CUMBERLAND COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE
COURTHOUSE, 117 DICK STREET, 5TH FLOOR, ROOM 564
AUGUST 4, 2016 – 9:00 AM
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Larry Lancaster, Chairman
        Commissioner Jeannette Council
        Commissioner Kenneth Edge
        Commissioner Jimmy Keefe

OTHER COMMISSIONERS
PRESENT: Commissioner Glenn Adams
        Commissioner Faircloth

OTHERS: Amy Cannon, County Manager
        James Lawson, Deputy County Manager
        Tracy Jackson, Assistant County Manager
        Melissa Cardinali, Assistant County Manager
        Sally Shutt, Governmental Affairs Officer
        Rick Moorefield, County Attorney
        Vicki Evans, Finance Director
        Deborah Shaw, Budget Analyst
        Heather Harris, Budget Analyst
        Kim Cribb, Budget Analyst and Grants Coordinator
        Tammy Gillis, Director of Internal Audit and Wellness Services
        Jeffrey Brown, Engineering and Infrastructure Director
        Jim Lott, Workforce Development Director
        Joe Utley, Tax Administrator
        Candice H. White, Clerk to the Board
        Press

Commissioner Lancaster called the meeting to order.

1.   APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 2, 2016 FINANCE COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

MOTION: Commissioner Council moved to approve the June 2, 2016 minutes.
SECOND: Commissioner Edge
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (4-0)

Melissa Cardinali, Assistant County Manager, stated Tammy Gillis, Director of Internal Audit and Wellness Services, is now a Certified Government Auditing Professional having passed the exam issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors Certified Government Auditing Professional. Ms. Cardinali also introduced Kim Cribb as the new budget analyst and Juvenile Crime Prevention Council coordinator.

2.   CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE CUMBERLAND
        COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

BACKGROUND:
Workforce Development staff have prepared the Request for Proposals (RFP) for FY17
programs and services. These important services are focused on the following groups: local
employers, the unemployed, underemployed adults, veterans, dislocated workers, In-School
Youth (age 14-21) and Out-of-School Youth (age 16-24). This RFP seeks service providers
who will work collaboratively with Cumberland County Workforce Development and the
North Carolina Department of Commerce's Division of Workforce Solutions as part of an
integrated services model. All program funding originates from the federal government via the
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and is passed through to the State of
North Carolina to local Workforce Development Boards. Estimated allocations for FY17 are
anticipated to be as follows for these specific program areas in Cumberland County:
   1) $800,000 for adult services programs
   2) $700,000 for dislocated worker programs
   3) $900,000 for youth services programs

These amounts may be subject to change as it is based upon a prior estimate of available funds.
It is anticipated that the exact funding amount will be known at or about the time of the final
contract negotiations. All contracts for services will be on a cost-reimbursement basis, based
upon performance, and may be extended for two additional years at the discretion of the
County.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED ACTION:
Approval to move forward with the RFP process for youth, adult and dislocated worker
workforce services in Cumberland County.

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Tracy Jackson, Assistant County Manager, recognized Jim Lott, Workforce Development
Director, who stated Cumberland County received about $3 million per year in federal funds
that come through the state to the County to serve those who are unemployed and looking for a
better job. Mr. Lott stated two years ago the state passed a law requiring that the Career Center
bid out the service programs. Mr. Lott stated the Request for Proposals (RFP) for FY17
programs and services will be released in the next few days and the bidders can be a
government agency, nonprofit agency or a private for-profit agency. Mr. Lott stated bids will
be due the end of August, the Workforce Development Board will review and approve on
September 7 and the Board of Commissioners will give final approval in mid September.

MOTION: Commissioner Edge moved to go forward with the RFP process for youth, adult
            and dislocated worker workforce services in Cumberland County.
SECOND: Commissioner Council
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (4-0)

3.   PRESENTATION ON THE 2017 TAX REVALUATION PROCESS BY JOE UTLEY

BACKGROUND:
NCGS 105-286 required counties to reappraise all real property every eight years. Cumberland County's next general reappraisal is scheduled for January 1, 2017.

This is the first of two presentations meant to serve as informational session prior to the October 3, 2016 Board of Commissioners' meeting. This presentation will inform the Finance Committee members about the revaluation process, the current status and future timeline.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED ACTION:
This presentation is for informational purposes only. No action by the Finance Committee is required.

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Amy Cannon, County Manager, recognized Joe Utley, Tax Administrator, and stated he will provide information on the revaluation process; however, there are no numbers available at this point in the revaluation process. Ms. Cannon stated it will likely be late November or early December before there are any conclusions. Mr. Utley introduced Tami Botello, Real Estate Division Manager, and provided the following presentation on the 2017 revaluation to include background information, steps involved in the revaluation process, timetable of key events and plans for citizen education.

What is Revaluation?
Revaluation is simply…
  ➢ The process of appraising all real estate at the fair market value or present use value, as of January 1st of a specific year

Why Conduct a Revaluation?
  ➢ A general revaluation is conducted to equalize all property values at 100% of fair market value
     ▪   NCGS 105-283: Uniform Appraisal Standards
     ▪   All Property, Real and Personal
     ▪   Valued at "True Value" in money = "Market Value"
  ➢ To reestablish tax equity and fairness between all properties, which increase or decrease in value due to various factors
  ➢ Ensures that all property owners are paying their fair share of the property tax burden

How Often is a Revaluation Conducted?
  ➢ North Carolina law requires all counties to perform a countywide real property Revaluation at least once every 8 years (G.S. 105-286)
  ➢ Cumberland County Revaluation cycle has varied; however, we are currently on an 8 year cycle; our last revaluation was January 1, 2009
  ➢ 56 Counties remain on an 8 year cycle
     •   To include: Cumberland, Durham and Mecklenburg
  ➢ 40 Counties are on a 4 year cycle
     •   Wake County BOC approved a 4 year cycle on March 21, 2016

Commissioner Adams asked why some counties are on a 4 year cycle versus an 8 year cycle and whether one cycle was better than the other. Mr. Utley stated a 4 year cycle is too quick for some counties and some of the smaller counties are on an 8 year cycle due to funding considerations. Chairman Faircloth stated Cumberland County was on a 4 year cycle when real estate values were growing and went back to an 8 year cycle when growth slowed down. Mr. Utley stated a permanent revaluation team would have to be established if the county went back to a 4 year cycle which would require additional staff. Mr. Utley continued his presentation.

