

MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

FEBRUARY 13, 2007

3:00 P.M.

**NORTH CAROLINA
MECKLENBURG COUNTY**

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in Budget/Public Policy Session in Conference Center Room 267 of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center located at 600 East Fourth Street at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 13, 2007.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairman Jennifer Roberts and Commissioners
Dumont Clarke, H. Parks Helms
Norman A. Mitchell, Sr., Dan Ramirez
and Valerie C. Woodard
County Manager Harry L. Jones, Sr.
Clerk to the Board Janice S. Paige

Absent: Commissioners Karen Bentley, Dan Bishop and Bill James

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Roberts, after which the matters below were addressed.

(1) COMMUNITY & CORPORATE SCORECARD

Leslie Johnson, Planning and Evaluation Director reviewed proposed revisions to the County's Community & Corporate Scorecard by Focus Area.

COMMUNITY & CORPORATE SCORECARD
EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW
Proposed Revisions

Community Health & Safety

Desired Result	Proposed Revision
Reduce Violence, Injury & Emotional Harm (Increase Safety & Security of Residents)	Re-label desired result, provide more specificity to strategy, realign two program categories and add the following measures: M: Elder Abuse Rate M: Domestic Violence Rate
Increase Efficiency & Effectiveness of Criminal Justice Service	Include "effectiveness" in labeling of desired result and add the following measure: M: Trial Court Performance Index
Reduce Diseases & Mental Illness (Reduce Health Risks & Diseases)	Split into two desired results (health risk & mental illness), accordingly modify strategies, realign mental health measure and four program categories
Improve Management of Mental Illness, Developmental Disabilities & Substance Abuse	(see above)

Social, Education & Economic Opportunity

Desired Result	Proposed Revision
Increase Literacy & Workforce Preparedness (Increase Literacy & Workforce Development)	Re-label desired result, base workforce development measure on data from CPCC, and include the following measure: M: Adult Literacy Index
Increase Citizen Self-Sufficiency	Modify/broaden strategies to reflect the following: S1: transitioning persons along a continuum and accordingly modifying measure S2: encouraging community and private collaborations in early intervention and temporary support services
Increase Respect/Preparedness of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity	Add more specificity to being a model diverse community (see below) and accordingly modify measure: S: Partner w/ organizations that promote cultural activities S: Encourage integrated communities, diversified development and diverse workforce representation by business partners

Growth Management & Environment

Desired Result	Proposed Revision
Improve/Expand Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways & Recreational Opportunities	Split current measure into two measures: M: Open Space & Parks Index M: Customer Satisfaction w/ Recreational Opportunities
Increase Economic Development & Job Opportunities	Change methodology for calculating business growth rate measure to represent growth in real property valuation plus business personal

Effective & Efficient Government

Desired Result	Proposed Revision
Enhance Citizen Involvement	Delete the following measure: M: Board Satisfaction w/ Public Input
Improve Financial Management	Add the following measure: M: Tax Collection Rate
Maintain Affordable & Competitive Tax Rate	Replace existing measure with two measures that evaluate the following: M: affordability of tax rate to homeowners M: competitiveness of tax rate to business relative to other jurisdictions
Enhance Workforce Retention & Recruitment	Broaden scope for workforce representation measure to include age and gender

Comments - Community Health & Safety

Chairman Roberts asked for clarification on the difference between Alternate Sentencing Rate and Trial Court Performance Index, which was explained.

Commissioner Clarke asked if staff would be creating a trial court performance measure locally and was the data readily available. The response was yes.

General Manager Janice Jackson said the standards were taken from Governing magazine, a national publication that had a list of indicators for measuring court performance. General Manager Jackson said court performance was not just a state problem, but a national problem, as well.

General Manager Jackson stated further that local Court Administrator Todd Nuccio was provided the list from Governing magazine and was asked to select those indicators that he thought were most important and things the County should be measuring. It was noted also that Mr. Nuccio informed staff of measures used by the state.

General Manager Jackson said the measures selected are very similar to those of the state.

Commissioner Clarke said staff needs to make sure the benchmarks used are the same as the state's.

County Manager Jones said staff would verify that the measures selected are in line with those used by the state.

Commissioner Woodard asked about alternative programs in lieu of incarceration. She asked were there enough programs in place that are not being challenged to assist with jail overcrowding. The response was that staff is looking into jail diversion programming.

County Manager Jones said staff will be coming to Board with some jail diversion concepts and strategies for consideration, specifically, as it relates to mental health and substance abuse issues.

