MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF GUILFORD COUNTY
Greensboro, North Carolina
February 6, 2014

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed regular meeting on February 6, 2014 at 5:30 PM, in the Commissioners’ Meeting Room, 301 W. Market St., Greensboro; North Carolina.

PRESENT: Chairman Bill Bencini, presiding; Vice Chairman Hank Henning; Commissioners Jeff Phillips, Carolyn Q. Coleman (arriving at 5:53 PM), Kay Cashion, Linda O. Shaw, Alan Branson, and Raymond Trapp.

ABSENT: Commissioner Bruce Davis.

ALSO PRESENT: Marty Lawing, County Manager; Mark Payne, County Attorney; Robin Keller, Clerk to the Board; Michael Halford, Budget Director; Reid Baker, Finance Director; Delanie Poteat, Interim Property Management Director; Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director; Ben Chavis, Tax Director; Robert Williams, DSS Director; Jeff Fowler, Security Director; Paul Lowe, Deputy Clerk to the Board; Thomas Marshburn, Parks Operations Manager; and members of the media and community.

I. INVOCATION

Board Chaplin presented the invocation.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Bencini led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bencini called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM.

IV. PROCLAMATION DECLARING FEBRUARY 7, 2014 as NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

Commissioner Cashion read the Proclamation and presented it to Angelina Meeks of Guilford County DSS, Chair of the Employee’s Incentive Council.
Ms. Meeks accepted the proclamation and thanked the Commissioners for taking the time to bring attention to the issue of women’s health in the County. Meeks issued a challenge to all women in Guilford County to take ownership over their health and work to implement exercise into their daily routines.

V. SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR (Each speaker will be allowed three minutes to address the Board. Speakers from the Floor will last for a maximum of 30 minutes.)

Marian Stafford, President of the Greensboro Regional Realtors Association, addressed the Board. Stafford provided statistics regarding the state of the housing market in the Triad. Stafford shared that homes are selling more quickly as the economy gradually improves.

Chairman Bencini thanked Ms. Stafford for sharing the positive news with the Board.

Andy Stevens spoke regarding recent alternations made by the NC General Assembly which impact how firearms are regulated in parks throughout the State. Stevens urged the Board to consider allowing guns in all areas of the County Park System.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Bencini asked if any of the Commissioners would like to remove any items from the consent agenda for separate consideration.

Commissioner Phillips stated that he wanted to pull VI.A.1.

Removed from Consent Agenda

A. BUDGET AMENDMENTS

1. Approve the amendment / establishment to the three capital project ordinances outlined in the budget action below in the amount of $15,013,000 to reflect the BOC’s first three priority capital projects from the updated FY 2014 - 2023 Capital Investment Plan (See Attached Project Ordinances). NO ADDITIONAL COUNTY FUNDS REQUIRED.

B. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Adopt resolution ordering the advertisement of the delinquent 2013 tax liens on real property.
2. Approve the following minutes:

   11/21/13 Closed Session (Approve and Unseal)
   01/09/14 Regular Meeting
   01/10/14 Family Justice/Crisis Resource Center Feasibility Committee
   01/16/2014 & 1/17/2014 - Commissioners Annual Retreat
Motion was made by Commissioner Linda O. Shaw, and seconded by Commissioner Trapp to approve VI. CONSENT AGENDA.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 – 0.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Commissioner B. Davis.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

A1. Approve the amendment / establishment to the three capital project ordinances outlined in the budget action below in the amount of $15,013,000 to reflect the BOC's first three priority capital projects from the updated FY 2014 - 2023 Capital Investment Plan (See Attached Project Ordinances). NO ADDITIONAL COUNTY FUNDS REQUIRED.

Commissioner Phillips expressed concerns regarding the costs associated with the Law Enforcement Special Operations Building.

The facility which would be operated by the Guilford County Sheriff’s Department would cost about $3,000,000 to construct and outfit.

Commissioner Phillips stated that the proposed Budget Ordinance presented to the Board was not consistent with past updates provided by the Sheriff’s regarding the proposal. Phillips commented that he was more comfortable with a project cost of about $2,300,000 to complete the facility.

Michael Halford, Budget Director, provided an update to the Board. Halford stated that the requested $3,000,000 included in the Budget Ordinance represented a rough estimate to develop the facility.

Commissioner Phillips thought the County should take more care to fully understand the costs associated with the project.

