

NORTH CAROLINA

WAYNE COUNTY

The Wayne County Board of Commissioners met with the Wayne County Board of Education on Monday, February 18, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. at the administrative office of the Wayne County Public Schools, 2001 E. Royall Avenue, Goldsboro, North Carolina, after due notice thereof had been given.

Wayne County Board of Commissioners members present: Roland M. Gray, Chairman; Atlas Price, Jr., Vice-Chairman; Wilbur E. Anderson; John M. Bell; C. Munroe Best, Jr.; J. D. Evans and Efton M. Sager.

Wayne County Board of Education members present: Thelma Smith, Chairman; George Moye, Vice-Chairman; John P. Grantham; Pete Gurley; Rick Pridgen; Shirley Sims and Dave Thomas.

Welcome

Wayne County Board of Commissioners Chairman Roland M. Gray and Wayne County Board of Education Chairman Thelma Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Facility Update Information

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III reviewed the facilities information presented last week at the Board of Commissioners retreat:

- In December 2007 the Board of Commissioners presented a \$23 million school facilities plan. The staff of the Wayne County Public Schools was asked to secure the services of an architect and engineer, plans for new construction and renovations and cost estimates for the projects, prior to going to the Local Government Commission for funding approval. The county will finance the \$23 million with cash and by borrowing money. He anticipated the county would not utilize installment purchasing the first 24 months. Later the county will probably borrow less than \$10 million in order to utilize installment purchasing.

At 11:10 a.m., Board of Education Member Shirley Sims arrived at the meeting.

- The Wayne County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is updated monthly. The CIP extends out 10-15 years.
- Wayne County's communication system has equipment, which is 35-50 years old. The equipment is outdated. Wayne County needs an up-to-date communications system for law enforcement and emergency services. The State of North Carolina took the county's 911 funds and lowered Wayne County's rate to the statewide rate of 70 cents. The communications system project will need \$7 million within 18 months. The Board of Commissioners will be asked to consider this funding request within the next 60 days.
- Wayne County is considering a 36-acre campus plan for the Health Department, Social Services and Services on Aging on property located behind the new Animal Adoption and Education Center.
- The Board of Trustees of the Wayne County Public Library has given it's priorities to the Board of Commissioners. The priorities include renovation of the Goldsboro branch, to build a new northern branch library and to build a southern branch library in Mount Olive. The projected cost for the new Mount Olive southern branch library is \$4 million. The projected cost for the Goldsboro renovation and northern branch library is \$9 million. The county must consider the possible financing methods.
- Goldsboro/Wayne Airport serves as an economic development tool. The Goldsboro/Wayne Airport Authority has requested extension of the runway.
- The county needs a 100,000 or greater square foot shell building as an economic development tool.
- The Board of Commissioners stated its #1 priority is education, which includes the Wayne County Public Schools and Wayne Community College.

- The county is exploring programs to reduce the detention center population in an effort to delay building and/or renovating. The projected cost of a new detention center is at least \$48 million.
- The new Animal Adoption and Education Center is scheduled to receive funding from public contributions. The facility is scheduled for completion August 2008.
- Both the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education need to understand the mandates and limitations on each other.
- The Davenport plan for the county is being revised based on comments at the retreat held by the Board of Commissioners. The schools projects are included in the plan. The county cannot afford to fund all of the requested projects of the Wayne County Public Schools in five years. The staff is working on a plan, which the county can afford. The \$23 million for the Wayne County Public Schools does not require a tax increase.

Wayne County Public Schools \$23 Million Facility Plan Discussion Issues

Continue to hire a project manager for large construction projects

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the Facilities Committee met and is moving forward to select an architect for the school projects. The school system will also hire a construction manager. Engineering firms are working on the water problems at Norwayne Middle School and Eastern Wayne Middle School. During the construction phases, some children will need to be moved into mobile classrooms.

Establish guidelines/goals for mobile classrooms

Wayne County Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services Sprunt Hill stated Wake County has a guideline to have 20% or less of its classrooms as mobile classrooms. Wayne County currently has 110 mobile classrooms, which are also used for music, choral and the in-school suspension program.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III requested the schools be specific in its mobile classroom guidelines. He questioned "How many is too many?" He requested the schools determine if a new school needed to be built when mobile classrooms are being needed in high growth areas. The schools need a rotation policy for mobile classrooms.

Wayne County Commissioner Wilbur E. Anderson questioned if the proposed mobile classrooms for Norwayne Middle School and Eastern Wayne Middle School could be moved to other locations.

