

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

Thursday, February 14, 2005

Annual Retreat

MINUTES

Place: Museum of Life & Science, 433 West Murray Avenue, Durham, NC

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

Staff: Department Heads and Community Leaders

Facilitator: John G. Ott, John G. Ott & Associates

Opening Session

Chairman Reckhow made brief opening remarks before calling on John Ott.

John Ott, John G. Ott & Associates, began the Commissioners' Annual Retreat with a welcome and opening remarks based on the objectives, agenda design, and focus of the retreat. The facilitator's role was also discussed.

Summary of Commissioners' Annual Retreat

Mr. John Ott prepared the following summary subsequent to the County Commissioners' annual retreat. The summary is an integral part of the minutes of the retreat.

I. Opening reflections

- A. What are we most proud of from 2004/What gives us hope coming into 2005
1. We continue to provide good services even with staff attrition.
 2. We achieved a 98% collection rate in 2004.
 3. We completed 4 capital projects last year.
 4. Successfully concluded land negotiations related to EMS libraries.
 5. We reduced the average length of stay in foster care last year.
 6. Infant mortality has declined significantly.
 7. We maintained our AAA bond rating.
 8. We developed the City/County Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Ordinance.
 9. Successful completion of parts of the IT plan.
 10. Resolve the Jail Health issues.

- B. What developments reveal the complexity of what we are facing in 2005
 - 1. Exploding Medicaid costs
 - 2. Staff compensation issues
 - 3. Still have complex land negotiations regarding the new courthouse
 - 4. Implementing the City/County Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Ordinance
 - 5. ERP implementation
 - 6. Legislature going into session
 - 7. Ruling on impact fees
 - 8. Uncompensated health care (one estimate: \$50 million)
 - 9. State budget issues and their likely impact on local revenues and programs
 - 10. Returning veterans from Iraq (post-traumatic stress syndrome)
 - 11. Increasing demand for IT resources
 - 12. Increase in tuberculosis rates in the county

II. Draft priorities for Commissioners

- A. Strengthening the infrastructure of County government
 - 1. Addressing compensation issues for County employees, including
 - a. Salary increases
 - b. Salary compression issues
 - c. Other sources of compensation—e.g., various benefits packages
 - 2. Addressing staffing levels
 - 3. Improving the evaluation and performance appraisal process
 - 4. Review the needs of Departments jointly funded by the City and County.
 - 5. As part of their analysis of how to strengthen County government infrastructure, Commissioners are asking the Manger to prepare two different budget documents: a standard budget that is balanced within current revenues, and an ideal budget that shows what Departments believe they require to provide an optimal level of service for Durham citizens.
- B. Pursue programs that support the eight outcomes.
 - 1. The eight outcomes
 - a. Durham citizens are safe.
 - b. Durham citizens enjoy a prosperous economy.
 - c. Durham citizens enjoy a healthy environment.
 - d. Durham citizens enjoy a vibrant community, rich in aesthetic beauty that embraces and promotes its cultural diversity and heritage.
 - e. Durham's children are ready for and succeeding in school.
 - f. Every Durham citizen has access to adequate, safe and affordable housing.
 - g. Durham citizens are healthy.
 - h. Durham citizens enjoy sustainable, thriving neighborhoods with efficient and well-maintained infrastructure.

2. As a general rule, Commissioners want to support programs that help achieve these outcomes.
 3. Commissioners also want Departments to continue to pursue the Results-based Accountability framework to improve performance generally, and to document contributions to the eight outcomes where applicable.
- C. Commissioners will assess how they can meet both overarching priorities—strengthen the infrastructure for County government *and* pursue programs that support the eight outcomes—through their budget deliberations over the next several months.

Adjournment

Mr. Ott adjourned the Commissioners' Annual Retreat on February 14, 2005 at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Garry E. Umstead, CMC
Clerk to the Board