Chairman Bencini asked Halford if he and his staff could provide a more detailed report regarding the costs associated with constructing the facility.

Halford stated that funds would have to be appropriated to complete a study to determine the exact costs associated with the project.

Chairman Bencini thought the project could be funded in phases to ensure that costs could be fully understood and controlled.

Commissioner Coleman agreed with Bencini’s proposal and suggested that the County put the project out to bid- as to get the best possible price for the facility. Coleman also commented that
if Commissioners were in disagreement regarding the overall cost of the project- that preliminary design work could be conducted to fully understand the complexities of the proposed facility.

Chairman Bencini asked how much the design work would cost the County.

Halford shared that the design phase of the project would cost the County between $50,000-$100,000.

Commissioner Phillips spoke in support of the proposal.

Chairman Bencini asked for clarification regarding the project.

Marty Lawing, County Manager, stated that the $3,000,000 request was a preliminary estimate. Lawing shared that a price range could be communicated with architects and designers to help control the costs associated with the facility.

Commissioners Coleman and Phillips commented that the estimates for the proposed facility should be lower because the County had already purchased the land from the former property owners. Both Commissioners asserted that the cost of the land seemed to be included in the proposed estimate.

Captain A.W. Caliendo, Special Operations- Guilford County Sheriff’s Department, addressed the Board. Caliendo shared that the proposed $3,000,000 estimate for the project came from an unsolicited quote from a construction company. Caliendo commented that the facility would have to be an “essential structure”- meaning that it would be required to meet additional safety and structural integrity standards which would increase the construction costs associated with the project.

Commissioner Phillips expressed his concerns with the cost estimates associated with the proposed facility.

Chairman Bencini asked the Sheriff’s Department staff to provide the Board with more specific information- so the Board could make an informed decision regarding the project.

Commissioner Coleman expressed her concerns with the project.

Chairman Bencini suggested tabling the issue.

Commissioner Branson expressed concerns with the suggestion to table the matter. Branson commented that the felt that the project was important and could be move along more quickly.

Chairman Bencini stated that it was the Sheriff’s Department’s responsibility to provide the Board with complete information to review.

Lawing suggested that the Board approve the design component of the project- so complete cost estimates could be developed.
Vice Chairman Henning expressed his support for the measure and suggested that the Board approve the Motion.

Commissioner Phillips asked when the current lease on the facility expired.

Halford stated that the lease ended in July 2014.

Commissioner Phillips asked how long the proposed facility would take to construct.

Captain Caliendo informed the Board that the facility would take between seven and nine months to construct.

Commissioner Trapp asked if the County had been in negotiations with an existing firm.

Caliendo shared that the Sheriff’s Department had been contact by a number of construction firms—one of which had submitted a proposal.

Commissioner Trapp expressed his concerns regarding how these preliminary conversations would impact the bid process. Trapp stated that he wanted to ensure that MWBE firms would be fairly considered in the bid review process.

Chairman Bencini commented that the Sheriff’s Department was simply trying to develop a baseline construction budget for the proposed facility.

County Attorney Mark Payne responding to Commissioner Trapp’s concerns stated that when a project is put out to bid the slate is wiped clean— as firms would have to participate in a new RFP process.

Commissioner Coleman suggested that a postponement could be considered. Coleman expressed concerns with moving forward with the project without having all of the pertinent information.

Commissioner Branson shared that the construction market is still soft and thought the bid process would be a competitive one— as many firms are still looking for additional work. Branson suggested that the County move forward with pursuing the project.

Chairman Bencini stated that though the Board still had questions regarding the Law Enforcement Special Operations project, Commissioners should pursue considering the other project ordinances under consideration.

Payne advised the Board that they could approve the other project ordinances addressed in a previous motion and amend the Law Enforcement Special Operations capital project ordinance to appropriate only $100,000 for design and architectural fees. Payne stated that the Board needed to pursue a substitute motion to take action on the proposal.
Commissioner Cashion expressed concerns with the costs associated with the proposed Special Operations facility. Cashion stated that an architect could help to design the facility within a set budgetary framework which would help to control costs.

Motion was made by Commissioner Jeff Phillips, and seconded by Commissioner Alan Branson to approve the amendment / establishment to the three capital project ordinances outlined in the budget action below in the amount of $15,013,000 to reflect the BOC's first three priority capital projects from the updated FY 2014 - 2023 Capital Investment Plan (See Attached Project Ordinances). NO ADDITIONAL COUNTY FUNDS REQUIRED.

