

Minutes
Reconvened Meeting/Work Session
Hertford County Board of Commissioners
County Commissioners' Meeting Room
Tuesday, October 25, 2011
9:00 A.M.

Present: Johnnie R. Farmer, Curtis A. Freeman, Sr., Ronald J. Gatling, Howard J. Hunter, III, and William F. Mitchell, Jr.

Absent: None

Also Present with the Board: Loria D. Williams, County Manager; Charles L. Revelle, III, County Attorney; and Shelia W. Matthews, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Johnnie R. Farmer called the reconvened meeting to order.

The invocation for the meeting was provided by Commissioner Howard J. Hunter, III.

Chairman Farmer made everyone aware that the Town of Winton had hired a police officer. He has made the County Manager move the county car from a handicapped parking space and has been writing tickets to Social Services and Health Department employees for illegal parking. He asked that Department Heads be made aware of this so they can inform their employees.

COURTHOUSE

Chairman Farmer shared there were two blanks that can now be completed on the Potential Courthouse Site Summary handout in the agenda packet (cost/acre for the Schools property and the Pierce Beasley property). Hertford County Schools is not offering a price and can be removed from the list, and the Pierce Beasley property cost/acre is \$25,000.

WEBSITE

Sara Turner, GIS Land Records Director, presented the new website for Hertford County to the Board. She was accompanied by Crystal Askew and Josephine Green, website committee members. The site is 99% ready to go live online.

Gay Sumner, Tax Collector, was also present to review the implementation of online tax payments.

The County Commissioners commended the Website Committee and Ms. Sumner. They acknowledged all the hard work put into it and thanked them for a job well done. The Board gave their consent to go live as soon as possible.

COURTHOUSE

Loria D. Williams, County Manager, reviewed the summary sheet for the potential courthouse sites (eight parcels).

No presentations from landowners are being made today.

The County Attorney reviewed the process that would be followed regarding relocation of the courthouse. There was a ranking criteria sheet included in the agenda packet to be used to rank these properties and assist with the elimination process. Any discussion relating to acquisition of property would be held during Closed Session.

Chairman Farmer asked that each Commissioner be given a copy of the Town of Winton's proposal letter to add to the letters received from the Towns of Ahoskie and Murfreesboro.

COURTHOUSE/COUNTY BUILDINGS

Loria D. Williams, County Manager, led a discussion and presented data in relation to certain departments being located in or near the courthouse should it be relocated outside of Winton. There had been prior discussions about filling out the third floor of the courthouse plans. Due to the fact of reconfiguring the mechanics and the aesthetics of the building, the architects suggested adding wings to the courthouse instead of filling out the third floor. This addition would increase the project by approximately \$2 million.

Discussion was then held about moving the Ahoskie Social Services employees to County Office Building #1. There would need to be minimal renovations to do that and would be reimbursed 50% through cost allocation.

Commissioner Gatling expressed his views explaining there are other options – quotes from another contractor; a stand-alone building; no expansion; etc.

COUNTY MANAGER'S UPDATE/E911

The County Manager explained that the Board had recently adopted a resolution to spend 50% of E911 funding. Now, we are being told we can't carry forward unspent money of more than 20% or it will affect our distribution for coming years. The Sheriff will be addressing the Board in the future requesting this money.

TELEPHONE SYSTEM

The County Manager informed the Board that the County's telephone system needs to be replaced. Our old system is not upgradable and obsolete. The cost will be approximately \$150,000 to \$160,000 and will be taken from Fund Balance.

PARKING LOT

Discussion was held regarding paving the gravel parking lot beside County Office Building #1. The County Manager was asked to bring quotes back to the next meeting.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS/RECREATION/COMMISSIONERS/BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Vice-Chairman Freeman had to call for EMS on Friday afternoon, and they were very quick, very professional, and did an outstanding job.

Commissioner Hunter will be meeting with the Governor on November 4.

Commissioner Gatling reviewed the Parks and Recreation Proposal for a total of \$109,268.28. This would include a computer lab at the Elks Shrine (\$5,268.28), a play system in Harrellsville at the Amanda S. Cherry Community Resource Center (\$52,000), and a play system for River Street playground in Murfreesboro (\$52,000).

Discussion was held regarding electronic agendas. After some discussion on electronic versus hard copies, it was decided to email electronic agenda packets to the Board and to deliver hard copies to the Board before the meetings.

Loria D. Williams, County Manager, held a discussion on Boards and Commissions vacancies. It was decided to advertise upcoming vacancies in the newspaper and on our website quarterly. The Resolution for the Establishment of Policy and Procedures for Appointments to County Boards, Commissions, Committees or Authorities will be amended to reflect that and be presented at the next meeting for adoption.

On a motion by Freeman and a second by Hunter, the Board voted unanimously to recess Regular Session to go into a scheduled Closed Session as allowed under G. S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with the County Attorney.

CLOSED SESSION

Minutes of Closed Session are on file in the office of the Clerk to the Board.

REGULAR SESSION

PERSONNEL

Commissioner Mitchell expressed his desire to give County employees cost-of-living raises in December or January. He explained that they work hard and deserve being rewarded. This would not affect longevity/bonuses in December. Ms. Williams will bring figures back at a later date for a possibility of implementing this increase.

COURTHOUSE

On a motion by Hunter and a second by Freeman, the Board voted unanimously to direct the County Manager to seek the best offer obtainable for land acquisition from the owners of three tracts:

- (1) The Percy Bunch tract
- (2) The Larry and Nancy Freeman tract
- (3) The Pierce Beasley Co., Inc., tract

in light of the initial narrowing of proposed courthouse sites to these three preferred sites. In addition, the County Manager shall seek additional information on sewer costs and sources of funds for the Freeman tract, water costs for the Pierce Beasley tract, and written assurance from the Town of Murfreesboro that if the Bunch tract is selected, Murfreesboro will bear the cost of extending sewer to the site and will exclude the Bunch site in its entirety from Murfreesboro's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

On a motion by Gatling and a second by Freeman, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Shelia W. Matthews
Clerk to the Board

Johnnie R. Farmer, Chairman
Hertford County Commissioners