

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA**

Tuesday, March 3, 2011

7:00 P.M. Conversation with Commissioners

MINUTES

Place: Durham County Main Library, 300 N. Roxboro Street, Durham, NC 27701

Present: Chairman Michael D. Page Vice-Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow and Commissioners Becky M. Heron, Brenda A. Howerton, and Joe Bowser

Staff: County Manager Mike Ruffin; Assistant County Managers Deborah Craig-Ray and Drew Cummings; Deputy County Manager Wendell Davis; Interim Deputy County Manager Marqueta Welton; Michael Davis, Assistant to the County Manager; Pam Meyer, Director of Budget & Management Services; Bo Gattis, Budget Analyst; Lowell Siler, County Attorney; Michelle Parker-Evans, Clerk to the Board; and Library Director, Tammy Baggett

Presider: Chairman Page

Chairman Page welcomed citizens to "Conversations with Commissioners," a community meeting to allow citizens the opportunity to give input on the FY2011-2012 County Budget.

County Manager Ruffin introduced County staff. He proceeded by explaining how County dollars are spent. He further explained the County's current financial status. There is no growth in revenues. The County owes \$38 million in debt services.

Commissioners shared the following comments with the audience:

- The news is not good. The General Assembly is planning to cut much further than the Governor proposed in her budget. Some cuts will impact counties;
- Charter Schools could impact public schools;
- No one is sure how deep the budget cuts will go.

Chairman Page entertained questions and discussion from the audience. The following issues were presented to the Board and discussed:

- The Senior Center needs more money. There was concern expressed about the new fees, the need for more exercise equipment, and restricted parking. Chairman Page recommended that the seniors look for group sports events at the Center. Manager Ruffin responded that the lot has been restricted and signs installed to warn of towing;
- The North Regional Library needs lighting. Deputy County Manager Davis responded that General Services has begun assessing the lighting needs at facilities. Work will begin on lighting at the North and East Regional libraries. Commissioner Bowser echoed that the lighting is insufficient;

- Concern about signage for the North Regional library at Milton Road near Carrington Middle School;
- (Ted Bryant) Vehicle maintenance on County vehicles. Manager Ruffin is currently working on this issue;
- (Mike Shilet) The Commissioners were asked about their plans to support the Transit Plan referendum to add ½ cents sale tax. Encouraging more parent participation in the schools. The Board commented that the Board is looking forward. Approximately 52 percent of citizens surveyed favored a transit tax. Staff is working on the assumptions. Wake County will need to take the lead;
- Bond Schedule and Update on Projects—Manager Ruffin stated that the first phase of the Human Services complex (60 percent) will be ready in six weeks. The other 40 percent of the project will be ready in approximately 18 months. The Courthouse is scheduled for completion in Fall 2012.

Chairman Page thanked the citizens for coming out and sharing their concerns. There being no further business, Chairman Page adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



V. Michelle Parker- Evans
Clerk to the Board