A substitute Motion was made by Commissioner Jeff Phillips, and seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp to amend the previous motion to approve the amendment / establishment to the three capital project ordinances outlined in the budget action below in the amount of $15,013,000 to reflect the BOC's first three priority capital projects from the updated FY 2014 - 2023 Capital Investment Plan (See Attached Project Ordinances). NO ADDITIONAL COUNTY FUNDS REQUIRED.

And to amend the Law Enforcement Special Operations Budget Ordinance to fund only $100,000 for architectural and design fees.

VOTE: Motion carried 6 – 2.
NOES: Commissioners C. Coleman, A. Branson.
ABSENT: Commissioner B. Davis.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Adopt uniform rules, regulations, policies and fees for Bur-Mil, Gibson, Hagan-Stone, Northeast and Southwest Parks. These include the following documents: 2014 Park Fee Schedule; Uniform Park Rules and Regulations; Shelter Use Policy; Shelter Rental Agreement; Inflatable Moonwalk Rental Agreement and Release from Liability; Field Use Agreement; Catering Agreement; Clubhouse Policies; Clubhouse Lease Agreement; and a Clubhouse Rental Estimate.

Payne introduced the item and shared that his staff has been working collaboratively with the Parks and Recreation Commission as they work to amended and develop new policies and procedures for the Board to consider.

Chairman Bencini asked for clarification regarding language in the proposed regulations that addressed handguns in County Parks and Preserves.

Payne commented that the proposed alternations made by the Parks and Recreation Commission would move the County into compliance with recent changes with State law. Payne reviewed North Carolina general statutes regarding how handguns are regulated in parks across the State.
Vice Chairman Henning asked for clarification regarding how the County would enforce concealed-carried permits in parks and preserve lands under the proposed provisions.

Payne stated that the Board by considering the proposed alternations to County Park procedures would be adopting new State-wide standards which regulate guns. Payne shared that the County’s policies could not be more restrictive than the new State standards.

Vice Chairman Henning asked for clarification.

Payne commented that the Board was reviewing County-wide Park procedures. Payne shared that the Board would consider adopting measures which regulate guns mostly likely at the February 20th BOC meeting.

Commissioner Cashion asked for Payne to explain the differences between the procedures that the Board was currently considering versus what the Commissioners would be asked to review in the future regarding regulating guns in County parks and recreation facilities.

Payne shared that the proposed ordinance would be very similar to current County codes which regulate guns. Payne stated that it was staffs’ recommendation is for the County to adhere to the recent changes in State law while not expanding the number of locations where residents could bring firearms including recreation centers.

Vice Chairman Henning suggested that the Board consider all proposed alternations to County ordinances, rules, and procedures relating to the regulation of guns in parks and recreation centers at one meeting to limit confusion regarding the issue among Commissioners.

Payne stated that he did not see any problems with that proposal as Commissioners were considering amending park rules not County ordinances.

Vice Chairman Henning made a motion to table the consideration of policies regarding how guns are regulated at County parks until the next time the Commissioners considered the ordinance.

Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cashion stated that the Board needed additional information to make an informed decision on the matter.

Payne commented that the Board could pull the provisions regarding guns in County Parks and review them at the next BOC meeting. Commissioner Shaw asked what the level of urgency regarding the matter was.

Chairman Bencini suggested the Board move on Commissioner Henning’s motion to table the consideration of the portions of the proposed Park rules which regulate guns in County Parks for a later meeting.
Vice Chairman Henning clarified his motion to postpone - and amended it to remove the gun portion of the proposed Park rules - but would consider adopting the others.

Commissioner Phillips asked for clarification.

Payne stated that the definition for recreational facilities is defined by State statute.

Commissioner Coleman asked if picnic shelters are considered a recreational facility.

Payne commented that picnic shelters are not considered recreational facility.

Commissioner Coleman urged the Board to reach out to Guilford County’s delegation in the NC General Assembly to consider introducing changes to the State’s current regulations regarding guns.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Hank Henning, and seconded by Commissioner Jeff Phillips to table the measures regarding regulating guns in County parks and to adopt uniform rules, regulations, policies and fees for Bur-Mil, Gibson, Hagan-Stone, Northeast and Southwest Parks. These include the following documents: 2014 Park Fee Schedule; Uniform Park Rules and Regulations; Shelter Use Policy; Shelter Rental Agreement; Inflatable Moonwalk Rental Agreement and Release from Liability; Field Use Agreement; Catering Agreement; Clubhouse Policies; Clubhouse Lease Agreement; and a Clubhouse Rental Estimate.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 – 0.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Commissioner B. Davis.

