

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN
RECONVENED ITS RECESSED REGULAR SESSION OF FEBRUARY 5, 2007
ON FEBRUARY 19, 2007 AT 9:08 A.M. IN THE COMMISSIONERS' ROOM OF
THE CRAVEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 406 CRAVEN
STREET, NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA. THE PURPOSE OF THIS
MEETING WAS TO CONDUCT A WORK SESSION.**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Johnnie Sampson, Jr.
Vice Chairman Jason R. Jones
Commissioner Lee Kyle Allen
Commissioner Theron McCabe
Commissioner Perry L. Morris
Commissioner Steve Tyson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Commissioner M. Renée Sisk

STAFF PRESENT:

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

Following the roll call, the Board proceeded to receive information in work session concerning the following matters.

Capital Improvement Plan

Craven County Finance Officer, Rick Hemphill, presented the County's proposed five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), as follows, and discussed the financing of the proposed projects with the Board.

	Current	Proposed	
	<u>FY 07</u>	<u>FY 08</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
<u>Unexpected Maintenance Items</u>	100,000	100,000	Capital Reserve
Phone System in Human Svcs Bldg	250,000		Capital Reserve
Jail/Law Enforcement Center (4)	28,000,000		Capital Reserve And Debt Issue
Digital Orthophotography	350,000		Wireless Fees
Fiber optic project	1,200,000	1,000,000	School debt service fund
New elementary school	14,000,000		School debt service fund
West Craven Park	1,000,000		Grant and debt
Community College Commitment	1,500,000	500,000	Capital Reserve
PeeDee Aquifer project	<u>500,000</u>	<u>500,000</u>	Water fund balance
Totals	46,900,000	12,833,000	
Less Items not from Reserve	<u>42,550,000</u>	<u>11,726,000</u>	
Capital Reserve Needs	<u>4,350,000</u>	<u>1,107,000</u>	

Commissioner Morris moved to adopt the Capital Improvement Plan, as presented, seconded by Commissioner McCabe and unanimously carried. It was explained to the Board that the actual funding of projects would occur at the time of budget deliberations, giving the Board an opportunity to select the project priorities.

Recreational Water Testing

County Manager, Harold Blizzard, reported to the Board concerning his research, as directed by the Board, into the procedures and projected costs for recreational water testing for the river and creek areas. The directive was a result of a petitioner to the Board several months ago asking that the County consider testing the recreational waters. He reported that the initial cost of new equipment is projected at \$10,000 and additional man-power at \$5,000. The subsequent annual cost for maintaining the program is projected at \$10,000. He advised the Board of the limitations of the test and potential liability for the County as a result of citizens' reliance upon the tests. He asked that the Board consider if it wishes to pursue a testing program. It was the consensus of the Board that the establishment of this program be discussed during the budgeting process.

Board of Education Projects

Board of Education Chairman, Carr Ipock, presented proposed projects totaling \$8.1 million, as follows:

- J.T. Barber Elementary School – renovations to the access drive, media center and office area.
- Grover C. Fields – renovations to the media center
- Bus maintenance facility - demolition and the construction of a new building, in addition to new equipment

The Board was also asked to approve the acquisition of 75 acres of land for a new high school in the Hwy 70 Corridor at a cost of \$750,000. He explained that the Board of Education does not anticipate building a new high school within the next five years but would like to secure the land and have it designated for unrestricted use. This would allow for future disposal by the County if the land is not needed for a high school. Endorsement was also asked for use of Board of Education funds to purchase land adjacent to Farm Life School. Commissioner Morris moved to approve the purchase of the land from the school's capital outlay budget, adjacent to Farm Life School, seconded by Commissioner Jones and unanimously carried.

At 10:40 a.m. the Board was declared in recess and reconvened at 10:55 a.m. with Craven County's State Legislative Delegation; Senator Jean Preston, Representative William Wainwright, Representative Alice Underhill in attendance. Commissioner Allen introduced discussion concerning removal of the Ketner Boulevard traffic signal in Havelock. He reported that Representative Braxton and Senator Kerr stated that if four members of the Board of Commissioners would petition for a local bill for the reinstatement of the signal, they would put a bill on the floor in both houses. Representative Underhill responded that the issue is between the Department of Transportation and the City of Havelock, as a result of a contract which Havelock has entered into with the D.O.T. She further stated that, according to the Department of Transportation, Havelock would be eligible to have additional lights once a by-pass in eminent.

Commissioner Morris introduced discussion of the Medicaid program. He voiced the expectation that the County may have to give up something in order to have the Medicaid program taken over by the State. Representative Wainwright reported that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners was asked to set up a table demonstrating how the Medicaid costs can be shifted to the State. He stated that discussions are still ongoing. Senator Preston reported that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners has recommended a cap on Medicaid at the 2005-2006 level and a local option to raise taxes, including real estate transfer tax. Representative Wainwright assured the Board that the State considers the matter of Medicaid very seriously and expects there to be a solution; however, the solution is not known at this point.

Commissioner Sampson introduced discussion concerning the continuance of ADM funds and the importance that lottery funds not be used to supplant ADM funds. Representative Wainwright reminded the Board that there is a stipulation on the lottery

funds that they cannot be used to supplant any other funds. He stated that the ADM funds are budgeted and there is no movement presently to dismantle that program.

Commissioner Jones introduced discussion concerning the Cove City and Dover sewer project. He requested assistance from the legislators in getting the project fully funded so that the allocation designated by the Rural Center can be used before it reverts.

Representative Wainwright explained that the bids for the project came in higher than anticipated, resulting in approximately a \$7 million shortage. He advised the Board that he intends to introduce legislation for an allocation in the amount of \$8 million for the Cove City and Dover sewer projects, as well as to instruct the Rural Center to leave the \$7 million already allocated set aside for Dover and Cove City, pending receipt of the additional funds. Senator Preston requested that copies of any grant applications such as those sent to the Rural Center be shared with the legislative delegation at the time of application so that they can strengthen the grant applications by their endorsement. Commissioner McCabe asked if District 5 could be included in the sewer project and Representative Wainwright responded that a separate application by the County would be necessary because Harlowe is not a municipality.

Discussion was introduced concerning drainage issues and ditch maintenance. Aaron Everett and Jason Peterson who were present representing the Department of Transportation, stated that the ditch maintenance is restricted to problems affecting the integrity of the roadway or safety of the traveling public. In reference to drainage issues resulting from beaver activity, it was noted by Commissioner Jones that the cost of effective management of beaver is prohibitive to the County; however, a trapping program is needed. Representative Wainwright responded that it is a wildlife issue and that he has arranged a meeting with the head of the Wildlife Department, Dick Hamilton, to survey and estimate the cost involved in an effective trapping and management program that can be put into place in partnership with counties.

Commissioner Morris alerted the legislative delegation to concerns relative to the Ethics Reform Legislation, which has gone into effect. He stated that the required economic interest forms are intrusive for volunteer members of boards. Representative Wainwright indicated that the General Assembly is reviewing the legislation and its requirements.

At 12:28 p.m. Commissioner McCabe moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Morris and unanimously carried.

Chairman Johnnie Sampson, Jr.
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Gwendolyn M. Bryan
Clerk to the Board