

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN
RECONVENED ITS RECESSED REGULAR SESSION OF DECEMBER 5, 2005
ON DECEMBER 9, 2005 AT 8:35 A.M. IN JOINT SESSION WITH THE
CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION IN THE COMMISSIONERS'
ROOM OF THE CRAVEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 406
CRAVEN STREET, NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA.**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Perry L. Morris
Vice Chairman Johnnie Sampson, Jr.
Commissioner Lee Kyle Allen
Commissioner George N. Brown, Jr.
Commissioner Bill Harper
Commissioner M. Renée Sisk
Commissioner Leon C. Staton

STAFF PRESENT:

Harold Blizzard, County Manager
George B. Sawyer, Assistant County Manager
Richard F. Hemphill, County Finance Officer
Ray H. Moser, Human Resources Director
Gwendolyn M. Bryan, Clerk to the Board
James R. Sugg, County Attorney

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Carr Ipock
Vice Chairman Linda Thomas
Sidney French
Rebecca Kafer
Beatrice Smith
Kimberly Smith

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER ABSENT:

Joseph Walton

BOARD OF EDUCATION STAFF PRESENT:

William Rivenbark, Superintendent
David Clifton, Assistant Superintendent
Brian Gatchel, Attorney
Mary Alice Swindell, Secretary to the Board

Following an invocation, Chairman Ipock presented the concerns about the student population numbers in Craven County on behalf of the Board of Education. He advised the Board of Commissioners that SFL&A is doing a capacity study for the school system. Acquisition of property is needed in order for the Board of Education to be prepared to design schools and begin their development once the study is completed. He stated that the projected needs are as follows:

- a high school between New Bern and Havelock (he indicated that the Board has been discussing an option along that corridor with Weyerhaeuser)
- a middle school in the western part of the County (he indicated that the Board of Education has not begun to search for a location to date)
- an elementary school between New Bern and Havelock

Mr. Ipock stated that property has been identified in Carolina Colours for construction of the elementary school and the Board of Education is currently holding an option for the property; however, the developers are not interested in having a high school located in the vicinity. The current option is for 30 acres. Approximately 70 usable acres would be needed for a new high school. According to Mr. Ipock the site for a new middle school is likely to be between Bridgeton and Vanceboro; however, the study will show the best location. The goal size for each school will be determined as a result of the study, which

will also help determine any need for redistricting. Estimates for the new high school range from \$37 million to \$55 million, with building costs projected to increase by 10% in the coming year. It was stated that the Board of Education's only request at the present time is to acquire land. Approximately \$1 million would be needed for land for the elementary and the high school sites. As the concept of redistricting was discussed, Mr. Rivenbark asserted that it should be minimized in areas where population shifts may be temporary. He also stated that further mandated class size reductions will place additional strains on the number of classrooms and teachers. Commissioner Staton introduced discussion concerning the need for alternative schools and programs. Mr. Rivenbark said that facilities to support such a concept are an issue, with the old Bridgeton Elementary School having been suggested. He stated that facility would need a new roof if it is to be considered for use. Commissioner Staton indicated that he would support a feasibility study for transporting students to such a program if it were established as a magnet program. Mr. Ipock responded that part of the need is being met by the new early college/high school program, which is slated for fifty participants in the first year with a targeted maximum goal of 200. This program will test the magnet concept in Craven County. Discussion was also initiated concerning the feasibility of vocational programs in the schools. Mrs. Thomas stated that students have traditionally not enrolled. Commissioner Morris commented that the courses are spread out geographically and Commissioner Sisk suggested applying the magnet concept to vocational programs.

The Board of Education was asked by the Board of Commissioners to prioritize its property needs. Mr. Clifton stated that the needs for the land for the high school and the land for the elementary school are relatively equal; however, the developer at Carolina Colours, who has extended the option on the elementary school site, may not be willing to hold the option open much longer. The surrounding land is selling for double the price that has been offered in the option to the Board of Education. Mr. Blizzard stated that it would be most logical to act on the property acquisition for the elementary school first due to the fact that the property has been identified and that an option already exists. Commissioner Morris inquired if there are any contingency funds remaining from existing projects and Mr. Clifton responded that it is not likely. The Board was advised that the cost per acre on the option in Carolina Colours is \$12,500. Finance Officer, Rick Hemphill, stated that the total purchase price of \$375,000 could be advanced out of the Schools' Debt Service fund. The Board reached consensus to support the exercise of the option on the Carolina Colours property and expressed its intent to take action at its December 19 regular session.

At 10:15 a.m. the Board of Education adjourned and departed and the Board of Commissioners went into recess.

The Board reconvened at 10:30 a.m. and reviewed a presentation of the Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan prepared by the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at East Carolina University, led by Dr. Robert Wendling, Associate Professor. The Board was informed that the plan of action will be completed in final draft, as well as a site design for the West Craven Park, in January. The Board was also advised that the Weyerhaeuser land transfer is scheduled by the end of December. A transfer from the Board of Education relative to the West Craven Park is expected in January.

At 11:15 a.m. Commissioner Brown moved to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(5) relative to property acquisition. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The Board reconvened in regular session at 12:20 p.m. County Attorney, Jim Sugg, announced that property acquisition for airport expansion had been discussed, which will again be addressed on December 19.

Commissioner Brown moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Sampson and unanimously carried.

Perry L. Morris, Chairman
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Gwendolyn M. Bryan
Clerk to the Board