Commissioner Shaw recognized Nichole Arnold, wife of former Commissioner Steve Arnold - who was attending the meeting.


Mr. Bob Cleveland, Aging Program Planner- Piedmont Triad Regional Partnership, shared County demographics with Commissioners. Cleveland stated that the County’s sixty and over population is expected to grow by about 161% between 1990 through 2030. Cleveland commented that services need to be implemented to assist seniors as they age. Cleveland shared that the most utilized service offered to citizens in the County was the in-home aid service - which allows seniors to age in place. Cleveland reviewed the various funding streams which supports the Commission on Aging’s programs. Cleveland stated that the Commission is currently serving fewer residents than they did in 2001. Cleveland commented that while funding levels have remained constant the increase in costs associated with offering health care services has resulted in the funding covering fewer residents. Cleveland shared that providing aging services to residents is more cost effective than institutionalization of the elderly.
Cleveland introduced Kim Johnson, Long Term Care Ombudsman- Piedmont Triad Regional Council. Johnson discussed the necessity of long term care facilities to serve the County’s citizens. Johnson shared with the Board the role of the Ombudsman- which includes providing oversight of long term care facilities found in the County. Johnson commented on the work of the Community Advisory Committee. Johnson stated over the last year the Committee had conducted over 140 site visits.

Cleveland commented that one of the goals of the Commission is to rethink how our community addresses aging and aging issues. Cleveland urged employers in the County to offer family friendly policies which allow employees to act as caregivers to relatives and spouses.

Meeting went into Recess at 7:00 PM.

Meeting Reconvened 7:15 PM.

C. **Hear Update on Guilford Workforce Development.**

Lillian Plummer, Executive Director of the Greensboro Workforce Development Board, addressed the Board. Plummer shared that the Board’s goal was to match job seekers with available openings in the County. Plummer stated that the majority of the members of her Board represented the private sector. Plummer commented that having insights from the business community was important to keep training programs which the Board offers current.

Plummer stated that the County operates two JobLink career centers- in High Point and Greensboro. Plummer shared that the two facilities served 28,000 and 19,000 customers respectfully during 2013.

Plummer commented that in 2011 the Employment Security Commission was integrated into the NC Department of Commerce. Plummer commented that a new integrated data system NC Works Online was launched on August 5, 2013. Plummer shared that the Board is looking to move more services online-so customers can access an array of services quickly and efficiently.

Ms. Plumber reviewed the demographics of individuals receiving services from the Workforce Development Board. Plummer shared that the new system more efficiently tracks customers’ outcomes while connecting residents to job openings. Plummer stated that the Board looks to match job training funding to growing sectors and employment clusters.

Commissioner Trapp asked Plummer what was the difference between advanced manufacturing and traditional manufacturing.

Plummer commented that advanced manufacturing positions require additional training and higher skill sets. Plummer stated that advanced manufacturing firms utilize computers and specialized equipment- more than traditional manufactures.

Commissioner Coleman asked for clarification regarding the hydro cluster program.
Plumber stated the program provides training opportunities for students who are attending school.

Commissioner Coleman asked if the Board had a program to train welders.

Ms. Plumber shared that the Board does train some welders, but due to capacity limitations they are limited to the number of individuals that could take advantage of the program. Plummer informed the Commissioners that GTCC is currently working on a project on High Point Road in Greensboro- which would expand the welding training program. Plummer shared that the Board works collaboratively with the Triad’s community colleges to offer courses and training. Plummer commented that the Board helps to train many nurses each year and works regionally with institutions to mitigate capacity issues.

Commissioner Coleman asked if there were any programs which assisted students with transportation when they were attending programs outside of the County.

Ms. Plumber shared that the individuals are utilizing their own vehicles and taking PART.

Plummer commented that the Board is able to send customers to private truck driving training schools when funding is available. Plumber stated that the Board provides customers $2,000 to attend private truck driving training programs.

