

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Monday, October 23, 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 interviews for County Manager and discussion on the Columbus County Historic Courthouse.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**  
Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice Chairman**  
Giles E. Byrd  
P. Edwin Russ  
Trent Burroughs  
Ricky Bullard  
Charles T. McDowell

**APPOINTEES PRESENT:**

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

**MEETING CALLED to ORDER:**

At 6:00 P.M., Chairman James E Prevatte opened the October 23, 2017 Columbus County Board of Commissioners Special Meeting to order, and stated the following:

1. This is a special meeting for the purpose of interviews for the Columbus County Manager, in Closed Session from 6:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.;
2. At 7:00 P.M., discussion on the Columbus County Historic Courthouse; **and**
3. The Closed Session will be first.

**INVOCATION and PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE:**

Commissioner McDowell delivered the invocation. Everyone in attendance stood and pledged Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, which was led by Commissioner Bullard.

**RECESS REGULAR SESSION and enter into CLOSED SESSION in ACCORDANCE with N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a) (6) PERSONNEL:**

At 6:03 P.M., Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to recess Regular Session and enter into Closed Session in accordance with N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a) (6) Personnel, seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

**CLOSED SESSION in ACCORDANCE with N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a) (6) PERSONNEL:**

No official action was taken.

**ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION and ENTER into COLUMBUS COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE WORKSHOP:**

At 6:53 P.M., Commissioner Byrd made a motion to adjourn Closed Session and enter into a Historic Courthouse Workshop, after a five (5) minutes recess, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs. The motion unanimously passed.

**COLUMBUS COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE WORKSHOP:**

Chairman Prevatte stated this workshop was for the purpose of discussing the usage of the Columbus County Historic Courthouse. As was requested at the October 09, 2017 Historic Courthouse Workshop, Mr. Stephens, what is the square footage in the Columbus County Historic Courthouse? In the absence of Larry Hayes, Maintenance Director, Mr. Stephens replied stating fifteen thousand, ninety-six (15,096) square feet.

**Commissioner Burroughs:** the main emphasis was the area not counting the entrances, in order to maintain the original design. The number was not determined at this time.

**Commissioner Bullard:** stated the following:

1. The majority of the discussion that I have heard is as follows:
  - Don't spend a bunch of money on the courthouse;
  - Maintain the courthouse in as good a condition as you can; **and**
  - Use local contractors for the work being done on the courthouse;
2. Heating and air work needs to be done
3. Level the floors where it is needed;
4. Update the bathrooms; **and**
5. The electrical issues need to be addressed.

**Commissioner Burroughs:** from the information I have seen and been told, the Columbus County Historic Courthouse would be a good location for the Administrative staff.

**Commissioner Russ:** stated the following:

1. I have people telling me it would be best to tear it down, and use the money for the schools in Columbus County; **and**
2. I am not in favor of that.

**Commissioner Bullard:** stated the following:

1. The majority of the people do not want to spend that money on the courthouse;
2. My opinion is for us to do the necessary repairs to maintain that building; **and**
3. At this time, I don't have no special use for the courthouse.

**Commissioner Byrd:** stated the following:

1. At the present time, we are paying monthly rent for the Parole/Probation offices; **and**
2. I suggest to fix what we would need for our department, and let Parole/Probation move in the building where we are at.

**Commissioner McDowell:** stated the following:

1. The majority of the discussion that I have heard is don't spend \$5 million on the building;
2. For the work that is needed to be done on the building, spend the money with local people;
3. We need to improve the building with emphasis on adequate bathrooms upstairs and downstairs; **and**
4. We still need to look at square footage for the suggestions that have been made to see if there is adequate space for the moves.

**Chairman Prevatte:** stated the following:

1. I am hearing don't spend \$5 million on the building
2. Secure up-to-date wiring;
3. Have good bathrooms upstairs and downstairs;
4. Keep the courtrooms where they are, in the future you may need them; **and**
5. For the work that will be done, to use local contractors.

## **SYNOPSIS OF WORKSHOP:**

1. Mike Stephens, County Attorney/Interim County Manager, to direct Larry Hayes, Maintenance Director, to do the following:
  - to get square footage on the space of the Professional Building being rented for Parole and Probation, and the Administration Building;
  - what department would work in each quadrant of the courthouse to keep the integrity of the hallways; **and**
2. Keeping the use of the courthouse to administrative or judicial purposes.

## **RECESS MEETING:**

At 7:35 P.M., Chairman Prevatte stated the Columbus County Courthouse Workshop was recessed until Monday, October 30, 2017, at 6:00 P.M.

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