Comments - Social, Education, and Economic Opportunity

Commissioner Mitchell asked about the Workforce Development Index. The response was that the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Central Piedmont Community College have a partnership with respect to workforce development. Also, that the Chamber of Commerce does a periodic study, which is reviewed by staff, but not relied upon since it's not done annually. It was noted that CPCC and DSS report on this annually and this is the data source used by staff.

Commissioner Helms asked about Increase Citizen Self-Sufficiency and the statement, "*various levels of dependency to more independent states and improved citizen well being.*"

Commissioner Helms suggested the word "*states*" be changed to "*status.*" Staff said they would make that change.

Commissioner Helms asked about Partnering with Organizations that Promote Cultural Activities and was the Community Building Initiative (CBI) one of those organizations. The response was that it could be CBI or any organization that promotes these types of things. It was noted that staff did not want to be in the business of this because there are entities in the community embracing cultural activities.

Commissioner Ramirez requested more specifics with respect to partnering with organizations, specifically, what the County is expecting out of the partnership and what's being expected of the County. The response was that it could be a variety of things and examples were given.

Chairman Roberts asked about the Ethnic & Cultural Diversity Index. Staff said it would report back on this because it was still being developed.

Chairman Roberts asked about Increase Citizen Self-Sufficiency, specifically, the use of the term "*quality of life.*" Staff said they were trying to broaden the scope, rather than limiting it to household needs.

Comments - Growth Management and Environment

Commissioner Clarke commented on Open Space. He asked what does it mean. Is it undeveloped land? The response was yes.

Commissioner Helms suggested adding the word *dedicated* in front of the measure Open Space.

Commissioner Clarke concurred that the word *dedicated, restricted, passive or something similar* should be placed in front of measure Open Space. Staff's response was that it could accommodate this desire.

Commissioner Clarke said the Board needs to give thought to focusing on land that's undeveloped, including privately owned land subject to a conservation easement that will never be developed.

Commissioner Clarke said the public likes to know that there's land out there.

Commissioner Ramirez mentioned farmland preservation as a means of having Open Space. He noted also that the Department of Natural Resources buys wetlands, usually in large quantities, but perhaps this is something the County can consider doing.

Chairman Roberts asked should partnering with business and non-profits be mentioned under Growth Management and Environment to achieve some of these goals. Staff's response was that this was doable.

County Manager Jones said the notion of partnering was really implied throughout because the County can't do much of what it does without there being some partnerships, such Park and Recreation working with the School System or the Trust for Public Land. He said staff could tweak the wording and add it more specifically.

Commissioner Helms commented on Increase Economic Development & Job Opportunities and asked would it not be appropriate to add under Strategy, "*appropriate incentives.*"

Commissioner Clarke suggested the use of the term "*job growth related grants.*"

Staff's response was that the concept was understood and that they would work on revising the wording of the strategy for Increase Economic Development & Job Opportunities – Desired Result 5.

Efficient and Effective Government

Commissioner Helms commented on Improve Financial Management, specifically, the Tax Collection Rate. He asked was it on an annual basis or over a period of years. The response was that it was on an annual basis.

Commissioner Helms said this was important and needs to be made clear that it's on an annual basis.

Commissioner Helms, with respect to Competitive Tax Rate, suggested using as a measure the "*stability of the tax rate,*" that you do not have to constantly adjust it by any large means. Staff acknowledged this suggestion.

Commissioner Ramirez commented on Enhance Citizen Involvement and the deletion of Measure 3: Board Satisfaction w/Public Input. He asked what Board staff was referring to. The response was the Board of Commissioners.

Community Health & Safety

Commissioner Helms said he was a little uncomfortable with saying the Board will measure the performance of the court system because the County has limited leverage.

Commissioner Helms said one thing the County does do is provide jail space. He said a Specialized Detention Facility could have an impact on the effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

Commissioner Helms suggested staff see if this fits in with one of the things the County is doing with respect to Community Health and Safety.

Commissioner Woodard expressed concerned for adolescents as it relates to reducing health risks

and diseases. She suggested the Board review and/or reconsider its Policy on Sexuality Counseling for Children. Commissioner Woodard said she was concerned about children between the ages of 10 – 17. Commissioner Woodard said something needs to be done to communicate the risks to this age group.

Commissioner Mitchell said a school representative could be asked to attend one of the Community Health and Safety Committee meetings to find out what's being taught in the schools.

