

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS****Workshop for Department of Aging****Monday, April 12, 2010****6:30 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, for the purpose of conducting a **Workshop** for the Department of Aging.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Edwin Russ **Chairman**  
 Giles E. Byrd, **Vice Chairman**  
 Amon E. McKenzie  
 James E. Prevatte  
 Lynwood Norris  
 Ricky Bullard  
 Ronald Gore

**APPOINTEES PRESENT:**

William S. Clark, **County Manager**  
 Mike Stephens, **County Attorney**  
 June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**

**AGING STAFF:**

Ed Worley, Director

**WORKSHOP CALLED to ORDER:**

At 6:30 P.M., Chairman P. Edwin Russ called the Workshop for the Department of Aging to order.

**READING of WORKSHOP PROCEDURES:**

Chairman P. Edwin Russ stated the following:

1. First, the workshop meeting is to inform the Board and permit discussion - no final action is taken; **and**
2. Second, the procedures are less formal than at a regular meeting, but such meetings are part of the decision-making process, deliberations are going on, and therefore, they constitute "official meetings".

Chairman Russ stated I have provided for each one of you photographs that were taken by me of this building, in the photographs you will see the sprinkler system, and I have obtained some information from Lacy Wilson who is the realtor for this building.

Chairman Russ turned the floor over to Ed Worley, Aging Director, for presentation. Mr. Worley stated that he was present for any discussion and/or questions.

**DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS / ANSWERS:**

1. **Commissioner McKenzie:** Have any negotiations been conducted on this building?

**Ed Worley:** When we were discussing this building with Southeastern Community College, the price was seven hundred fifty thousand and 00/100 (\$750,000.00) dollars, and we negotiated the price down to seven hundred thousand and 00/100 (\$700,000.00) dollars. The building has been placed back on the market, and the asking price now is six hundred seventy-five thousand and 00/100 (\$675,000.00) dollars.

2. **Commissioner Prevatte:** stated the following:  
 Ray Reaves, Building Inspector, Tony Soles, Maintenance Director, Kip McClary, Public Utilities Director, and Carey White, City of Whiteville, Building Inspections, performed a Visual Assessment of the Chase Menswear Building on April 8, 2010, and sent an e-mail out on their findings as listed below.

**Visual Assessment of Chase Menswear Building**

April 8th 2010

County Personnel:

Ray Reeves – Building Inspections Director

Tony Soles – Maintenance Director  
Kip McClary -Public Utilities Director

City of Whiteville:  
Cary White – Building Inspections

The above personnel met at the facility on at 2:00 pm and did a walk through inspection of the facility.

## Scope of Assessment

To provide general information on the condition of the building, utilities available, and all systems therein.

- The building is a 33,000 square foot independent structure constructed of concrete masonry, with 4 hour fire walls between adjacent businesses. Presently about ½ of the building is occupied as the menswear store with two additional unoccupied spaces on either side. The menswear store is in like new condition appearing to have recently been renovated. The unoccupied spaces are in rough condition, having been partially demolished. Light fixtures have been removed, ceilings have been partially removed, insulation has been removed plumbing has been removed, hvac equipment has been removed and several wall sections have been modified that will require repair. The floor in the unoccupied spaces will need patching and repair as well as the sidewalk in front where existing tiles and adhesive still remain from previous occupancy.
- The roof appears to be in fair condition with some noticeable leaks along the back wall between the roofline and the gutter that needs immediate attention. There is evidence of previous leaks near the front corner near the front parapet. This will also need attention. The entire roof would likely need replacement in the next 3-5 years at a current cost estimate of \$132,000.
- The facility has a 6” sewer service and a 2” domestic water service, with plumbing under concrete and is also served by an independent 6” fire suppression system that can be altered to serve future floor plans. Moving the plumbing to serve bathrooms a kitchen and other amenities will require the cutting of the floor and replacement after lines are run. Relocating fire sprinkler heads will be an additional cost to renovations as the heads will have to placed where needed to serve occupancy of the space.
- The Fire Alarm Control Panel is currently adequate for the menswear store, but would have to be modified or expanded to serve the spaces adjacent to what is presently occupied.
- The electrical service is a 1200 amp 3phase service. There is no power in the presently unoccupied space. Additional circuits, light fixtures, outlets and switches will have to be installed to provide power to the two unoccupied spaces.
- The rooftop HVAC units are 4 each, 7.5 ton Trane package heat pumps (30 tons total), which currently serve the menswear store. Additional units will have to be installed along with new ductwork or present units upsized and additional ducts installed to handle the additional unoccupied spaces. For a rough estimate of total heating and cooling requirements, the rule of thumb, (400 square feet per ton), a total of 82.5 tons is required, or an additional 52.5 tons. Keep in mind this is only an estimate and for actual requirements a load calculation would have to be performed after all amenities are engineered into the plans.
- The parking lot appears to be the original asphalt paving that was installed when the facility was built in 1993. The paving appears to have been seal coated and restriped recently to give a better appearance. Because paving wears due to weather and traffic a typical life expectancy is 10-15 years before requiring resurfacing. A 1” asphalt overlay will need to be done within the next 3-5 years. To resurface the paving and restripe the parking will cost an estimated \$100,000.00.
- The parking lot lighting will also be included in the monthly utilities. The present owner stated that the average electric bill for the building and parking lot lighting is around \$800.00 per month. If the unoccupied spaces are renovated and occupied the monthly power bill could

