

MINUTES

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF HENDERSON**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 31, 2007**

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a special called meeting at 9:00 a.m. at the Justus (WNC) Justice Academy in Edneyville.

Those present were: Chairman Bill Moyer, Vice-Chairman Charlie Messer, Commissioner Larry Young, Commissioner Chuck McGrady, Commissioner Mark Williams, County Manager Steve Wyatt, Assistant County Manager Selena Coffey, County Attorney Russell Burrell, and Clerk to the Board Elizabeth W. Corn.

Also present were: Research/Grants Coordinator Amy Brantley, Public Information Officer Chris S. Coulson, Internal Auditor Darlene Burgess, Finance Director J. Carey McLelland, County Engineer Gary Tweed, Fire Marshall/Emergency Management Coordinator Rocky Hyder, Code Enforcement Director Toby Linville, Social Services Director Liston Smith, Public Health Director Tom Bridges, Human Resources Director Jan Pritchard, Deputy/Delinquent Tax Collector Lee King, County Assessor Stan Duncan, Agriculture Extension Director Denise Baker, Director of Elections Beverly Cunningham, Sheriff Rick Davis and Debbie Ward from the Sheriff's Dept., Planning Director Anthony Starr, Register of Deeds Nedra Moles, Information Technologies Directory Becky Snyder, and Library Director Bill Snyder.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. He explained that the weather forecast is presenting a problem so his recommendation was to try to condense the two-day retreat into one day, today so that we don't have to worry about the weather tonight and tomorrow. It was the consensus of the Board to condense the retreat into one day. He explained that the agenda would go later into the afternoon but we would get it all into one day.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION – Hillandale and Mills River

Chairman Moyer stated that this is such an over-riding factor to our capital budget and our strategic plan and it's so important that we deal with this issue, he recommended that the Board discuss this first thing. He felt it would set the tone for where we go regarding other capital projects. It was the unanimous consensus of the Board to deal with these two schools and deal with them immediately. He turned the floor over to Steve Wyatt and the folks from Moseley Architects to give an update on where we stand.

Steve Wyatt reminded the Board of the presentation the Board had received from Moseley Architects where they spoke on cost effective school construction. The Commissioners, along with School Board members, have visited some schools in Iredell and Durham Counties and have studied the issue. The architectural firm made a proposal to begin these two projects, establish a budget and get these two schools underway. Mr. Wyatt stated that there are a couple of issues the Board needs to discuss: setting a budget, financing options, as well as capacity or size of schools. Steve Wyatt introduced Dan Mace of Moseley Architects.

Dan Mace introduced his associate, Jimmy Wilhide, Jr. They distributed a hand-out which reiterated some of the information from the presentation they had made previously to the Commissioners. They have been looking at a potential adaptation of the Northern Elementary School they completed and bid last year for Guilford County Public Schools. Northern Elementary meets the NC DPI standards. They

DATE APPROVED _____

would use the school as a spring point. They would propose to the School system to look at it in terms of adapting it to our educational specifications in Henderson County. Moseley feels that is very feasible. Moseley has toured Henderson County and some of the schools here. They feel we already have a very good school design. Nothing really struck them, just little things. One of the primary things they would bring to the table is to really pursue the general contractors and subcontractors and have them competitively bid our projects. That is one of the major things they noticed. Fundamentally they would not compromise the operations and longevity of our school buildings.

Mr. Mace called attention to a page in the hand-out entitled "Opinion of Probable Construction Cost". Moseley used the 80,000 square foot Guilford County School model. That school is a 740 student, 800 core school. This is state DPI standard. They would differ between school systems due to education specifications. That school had a unit cost of \$130 per square foot, excluding site development.

Mr. Mace and others from Moseley had toured the two proposed sites for Hillandale and Mills River. They felt that the Hillandale site would have the highest site costs due to the mucky site conditions of the property. They have budgeted for both sites \$1.5 million which he felt would give a little cushion. They have allocated \$3 million in site improvements for both sites. They would anticipate the projects bidding the middle of this summer, fiscal year 2007. Both schools (together) would be 160,000 square feet at a proposed unit cost of \$148.75 per square foot, totaling \$23,800,000.00. They recommend a 5% design and construction contingency, \$1,190,000.00. They had budgeted 6% for FF&E (fixtures, furnishings, and equipment) or \$1,428,000.00. He also added A/E fees, site, construction testing, surveys, etc., and bid document advertising/printing costs. No site acquisition costs were included. Total estimated project budget was \$27,837,500.00. They had included a 6% cost of construction increase due to the time lapsed in bidding the two projects.