Wayne County Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services Sprunt Hill stated the mobile classrooms will have built-in restrooms and hopefully will be utilized again.

Establish an annual small projects facility budget

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the schools use the sales tax monies for routine maintenance. The county appropriates \$1.8 million for maintenance and small projects. The schools could use \$2.5 million in local monies for maintenance and small projects in the 2007-2008 budget. Lottery monies can be used to retire debt. The Wayne County Public Schools needs funds on-hand in the event of emergencies.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the Wayne County Public Schools has approximately \$700,000-800,000 in lottery and approximately \$700,000-800,000 in sales tax monies. He requested the schools consider pay-as-you-go for small projects, such as vehicles, computers and projects under \$200,000. The Wayne County Public Schools needs capital reserves for emergencies. The Board of Commissioners is concerned the state will need revenue to balance its budget and will take monies from lottery, ADM and sales tax funds, which have not been earmarked for a specific project. He requested the schools work on a small capital budget.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the Wayne County Public Schools needs \$2.5 million for small capital projects and emergencies.

Wayne County Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services Sprunt Hill stated the schools are examining all options for mobile classrooms, including renting and leasing to own.

Develop an efficiency cost analysis of existing facilities

Wayne County Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services Sprunt Hill stated an energy analysis is performed monthly on school facilities. The energy program is saving money for the schools. The equipment is being changed out through the performance contracting program. Phase 2 of the performance contracting program is now underway.

Analyze all current trends and alternatives before considering construction of new schools

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the Board of Commissioners is requesting a detailed analysis, which should include school closings and reassignment. The Board of Commissioners recognized the sensitivity of these issues. However, the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education need to be accountable to the taxpayers.

Capital financing explanation of COPS and temporary transfer of building ownership to the County of Wayne according to North Carolina General Statutes requirements

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the county may use Certificates of Participation (COPS) for school facility financing.

Wayne County Attorney E. B. Borden Parker stated the school facility would be put up as a security under COPS financing. The county would borrow the monies for the school facility. The Board of Education would convey the school facility to the county. As the debt for the school facility is paid off, the facility would be conveyed back the Board of Education. This procedure would also allow the taxpayers to save on the sales tax for the new construction. The county, but not the Board of Education, is eligible to receive sales tax refunds on construction projects.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III requested the staff of the Wayne County Public Schools work with the County of Wayne staff on this process. He also requested the Wayne County Public Schools make sure its buildings are appraised and insured for replacement costs.

Wayne County Public Schools Attorney H. Jack Edwards stated the Board of Education had discussed COPS. The Board of Education has requested a memorandum of understanding.

Wayne County Board of Education Member Pete Gurley stated the funding for the \$23 million phase has been determined. He questioned why we have to wait three years before starting funding plans for the next phase. He wanted the funding process hastened. He asked about the bond process.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III explained the process the schools would need to follow prior to building a new school facility. He stated the county has projects, other than schools, which need to be funded. The county must space out capital projects in order to conform to financial benchmarks, which the Board of Commissioners has adopted. A bond in 2009 is a possibility. The county must determine what it can afford. The Wayne County Public Schools must also consider programs, as well as facilities.

Wayne County Board of Education Member Dave Thomas recommended the Board of Commissioners specify how the proposed one-quarter cent sales tax would be used. He thought the public would be more willing to approve the local sales tax if the public knew how the monies would be spent.

Wayne County Commissioner Wilbur E. Anderson stated it was difficult to specify the exact usage of the local sales tax with the federal and state governments reducing the county's revenue sources.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the county is waiting on Medicaid data. The local sales tax monies can be used for current expense or capital expense. The Board of Commissioners wants flexibility in the use of the monies.

Wayne County Board of Education Member John Grantham questioned if the county had examined the use of the old Cherry Hospital facility.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the old Cherry Hospital facility has very limited uses for the county.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the staff of the Wayne County Public Schools must complete all items discussed concerning the \$23 million facility plan prior to submission to the Local Government Commission for approval.

Recess

At 12:00 noon, the meeting was recessed for lunch. At 12:40 p.m., the meeting was reconvened.

Budget Discussion

Request the Board of Education to submit a preliminary/draft budget no later than April 1, 2008

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III requested the Board of Education submit a preliminary/draft budget to the county no later than April 1, 2008 with the realization the budget may need to be refined.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the schools operate under the state guidelines. The schools will try to do the best it can. The budget will need to be refined.