Commissioner Ramirez left the meeting and was absent until noted in the minutes.

Motion was made by Commissioner Helms, seconded by Commissioner Woodard and carried 5-0 with Commissioners Clarke, Helms, Mitchell, Roberts, and Woodard voting yes, to approve (or modify/approve) proposed changes to the Community & Corporate Scorecard as recommended by staff; taking into consideration the suggestions made by various Commissioners.

A copy of the proposed revisions is on file with the Clerk to the Board.

The above is not inclusive of every comment or question, but reflects key points made and questions asked by the Board.

(2) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRESS UPDATE

Stacy Lowry with the Women's Commission gave an update on Domestic Violence Progress in Mecklenburg County. She highlighted accomplishments in 2006.

The report addressed:

- Challenges
- Future consequences
- The creation of the Department of Community Support Services
- Shelter beds
- Rental fee waiver
- Additional staff
- Outreach and resources
- Memorandum of Understanding with United Family Services
- Satellite services
- Domestic Violence Community Leadership Team and its goals
- Next Steps

A copy of the report is on file with the Clerk to the Board.

Comments

Commissioner Mitchell said there are men who are also being abused. He asked what services were available to men. The response was that the Women's Commission provides services to men. Also, the Shelter for Battered Women provides counseling, but not on site, but through other counseling services.

Commissioner Mitchell said he thinks these services need to be divided somehow, because men may be uncomfortable with going to the Women's Commission.

Commissioner Clarke complimented staff for going in the direction that it has with respect to addressing domestic violence and forming the Community Support Services Department.

Chairman Roberts asked was there a south regional initiative? The response was no, but that this was something that could be looked into.

Chairman Roberts said it was good to see the collaboration that was taking place and that

progress was being made.

Carol Morris, consultant, commented on the feasibility study that's being conducted on creating more emergency shelter beds and transitional housing.

Ms. Morris noted the following:

Commissioner Ramirez returned to the meeting.

- Mecklenburg County has fewer beds of other counties of comparable size.
- There are currently 29 beds in Mecklenburg County.
- The permitted stay at the shelter is 30 days, which often is not long enough.
- Funding sources are being looked at.
- Zoning issues and costs are being looked at.

Commissioner Ramirez left the meeting and was absent until noted in the minutes.

- The number of beds needed is estimated to be 108-120.
- The number of transitional housing units needed is estimated to be 20.
- The average length of stay time needs to be 30-90 days.
- It will not be recommended that the current domestic violence shelter be expanded or remodeled.
- New construction or reuse of an existing building will be recommended.
- Location and design considerations will be presented.
- They will be relying upon a capital campaign to provide a bulk of the funding.

Commissioner Ramirez returned to the meeting.

- This will be an expensive venture.
- The cost may be well over \$5 million.

Ms. Morris said she would report back to the Board again at a later date.

Comments

Commissioner Helms asked about operational costs. The response was that this was being worked on.

Mark Pierman with United Family Services commented on how well the collaboration has gone in addressing this matter.

Chairman Roberts thanked Ms. Lowry and Ms. Morris for their reports.

(3) CLOSED SESSION – PERSONNEL MATTER

Motion was made by Commissioner Ramirez, seconded by Commissioner Woodard and unanimously carried with Commissioners Clarke, Helms, Mitchell, Ramirez, Roberts, and Woodard voting yes, to go into Closed Session to discuss Personnel Matter.

The Board went into Closed Session at 4:45 p.m. and came back into Open Session at 5:03 p.m.

Commissioner Helms, chair of the Board's selection committee for the appointment of a new finance director, said it was the unanimous decision of the Board Committee (Commissioners Helms, Clarke, James, and Roberts) that Dena Diorio be appointed Finance Director effective April 2, 2007. Commissioner Helms commented on Ms. Diorio's background and years of experience.

Motion was made by Commissioner Ramirez, seconded by Commissioner Woodard and unanimously carried with Commissioners Clarke, Helms, Mitchell, Ramirez, Roberts, and

Woodard voting yes, to appoint Dena Diorio as Mecklenburg County Finance Director effective April 2, 2007.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Ramirez, seconded by Commissioner Woodard and unanimously carried with Commissioners Clarke, Helms, Mitchell, Ramirez, Roberts, and Woodard voting yes, that there being no further business to come before the Board that the meeting be adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Janice S. Paige, Clerk

Jennifer Roberts, Chairman