

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

Monday, April 12, 1999

6:00 P.M. BOCC/Library Board of Trustees

**MINUTES**

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

Present: Chairman MaryAnn E. Black, Vice-Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow, and Commissioners William V. Bell, Joe W. Bowser, and Becky M. Heron

Chairman Robert K. Otterbourg, Vice-Chairman Bessie M. Carrington and Board members Ann W. Craver, Carl D. Hodges, William G. Ingram, Catherine Petroski, Melva W. Sloan, and Nancy P. Wardropper

Absent: Thomas R. French

Presider: Chairman Black

**Presentation of Proposed Library Regional Plan**

In accordance with the by-laws of the Library Board of Trustees, Robert Otterbourg, Chairman of the Library Board, and Bessie Carrington, Vice Chairman, will present and recommend to the Board of Commissioners a plan for regional library services and facilities. The presentation will kick off a series of community meetings to solicit citizen input regarding library service and facility development.

The Board of Commissioners is requested to receive the report and make comments. Other Library Board members and the Library Director will be present to respond to questions.

County Manager's Recommendation: That the Board of Commissioners receive the report from the Durham County Library Board of Trustees and make comments.

Mr. Otterbourg and Ms. Carrington presented the Commissioners an overview of the library's proposed expansion program.

The following information is a summary of the plan that was presented to the County Commissioners. This handout was distributed at the start of the presentation.

## THE DURHAM COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

### A PLAN FOR SMART GROWTH IN CHANGING TIMES

#### ◆ A Quality of Life Initiative

Many people choose to live in a community because of the quality of library services. Over the last fifteen to twenty years, the public library system of Durham has been considered one of Durham's major assets, described by one County Commissioner as a "jewel in the crown of Durham County Government."

As the community continues to experience phenomenal growth and change, it is imperative that plans are implemented to maintain and enhance the value the public library offers to Durham's citizens.

#### ◆ Equity and Access Throughout the County - A Regional Plan

The library system currently consists of a mixture of leased and owned facilities, with wide discrepancies in size, conditions of facilities and equipment, and amenities provided. The eastern area of the county has no convenient library facility whose mission is to address the needs of that segment of the county population.

It is time to address these inequities and achieve an accepted standard of service excellence throughout the community.

During 1998, Library Board and staff placed high priority on defining library service excellence. In December, the Board adopted service, collection and facility standards to guide library development into the next century.

Using these standards, the Library has developed a blueprint for library development to ensure service equity and access throughout the county. This plan calls for dividing the county into five regions: North, East, South, Southwest, and Central, with a regional library serving each region.

The Central region is served by the Main Library, which also serves as the headquarters for administration and support services, as well as provides specialized reference, research, and information services for the entire county. Also located in the central region, the Stanford L. Warren Library will enhance its role as a cultural and historical research center.

Regional branch libraries will provide a full range of services and collections for residents of the outlying areas. Libraries will be sited in accordance with Durham's 2020 Plan, in planned urban and regional corridors, with access to public

transportation. In the largest geographic region, the North region, a small branch serving the northeastern section of the region will supplement the services of the regional branch.

◆ A Plan for the New Millennium

By 2025 Durham's population is projected to increase by a minimum of 50%, with some areas of the county doubling in population.

More than 50% of the County's population are registered library users. Annual circulation of books and other materials exceeds 1.5 million. Door count exceeds 800,000.

Durham's facilities currently do not meet state guidelines for square footage to serve the existing population, guidelines which incorporate the changing role of public libraries. Space shortages currently exist for staff, collections, public meeting and study areas, and the new technology.

The plan calls for building facilities with the square footage required to maintain the library's reputation as a major quality of life asset through the year 2025.

◆ A Plan Whose Time Has Come

A study of the library system in 1977 identified the need to plan for branch libraries in the outlying areas of the county. At the time, Parkwood and Bragtown were the only library facilities outside a three mile radius of the Main Library. Since that study, the North Durham and Southwest Branches were opened. Although expanded once since its opening in 1979, the North Durham Branch continues to operate in leased facilities with much of the same furniture and equipment it opened with in 1979. The Parkwood Branch has expanded twice, but it too continues to operate in increasingly expensive leased facilities.

The Library has submitted to the County for the last fourteen years capital project proposals for new libraries in the north, south, east, and west. Only the Southwest Branch has been built in that time.

A space study of the Main Library conducted in 1990 indicated an urgent need to expand the Main Library by 30,000 square feet by 1995. Cited were space shortages for a growing collection, staff, and readers. It did not project space needs for computer workstations to provide public access to the Internet. In the last several years, the need for staff space has begun to compete with public and collection space, with offices built in public areas in the children's room, and in the fiction stack area. There is no room to expand book stacks or special collections and little area for the coming Internet workstations.

◆ Urgency for Action - an Economic Issue

⇒ Land needs to be purchased now before land costs go any higher and while suitable sites are still available.

The possibilities for negotiating land donations are currently at a peak with the number of private developments being considered in prime site locations.

⇒ Moving forward will eliminate the costs, which increase annually, of leasing branch library facilities.

The lease for the North Durham Branch is up for renewal this year.

DURHAM COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REGIONAL PLAN

Population Projections

Region	1995	2025 (Projected)
Central	71,169	74,312
East	32,995	62,122
North	49,501	82,567
South	30,341	61,504
Southwest	<u>26,568</u>	<u>38,837</u>
Total County	210,574	319,342

Central Region

Add 30,000 square feet to the 66,000 square foot Main Library, and required parking.

Add 1,500 square feet to the 8,500 square foot Stanford L. Warren Branch Library.

North Region

Construct a County-owned regional library of 25,000 square feet to replace the North Durham Branch, a 9,200 square foot leased facility.

Construct a County-owned small branch library of 10,000 square feet to replace the Bragtown Branch, a 1,000 square foot County-owned facility.

East Region

Construct a County-owned regional library of 25,000 square feet.

South Region

Construct a County-owned regional library of 25,000 square feet to replace the Parkwood Branch, a leased 9,100 square foot facility.

Southwest Region

Add 10,000 square feet to the 10,000 square foot Southwest Branch.

Total Estimated Cost of Plan: \$37,118,167

This estimate includes cost of land, design and technical services, construction, and furniture and equipment.

The Commissioners made comments and asked questions about the plan.

Mr. Otterbourg and Ms. Dale Gaddis, Library Director, responded to the comments and questions.

Chairman Black asked the library staff to tell the Commissioners what is happening this week to celebrate National Library Week, April 11-17, 1999.

No official action was taken at this meeting.

**Adjournment**

Chairman Black adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Garry E. Umstead, CMC  
Clerk to the Board