run around \$1,200.00-\$1,500.00 per month.

- The City of Whiteville has stated that sealed, engineered plans will be required before renovations could begin. If the renovations could be done for \$800,000.00 then engineered plans would add approximately \$80,000.00 to the cost of the project.
  - A. In this information that has been provided, they are stating the building size is thirty-three thousand (33,000) square feet, and Lacy Wilson is listing the building size as thirty-one thousand, five hundred (31,500 +/-) square feet, plus or minus;
  - B. The air conditioning and heating units are only for the Chase Menswear Store and the ducts in the remaining parts of the building have been removed;
  - C. Additional air conditioning and heating units would need to be installed to accommodate the remaining parts of the building; **and**
  - D. Commissioner Gore, due to the type of work you do, do you know what the cost would be for the additional heating and air conditioning work that is needed?

**Commissioner Gore:** replied stating the following:

1. The cost of the additional air conditioning and heating units will run approximately one hundred five thousand and 00/100 (\$105,000.00) dollars, plus the control wiring; **and**
  2. The wiring hookup to the electrical panel would be an additional ten to fifteen thousand (\$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00) dollars.
- E. In the information that was provided to us, they are stating that the roof will need to be replaced in the next three to five (3-5) years at the estimated cost of one hundred thirty-two thousand and 00/100 (\$132,000.00) dollars, and is that a reasonable figure?

**Commissioner Gore:** replied stating, I pulled some information where we replaced a roof on a school with the same square footage, on December 18, 2008, the low bid was two hundred sixty-one thousand, and 00/100 (\$261,000.00) dollars.

3. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** Does the stated eight hundred thousand and 00/100 (\$800,000.00) dollars for renovations include the heating and air conditioning cost?

**Ed Worley:** replied stating this price is only for carpenter work, labor and electrical work that was estimated by a general contractor.

4. **Commissioner Gore:** stated the following in reference to the information he has obtained:
  - A. If you replace the roof, based on the square footage, the low figure would be \$261,000.00;
  - B. The relocation of the fire sprinkler system would be at a cost;
  - C. You will need to break out the floor in some areas to make accessible plumbing for restrooms and similar items;
  - D. If Mr. Worley is planning on a kitchen facility, he will need a fire suppression system, with the necessary plumbing to accommodate that;
  - E. With the necessary plumbing, and making everything accessible and the work that you need to do, will be at a cost of approximately \$150,000.00;
  - F. The fire alarm control panel has to accommodate the entire building, and will be at an estimated cost of \$30,000.00;
  - G. The electrical service upgrade will be at a cost of \$100,000.00;
  - H. The heating and air conditioning units, at the current price will be \$125,000.00;
  - I. The parking lot resurfacing will be \$100,000.00
  - J. Parking lot lighting and service to the entire footage will be at a cost of approximately \$2,000.00 per month;
  - K. A set of engineer's drawings will cost \$80,000 if the project is \$800,000.00, or at a cost of ten (10%) percent of the entire project cost;
  - L. You will need to repair the floor, install the walls, put down floor covering of some sort, paint the walls, waterproof these areas, divide into office spaces to accommodate the number of employees, and special lights that are needed, the ceiling

