

PERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

APRIL 30, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Jimmy B. Clayton

Heidi York, County Manager

Kyle W. Puryear - ABSENT

B. Ray Jeffers

Brenda B. Reaves, Clerk to the Board

Samuel R. Kennington

Frances P. Blalock

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The Board of Commissioners for the County of Person, North Carolina, met in special called session on Monday, April 30, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. in the old Helena School cafeteria located at 295 Helena Moriah Road, Timberlake. The purpose of the special called meeting was for closed session discussion of matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the county per General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4).

Chairman Clayton called the meeting to order. Vice Chairman Puryear was absent.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeffers, **seconded** by Commissioner Blalock, and **carried 4-0** to enter Closed Session at 5:01 pm pursuant to General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the county.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeffers, **seconded** by Commissioner Blalock, and **carried 4-0** to return to open session at 6:06 pm.

RECESS:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Blalock, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers, and **carried 4-0** to recess the meeting at 6:06 pm until 6:30 pm at the same site for the purpose of holding a Community Conversations meeting.

Chairman Clayton called the Community Conversations meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

The purpose of the informal Community Conversations meeting is to receive feedback from the community about services, suggestions for improving County Government and the opportunity to shed some light on the budget process in general.

Attendees were given the opportunity to sign up with the Clerk to the Board to address the Board or the option to write down questions or comments to be read.

A total of 49 people were in attendance which included Board members, county staff and citizens.

County Manager, Heidi York told the group the Community Conversations meetings were developed to show more transparency in county government as well as give the public a chance to speak to the commissioners about community priorities prior to the proposed budget. Ms. York highlighted the *Person County Government Citizens' Guide to the Budget* presented to all attendees upon arrival. The handout included basic budget information including challenges, statistics, neighboring counties' tax rates, as well as explained where revenue is gained and to which county services or function areas it is spent.

Clerk to the Board, Brenda Reaves, called the names of those individuals who had signed up to speak in the following order:

Mr. Phillip Puryear, PO Box 924, Roxboro addressed the Board related to the current building ordinance that limits the number of structures on a property. Chairman Clayton recommended consultation with the county attorney and Commissioner Jeffers stated the Board will be discussing at its next meeting a review of the ordinance.

Ms. Pat Hill of 916 Mann Oakley Road, Rougemont advocated Commissioner Blalock's idea to Person County Schools to increase county recycling to a level that could raise revenues that could benefit the county and the schools. Ms. Hill stated her support to close the landfill in 2017 and partner with a neighboring county for waste disposal. Commissioner Blalock told the group a ton of waste that goes to the landfill will earn \$2.00 as compared to a ton of recycling materials to the recycle center will earn \$133.00.

Ms. Flora Peed of 10215 Oxford Road, Rougemont stated she lives very close to the landfill noting her support to close the landfill in 2017. Ms. Peed stated her support of recycling efforts. Ms. Peed asked the Board if the landfill property was taxed with a farm tax discount. Mr. Russell Jones, Tax Administrator confirmed the landfill was taxed at the same rate as all citizens are taxed without any discount.

Mr. Peyton Humphries of Timberlake asked if the Planning Ordinance was on the county website to which staff confirmed affirmatively. Mr. Humphries asked the Board for more information related to the proposed watershed. Chairman Clayton stated the proposed Falls Watershed Ordinance was mandated by state legislature with the process to be approved by the Division of Environmental Management and EPA to improve the water quality. Chairman Clayton noted a public hearing would be held on May 23 to receive public comments. Mr. Humphries requested the proposed watershed ordinance be placed on the website for citizen access. County Manager, Heidi York stated the proposed watershed ordinance would be posted to the county website.

Ms. Marjorie Cash Palmer of 219 Hill Country Road, Rougemont noted her home is the closest to the landfill and the noise she deals with on a daily basis. Ms. Palmer advocated for recycling and creating more jobs in Person County.

Robert and Shelby Barbar of 79 Deep Creek Point, Rougemont described a complaint that a neighbor in the same development possesses thirty or more dogs causing high level of noise and odor for them and other residents. The Barbars requested the Board's assistance and asked the Board about the county Animal Control Ordinance limiting the number of domestic animals per residence. Commissioner Jeffers stated the Animal Control Advisory Committee was forthcoming with revisions to the ordinance noting the Sheriff's Office is tasked with enforcing the noise ordinance. Ms. York noted county staff have investigated and are continuing to review the situation.

Mr. Jay Jennings of 155 High Rock Road, Hurdle Mills spoke to the Board related to the proposed Falls Lake Stormwater Ordinance for improved water regulations that would include fees for citizens. Mr. Jennings requested the Board to publicize the rules, procedures and requirements so all citizens and professional occupations would be informed. Board members clarified the Board of Commissioners were not imposing the rules but was mandated by the State of NC. Chairman Clayton noted the upcoming public hearing on May 23, 2012 that would be held by the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Board with technical questions to be answered by consultants and attorneys. The May 23, 2012 public hearing will be held in the FEMA Room at the Human Services Building at 6:00 pm.

Ms. Kay Reynolds of 74 Alleghany Drive, Roxboro asked the Board to consider the high rate of cancer in Person County noting Person County is the worst in the state for toxic emissions. Commissioner Blalock stated there were two upcoming public hearings addressing mercury pollutions; May 23, 2012 in Craven County and May 14, 2012 in Hickory. Ms. Reynolds inquired about the tax revaluation. Mr. Jones noted tax revaluation considered an overall value of property and tax rate excluding foreclosures, sales under duress and any other invalid sale. Mr. Jones stated property around the two lakes and undeveloped land in the county would likely increase with lots in subdivisions staying flat or decreasing. A notice of value would be mailed to property owners in January, 2013.