Plummer shared that the Board worked with private businesses and four local community colleges to develop a machinist training program. Plummer stated that each school can train forty machinists each year. Plummer also commented that the Board worked with community colleges to develop remedial training programs to help customers improve their math and reading skills.

Plummer expressed concerns regarding recent legislation which was passed by the NC General Assembly, Senate Bill 73, which requires Workforce Development boards across the State to use a competitive selection process to award adult and dislocated worker services provider contracts. Plummer commented that the legislation requires Boards to separate operational and organizational components. Plummer stated that the law would eliminate about twenty jobs at the Guilford County Board.

Plummer thanked the Commissioners for their time and attentiveness.

D. New Business from County Commissioners

No new business was offered from any of the Commissioners.
E. Hear Recommendations from the Tax Committee and Consider the following Items: 1) Authorize staff to issue RFP for the purpose of bidding out the advertisement of the County's delinquent tax accounts to newspapers qualifying under N.C.G.S. 1-597 2) Approve the reduction of the County's early property tax payment discount rate from 1% to .5% to be applicable for the current tax year. 3) Approve modification of the County's tax reevaluation cycle from eight to five years starting in 2017.

Chairman Bencini stated that the Tax Committee had met and suggested the Board implement three proposals. Chairman Bencini then invited Ben Chavis, Tax Director, to address the Board.

Ben Chavis, Tax Director, shared the advertising costs associated with listing delinquent tax accounts from previous fiscal years with the Board. Chavis commented that the County spent a total of $97,949.96 to advertise the listings in three papers. Chavis explained that the Greensboro News and Record advertised all Guilford County parcels, while the Carolina Peacemaker printed listings found in Greensboro, and the High Point Enterprise listed parcels within High Point.

Chairman Bencini shared that the Tax Committee recommended bidding out the advertising of the delinquent tax accounts to one newspaper which offered the County the lowest price.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concerns with only listing the advertisements in one paper. Coleman asked for confirmation from the Chavis that the costs associated with advertising a parcel are placed on the tax bill sent to the property owner.

Chavis stated that Commissioner Coleman was correct that the costs associated with advertising a parcel are included in the property owner’s tax bill.

Commissioner Coleman commented that she thought the Board’s current system for advertising delinquent tax account worked well as all the areas of the County was reached by the three newspapers.

Chavis stated he was asked by the Board to provide the information regarding advertising costs.

Commissioner Coleman asked for clarification from Tax Committee members regarding the proposal.

Chairman Bencini shared that the Tax Committee recommended the change to reduce the burden placed on tax payers to advertise the delinquent tax accounts.

Coleman spoke in favor of the utilization of the three newspapers which the County currently utilizes to advertise delinquent tax accounts. Coleman stated that she thought the approach helped to reach a larger share of residents and assisted the County in collecting unpaid property taxes. Coleman expressed concerns regarding the proposed alternation.

Chairman Bencini stated that he thought advertising the properties did not help the County collect unpaid property taxes. Bencini commented that the County could meet its statutory requirement and save money by advertising the delinquent accounts in only one paper.
Commissioner Coleman asked if the County would consider contracting with two newspapers to advertise the listings. Coleman stated that she wanted to be fair to tax payers by printing the advertisements in newspapers which are located where tax payers reside.

Chairman Bencini stated that the Tax Committee recommended the County utilizing one paper to advertise the delinquent accounts.

Commissioner Trapp echoed Commissioner Coleman's concerns with pursuing a proposal to only publish the delinquent tax accounts in only one paper.

Commissioner Coleman urged the Board to consider a broader approach- which would be fairer to the citizens and tax payers.

Commissioner Shaw shared that delinquent taxpayers are notified by mail regarding the status of their tax account before the listings are advertised.

Commissioner Coleman stated that advertising the accounts helps the County to collect unpaid tax revenues.

Commissioner Cashion asked if the State statute requires the listings to be advertised in a newspaper. Cashion questioned how the

Payne shared the statutory requirements regarding advertising delinquent tax accounts with the Board. Payne stated that an RFP could be developed to collect information from the various publications to ensure that they meet the standard of a newspaper of general circulation.

Commissioner Cashion asked for clarification- so the selected publication does not have to be the newspaper with the largest circulation.

Payne commented that the publication that is selected to advertise the delinquent tax accounts simply had to be a newspaper of general circulation. Payne stated that all three of the newspapers that the County currently utilizes to list the parcels would qualify. Payne shared that there could be other newspapers in the County that meet the requirements. Payne commented that the County could obtain this information by reviewing the completed bids submitted by interested firms.