- grids and insulation that are missing will need to be addressed, at a cost of \$200,000.00;
- M. With all these costs involved, you could easily spend \$1 million, depending on what you pick and choose;
- N. You will need computer tables, desks, chairs and any necessary furniture;
- O. If you have a cafeteria in there to prepare food, you will need to buy commercial grade cafeteria equipment, depending on what extent you want to go, you could easily spend \$150,000.00;
- P. These figures are based on what information that was provided to me.
5. **Commissioner McKenzie:** stated the following:
- A. We have heard a lot of cons, and now we need to hear about the pros;
- B. I think the cost would be less by locating a building that has already been established versus building a new building;
- C. The conditions at the existing Department of Aging are very cramped and they are in need of additional space;
- D. I think we have enough information here, to make some kind of decision; **and**
- E. With the efforts put forth by Mr. Worley by obtaining the \$450,000.00 from Congressman McIntyre and having \$229,000.00 in his Fund Balance, this Board needs to meet him half way.
6. **Commissioner Gore:** Mr. Worley, do you plan to leave the walls that are in tact?  
**Ed Worley:** replied stating yes.
7. **Commissioner Prevatte:** stated the following:
- A. I agree strongly that the Department of Aging needs additional space;
- B. I think we need to have an assessment done to see what our needs are to provide adequate services to our senior citizens;
- C. Some of the services stated by Mr. Worley will be too costly in comparison to the financial status of Columbus County; **and**
- D. We need to concentrate on what our needs are in lieu of what our wants are.
8. **Commissioner Norris:** the five thousand and 00/100 (\$5,000.00) dollars deposit that you are taking about, will hold the building for how long?  
**Ed Worley:** the five thousand and 00/100 (\$5,000.00) dollars would be good faith money until September 1, 2010
9. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** stated the following:
1. If the Board could secure this building, how long would it be before you needed to use the two (2) side areas that are unfinished?; **and**
2. These two (2) side areas are where most of the cost seems to be concentrated;
10. **Commissioner Prevatte:** If you utilized the finished area, you will have approximately three thousand more square feet than you have now.
11. **Ed Worley:** Keep in mind, I have got eight (8) buildings out back that houses materials that has to go somewhere, and I was planning to use that back part to store that in.
12. **Commissioner Byrd:** Could the side areas be used for storage until they are finished?  
**Ed Worley:** replied stating that on one side, there is 7,875 square feet which I had planned to use for the In-home Service Department, and on the opposite is 11,375 square feet which I had planned to use for an in-door walking trail and exercise equipment.
13. **Commissioner Prevatte:** Are you planning on making offices for all the in-home healthcare people?  
**Ed Worley:** replied stating all the in-home aid coordinators.
14. **Commissioner Prevatte:** What could you get by with now?  
**Ed Worley:** Just stay where I am now.

15. **Commissioner Gore:** Could you take the \$450,000.00 and add onto the existing building?
- Ed Worley:** there are approximately thirty (30') feet of land from the wall of our building to the property line of the Columbus County Board of Education.
16. **Commissioner McKenzie:** Parking has always been a serious problem at our present location.
17. **Commissioner Bullard:** stated the following:
- A. I am of the same belief as Commissioner Gore that we could add onto the existing building, and the Board of Education may work with us to let us have some land for a parking lot over to the side;
  - B. I have called and got a comparison with the other Departments of Aging in comparable counties;
  - C. We have thirty-two (32) full-time employees, three (3) part-time employees, and one hundred thirteen (113) contract employees;
  - D. I have not been sold on the idea that we need that building that we are discussing;
  - E. I have not been shown where we need to go from a nine thousand (9,000 SF) square foot building to a thirty-one thousand, five hundred (31,500 SF) square foot building;
  - F. I do not think this is a good deal, and I have been told the building was sold to the owner for \$600,000.00;
  - G. Real estate value has not increased in the last few years, instead it has declined;
  - H. We are in line with the square footage in other comparable counties;
- Ed Worley:** stated the following:
- There are only ten (10) counties in the State where all the senior programs are under one (1) roof;
  - These other counties have much fewer programs than Columbus County; **and**
  - We have twenty-nine (29) programs, and would like to grow beyond that.
- I. I know your building is congested;
  - J. We need to confirm that the money that Congressman McIntyre has stated is coming is indeed coming;
  - K. We need to find out if that \$450,000 can be used to add onto your existing building and work with the Board of Education or Columbus County Schools and they might work with us in giving us some land for parking and re-work the total site and save \$1 million, and still get what we need;
  - L. I think we are looking at one (1) thing and not looking at the entire picture; **and**
  - M. Will this be possible?
18. **Ed Worley:** stated the following:
- A. We have a serious parking problem;
  - B. I can't put any more utility buildings out back; **and**
  - C. There is a main sewer trunk line that runs between the two (2) properties..
19. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** What is the actual cost of a new building per square foot?
20. **Ed Worley:** From what they tell me, it is one hundred and 00/100 (\$100.00) dollars to one hundred twenty-five and 00/100 (\$125.00) dollars per square foot.
21. **Commissioner Bullard:** stated the following:
- A. If you spend one-half million dollars and done five thousand (5,000 SF) square feet, and it worked to where it accommodated his needs, we would not spend any taxpayers' money;
  - B. We could take what money we have from Congressman McIntyre's \$450,000.00 and what Mr. Worley has, and make this program better than it is and it will give you more room;
  - C. This is something we still have to look into; **and**
  - D. There is a good possibility that we can get what you need, might not get what you want, but we might get what you need and what will work.

