

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

Thursday, September 7, 2006

10:30 A.M. Worksession

**MINUTES**

Place: Commissioners' Room, second floor, Durham County Government Administrative Complex, 200 E. Main Street, Durham, NC

Present: Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow, Vice-Chairman Becky M. Heron, Commissioners Lewis A. Cheek, Philip R. Cousin Jr., and Michael D. Page

Absent: None

Presider: Chairman Reckhow

**Agenda Adjustment**

Chairman Reckhow announced an adjustment to the agenda; Granicus Inc. Webcasting Demonstration would be placed after Citizens Comments.

**Citizens Comments**

Douglas Register spoke to the Commissioners about Durham County's Code of Ethics. He stated that the Code of Ethics was adopted in March 2004 by the County Manager and County Attorney to be consistent with state statutes. He asked that the Code of Ethics be recognized as abiding authority to promote the best interest of Durham County citizens.

Alison Davis spoke to the Board of Commissioners about the steady increase of children in Durham County who have been diagnosed with autism. She proposed a relationship between Durham Public Schools (DPS), parents of autistic children, and the Autism Society of North Carolina, Durham Chapter to help successfully transition autistic children. She also addressed the acquisition of funds for DPS in the form of research grants.

Laura Bono, Board Member and Co-Founder, National Autism Association, responded to questions by the Commissioners.

Chairman Reckhow thanked the citizens for their comments.

**Granicus Inc. Webcasting Demonstration**

Deborah Craig-Ray, Assistant County Manager, introduced this item by stating that Durham County is preparing to collaborate with Granicus Inc., a firm that specializes in working with local governments to provide streaming video services. Granicus' unique agenda-based solution allows governments to reach more citizens and communicate more effectively.

Chris Rynders, Granicus Inc., Southeast Regional Director, gave a brief overview of the company and its technology. He stated that many local governments in North Carolina have contracted with Granicus to provide this service; the results have been very positive. The list includes Wilmington, Mecklenburg County, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Greenville, and Onslow County to name a few.

Mr. Rynders demonstrated the product and responded to questions from the Board.

In response to Vice-Chairman Heron concerns regarding closed-caption, Mr. Rynders stated that closed caption is ADA compliant and will be available on the web.

Commissioner Cousin asked about accessibility of the program and Granicus' intervention.

Mr. Rynders responded to Commissioner Cousin's question; all documentation would be published at the Clerk's discretion.

#### Directive

1. Develop a contract and place item on September 25 consent agenda for approval.
2. Solicit information about closed captioning to incorporate at a later date.

#### **Consider Additional Compensation for ABC Board Members**

Chuck D. Watts Jr., Chairman, Durham County ABC Board, requested that the Board of County Commissioners consider additional compensation for ABC Board members. The Board of County Commissioners voted on August 4, 1997 to pay ABC Board members \$50 per meeting, not to exceed a maximum of \$100 per month. No additional increases in compensation have been awarded since that time.

Mr. Watts provided data about Durham County's ABC Board compared to other counties across the state. He discussed the profitability of the ABC system and its contribution to Durham County and alcohol education. He concluded by asking that the Commissioners to bring Durham's ABC Board members' stipend in-line with other ABC boards in North Carolina.

In response to Chairman Reckhow's question regarding plans for the ABC board, Mr. Watts stated that once the remaining leased unit is vacant, the need for retaining funds would decrease.

The Board commended the ABC Board on its efforts in terms of outreach in education and mental health support in the community.

Commissioner Cheek expressed appreciation for the ABC Board's efforts to maximize the profit levels for an increase in County revenues to address various issues in Durham County.

Chairman Reckhow recommended that the stipend be increased to \$200 per month for ABC Board members and \$250 per month for the Board chairman.

Vice-Chairman Heron disagreed with the Chairman's proposal.

Directives

1. Increase the stipend to \$200 per month for ABC Board members and \$250 per month for the Board chairman; place on the September 25 agenda.
2. Ascertain the stipend of other Commissioner-appointed board and commission members, including those counties in Durham's labor market.

**Status of Environmental Study of the East End Connector Project**

Mark Ahrendsen, Transportation Manager, City of Durham, stated that the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) with its consultant, Reynolds Smith and Hill, would provide a presentation on the status of the environmental study for the East End Connector project. The East End Connector is a proposed highway project that will link the Durham Freeway (NC 147) and Miami Boulevard (US 70) with a new freeway facility and upgrade US 70 from Pleasant Drive to north of Holloway Street (NC 98). The estimated cost of the East End Connector project is \$90,285,000.

Mr. Ahrendsen also stated that the environmental study includes a review of several alternative routes for the East End Connector. All of these routes are located in the study area. In addition, a no-build alternative will be considered. Since it is early in the environmental process, a comprehensive current assessment of the alternatives has not been produced. There will be several opportunities for public comment during the environmental process, including a meeting on September 26, 2006 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Living Waters Church at Lynn Road and US 70.

Jan Anderson, Consultant, Reynolds Smith and Hill, gave a brief overview of the background and schedule of the environmental study and the public outreach effort. She presented a five-minute presentation about the East-End Connector Project.

Directive

Include Durham County in the presentation in support of the East End Connector Project.

**Discussion of Issues for NCACC State Legislative Agenda**

Deborah Craig-Ray introduced this item stating the Board held a preliminary conversation on August 22 with staff regarding possible statewide legislative initiatives to propose to the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners for inclusion in its 2007 Legislative Agenda. Staff was directed to continue to work on additional issues suggested by the Board and come back to the worksession for more discussion. September 15 is the deadline for submitting items to the NCACC. Approved items will be voted on by the NCACC membership in January 2007 at its Legislative Conference.

County Attorney Chuck Kitchen informed the Board that drug paraphernalia is covered by North Carolina General Statutes.

The Board held a discussion about banning “roses in a glass” that are available in convenience stores and are allegedly used as drug paraphernalia.

Directives

1. Consult with related community agencies to determine whether other issues must be included in the final version and place on the September 11 agenda for approval.
2. Study the adequacy of revenues to meet future public facility needs.
3. Prepare a rationale statement for the steering committee.

Closed Session

Vice-Chairman Heron moved, seconded by Commissioner Cousin, to adjourn to closed session to consult with an attorney and in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege and to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of businesses in the area served by the County pursuant to N. C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(3) & (4).

The motion carried unanimously.

Reconvene to Open Session

Chairman Reckhow announced that the Board met in closed session; direction was given to staff; no action was taken.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Reckhow adjourned the meeting at 1:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela M. McIver  
Staff Specialist  
Clerk to the Board’s Office