

CLEVELAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

March 14, 2007

The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners reconvened their recessed regular session of February 20, 2007 on this date, at the hour of 4:30 p.m., in the Commission Chamber of the Cleveland County Administrative Offices.

PRESENT: Mary S. Accor, Chairwoman
Eddie Holbrook, Vice-Chairman
Jo Boggs, Commissioner (entered at 4:35 p.m.)
Ronald J. Hawkins, Commissioner (excused at 5:45 p.m.)
Johnny Hutchins, Commissioner
David C. Dear, County Manager
Wanda Crotts, County Clerk
Kerri Melton, Deputy Clerk
Eddie Bailes, Assistant County Manager
Chris Crepps, Finance Director
Pete Delea, The Star
Kathryn Larson, Cleveland Headline News
Other individual names on file in the Clerk's Office

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Accor called the meeting to order and led the audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag of the United States of America. Commissioner Ronald Hawkins provided the invocation for the meeting.

Chairwoman Accor moved the meeting to the County Manager's conference room.

GOAL SETTING

Chairwoman Accor began by asking each Commissioner to state their budget goals. Goals were presented by each Commissioner one at a time.

- No tax increase (Commissioner Holbrook, Hawkins)
- Medicaid Relief (Commissioner Boggs, Hawkins)- Chairwoman Accor and Commissioner Hawkins suggested that a plan be developed on how savings can be dispersed should Medicaid relief become a reality.
- Capital Expenditures (Commissioner Hutchins)- Commissioner Hutchins explained that 27 vehicles in the Sheriff's Department have been driven over 90,000 miles. He discussed the possibility of hybrid vehicles.
- Property Tax Relief (Chairwoman Accor, Commissioner Hawkins)
- Budget should be communicated to the community (Commissioner Hawkins)
- At least a 3% COLA for county employees (Commissioner Holbrook)
- Support Travel and Tourism (Commissioner Boggs)
- Review Public Safety Salaries (Commissioner Holbrook, Hutchins)
- Eliminate ½ step merit increases for first three steps (Commissioner Hutchins)
- Ensure Employee Wellness Clinic is staffed sufficiently (Commissioner Hutchins)
- Support County Manager goals including possible change in county health plan (Commissioner Hawkins)
- Community College Funding- Currently, Cleveland County ranks last in per pupil funding for community colleges (Chairwoman Accor)
- Develop a plan for 800mhz system funding (Commissioner Holbrook)
- Allow only ½ merit increases for those employees above Step 4 (Commissioner Hutchins)
- School Construction (Chairwoman Accor)

County Manager, David Dear presented to Commissioners a list of possible capital needs.

- Airport Terminal Project- This project may include the county sharing a match for a grant to complete construction of a new airport terminal- \$160,000
- EMS Base Station- Mr. Dear discussed a base station in the southern end of Cleveland County. Commissioners discussed proposed location and agreed that an EMS base station in the Boiling Springs area is a priority due to the growth of the Boiling Springs Community- \$300,000 (building only)
- No interest loan for the Neal Senior Center- funding may include a no-interest loan to relieve the Senior Center of a 10-year interest bearing loan. Granting the loan would mean, for the Senior Center, a \$30K-\$32K cost savings per year- \$140,000
- City of Kings Mountain boat dock and launch- funding would provide a grant match for boat launching capabilities for Chris Craft Corporation- \$30,000
- Animal Shelter Renovations- Under state mandate, the Cleveland County Animal Shelter will need to undergo renovations. No pricing has been determined at this time.
- Landfill Project- the landfill project will continue to move forward. Funds have already been set aside to complete this project.
- Boiling Springs EMS Base Station- acquire land for the future Boiling Springs EMS Base Station.

Chairwoman Accor then asked each Commissioner to state their “Commissioner Goals”. Goals were, again, presented by each Commissioner one at a time.

- Continue strong economic development focus and encourage lobbying for Duke Power project (Commissioner Holbrook)
- Support Upper Cleveland Reservoir (Commissioner Holbrook, Boggs)
- Attract retail business to Cleveland County (Commissioner Hutchins)
- Continue dialogue about a conference center in Cleveland County (Commissioner Hawkins)
- Make dropout prevention a priority in Cleveland County (Commissioner Accor)
- Periodic “no agenda” meetings held throughout the county (Commissioner Accor)
- Board needs to reach a consensus that is more “citizen friendly”- Commissioners discussed possible modification of the tarp ordinance and addressing a countywide leash law (Commissioner Holbrook, Boggs, Hutchins)
- Support community groups like Destination Cleveland County, Agri-tourism, etc. (Commissioner Boggs)
- Work with non-profits, senior centers and faith based organizations to ensure that no county citizens go hungry (Commissioner Hawkins)
- Support legislative efforts on recruitment and retention for volunteer firefighters/rescue personnel (Commissioner Hawkins)
- Continue communication between Commissioners (Commissioner Hutchins)

Chairwoman Accor asked Commissioners to rank their top three goals by marking those goals that they felt were most important. Commissioners agreed that those goals with the most marks would become top priorities.

PRIORITIZED “TOP 4” BUDGET GOALS FOR 2007

1. No tax increase
2. Address Medicaid issue
3. 3% COLA to county employees
4. Community College funding

PRIORITIZED “TOP 4” COMMISSIONER GOALS FOR 2007

1. Continue efforts in economic development
2. Support Upper Cleveland Reservoir
3. Modify tarp ordinance and look at leash law resolution
4. Support legislation for Fire/EMS volunteers

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, Johnny Hutchins made the motion, seconded by Eddie Holbrook, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to adjourn the meeting (*at 6:05p.m.*).

*Mary S. Accor, Chairwoman
Cleveland County Board of Commissioners*

*Kerri Melton, Deputy Clerk
Cleveland County Board of Commissioners*