There was some discussion regarding energy efficiency. The Commissioners had toured the Third Creek School which is the first LEAD School in the world, it is a LEAD Gold facility. LEAD means leadership in energy and environmental design. To make both these schools LEAD schools would add \$714,000 up front but the pay back would be 5 years, due to energy savings.

There was discussion regarding use of the same school design/floor plan. Each would have to be customized for the lay of the land. The first school built from a design would have 6% costs for Architecture and Engineer and 4.5% for the second one.

Chairman Moyer stated that he felt it was very important to move the project along and give the School Board and Administration a feeling of where the Board of Commissioners stands on the projects. He introduced a Resolution based on the many discussions on this issue. The resolution follows:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Statutes establish policy which gives county government the mandate to provide school facilities from local revenues; and

WHEREAS, Henderson County Government fiscal policy mandates effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of mandates and fiscal responsibility in providing all County functions funded from local revenues or other sources as determined by the Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the taxpayers of Henderson County deserve and expect responsible stewardship of their investment in all locally funded mandates, services and projects; and

WHEREAS, the Henderson County Board of Public Education has determined that the construction of schools to replace the current Mills River and Hillandale Elementary schools is the school system's highest need and priority; and

WHEREAS, the Henderson Board of County Commissioners concurs with this priority and endeavors to meet this need within Henderson County Government's fiscal policy which mandates that this need be met in the most effective and efficient manner as determined by the Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the Board has given considerable time, study and attention to the matter of cost effective school construction as stewards of the public treasury and is ready to authorize the most effective and efficient method for providing school facilities that this work process has identified,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Henderson County Board of Commissioners meeting in a special work session hereby endorses the proposal of Moseley Architects to design and deliver replacement schools for Mills River and Hillandale Elementary each with a capacity of seven hundred and forty students, with a core capacity of eight hundred students, at a cost of \$27,837,500 (as outlined in the attachment) and commits to the debt service required to fund these two projects at this amount and further resolves to request that the Henderson County Board of Public Education accept this proposal and begin work immediately to complete these schools for occupation at the earliest possible date within the framework outlined in this resolution.

Approved this day of January, 2007 by a vote of the Henderson County Board of Commissioners.

William L. Moyer, Chairman
Henderson County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Elizabeth W. Corn, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Moyer made the motion that the Board adopt the resolution as presented. Commissioner McGrady was in favor of the resolution but felt that the Board should put more money on the table and make these two schools energy efficient schools, especially if it could be recouped in just five years. Following much discussion, a vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

There was some discussion regarding how lottery monies are distributed. We are a donor county. Because of our tax rate we certainly aren't getting a "fair share" of the lottery proceeds.

Expenditures/Revenues

Selena Coffey reviewed county expenditures. Education is the highest expense at 30.05% and Human Services comes in second at 29.58%, third is public safety at 18.47%.

Education includes public schools and the community college. Human services includes DSS (Department of Social Services), Health, and Veteran Services. Public Safety includes the Sheriff's Department, the Detention Center, Fire Services, and Emergency Management and a number of other smaller departments.

Selena Coffey then discussed the local share (county funds) in the FY 07 General Fund Budget - \$74,498,438. The percentages change a bit for local funds: Education 33.40%, Human Services 18.47%, and Public Safety 19.60% with the biggest change being in human services. Just over a third of the local funds go into education.

There was some brief discussion regarding revenues. Our biggest source of revenue is, of course, the property taxes (51%). We do take in some fees, our biggest being for inspections and recreation and we continue to ask for alternatives.

Selena explained that with a FY 07 Budget of \$104,333,900, mandated services (with limited discretion in funding amounts) use 83% of that money or \$86,423,416. Non-mandated services with complete discretion in funding use 13% or \$13,335,894. Services that we provide with no county funding are CJPP, Juvenile Justice, Court facilities. Funding comes from grants or other sources and is about 4% or \$4,574,590.

Financial Position

Carey McLelland informed the Board that at the end of the last fiscal year, 6/30/06, we had \$12.9 million unreserved fund balance. That is our savings account that is available for the Board to appropriate for whatever purpose the Board deems is necessary. That was 14.02% of the FY 06 General Fund expenditures. The Board has a fiscal policy to maintain a minimum of 12% fund balance. We currently have 2.02% available above the fiscal policy which equals \$1.1 million non-recurring funds available to appropriate. There is an appropriated fund balance of \$1.2 million for the FY 07 budget.

Revenue-Neutral

Selena Coffey explained that the revenue-neutral rate is the rate for the fiscal year after revaluation that, taking into account expected rates of growth in the tax base and excluding increases in market value recognized by the revaluation, would produce revenue that equals the current year's tax levy. The expected rate of growth in the revaluation year is based upon an average of increases or decreases to the assessed value since the last revaluation.

Steve Wyatt explained that revenue neutral does include normal growth. He expects to know the new tax valuation and the amount of increase for 2008 by March 15, 2007.

Selena Coffey then talked about TRE with the Board (Tax Rate Equivalent). A "TRE" is a measure of the relative impact of a function, department, agency, or project on the existing tax rate. It is also the amount of money one penny or a fraction of a penny brings in at the 97% collection rate.

So, under our current tax rate, 1 TRE equals \$907,931, ½ TRE equals \$453,966, and ¼ TRE equals \$226,983. This is important because the property tax is the County's primary discretionary revenue source and the TRE quantifies the amount required to be levied to fund a function, department, agency or project on the existing tax rate.

Alternative Revenues

Carey McLelland reminded the Board that in December 2006, the Alternative Revenue Task Force recommended that the County seek legislative approval to increase sales tax in Henderson County by ½ cent, and to institute a 0.5% Land Transfer Tax. The ½ cent sales tax increase is estimated to produce \$4.4 million in additional revenues. The 0.5% Land Transfer Tax is estimated to produce \$5.3 million in additional revenues.

The Board of Commissioners cannot levy an additional sales tax. The Board of Commissioners cannot levy a land transfer tax. The Board of Commissioners cannot levy impact fees. It would take an action of the General Assembly to authorize any of these alternatives to the property tax.

Carey McLelland then discussed debt service and showed graphs. At the end of FY 06, Henderson County had \$8,396,180 in debt service. Our legal debt capacity limit is \$626.8 million.

Medicaid Growth in Henderson County

Selena Coffey explained that our TRE for Medicaid in Henderson County is 6 cents. We saw a 12.05% growth from the 06 budget to the 07 budget. In the FY 07 budget \$5,467,024 was budgeted for Medicaid.

Selena Coffey also stated that from 1997 to 2001 our general population was growing at a rate more than school enrollment. When you look at 2002 school enrollment, it outpaces general population growth. Since then it has gone up and down but now school enrollment is outpacing general county population growth.

Future Financial Commitments as of January 31, 2007

These are all 2006 Strategic Plan Initiatives:

- Minimum Housing Code Enforcement
- Sedimentation & Erosion Control Program and Enforcement
- Stormwater Management Enforcement
- Flood Hazard Prevention Enforcement
- Etowah Library
- Tuxedo Library & Park
- Edneyville Park
- Land Development Code Objectives

Selena Coffey also explained that the following are things the Board has committed to in the up-coming year:

- Compensation & Benefits
- Sugarloaf Elementary School
- Dana Elementary School, Phase II
- Mills River Elementary School
- Hillandale Elementary School
- Mental Heath
- Energy Costs
- Strategic Plan Initiatives (TBD)
- Capital Improvement Plan (TBD)

Break

Chairman Moyer called a 15 minute recess.

Capital Improvements Plan – FY 2008-2019

Steve Wyatt explained that this is a work in progress and has a 12-year time period corresponding with 3 revaluation cycles. This plan is inclusive of all departments receiving county appropriations.

Denny Martin explained that all the projects are ranked in 3 priority levels:

- Highest Priority – Mandated, Critical or Certain
- Second Priority – Necessary to Maintain Service Levels
- Lowest Priority – Needed to Enhance Service Levels

The Plan was divided into four capital classifications: Capital improvements, vehicles, reoccurring equipment, and non-reoccurring equipment.

Cost estimates were listed in current dollars. An estimate of any new operating costs associated with proposed capital costs were included. Grants were taken out of the cost estimates.

The CIP was started in July and they proposed to finish up with the final CIP in February 2007.

The total value of the draft CIP equals \$339.4 million. Value broken down by revaluation cycles:

FY 2008-2011	\$181.4 million
FY 2012-2015	76.4 million
FY 2016-2019	81.6 million

The value of the improvements by classification were:

Capital Improvements	\$278.5 million
Vehicles	19.1 million
Reoccurring Equipment	37.3 million
Non-reoccurring Equipment	3.2 million
Studies	1.3 million

Denny Martin also broke them down by value to each department:

Henderson County Schools	\$175,340,591	51.7%
BRCC	66,258,439	19.5%
Sheriff	28,066,471	8.3%
Emergency Management	10,819,500	3.2%
Detention Center	10,802,595	3.2%
Solid Waste	8,461,288	2.5%
Library	6,916,400	2.0%
Recreation	5,564,238	1.6%
Cane Creek District	5,079,312	1.5%
Central Services	4,903,800	1.4%
Information Technology	3,931,350	1.2%
EMS	3,588,800	1.1%
Social Services	2,821,073	0.8%
Elections	2,065,000	0.6%
Health Department	1,215,035	0.4%
Animal Services	1,213,100	0.4%
All other Departments	2,330,437	0.6%

Denny Martin reviewed the largest projects, those over \$2.0 million with proposed dates from staff:

Mud Creek Interceptor, Phase 2	\$2.0 million	2008
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Mud Creek Interceptor, Phase 3	2.3 million	2009
Central Services Garage	3.5 million	2012
Detention Center Expansion	10.5 million	2009
Voting Equipment	2.0 million	2017
EMS Communications Upgrade	10.0 million	2010
Fletcher Library	3.2 million	2009
Main Library Upgrade	2.0 million	2010
Soccer Complex	2.1 million	2009
Other Jackson Park Improvements	2.0 million	2008-10
Law Enforcement Center	8.5 million	2008
Firearms/Driving Training Center	1.5 million	2011
3 rd Solid Waste Transfer Station	2.0 million	2016
BRCC Land Purchase	2.0 million	2008
BRCC Physical Education Center	17.2 million	2008-9
BRCC Workforce Dev./Lifelong Learning	9.9 million	2011
BRCC Land Purchase	3.3 million	2012
Dana School Completion	2.5 million	2008
Mills River School	15.8 million	2008
Hillandale School	16.7 million	2008
Apple Valley Middle Expansion	4.5 million	2009-10
North Henderson High Expansion	4.5 million	2009-10
Etowah/Atkinson Expansions	3.0 million	2009-10
Schools Transportation Center	4.0 million	2009-10
Edneyville/Bruce Drysdale Expansions	7.0 million	2011-12
Hendersonville Elementary Expansion	4.0 million	2011-12
Marlow Elementary Expansion	1.5 million	2013
New Middle School	25.0 million	2013
Atkinson Elementary Expansion	2.5 million	2015-16
New High School	42.0 million	2016
Total =	\$218.3 million	

Denny Martin then reviewed a summary of the highest priority projects:

FY 2008 Projects	\$37,951,000
FY 2009-2012 Projects	69,173,000
FY 2013-2016 Projects	77,710,000
FY 2017-2020 Projects	2,892,000
Total =	\$187,726,000

Denny Martin stated that \$339 million worth of projects in 12 years may be too burdensome. The projects are heavily concentrated in period one or 2008-2012. He also stated that there is inconsistency among departments as to how they rated their highest priority projects. The costs are in current dollars so over a 12 year period those numbers will change radically. It is difficult for departments to envision long-term needs. They have a clearer vision of the short-term needs. Associated new re-occurring expenses are yet to be determined. The CIP should be reviewed and revised annually to realize it's greatest value.

Carey McLelland reviewed the current capital outlay and debt trends. He explained that every one cent of new taxes levied will buy \$1,089,517 in real capital outlay dollars or can leverage \$10.9 million in financing proceeds at current rates for 20 years. Actual debt service as a percentage of total General Fund

Expenditures is currently 11.4% (15% debt policy maximum). Actual outstanding debt as a percentage of total assessed property tax value is currently 1.1% (3% debt policy maximum).

Denny Martin explained an incremental approach for capital investment as a starting point for board discussion:

- Establish the Commission's priorities
- Spread the investments over more time
- Set 4-year goals for total investments and new revenues for capital
- Begin with identified "Highest Priority" projects

If the Board sees this as a good approach, then Denny felt that the first thing to look at would be what department heads and county funded agencies have considered as highest priority projects. Staff wanted to get some sense of the Board of Commissioners' priorities:

Physical Education Facilities	BRCC	\$1,290,000	(debt service, phase I)
Sewer Improvements	Cane Creek District	50,000	
Courthouse Repairs	Central Services	20,000	
Equipment	Detention Center	63,700	
Vehicles	Detention Center	45,000	
Cardiac Monitors	EMS	175,000	
Computers for Clinic Area	Health Department	22,000	
ADA Improvements	County Schools	40,800	
Doors/Keys Replacements	County Schools	91,900	
Dana, Mills Rover, Hillandale	County Schools	34,994,000	
Wastewater Systems	County Schools	75,000	
Fencing	Recreation	10,000	
Bomb Squad Equipment	Sheriff	10,000	
Drying Cabinets Sheriff	Sheriff	12,000	
Radio Replacements	Sheriff	800,000	
Forensic Fuming Cabinet	Sheriff	8,000	
Trucks	Solid Waste	75,000	
Turnoff Lane, Stoney Mtn. Rd	Solid Waste	75,000	
Loader	Solid Waste	89,900	
Appliances	Youth Programs	3,400	
Total =		\$37,950,700	

As Commissioners discussed these items, they did not give BRCC a high priority and removed that item from the 2008 list. The Board had already dealt with Dana, Mills River, and Hillandale schools. Chairman Moyer felt that the Board only wanted to deal with items over \$500,000. Other items should be handled by staff and placed into the budget as recommendations to the Board. The only item left that qualified for Board discussion was \$800,000 for Sheriff's Department Radio Replacements. Sheriff Davis explained that they are facing a federal mandate and will have to replace almost 100% of their radios. The timeline is somewhat flexible and it can be phased in. Sheriff Davis stated that there are monies available to offset some of that cost, as well as grants. It was the consensus of the Board to approve this as a phased in program and to pursue grants and alternative revenue sources to help with funding. Sheriff Davis and Steve Wyatt were directed to work on a phase-in together.

Highest Priority Projects FY 2009-2012

Denny Martin reviewed only those with the Board that cost \$500,000 or more as follows:

Killian Library Expansion	BRCC	\$1,000,000
Patton Auditorium	BRCC	500,000
Physical Education Facilities	BRCC	15,910,000
Workforce Dev./Lifelong Learning	BRCC	9,890,000
Jail Expansion	Detention Center	10,470,000
Building Repairs	County Schools	1,505,000
Apple Valley, N. Henderson, Etowah, Atkinson, Transportation Center, Edneyville, B. Drysdale, Hendersonville	County Schools	27,200,000
E-911 Positron	Sheriff	780,000

It was the consensus of the Board to move the BRCC projects out farther, work with BRCC and maybe do one or two of these by 2012 but certainly not all of them. Chairman Moyer had talked with Sheriff Davis about the program on illegal immigration and as a result of that there would have to be some changes made to the detention center. Sheriff Davis stated that we could recoup monies for federal bed space, if we could get that illegal immigration program up and running. Another county is actually getting almost 100% pay back for a similar program. Sheriff Davis felt that the \$10 million for jail expansion would have to be re-evaluated in a couple of years, after getting the illegal immigration program up and running.