Commissioner Cashion stated that the alternation would be more cost effective, but would not reach all citizens of Guilford County.

Payne shared that the newspaper selected to run the advertisements- must be at least a weekly publication which had twenty six or more editions during the past twelve months.

Commissioner Cashion asked if the selected newspaper would be published in Guilford County.

Payne shared that staff would select a publication which was published in the County to advertise the delinquent tax accounts.
Commissioner Trapp thanked the Tax Committee for their work, but stated that he would be voting against the measure. Trapp commented that he did not see the utility of advertising the delinquent tax accounts in newspapers. Trapp shared that he thought the County should pursue placing the notices online. Trapp stated that he disagreed with the State statute which required local governments to print the notices in newspapers.

Commissioner Shaw suggested that the Board place the item on their legislative agenda.

Commissioner Phillips stated that he thought historically the purpose of the tax advertisement program was to manipulate citizens to pay their taxes. Phillips commented that he did not think that strategy was prudent. Phillips reviewed the costs associated with advertising the delinquent tax accounts. Phillips expressed his concern regarding the disparity in the costs which the various publications have charged the County in the past. Phillips shared his support for bidding out the advertising of the delinquent tax accounts.

Commissioner Coleman stated that she wanted the County to pursue advertising the delinquent tax accounts in at least two papers- to reach a larger number of Guilford County residents.

Chairman Bencini stated that Commissioner Coleman could offer a substitute motion regarding her proposal.

Commissioner Coleman urged the Board to ensure that the advertising program had a geographic balance. Coleman stated that she wanted to offer a substitute motion for the Board’s consideration.

Commissioner Cashion stated that she shared Commissioner Coleman’s concerns. Cashion commented that the Board could advertise in two papers which would provide geographic balance for about $16,000-$17,000.

Commissioner Trapp shared his mutual concern regarding the proposed alternations in the County’s delinquent tax listing program. Trapp stated that the County should ensure that a geographic balance is maintained in the advertising program.

Motion was made by Commissioner Carolyn Q. Coleman, and seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp to approve authorize staff to issue RFP for the purpose of bidding out the advertisement of the County's delinquent tax accounts to newspapers representing the County's Geographical make up as well as the two lowest responsible bidders qualifying under N.C.G.S. 1-597.

VOTE: Motion failed 3 – 5.
AYES: Commissioners C. Coleman, K. Cashion, R. Trapp.
ABSENT: Commissioner B. Davis.

Commissioner Coleman expressed her displeasure. Coleman stated that she wanted to ensure that the County was fair to tax payers.
Motion was made by Vice Chairman Hank Henning, and seconded by Commissioner Alan Branson to approve and authorize staff to issue a RFP for the purpose of bidding out the advertisement of the County's delinquent tax accounts to news papers qualifying under N.C.G.S. 1-597.2.

VOTE: Motion carried 6 – 2.
NOES: Commissioners C. Coleman, R. Trapp.
ABSENT: Commissioner B. Davis.

Chairman Bencini shared that the next item for consideration was a recommendation from the Tax Committee to lower the County’s discount rate. Bencini stated that the Commissioners had discussed the issue at the Board’s Retreat in High Point, but did not take any official action on the matter.

Commissioner Phillips reiterated that no large county in the State offered a discount to citizens who paid their property taxes early. Phillips estimated that the County would be able to save about $750,000 by reducing the discount rate. Phillips stated that some tax payers might consider the reduction a taking. Phillips commented that he wanted the Board to pursue reducing the County’s property tax rate by 0.0025% to mirror the alternation in the discount rate.

Motion was made by Commissioner Linda Shaw, and seconded by Commissioner Kay Cashion to approve the reduction of the County's early property tax payment discount rate from 1% to .5% to be applicable for the current tax year.

VOTE: Motion carried 7 – 1.
NOES: Commissioner R. Trapp.
ABSENT: Commissioner B. Davis.

Chairman Bencini introduced the final recommendation from the Tax Committee to reduce the County’s tax reevaluation cycle from eight to five years starting in 2017.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alan Branson, and seconded by Commissioner Linda O. Shaw to approve modification of the County's tax reevaluation cycle from eight to five years starting in 2017.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 – 0.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Commissioner B. Davis.

