

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

Saturday, March 10, 2012

PAC 4 Meeting

Place: Campus Hills Recreation Complex, 2000 S. Alston Avenue

Present: Vice-Chair Ellen W. Reckhow, and Commissioners Joe W. Bowser, Brenda A. Howerton, and Pam Karriker; Michael M. Ruffin, County Manager; Michelle Parker-Evans, County Clerk

Absent: Chairman Michael D. Page

Mr. Harold Chestnut, Pac 4 Facilitator, opened the meeting. He welcomed the Commissioners and guests.

After several reports from City departments, the Board members were queried and received comments from the audience regarding the County's upcoming budget. The following questions and comments were received:

- Durham Open Space and Trails (DOST) funds being restored in the budget - Mr. Ruffin replied that the plans for the upcoming budget included the restoration of the funds;
- Revenue streams for taxes collected on hotels and rental cars - Commissioner Bowser responded that the rental car money goes to the Triangle Transit. Commissioner Reckhow replied that the hotel tax is divided between the City, County, Convention Bureau, and DPAC. Citizens were encouraged to contact the Budget or Tax Office for additional information.
- There was lengthy discussion about the DPAC. The Board pointed out that the City gets revenue from the DPAC although the County was the primary funder of the facility. There was also concern that there is no mention of the County in the DPAC—only a welcome from the Mayor.
- Road improvements to Riddle Road from Fayetteville Street to Highway 55 - The school bus traffic from Hillside facilitates the need for widening of Riddle Road.
- Merger between City and County governments - Commissioner Bowser commented that the County is leading efforts in downtown revitalization. Commissioner Howerton added that we need to improve the image of what Durham County does. She noted that there were many merged activities with the City.
- Commissioner Karriker stated that the Strategic Plans of local government should help to break down some of the silos that exist.

- Commissioner Reckhow commented that the Police Department and Sheriff's Office are working together on crime.
- There should be information on the website, including how many jobs DPAC has created.
- County Manager Ruffin gave a further overview of the budget. \$108 million goes to Durham Public Schools (over half of the tax dollars received). The County's budget is \$499 million. He added that this is the first year Medicaid will not be a part of the County's budget.
- Citizen comments regarding the budget included:
 - A tax for those who don't live in Durham, but work here;
 - Revenue from RDU Airport;
 - Not having yearly elections.
- The impact of charter schools on public schools
- How much money for schools goes to salaries?
- Computers for Kids – Commissioner Bowser stated that he and County Manager Ruffin initiated the program. Surplus computers go to Durham Public Schools thru the Department of Social Services. Everyone agreed that internet connection is the greatest challenge.
- New Judicial building – Departments in leased properties will go into the old judicial building.
- 751 – why support? – Commissioners Bowser and Howerton responded that they supported the project bringing jobs to Durham.
- RTP tax – County Manager Ruffin responded that the RTP is taxed by Durham County, but cannot be annexed by the City.

Each Commissioner was given an opportunity to make closing remarks.

Candidates running for public office were invited to introduce themselves.

Mr. Chestnut thanked the Board for enlightening the group. Mr. Ruffin assured the group that he would have answers to the questions posed at the meeting, and would forward the responses to Mr. Chestnut to share at the next PAC meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,



V. Michelle Parker-Evans
Clerk to the Board