22. **Chairman Russ:** stated the following:
- A. What Mr. Worley wants to do is to get the five thousand and 00/100 (\$5,000.00) dollars to hold the building until September 01, 2010, and a deal worked out where we could purchase the building;
  - B. After two to three (2-3) years, he could fix the inside of the building like he wants;
  - C. We could rent that building to the same people for two to three (2-3) years, until he has enough money to do the renovations; **and**
  - D. I think what we need to do is to have a Senior Citizens Committee with two (2) County Commissioners serving on the committee.
23. **Commissioner McKenzie:** stated the following:
- A. The purpose here tonight was to decide on the five thousand and 00/100 (\$5,000.00) dollars;
  - B. The existing facility is not an adequate location and we need to change that;
  - C. Mr. Worley has a great idea in locating in the plaza which will provide adequate parking and lighting;
  - D. If all the space is not utilized by Aging, there are other departments who need additional space; **and**
  - E. We need to take advantage of this offer.
24. **Commissioner Bullard:** stated the following:
- A. This is the only option that has been presented to us;
  - B. I think we need to look at other options, and not take the first option that is being offered; **and**
  - C. What is your opinion of this, Mr. Clark?
- William S. Clark:** I would like to see a study done.
25. **Commissioner Gore:** stated the following:
- A. I agree with you to one extent;
  - B. If we should decide not to buy that building in September, we have lost our \$5,000.00;
  - C. If we do decide to buy that building, and we commit Mr. Worley's \$450,000.00 and his Fund Balance, all of his money to buy the building with, there is still the big question of where are we going get the other \$1.2 million to renovate that building and when are we going to get it from the people of this County; **and**
  - D. If we buy a building and let it set idle for three to four (3-4) years, it will go down, and it will cost even more to renovate.
26. **Commissioner McKenzie:** stated the following:
- A. I think we should at least secure the building until September 01, 2010;
  - B. After the building has been secured, we can decide on these other matters;
  - C. The \$5,000 can be taken from the Aging Department's budget;
  - D. We do not need to let the \$450,000.00 go back; **and**
  - E. If we wait too long, the building will be gone.
27. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** Buying this building will be contingent on receiving the \$450,000.00.
28. **Commissioner Bullard:** stated the following:
- A. During these economic challenging times, this building is not going anywhere; **and**
  - B. The proper steps need to be taken before we do anything.
29. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** stated the following:
- A. I have a problem with the figure of \$675,000.00;
  - B. The \$4,500.00 payment of rent would yield \$54,000.00 per year, and that would be better than paying 7% interest;
  - C. We need to understand that the renters could pull out tomorrow or anytime;
  - D. I think the building could be purchased at the price of \$600,000.00;
  - E. I would hate the lose this building if we needed it and not just wanted it, because I think it is an ideal situation; **and**
  - F. What other options would we have to get the \$1.2 million - a loan with low interest?

**William S. Clark:** replied stating Columbus County could always take out a loan at 4.25% interest rate.

30. **Commissioner Prevatte:** We need to do something to the Courthouse, and we need to realize what our first priority is.

31. **Commissioner Gore:** Our first priority is the E-911 Center, and we are mandated to do this by 2013.

32. **Commissioner Bullard:** The cost of upgrading the E-911 Center will be over \$1 million.

33. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** Have there been any consideration in the Senior Centers being consolidated across the state?

**Ed Worley:** Some have already consolidated.

34. **Commissioner Bullard:** Is our program the largest in the state because we are giving away the most?

**Ed Worley:** replied stating no, it is because we have seven (7) different locations.

35. **Commissioner Bullard:** asked the following questions:

- A. Are the meals you serve free?; **and**
- B. How much money do you make with the meals?

**Ed Worley:** replied stating the following:

- A. If the person does not have the money, we encourage them to donate whatever amount they can; **and**
- B. The total income from the meals is not readily available.

