

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA**

Monday, May 21, 2007

7:00 P.M. County Stadium Community Meeting

MINUTES

Place: Northern High School Auditorium, 117 Tom Wilkinson Road,
Durham, NC 27712

Present: Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow, Vice-Chairman Becky M. Heron, and
Commissioner Michael D. Page

Absent: Commissioners Lewis A. Cheek and Philip R. Cousin Jr.

Presider: Chairman Reckhow

Call to Order

Chairman Reckhow stated that the community meeting regarding the County Stadium would begin. She asked everyone to take their seats.

Welcome

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, Chairman Reckhow welcomed those in attendance.

Introductions

Chairman Reckhow introduced herself. She then introduced Vice-Chairman Heron and Commissioner Page; Durham County Stadium Authority members Tommy Hunt (Chairman), Willie Bradshaw, Jim Hedrick, and Vice-Chairman Heron (Commissioner representative); and County Manager Mike Ruffin, Assistant County Manager Heidi York, and General Services Director Mike Turner.

County Stadium Project

Chairman Reckhow stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the future of the Durham County Stadium. Many discussions have taken place in the past few months since the CIP proposal, which called for minimal improvements (\$1.77 million) to the Stadium. However, the Board felt that plan would not entice additional users. In fact, one Board member suggested selling the Stadium and land. The Commissioners agreed that it would be in the best interest of Durham County to invest more dollars to achieve greater utilization of the Stadium by making it a multi-purpose facility.

County Manager Mike Ruffin stated that tonight's presentation was only a proposal of ideas for comment. He explained that the Board is now considering \$4.5 million in renovations. The Stadium Authority is responsible for the leasing and booking of the Stadium. Nothing has been agreed upon with Shaw University except in the short term (four games in the fall of 2007). The plans are for the new high school to play its football games at the Stadium. In order for the Stadium to grow in usage, it must be made more adaptable.

Heidi York, Assistant County Manager, stated that the goals are to (1) increase the usage; (2) improve the conditions; and (3) make the facility more adaptable. The theme of the project has been adaptability. The Stadium will not be tied to color schemes, but will have places for school flags, banners, etc. Ms. York spoke briefly about the following improvements being considered:

- Track
- Field
- Grandstands
- Concessions
- Locker rooms
- Restrooms
- Press box
- Signs
- Lighting
- Fencing
- Score board
- Sound system upgrade

Public Comments/Questions

Chairman Reckhow called on members of the audience for questions and/or comments.

The following citizens spoke:

Jack Steer, Steve Jenkins, Cindy Davis, Charlie Gibbs, Steve Wachholz, Walter Parker, Charlie Payne, Carmelita Spicer, and Jacqueline Reed.

County Manager Ruffin, Assistant County Manager York, and Mr. Turner addressed issues raised by the citizens regarding handicap accessibility, greenspace, leasing rates, number of track lanes, the planned phases (I, II, and III), artificial turf, and noise.

Ms. York reported that basic repair work will be done prior to the 2007 football season. Work on Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III will begin in December 2007, 2008, and 2009, respectively, to be completed by the fall of 2010.

Authority Chairman Hunt commented about the Authority's support regarding refurbishing.

Chairman Reckhow stated that the use of the Stadium by the new high school, rather than building an on-campus facility, would offset most of the extra cost for improvements such as the track, which could serve both high school and collegiate events.

County Manager Ruffin informed the audience that the financing of the renovations would be moved from the 2007 GO Bond Referendum to 2/3s general obligation bonds, which do not require a public referendum (only Board of Commissioner approval). Stadium renovations are not contingent upon Shaw University's use.

Chairman Reckhow announced that Board of County Commissioners plan to approve the 2008-17 Capital Improvement Plan at its May 29 Regular Session. She thanked everyone for attending the meeting, especially Durham Public Schools representatives Hugh Osteen, Assistant Superintendent of Operational Services; Steve Martin, School Board Member; and Dr. Carl Harris, Superintendent.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Reckhow adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Sessoms, CMC
Clerk to the Board