

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

Monday, April 3, 2000

9:00 A.M. Worksession

AGENDA

1. Resolution Supporting Senate Bill 368 Which Provides Public Access to Rivers and Streams

Senate Bill 368 is an Act to Authorize the Department of Transportation to construct off-road access parking for vehicles adjacent to rivers and streams. This bill would aid in eliminating the need for roadside parking for recreational purpose along North Carolina's rivers and streams. The Bill has passed the Senate and is going to the House for consideration. Commissioner Becky Heron will lead a discussion on this proposed legislation.

Resource Person: Commissioner Becky Heron

County Manager's Recommendation: Receive presentation on the resolution and consider for action at the April 10, 2000 regular session.

2. Presentation on Countywide EMS System

When the Board of County Commissioners entered into the lease agreement for Durham Regional Hospital with Duke University Health Systems, it was acknowledged that the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) system transferred to the county was in need of additional resources. In FY 99-00 the Board began to address these needs through the provision of additional funds to the County EMS Service. A second component of our County's EMS system is the services provided by the County Volunteer Fire Departments. This presentation is designed to educate and inform the Board about how the Volunteer Fire EMS system operates and the issues they currently face.

For the past 20 years, Durham County EMS, the five volunteer fire departments, and the City of Durham Fire Department have worked together in utilizing available resources to design an EMS system capable of providing the optimum in pre-hospital care and transportation. Durham County EMS, the core of the County system, provides Paramedic level service from four sites within the City limits. The five volunteer fire departments provide station sites, ambulances and personnel to assist the County Paramedic assigned to their stations twelve hours/day. The City Fire Department provides first responder assistance within the City limits from their 13 stations.

Over the years, several key factors have arisen, that have stretched resources to the point that the quality of service has been severely affected: development, population growth, annexation, and inadequate funding. Even though recent studies indicate that the Durham County system is one of the most efficient and effective systems in North Carolina, all available resources have been maximized. It is now time to look at several enhancement/expansion options in order to maintain the current level of service. Timely growth of the core system was severely hampered by inadequate funding during its tenure with the Hospital Corporation. The volunteer departments helped address this by agreeing to expand their EMS coverage beyond their established fire districts. Annexation hampered this process by further reducing those tax districts, resulting in an undue financial burden on the taxpayers in those districts. Currently, a significant portion of the volunteers EMS responses are outside their tax districts. Although EMS provides some supplies and minor equipment as well as 50% of transportation fees collected for transports provided by the departments, the net result is a substantial shortfall in revenue for those departments.

The Volunteer Fire Chiefs have worked diligently over the past year to define the issues and search for alternative solutions. The result is the attached report which explains the Countywide EMS service and makes recommendations to begin to improve the system.

Resource Person(s): J.M.Tezai, EMS Director, Representatives from the five volunteer fire departments, Captain Scot Roberts, EMS Coordinator, Durham Fire Department.

County Manager's Recommendation: Receive the report and provide direction to staff. During the budget process staff will come forward with a specific recommendation regarding funding of the EMS system.

3. Discussion of Proposed American Tobacco Project

The proposed American Tobacco Project is a unique combination of offices, retail shops, restaurants, and cultural arts venues that has the potential to revitalize the southern end of downtown Durham. Mr. Mike Hill of Capitol Broadcasting Company will make a presentation to the Board of Commissioners, which will include a detailed explanation of the project. The presentation will describe the various phases of American Tobacco and highlight the private investment in the project.

Resource Persons: Carolyn P. Titus, Interim County Manager, Mike Hill, Vice President and General Counsel Capitol Broadcasting Company

County Manager's Recommendation: Receive the presentation and provide direction to staff.

4. Multi-Family Housing Revenue Bonds for Alston Village, L.P.

Durham County has received a request to issue tax-exempt housing bonds for NRP Alston Village, L.P. Housing bonds are tax exempt bonds, which are paid by the developer and not the County. The County issues the bonds in order for the developer to receive the tax-exempt status for the bonds.

The proposed project will be located in Research Triangle Park at 5400 South Alston Avenue. It will consist of 312 apartments. The intent of the tax-exempt issue will be to provide for affordable housing for the residents of Durham County. The amount of the bonds is \$21,275,000. The fee for the issuance of the bonds, which will be paid to Durham County, is 1% of the issuance amount.

Mary Nash Rusher, bond counsel for these bonds, will give a presentation explaining the use of tax-exempt bonds. A copy of the resolution for the April 10 meeting of the Board is attached.

Resource Person(s): Chuck Kitchen, County Attorney; Mary Nash Rusher, Hunton & Williams; Brad Parker, NRP Alston Village, L.P.

County Manager's Recommendation: Receive the information from bond counsel as to the purpose and process of issuance of Housing Revenue Bonds. The revenue received and duties imposed by the County's issuance of the bonds should also be considered.

5. Results of the Study to Determine the Accuracy of Coding for Subdivisions Annexed by the City of Durham

During the months of November and December 1999, the County discovered that Lakehurst and Chancellors Ridge Subdivisions had not been properly recorded and/or coded for taxation purposes. After these discoveries, the County Manager and the BOCC requested that staff conduct an outside review of the tax parcel codings in order to determine if there were other subdivisions that had not been properly recorded within the City boundaries. JCH GeoInfo Solutions Inc. was contracted to conduct the study and has completed its findings. Mr. Jim Henry of JCH GeoInfo Solutions will present his findings to the Board after having reviewed 85,800 tax parcels.

In addition, a status report on Lakehurst and Chancellors Ridge Subdivisions will be provided along with the corrective actions that have been implemented for the administrative procedures associated with the Annexation process.

Resource Person (s): Wendell Davis, Deputy County Manager/Acting Tax Assessor, Jim Henry, JCH GeolInfo Solutions Inc., Kim Simpson, Administrative Officer

County Manager's Recommendation: The Manager recommends that the Board receive the findings of the audit.

6. Closed Session

The Board is requested to adjourn to Closed Session to consult with an attorney and to preserve the attorney-client privilege, to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses, to consider the performance of public officers or employees, and to instruct the staff on property acquisition, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3), (4), (5), and (6).

7. Tax Administrator Matters

William Steven Crysel has been previously appointed as Tax Assessor and as Acting Tax Collector. In order for him to take office, the Board needs to approve his bond which will be presented at the meeting. Following approval of the bond, the oath of office will be administered to Mr. Crysel.

Since the appointment of Mr. Crysel, the Tax Collector, Charles Clark, has retired effective April 1, 2000. The position of Tax Collector is now vacant. The two positions of Tax Collector and Tax Assessor may be combined into one position of Tax Administrator.

Resource Person(s): Wendell Davis, Deputy County Manager; Chuck Kitchen, County Attorney

County Manager's Recommendation: The Board should take the following actions which will install Steve Crysel into office as Tax Administrator:

1. Combine the offices of Tax Collector and Tax Assessor into one position of Tax Administrator.
2. Approve the Tax Administrator's bond.
3. Have the oath of office administered by the Clerk.