

## Columbus County Strategic Planning Update 2011

**March 17, 2011, 8:30 A.M.**

The Columbus County Commissioners met Thursday March 17, 2011 in special work session at the Southeastern Community College, Columbus County, NC, Room T-21. In attendance were Commissioners Edwin Russ, Amon McKenzie, Lynwood Norris, Giles Byrd, James Prevatte, Charles McDowell and Ricky Bullard. County Manager Bill Clark and County Attorney Mike Stephens also attended. Chris May, Director for Cape Fear Council of Governments who facilitated and recorded the minutes. Chairman Byrd called the meeting to order at 8:45 AM. After welcoming the attendees he recognized Mr. Clark who introduced Mr. May to conduct Strategic Planning Update Workshop.

Mr. May reviewed the results of last year's session and sought input on any new issues of importance. The following were identified:

### **Education:**

- Funding for FY 2011
- Discussion of Legislative proposal to consolidate school systems
- Charter Schools

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Manager to set up joint facilitated meeting with both Schools Boards
- Commissioners wait to see what NCGA does on consolidation
- Oppose lifting cap on Charter Schools and oppose taking funds from regular public education to fund those schools.
- Encourage selection of students in the Charter Schools be across the spectrum, not just the best students.

### **Prioritization Exercise:**

The Commissioners were asked to list all the issues facing the County for consideration of Board action.

1. Complete renovation and restoration of the Courthouse
2. Phase out water district taxes in Districts 2 and 3.
3. Solid waste/recycling contract up in 2012
4. Promote job creation and retention
5. Continue to streamline County Government
6. Eliminate abandoned structures and eyesores in the county
7. Provide tax incentives to attract new business and to support existing business in the County
8. Promote tourism for economic development
9. Continue to protect and enhance the County's fund balance
10. Promote County use of Columbus vendors first
11. Support efforts to reduce crime and eliminate drugs abuse
12. Expand public infrastructure throughout county (W/S, gas, internet)
13. Improve funding for designated capital projects for schools
14. Purchase vehicles that are adequate, not overkill ( 4x4 when 2x2 will suffice)
15. Improve health in county to raise ranking statewide
16. Establish CIP long range multi-year capital budgeting
17. Create a centralized county fuel facility to reduce fuel costs
18. Sustain employee benefits to reduce turnover
19. Review employee time off policy regarding bad weather days

Also discussed but not listed as an action item were the tax revaluation's impact on future tax rates

and employee salary adjustments.

The Commissioners were then asked to vote on the top five issues of those listed above. The results were as follows:

**Top Priorities for Columbus Commissioners:**

1. Complete renovation/restoration of Courthouse
2. Phase out water district taxes in Districts 2 and 3.
3. Eliminate abandoned structures and eyesores in the county
4. Promote County use of Columbus vendors first
5. Promote job creation and retention by providing tax incentives to attract new business and to support existing business in the County

**The following action / to do list was agreed upon by the Commissioners:**

#	ACTION / TO DO	SOURCE
1	Complete renovation/restoration of Courthouse	BOC
2	Phase out water district taxes in Districts 2 and 3.	BOC
3	Eliminate abandoned structures and eyesores in the county	BOC/PLNR
4	Promote County use of Columbus vendors first	BOC/MGR
5	Promote job creation and retention by providing tax incentives to attract new business and to support existing business in the County	BOC

Chairman Byrd adjourned the special planning work session at 11:40 AM.

Vote: Aye -All, Nay-None

Chris May, Facilitator and recorder of minutes.

**APPROVED:**

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

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**GILES E. BYRD, Chairman**