

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE WORKSHOP**

Monday, November 13, 2017

6:00 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 Columbus County Historic Courthouse Workshop.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**
Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice Chairman** (Departed: 6:41 P.M.)
Giles E. Byrd
P. Edwin Russ
Trent Burroughs
Ricky Bullard
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Mike Stephens, **County Attorney /
County Manager**
June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

WORKSHOP CALLED to ORDER:

At 6:00 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte stated the Columbus County Historic Courthouse Workshop was resumed from the October 30, 2017 Workshop. The invocation was delivered by Commissioner Charles T. McDowell. Everyone in attendance stood and pledged Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America which was led by Commissioner Giles E. Byrd.

REQUESTED MEASUREMENTS:

Larry Hayes, Maintenance Director, presented the following measurements requested on the buildings involved.

BUILDING	SF UPSTAIRS	SF DOWNSTAIRS	TOTAL SF
Courthouse Annex	2,278	5,315	11,483
Board of Elections (Present Location)	---	7,958	7,958
Probation and Parole Office (Rented)	3,159	763	5,000
DA Facility	---	4,836	4,836
SCJ Area	---	1,531.25	1,531.25
Administration Facility	2,596	2,783	8,632

DISCUSSION/COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

Commissioner McDowell: stated the following:

1. It has been discussed to use the downstairs for Administration staff, and my concern is that we will not be using the upstairs as much as we should;
2. Would it be feasible for us to allow the DA's Office to go downstairs;
3. Move the Probation Office to the old DA's Office;
4. Move the court cases that are being held in the Annex to upstairs;
5. Move the Board of Elections to the downstairs of the Annex; **and**
6. Would this be feasible?

OPINIONS STATED:

The following two (2) lawyers stated their opinion regarding the Columbus County Historic Courthouse as follows.

1. **Carlton Williamson:** stated the following:
 - I have a personal interest and there are two (2) points that I would like to make regarding the Columbus County Historic Courthouse;
 - That is clearly the most iconic building we have in this county;
 - The importance is for the courtroom to remain as a courtroom for civil court;
 - Create a campus atmosphere and idea; **and**
 - The downstairs of the Courthouse Annex is not appropriate for court proceedings to be held.

2. **Butch Pope:** stated the following:
 - I have a personal interest in the Columbus County Historic Courthouse;
 - My mother worked downstairs with the ASCS for thirty (30) years; **and**
 - As Bob Burns used to say “That was the difference between the quick and the dead”.

Larry Hayes, Maintenance Director: All of those recommendations would be feasible. The second group of measurements are comparison of square footage in existing buildings versus possible re-locations of other departments.

EXISTING BUILDING	SQUARE FEET	POSSIBLE RE-LOCATION	SQUARE FEET
Annex Facility	11,483	Probation and Parole Office	5,000
	11,483	BOE	7,958
	11,483	DA/SCJ	7,198
	11,483	Admin Facility	8,632
Admin Facility	8,632	DA/SCJ	7,198

I have prepared an overlay of the different options of how different departments would fit into the Historic Courthouse.

VIEWING the OUTLAY DRAWINGS:

Each Board member reviewed the architect’s drawings of the Columbus County Historic Courthouse, with and without the suggested changes that are being recommended.

CONSENSUS of WORKSHOP:

- After lengthy discussion and suggestions, the consensus was as follows:
1. Move forward with securing two (2) architects to review the drawings we already have with the suggestions of Larry Hayes, Maintenance Director;
 2. Courtroom to be upstairs for criminal court and the Superior Court Judges;
 3. Possible DA’s offices to be downstairs; **and**
 4. Have this item on the November 20, 2017 Agenda for the purpose of deciding the use of the Columbus County Historic Courthouse.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:27 P.M., Commissioner Bullard made a motion to adjourn the Columbus County Historic Courthouse Workshop, seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to the Board

JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman