

**PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
APRIL 29, 2013**

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a joint meeting with the City Council of Elizabeth City on Monday, April 29, 2013 in the Albemarle Hospital Education Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeff Dixon, Chairman
Joseph S. Winslow, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Lloyd E. Griffin, III
Cecil Perry
Dr. William R. Sterritt
Frankie Meads

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Gary G. White (*Out of Town*)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Rodney Bunch, Interim County Manager
R. Michael Cox, County Attorney
Sheri Small, Finance Officer
Karen Jennings, Clerk to the Board

Also present were the Mayor, members of the City Council, the City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk and several city department heads.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman Jeff Dixon and Mayor Joe Peel who welcomed everyone present. The Boards observed a moment of silence and Mayor Peel led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

1. UPDATE ON MIDDLE SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT:

City Manager Rich Olson explained that the city and county entered into an interlocal agreement to jointly share the responsibility of renovating the first floor of the former Elizabeth City Middle School building. He said a \$500,000 CDBG grant has been awarded for the project and the city and county have each pledged \$75,000 in matching funds to bring the total funding for the project to \$650,000. He stated that as they got further into the project they realized, due to the nature of the repairs, that an outside consultant needed to be hired to help put together the bid package and also to address a number of issues with the electrical and the HVAC systems. Mr. Olson said the city and county jointly entered into an agreement with Hyman & Robey and a sub-consultant, Richard Klein, to do the design work associated with the middle school project. He stated that the work has been completed by Hyman & Robey and they are here to give an overview and to raise some questions concerning the budget for the proposed project.

Mr. Sean Robey provided an update on the first floor renovation project and outlined some of the key points the renovation will address. He said the project scope is about 24,000 square feet and due to budget constraints does not include the former cafeteria area which is about 6,000 square feet. He detailed the scope of work including: ADA compliance; cosmetic improvements; access restrictions; electrical supply concerns; heating & air conditioning concerns; mold remediation; repair work for the windows; and repair work to the exterior cornice. Mr. Robey stated that it is currently estimated that the repairs will cost \$750,000 to \$800,000. He said the cornice work alone will cost between \$40,000 and \$50,000, but needs to be done to prevent further structural damage.

Mr. Olson said since the budget has grown from \$650,000 to \$800,000 the city has contacted the Division of Community Investment to inquire about possible de-obligated grant funds and they are in the process of making a formal request for additional funds for this project. He stated that when the project was started, the city and county each obligated \$75,000 and it was pretty obvious at that time that there was no additional local money available for the project. He added that additional sources of revenue will need to be found for this project. He said since the project is so far along he would recommend that it be put out for bids in order to determine the exact shortfall while the city continues to look for additional funding sources.

Mr. Robey advised that the bid packets should be ready to send out in two or three weeks and he should know the budget for the project by late June.

2. APPROVAL OF CHANGE IN AEDC BYLAWS:

Economic Developer Wayne Harris explained that the Albemarle Economic Development Commission has proposed several changes in its bylaws that need to be approved by the City Council and the Board of Commissioners. The proposed changes are as follows:

- Change the name from Albemarle Economic Development Commission to Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission to better reflect the geographic region that the commission serves and the two entities that provide its financial support.
- Change the number of ex-officio members to eleven, deleting the Camden County position since Camden is no longer a member.
- Change the voting member position for Capital Campaign Advisory Council Chairman to owner or senior executive of an organization ranked among the area's top non-retail employers subject to the approval of the full Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission.
- Change wording that meetings will be held on the 4th Wednesday of the month to meetings will be held monthly.

Motion was made by Lloyd Griffin, seconded by Joe Winslow to approve the amended bylaws for the Economic Development Commission as presented. The motion carried 6-0.

The City Council also approved the changes in the bylaws.

3. UPDATE ON VISION 2020:

Mayor Peel provided a brief update on Vision 2020. He explained that in January nine action teams were established to work on the nine different areas identified by the steering committee. He said these committees are comprised of about 120 people. He said the committees have been working hard and are creating a lot of energy and one of the committees has applied for a \$20,000 grant. The Waterfront Committee is receiving funds from the Committee of 100 to hire a consultant to look at the waterfront. Last week the K-12 Education Committee conducted two community meetings which involved over 100 people. Mayor Peel said there is an online education survey available on the city's website. He advised that tomorrow the Business Climate Committee will meet and will probably finish its work. This committee will provide ten recommendations for changing policies and procedures to improve the business climate. Mayor Peel stated that the committees are working hard and are generating a lot of interest.

4. INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR COLLECTION OF TAXES:

County Attorney Mike Cox explained that in 1989 the city and county signed an agreement for the county to collect taxes, special assessments, and motor vehicle taxes on behalf of the city. He said there have been three amendments to the agreement over the years and he has combined them all into one document. He stated that an issue has arisen regarding tax foreclosures. He explained that if a bank is involved the bank will generally step in and pay the taxes because it does not want to lose the property if it has a mortgage on it. If there is a judgment holder, they will often step in. Mr. Cox pointed out if there is no lien on the property besides city and county taxes, there is a process by which the property would be advertised and the city or county would bid enough for the property to cover the taxes. He said if it is a city property, the county does not want to bid and own property within the city because it would be subject to the city's code enforcement. Mr. Cox stated that there has been an unwritten agreement for years that the city would bid on property in the city and the county would bid on property outside of the city. Mr. Cox said currently if the county bids on a property that is within the city limits, the county can withhold the taxes. He said this is not good for the city because the city is not getting its taxes and the county does not want to own the property. He proposed when there is a parcel of property in the city coming up for sale that the City Manager and City Finance Director be notified so they might bid on the property.

City Manager Rich Olson said under State Statute he can only bid on a property if he has the authority to do so if the cost is over \$5,000. He stated that he would like for it to be incorporated in the agreement that the county will deduct whatever the city owes up to the tax value and then

the property is titled in the city's name. He noted that this should take care of both the city's issues and the county's issues and he won't have to come to the Courthouse for a tax sale.

Mr. Cox added that DMV is preparing to begin collecting vehicle taxes for counties. Mr. Olson said this should result in a higher collection percentage. It was noted that due to software problems, this may be delayed.

Mr. Cox said he will work on language to include in the tax collection agreement specifying that the county will deduct the taxes the city owes for tax foreclosure sales in the city and then title the property in the city's name.

5. BUDGET IMPACT OF INTERLOCAL AGREEMENTS:

Mr. Olson explained that there are a number of joint city-county operations for which there are either interlocal agreements, contracts, or other types of agreements. He listed the jointly operated or funded agencies and departments. He said tonight's meeting is the last joint city-county meeting that will be held this fiscal year and both are in the process of preparing their budgets for the next fiscal year. He noted that under the agreements Pasquotank County is required to provide the city with a draft budget by April 1 of each year and thus far the city has not received any budget numbers for FY 2013-14.

Mr. Olson stated that after talking with county officials it appears that the county does not desire to fund a number of items in the Parks & Recreation capital budget, including a stadium, a multi-purpose field and a dog park. Several members of City Council explained that the stadium and multi-purpose field are badly needed, especially for kids who do not have transportation to other available facilities, such as River Road, South Park, and the high schools. Interim County Manager Rodney Bunch noted that once the Elizabeth Street Project is completed, the area behind the old Elizabeth City Middle School will be available for recreational use.

6. COMMENTS FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND CITY COUNCILORS:

Chairman Dixon and Mayor Peel asked for comments from Commissioners and Council members. Commissioner William Sterritt stated that everyone should not get too fixated on the property on Elizabeth Street and said other organizations have expressed an interest in the property. He said the county owns that land, so anything could happen with the property. He added that what the city is proposing is a good idea, but there are other things in the works.

Vice-Chairman Joe Winslow said it was a pleasure to be here tonight and he thanked the city for hosting the meeting and dinner. He stated that he believes the city and county can work together so that no child in the county goes without.

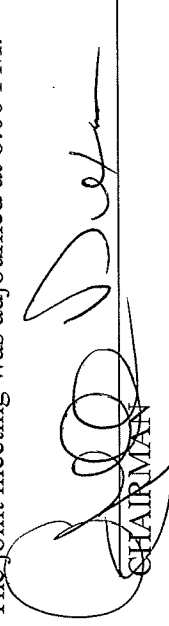
Commissioner Frankie Meads stated that some private schools and churches have summer basketball camps and soccer camps and they will pick up children and carry them to their gyms so they can participate in sports. He said these churches do not discriminate and are trying to help the community and make a difference.

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin advised that the Hospital RFP Committee will have its final site visit this Thursday. He said the process is moving forward and by the end of the year an agreement should be in place.

Councilwoman Jean Baker reported that she attended a few events lately that everyone should support, including the symphony at ECSU last week and Roc-a-Block. She said there are also some upcoming ribbon-cuttings and events and she encouraged everyone to attend.

Councilman Ray Donnelly requested that no one lose sight of the need for a stadium at least some time in the near future.

Mayor Peel thanked everyone for coming night. The joint meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.


CHAIRMAN


CLERK TO THE BOARD