There was then discussion regarding the county schools need for \$27 million. It was suggested that the Joint Facilities Committee work on this and rank it. Chairman Moyer suggested the Board of Commissioners designate an amount that Henderson County can afford to spend on school facilities and then the School Board come up with their priorities based on the budget allowance. Chairman Moyer stated that after the Board gets a draft of the 12-year Capital Plan and the Board sees what they will be spending in 2008-09 and 2009-10, then to see how much is reasonable for schools and give a tolerance figure to the schools. The Board was in agreement.

Sheriff Davis addressed the E-911 Positron, it's a needed upgrade. It would automate some things in dispatch. The Director requested it and stated that the systems we are currently using are out-dated. The Sheriff's recommendation would be to utilize the 911 surcharge to offset this cost.

Chairman Moyer stated that we are now at a critical point as to whether to continue with a plan for recreation and libraries of having a highly concentrated library/park in the center of town or whether to move to a plan where more of it is distributed out to the communities. He felt that we need to develop a comprehensive plan for both parks and libraries for 10-12 years out. It was his recommendation to authorize and direct the County Manager to start to develop those two plans so that they could then be worked into the priority projects.

Following much discussion, *Chairman Moyer made the motion to authorize the County Manager, in the parks area, to move expeditiously once we get the new person, to come up with a 10-12 year capital plan for parks. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

Denny Martin looked quickly at the two last revaluation cycles and stated that the most expensive highest priority projects were again for Schools and the Sheriff's Department.

Chairman Moyer asked if there were any other major projects that needed to be discussed. Steve Wyatt explained that a new Law Enforcement Center was a major project worthy of discussion and prioritization by the Board. Sheriff Davis stated that his staff are currently located in five different buildings/locations. Much discussion followed. There was a mix of feelings among the Commissioners regarding the priority of a new Law Enforcement Center. There were three votes to treat it more like a school and begin a planning process for a new law enforcement center, Commissioners Messer, McGrady, and Young.

Lunch

A brief recess was called for lunch.

Strategic Plan

Approximately 1:30 p.m. Selena Coffey reminded everyone of the process that was used to develop a strategic plan. In August we started a process to begin some input sessions. They were all held at the County Office Building, were taped, and televised on Channel #11. During the whole month of August we ran an on-line survey (e-survey) for anyone to respond to. The Commissioners were given the survey results as well as an executive summary of all the input sessions (meetings as well as the on-line survey). At that time the Commissioners got a workbook and were asked many questions. At the end of the workbook was a summary tabulation. Staff took those results and tabulated them. Staff then met with individual Commissioners and asked for their top three priorities.

Selena Coffey explained that the goal for today was for the Board to give direction as to which items they wished staff to develop meaningful action plans for and bring them back to the Board. Staff would also have the resources listed that are necessary to accomplish those goals, a calendar of when to accomplish them, and who is responsible for them.

It was the consensus of the Board that anything that is in the current strategic plan be carried forward, many are on-going. Some of those listed were: minimum housing code, spay and neuter program, illegal immigration, industrial park, implement air quality protection initiatives.

Selena Coffey reviewed the items on Priority 4, 5, and 6 with the Commissioners. Commissioners pulled the following to go on the list for meaningful action plans:

- Increase cost-effectiveness of county government
- Improve government accountability
- Regulate land use/development restrictions/aesthetic standards/billboard regulations/provide Countywide zoning (“not spot zoning”) **will accomplish as part of Land Dev. Code**
- Do more long-range school capital planning/Construct larger school buildings
- Enforce nuisance ordinance (manage abandoned cars, trailers, junk, trash, etc.)
- Need more job opportunities (high pay/good jobs/more jobs)
- Develop and enforce a local Erosion and Sedimentation Control program
- Address unregulated building/manage growth while preserving small town atmosphere/control overdevelopment **part of Land Development Code**
- Funding for Mills River & Hillandale Elementary Schools
- Promote farmland preservation/Address loss of agriculture land to development **part of CCP**
- Implement an Emergency Communications System Upgrade
- Recruit environmentally “clean” industry/business
- Improve recycling program
- Encourage “green”/energy efficient construction