36. **Commissioner Bullard:** Mr.Clark, can we do the E-911 Center and this project?

**William S. Clark:** replied stating the following:

- A. We are in good shape on the E-911 Center, with the accrued funds that we have; **and**
- B. The radio communications system is the area that is mandated, and there are no available funds, and this will be the costly part.

37. **Ed Worley:** stated the following:

- A. We applied for 501 (3) (c) status quite some time ago;
- B. We applied for twenty-five (25) grants and were turned down because we did not have a 501 (3) (c) status;
- C. I have contacted Congressman Mike McIntyre's office to see his assistance in getting this matter resolved;
- D. If we are awarded the 501 (3) (c) status, this will help us tremendously.

38. **Commissioner Bullard:** If we borrow the money that is needed for this building, Mr. Worley, can you make the payments?

**Ed Worley:** replied stating no, but I do have \$60,000 set up for this project in next year's budget.

39. **Commissioner Bullard:** If the Courthouse comes up in the near future, how is the source of the money going to be handled?

**William S. Clark:** replied stating that we will have to borrow the money needed.

40. **Commissioner Bullard:** Looking at the E-911 Center, the radio communications system and the Courthouse, which we are under a mandate for these two (2) projects, is the timing right for us to buy this building?

**William S. Clark:** replied stating that my concern is the cost of the renovations.

41. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** Mr. Worley, what services besides the Home health Care, do you duplicate with the Columbus County Health Department?

**Ed Worley:** replied stating the Columbus County Health Department is hands on and the Department of Aging is hands off.

42. **Commissioner Bullard:** Mr. Clark, are there any other County departments that are cramped for space?

**William S. Clark:** replied stating he was not aware of any. The Board of Education has expressed their want of the Department of Aging's building, if vacated, but they will not buy the building.

43. **Commissioner Gore:** I think if we spend the \$5,000.00, it needs to be spent on a needs assessment.

44. **Commissioner McKenzie:** stated the following:

- A. I have been on this Board for twelve (12) years, and from the very beginning of my tenure on this Board, Mr. Worley has always stated that he needed a 40,000 square foot building; **and**
- B. We should save the \$5,000.00 from doing a study and put this money on the building itself.

45. **Commissioner Bullard:** Mr. Clark is the County Manager and he feels that a Needs Assessment Study is needed.

46. **Commissioner McKenzie:** Mr. Clark is the County Manager, but the seven (7) Board members are ultimately responsible for what happens in the eye of the public.

47. **Chairman Russ:** We need for two (2) County Commissioners to volunteer to serve on a Department of Aging Needs Assessment Committee.

After a brief discussion was conducted, it was recommended that Commissioner Bullard and Commissioner McKenzie serve on the Department of Aging Needs Assessment Committee.

48. **Commissioner McKenzie:** I am requesting that the \$5,000.00 good faith money for the prospective Department of Aging Building be placed on the April 19, 2010 Agenda.

49. **Commissioner Bullard:** I am requesting that the appointment of members for the Department of Aging Needs Assessment Committee be placed on the April 19, 2010 Agenda.

50. **Commissioner Prevatte:** I think we should have at least five to seven (5-7) stakeholders to serve on the Department of Aging Needs Assessment Committee, inclusive of the Building Inspector and a member from the Aging Advisory Council.

51. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** I think the stakeholders should be separate and apart from the County departments, and this would provide the Board with a true reflection of what the general public feels about this.

52. **Commissioner Bullard:** Mr. Clark, who would serve on this committee?

**William S. Clark:** replied stating I think the following people need to serve on the committee: Ed Worley, Aging Director, me as County Manager, Bobbie Faircloth, Finance Director, Tony Soles, Maintenance Director, two (2) County Commissioners, Building Inspections Director, and a member from the Aging Advisory Council.

53. **Commissioner Bullard:** Mr. Clark, will you talk to Dan Strickland to see how much land, if any, we could obtain from the Board of Education.

**William S. Clark:** replied stating yes.

54. **Vice Chairman Byrd:** Anytime you purchase a building, you need to give yourself room to grow.
55. **Commissioner McKenzie:** stated the following:
- A. I am more interested in meeting the needs of our senior citizens than jails where people are incarcerated; **and**
  - B. The citizens of the baby-boom era will be senior citizens in the very near future, and we need to allow for that sizable increase.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 7:51 P.M., Commissioner Norris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Gore. The motion unanimously passed.

**APPROVED:**

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**JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board**

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**P. EDWIN RUSS, Chairman**