Board of Commissioners and Board of Education will hold a minimum of three meetings between February and June for discussion of the budget and associated issues –

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the meetings are a good means of communication and avoid misunderstandings. The meetings will also keep the boards informed about the proposed legislation in the North Carolina General Assembly.

Wayne County Board of Education Chairman Thelma Smith recommended the meetings as a means of updating each board.

Wayne County Board of Education Member Pete Gurley stated the meetings between the boards clear up misconceptions.

Wayne County Board of Education Member George Moye stated the Board of Education has gotten to know each other better by going out for dinner after the Board of Education meetings. The committee structure of the Board of Education was changed so each member is an officer of the Board of Education. Groups bond when they get to know each other.

Board of Education and Board of Commissioners develop an agreed upon annual current expense budget that may include capital expenditures with a possible memorandum of understanding

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the county current expense budget can only increase 2% annually. He requested the Wayne County Public Schools also adopt this guideline.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated a current expense budget would help the schools plan annually. The schools will not know the amount of state funding until sometime after April 1st.

Wayne County Board of Education Member George Moye stated it is a given it takes more to operate than the previous year. It is easier to plan if you know the appropriation.

Board of Education to submit a progress report with regard to the financial recommendations made by Evergreen Solutions

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the staff is working on the progress report.

Wayne County Board of Education Chairman Thelma Smith gave everyone a copy of the annual report of the Wayne County Public Schools.

Wayne County Commissioner J. D. Evans requested the Board of Education and staff provide updates to the Board of Commissioners during its meetings.

Explanation of appropriate use of school funds from various categories and funding sources

Wayne County Public School Assistant Superintendent of Finance Nan Barwick gave the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education a handout comparing the lottery funds versus the ADM (corporate tax) funds. ADM funds may be used for school construction or technology. ADM funds require a \$1 local match per \$3 state monies for construction with no match required for technology. Lottery funds may be used for school construction only, not technology. No match is required for the use of lottery funds.

Wayne County Commissioner C. Munroe Best, Jr. questioned the amount of cash available to the Wayne County Public Schools.

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the Wayne County Public Schools has approximately \$10.5 million available for current expense and capital expense.

County Offer of Support for Student Program

Financial support of WorkKeys Testing of Students

WorkKeys assessments measure cognitive abilities such as applied mathematics, reading for information and locating information.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the Wayne County Public Schools is only one of a few school systems which use the WorkKeys program. This academic year three high schools have been tested and next year all high school students will be tested. All tested students have placed. The testing cost is \$15 per student.

Wayne County Board of Education Chairman Thelma Smith stated she thought the WorkKeys testing would be available in all high schools.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the schools wanted to first do a pilot program first.

Wayne County Commissioner C. Munroe Best, Jr. questioned if the Board of Commissioners funded the monies to test all 9th graders, could the testing could be completed by June 2008. It would cost approximately \$50,000 to test all 9th graders in the Wayne County Public Schools.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated the schools would need to determine which grade level testing would be the most beneficial. He questioned why the 9th graders should be tested.

Wayne County Commissioner C. Munroe Best, Jr. stated the testing of 9th graders would help with the dropout problem. The earlier the students with a problem are identified, the earlier methods can be taken to correct the problem.

After considerable discussion about the purpose of the WorkKeys program, the Board of Education and Board of Commissioners decided to invite Diane Ivey with the WorkKeys program to the next meeting to discuss program.

Mentoring Program Coordinator for students to further improve graduation and dropout rate

Wayne County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the county and business community have discussed the value of a mentoring program in the Wayne County Public Schools to assist students. Members of the business community have offered to invest in the students.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor stated each school within the Wayne County Public Schools has a mentoring program. All children do not need a mentor. Details of the program would need to be worked out prior to the program being formalized. Many school principals would like to have more mentors in their school.

Wayne County Board of Education Member Dave Thomas stated he supported changing the age a child can drop out of school from 16 years of age to 17-18 years of age.

Wayne County Board of Education Chairman Thelma Smith stated there are several faith-based, civic and private groups mentoring students. Businesses are willing to let their employees take time off to mentor students. The groups need to work together in unity. The good news was the schools were reaching out for help and getting community-wide responses.

Other Business

Members of the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education discussed the procedure used by the Wayne County Public Schools in trying to eliminate drugs and weapons from school campuses.

Wayne County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven D. Taylor requested School Resource Officers for the middle schools.

Meeting Date for Next Joint Meeting

The members of the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education will be notified of the date, time and location of the next joint meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Marcia R. Wilson
Clerk to the Board