- Fund crime prevention programs/Better cooperation between jurisdictions in combating crime and illegal drugs **better as an issue for the Sheriff's Department**
- Improve & fund mental health services
- Develop a funding formula for schools and community college **with the School Board**
- Fund the construction of the Tuxedo Park.
- Fund the construction of the Tuxedo Library
- Provide proper maintenance of County facilities **on-going**
- Increase funding for public school operational issues (i.e. class-size reduction initiatives, teacher pay, local supplements, personnel, instructional equipment, food services, etc.)
Combine with funding formula above
- Implement water quality initiatives
- Develop a long term solid waste plan
- Support (fund) youth programs, including at-risk programs, child daycare subsidy, and coordination of children and family services **\$3.8 million in state monies in budget**
- Increase funding for parks and recreation/parks maintenance **develop a plan**
- Encourage "green"/energy efficient construction
- Protect the county's mountains and ridges
- Address affordable housing (not enough of)/Land and housing prices/housing trust fund
- Develop and enforce a minimum housing code
- Improve animal services/Implement a spay-neuter program/manage animal population/Develop Animal Services Volunteer and Animal Cruelty Program
- Construct a law enforcement center
- Address illegal immigration
- Encourage public input in county government
- Construct an industrial park
- Provide fair tax appraisals and reappraisals
- Implement air quality protection initiatives
- Support (and fund) the county's human service non-profits
- Address emergency operations/Establish a local crisis center/emergency shelter/Construct a new Emergency Operations Center
- Develop and implement Cost Recovery Plan
- Do better parks planning

Discussion followed on the above items. Staff will come back with a draft of priorities and action steps with specific measurable steps for the above pulled items by the first meeting in March, March 12, 2007.

Recess

Chairman Moyer called a 10-minute recess about 3:00 p.m.

Wrap-up

Chairman Moyer stated that this was the time for questions from Commissioners or for discussion of items that haven't been covered and direction to staff.

Chairman Moyer started with one issue regarding Capital Projects – Edneyville Park. He mentioned additional phases of the park. Selena Coffey stated that it was covered during the presentation this morning on future financial commitments. There was no monetary number assigned to it but it is listed.

Chairman Moyer stated that he is willing for the phases to become part of the Parks & Recreation Plan that needs to be developed yet.

Commissioner McGrady stated that we are participating in the United Committee/Agenda for Children. He asked what it means tangibly to be involved with that. Steve Wyatt stated that the request for next year is \$50,000 and \$50,000 in the following year. We have made no commitment to them, other than that they can work through the budget process like others do. This has evolved from the Strategic Plan for Children from some years ago. More recently the departments have assisted in an update of the Plan. After discussion, it was decided to add this to the next draft for action plans and steps.

Commissioner Williams stated that he felt it was important that the Commissioners do all they can from an economic development standpoint to retain existing businesses.

Commissioner Williams also brought up the issue of soccer fields and felt we should at least look at the alternatives regarding the use of school fields. He stated that some farmers would be willing to volunteer time and their heavy equipment to level the fields to help make the existing fields better than they are now.

Chairman Moyer mentioned economic development and that some counties economic development incentives only apply to new businesses. Several years ago Henderson County decided that retention would be a big part of our economic development program.

Commissioner Young had nothing to add.

Commissioner Messer had nothing but thanked the Department Heads for attending the retreat today. He talked about how it takes everyone working together to make things happen, staff, employees, management, and commissioners.

Commissioner McGrady mentioned the problem with old mobile home junkyards and that we need to deal with them and with the enforcement of the Nuisance Ordinance.

Toby Linville stated that some counties have a grant program where they assist low income folks with removal of old mobile homes. Buncombe County does. It costs between \$1,300 and \$2,000 each to have a qualified mover remove these old mobile homes.

Steve Wyatt thanked staff for the work they had done to prepare for this retreat, particularly Selena Coffey, Carey McLelland and Amy Brantley. He also thanked the Board for their perseverance and their attention to these matters.

Chairman Moyer thanked Steve and staff and stated that the next session to look at these issues would be sometime about mid-March

Adjourn

Chairman Moyer adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Attest:

Elizabeth W. Corn, Clerk to the Board

William L. Moyer, Chairman