeon M. Wickes, Assistant Deputy Clerk

11. Attorneys' Report. None.

12. Manager's Report.

- a. Department Displays.
County Manager Tom Lundy thanked the staff for their hard work in preparation for this community meeting and for their displays.
- b. Appointment of Clerk to the Board
Mr. Lundy introduced Barbara E. Morris, who has been hired as Clerk to the Board, replacing Thelda Rhoney. Mr. Lundy asked the Board to officially designate Ms. Morris as Clerk to the Board. Upon motion by Commissioner Beatty and unanimously carried, Barbara E. Morris was designated as Clerk to the Board. Ms. Morris would begin work on September 30, 2004.
- c. USAID/ICMA City Links (Resource Cities) Project – Tirana, Albania
Mr. Lundy shared the results of an international project that Utilities and Engineering Director Barry Edwards, Budget Manager Judy Ikerd, Finance Director Rodney Miller, and he had been involved with over the last two and one-half years. Working in cooperation with USAID and the International City/County Management Association, Catawba County has been participating in a program called City Links (formerly Resource Cities) where a U. S. jurisdiction is mirrored with a jurisdiction in a developing country. In essence, the program takes proven government practices in America and provides technical assistance to the jurisdictions overseas. There have been seventy such collaborative projects, and Catawba County was the first county to participate. In 2002, Catawba County was paired with Tirana, Albania. Tirana is the capital of Albania and has a population of about 600,000. Albania was at one time under Communist rule. Tirana had several corrupt regimes and about four years ago elected a young mayor by the name of Edi Rama, who brought in a young, energetic staff who were dedicated to the Mayor personally, but who did not have a lot of local government experience. Tirana identified five areas in which they wanted assistance.

Solid Waste Disposal

Boxes for the collection of solid waste were redesigned so there are multiple solid waste containers that sit on the street. \$25,000 has been obtained through USAID for this project. Staff also reviewed the private contracts which Tirana had for the disposal of solid waste which were very expensive. They have been provided new contracts which they will use next year when they rebid contracts. Barry Edwards has helped the Tirana staff redesign their landfill to take care of standing water, No bulldozing equipment was owned by Tirana, but through the redesign they were able to obtain \$6 million in aid from China and Italy to buy equipment, put in a road, and make other landfill improvements. The improvements in just two and a half years are tremendous.

Building Codes

The City of Tirana and the national government are looking at model of a building code similar to North Carolina and hopefully this will be implemented.

Fees

Very few fees were charged for city services. Tirana staff was given a template to determine the cost of providing services and determine an adequate fee. Staff also taught the Tirana a philosophy of fees---do you want to encourage behavior, discourage behavior, recovery of costs, etc. With the provided template, Tirana is able to implement fees to generate revenue.

Business and Privilege Licenses

A system and fee structure was designed for business and privilege licenses. A "one stop shopping" area was designed for the business community so taxes and fees could be paid in one location. A job description was created for the position.

Municipal Enterprises and Fixed Assets

A fixed assets inventory system was developed so Tirana staff would know what equipment they had. In addition, there was a series of nationally owned businesses that

had been turned back to the city and staff did not know exactly what to do with them. A tool was developed to help the staff know how best to utilize the enterprises—which ones should be kept, disposed of, how to relate those facilities with their total land use plan, etc.

During the length of the project, there have been five visits to Tirana and Tirana staff has visited here three times. The process culminated on September 17 with a Best Practices Symposium in Tirana with about fifty mayors in attendance. Staff from both jurisdictions made presentations. ICMA staff has stated that this has been one of the most successful Resource Cities projects they have had. Mr. Lundy displayed the symposium banner and decorative plate commemorating the project. Mr. Lundy commented that the success of the project will ultimately be determined if Tirana follows through on the project. They have been given the tools, but it's up to them to continue on.

USAID has expressed some interest in continuing the project in two of the areas—building codes and landfill—and are supposed to let County staff know within two weeks if they are going to do this. USAID financed the current project and will finance any additional work if approved.

In conclusion, Mr. Lundy thanked the Commissioners for their support and the staff that created and perfected the programs, as well as the staff that took care of things while the team was traveling. Mr. Lundy also thanked Judy Ikerd, Barry Edwards and Rodney Miller for their participation. They have worked hard and were very dedicated to the project.

Chair Barnes, on behalf of the entire Board, praised the team that worked on the project in Tirana and the entire County staff, commenting that not only had a difference been made in Tirana, but there had also been outreach in recent weeks in to other communities in North Carolina and the United States in the wake of the recent storm activity.

13. Other Items of Business. None.

14. Adjournment.

At 8:48 p.m., there being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 4, 2004, 9:30 a.m., 1924 Courthouse, Newton, North Carolina.

Katherine W. Barnes
Chair, Board of Commissioners

Avajeon M. Wickes
Assistant Deputy Clerk