Ms. Reynolds stated her desire that the landfill be closed. Chairman Clayton and Commissioner Jeffers noted they would want to review all options and costs prior to taking a stand on closing the landfill in 2017. Commissioner Kennington stated his support to close the landfill in 2017 as the intent of the Board when the contract was put into place. Commissioner Blalock added the contract, as written has ten 1-year options with the current tenant however in 2017 when the contract ends, continuation can not be granted without the Board of Commissioners approving a Solid Waste Ordinance which would directly affect a permit being approved by the State of NC.

Ms. JoAnne Howerton of 191 Lewis Winstead Loop Road, Roxboro thanked the Board for cutting the budget \$6.7 million in the last three years. Ms. Howerton stated her opposition to a property tax increase and questioned how to educate citizens to increase recycling. Chairman Clayton stated the County Manager is not recommending a tax increase in the proposed budget noting the tax rate has remained flat the last 6 years. Commissioner Blalock suggested to keep the public aware of the law to increase efforts in recycling products.

Ms. Rebecah Mooney of 314 Patterson Drive, Roxboro stated she was unaware as many of the general public of the 10-acre rule having to pay taxes back so many years. Mr. Jones confirmed citizens that participate in the present use (deferred tax) programs are held to State guidelines for 10-acre minimum in active production with \$10,000 income. If a citizen is removed from the tax deferred program, taxes for the current year plus three years back with interest are due. Mr. Jones clarified that the forestry program requires 20-acres in forest land for eligibility. Ms. Mooney referred to the incentives/tax discounts given to industry (Solar Park site) and Ms. York stated industry would pay the same tax rates and the owner of the business referred to by Ms. Mooney leases land from PCBIC without a tax discount as well as PCBIC pays the same tax rate. Chairman Clayton noted incentives are extended to recruit industry/jobs. Commissioner Jeffers added incentives given to industry also include requirement for a certain amount of jobs and if not met, a claw-back provision to return the county's incentive funds. Ms. Mooney proceeded to ask the status of the Force Protection incentives. Commissioner Blalock stated the Force Protection status could not be disclosed at this time. Ms. Mooney advocated for education and recycling and suggested getting the City involved with a franchise agreement to have private companies pick up recyclables.

Mr. Paul Hair of 2330 Ned Moore Road, Timberlake suggested to regulate property taxes by an independent appraisal as well as look into deposit fees on bottles. Commissioner Blalock responded that bottle bills have not successfully passed in NC legislature.

Clerk to the Board, Brenda Reaves read the following questions:

Ms. Lauren Brown of 529 Holly Springs Drive, Timberlake wanted to know if there are any plans to continue public water and sewer down Helena Moriah Road. Chairman Clayton responded there are no plans in the foreseeable future to expand water and sewer down Helena Moriah due to the lack of grant funds.

Ms. Faye Boyd of 69 Foxwood Drive, Timberlake wanted to know what control, if any, does Person County Commissioners have over the operation of the private landfill if the County Commissioners decide not to renew the contract with Upper Piedmont in 2017. Commissioner Blalock responded that a franchise agreement would have to be approved by the Board of Commissioners prior to Upper Piedmont receiving a permit to continue operation.

Mr. David Forsythe, Director of Person County Group Homes, a service provider for Mental Illness, Mental Retardation, Traumatic Brain Injury and the elderly, appeared before the Board to request reconsideration of funding non-profits noting some non-profits receive funding while many do not from the county. Commissioner Jeffers stated two non-profits have been heard since the annual Board Retreat noting he was against have mid-year requests when all non-profits were not given the same opportunity.

Commissioner Blalock asked Dr. Walter Bartlett, Piedmont Community College's President to speak to the group related to the vision for the old Helena School site. Dr. Bartlett noted local government partnerships will provide the county and the community college many opportunities to capitalize, i.e., horticulture, food service, economic training facility, community canning, bio networking, entrepreneur programs, agriculture. Dr. Bartlett noted the next step is to identify a leadership team and receive input from the community with innovative ideas to move forward. Chairman Clayton read an email he had received from Nancy Jeffrey with suggestions for the site to house shopping center, pharmacy supplies, hardware center, rentals for meetings, conferences, etc. Commissioner Blalock recommended citizens to submit ideas to the County Manager.

Mr. Clyde Whitfield from the Bushy Fork community advocated for the landfill to accept Person County garbage only and suggested using the Person County Farmers Market shelter to park PATS vehicles when not in use or ask the market to open daily versus the two times a week currently. Commissioner Jeffers stated the shelter was funded by majority with grant funds and there are many rules attached to grant funding that would not allow using for other purposes than the intended constructed purpose. Ms. York stated she was inquiring with some options for the shelter space. Mr. Whitfield asked if county employees were paid for 40 hours when only worked 37.5 hours per week. Ms. York stated county employees were only paid for the hours actual worked.

The Board of Commissioners thanked everyone for attending and participating.

Commissioner Jeffers told the group of the upcoming public meetings to discuss the Recreation/Senior Center Facility with the first one being held on May 2, 2012 at 6:00 pm at the Recreation, Arts & Parks offices.

Commissioner Kennington noted the majority of citizen participation revolved around two issues: the landfill and recycling.

Chairman Clayton asked for the community to provide input related to the potential uses of the old Helena School site.

Ms. York told the group that her office is open to the public to answer questions and interpret laws. Ms. York announced an Airport Commission Meeting is scheduled to be held on May 2, 2012 at 10:00 am in the Commissioners' Board Room.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeffers, **seconded** by Commissioner Blalock, and **carried 4-0** to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 pm.

Brenda B. Reaves
Clerk to the Board

Jimmy B. Clayton
Chairman