Commissioner Coleman out at 8:34 PM.
VIII. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Phillips spoke regarding the Workforce Development in the County. Phillips stated that the programs provided by the Workforce Development Board offer the citizens of Guilford County a wonderful opportunity. Phillips also wished Sheriff’ Barnes well during his recovery from a recent operation.

Vice Chairman Henning thanked junior achievement for inviting him to a recent event. Henning also wished Barnes a speedy recovery.

Commissioner Cashion shared that she had recently attended a Ralph Lauren job shadowing program. Cashion thanked Ralph Lauren for their support. Cashion updated the Board on her work on the NACO Family Justice-Public Safety Committee. Cashion advised the Commissioners regarding potential alternations to flood insurance rates. Cashion commented that she had recently attended a Greensboro Partnership meeting and a Sandhills Board meeting is coming up later in the month.

Commissioner Shaw stated that she also attended the Greensboro Partnership meeting. Shaw reiterated her suggestion that the Board reach out to the County’s representatives in Raleigh.

Commissioner Branson wished retiring Commissioners well and candidates for the open six congressional district the best of luck.

Commissioner Trapp spoke regarding the Family Nutrition Systems (FNS) report- which had recently been updated. Trapp commented that he was happy to see that the back-log in FNS applicants had been reduced. Trapp thanked Mr. Williams, DSS Director, for his Department’s efforts to address the issue. Trapp asked Williams when Medicaid was going to go online.

Williams stated that efforts to move Medicaid services online were currently delayed.

IX. COMMENTS FROM COUNTY MANAGER

A. Receive Manager’s Report For Month of January
B. Receive December Budget Performance Report

Lawing reviewed the updated FNS report. Lawing stated that DSS had worked with the State to implement alternations which improved the amount of applications which could processed by County staff. Lawing commended Williams and his staff for their hard work to get caught up. Lawing stated that recent changes at the State level including the troubled implementation of NC FAST contributed to the back-log in FNS applications.

The Board thanked Mr. Williams for his responsiveness and hard work.

Lawing reported that Guilford County’s AAA rating had recently been upheld and thanked Mr. Baker, Finance Director, and his staff their diligence.
Lawing shared that he had recently briefed the Alamance Board of County Commissioners regarding Project Haystack. Lawing commented that all of the five potential partners had been updated concerning the proposal. Lawing reported that the next step would be to develop an inter-local agreement between the concerned parties.

Chairman Bencini asked for clarification regarding how negotiations would be organized between the other local governments.

Lawing stated that process has not been fully developed as of yet. Lawing suggested that each of the County Managers and Board Chairman meet to discuss the matter further.

Commissioner Shaw asked staff to purchase new chairs for the Commissioner’s Chamber.

X. **SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR (Each speaker will be allowed three minutes to address the Board. Speakers from the Floor will last for a maximum of 30 minutes.)**

Andy Stevens, of Greensboro, addressed the Board. Stevens stated that he represented Grass Roots North Carolina. Stevens spoke in support of expanding gun-rights in North Carolina.

Vice Chairman Henning asked that County staff provide the Board with additional information regarding the recent alternations in State gun laws.

Payne stated that he could provide a memo with the requested information.

XI. **HOLD CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. §143-318.11 FOR THE PURPOSES OF: CONSULTING WITH THE COUNTY ATTORNEY, CONSIDERING THE ACQUISITION OR SALE OF PROPERTY, and DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER.**

Motion was made by Commissioner Linda O. Shaw, and seconded by Commissioner Jeff Phillips to enter close session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 for the purposes of: consulting with the County Attorney, considering the acquisition or sale of property, and to discuss a personnel matter.

**VOTE:** Motion carried 7 – 0.


**NOES:** None.

**ABSENT:** Commissioners B. Davis, C. Coleman.

Meeting went into Recess at 8:55 PM.

Meeting Reconvened at 9:12 PM.
Motion was made by Chairman Bill Bencini, and seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp to approve a 1% Merit increase in accordance with personnel regulations and the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee to tax Director, Ben Chavis.

VOTE: Motion carried 7 – 0.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Commissioners B. Davis, C. Coleman.

XII. ADJOURN

Motion was made by Commissioner Linda O. Shaw, and seconded by Vice Chairman Hank to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Motion carried 7 – 0.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Commissioners B. Davis, C. Coleman.

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Chairman

_____________________________
Deputy Clerk