Time and Staff to Conduct a Revaluation
Our assignment is to estimate fair market value as of January 1, 2017 by analyzing sales, cost and income data.
  ➢ To conduct a successful revaluation, we need a minimum of 2 ½ to 3 years
  ➢ Two primary teams – Commercial and Residential
  ➢ All staff members are involved at one time or another conducting specialized tasks

Current Real Estate Staffing
  ➢ Revaluations are completed by our own in-house staff (every revaluation since 1992)
  ➢ All appraisers with more than one year of service are certified by the NC Department of Revenue as Real Property Appraisers
  ➢ There are 14 appraisal positions in Real Estate
    • RE Division Manager
    • Appraisal Supervisor
    • 12 Appraisers

Steps Involved in a Revaluation
  ➢ Neighborhood Reviews (boundary, lot size; quality; characteristics)
  ➢ Cost Studies are conducted & Cost Models developed
  ➢ Conduct a Review of Vacant & Improved Property Sales
    • Our staff analyzes the actions of buyers and sellers in the market
    • We maintain a county wide sales file and have an active sales verification process
  ➢ Market models are then established to value residential properties
  ➢ The models are developed based on similarities between the neighborhoods, to include: location, age and quality
  ➢ A majority of the commercial property will be valued using the cost approach; however, income producing properties will use the income approach to value:
    • Apartments, Motels, Shopping Centers and Mobile Home Parks
  ➢ Collect Income & Expense Data
    • Income surveys are sent to the property owners
    • On-site visits are conducted to talk with owners and tenants
    • Resource guides for the property types
      · Marshall and Swift Valuation Services
      · Smith Travel Research (Hotels)
      · Institute of Real Estate Management (Shopping Ctrs/Apartments)

- ➢ Collect Income & Expense Data
  - From these sources <u>stabilized or market</u> rents, vacancy and expense ratios are established to create income models
- ➢ The income properties are grouped to ensure like properties are assigned to the same income model
- ➢ Income models are applied to establish an income value

Commissioner Keefe stated apartments are valued using the income approach; however, people who live in apartments use the County's services such as education, social services, public health and libraries at a higher level than other income producing properties that do not use the County's services such as hotels, shopping centers or mobile home parks. Commissioner Keefe asked why apartments could not be valued comparable to residential properties. Mr. Utley stated in accordance with the general statute, efforts are to reach the true value or market value, and apartment complexes are going to be bought and sold by investors based on their income producing capability. Mr. Utley stated although he is required to consider all approaches, were he to go to Raleigh with an appeal on the valuation set for an apartment complex and had not used the income approach, he would lose the appeal. A brief discussion followed. Commissioner Edge asked to have the number of rental properties in Cumberland County provided. Mr. Utley continued his presentation.

Time Table for Revaluation
- ➢ October 2016 – Presentation of Schedule of Values (SOV) to the Board of Commissioners and a Public Hearing is held
  - To be discussed in more detail at the September Finance Meeting
- ➢ November 2016 – Adoption of the SOV by the Board of Commissioners
- ➢ December 2016 – Last opportunity for the SOV's to be appealed to the NC Property Tax Commission
- ➢ January 1, 2017 – Values become final
- ➢ January Time Frame – 2017 notices are mailed
- ➢ February/March 2017 – Informal Hearings begin
  - Valuation Notices will have a mail in section
  - Questions answered and appointments made by phone
  - Walk-ins accepted – Appraisers on duty
  - Appraisers meet with taxpayers and begin site visits
- ➢ April 2017 – Begin sending 2nd notices with the results from the informal appeals
  - The vast majority of appeals will be resolved through the informal hearing process
- ➢ April/May 2017 – Board of Equalization and Review (BER) convenes with day and night meetings as needed

Citizen Education on Revaluation
- ➢ County Website – Link to a Revaluation Page
  - Frequently Asked Questions
  - Explanation of Revaluation
  - Link to the Brochure
  - Cumberland Matters
- ➢ Meetings with Municipalities as Requested
- ➢ Other Meetings
- NC Board of Realtors

- Cape Fear Appraisal Group
- Public Libraries

September Finance Committee
  ➢ What to Expect:
    - Factors that affect the Tax Base and Revenue
    - More Information on the Appeals Process
    - Overview of the Schedule of Values (SOV)

Commissioner Council asked whether this presentation be provided during a meeting of the Mayor's Coalition. Chairman Faircloth stated the presentation would be timely if provided during the next meeting which will be in November.

4.   MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

BACKGROUND:
There was a delay in providing reports because additional time was needed to validate reports as a result of transitioning to new system reporting layouts to ensure accuracy.

The attached financial report is as of May 31, 2016. Highlights include:

- Revenues
  o   Ad Valorem tax collections are continuing to appear strong

▪   Revenues exceeded the annual budget allocation for this line, consistent with May of 2015

▪   May year-to-date collections reached 98.97% of the tax levy for the year
  o   Sales and other taxes and other revenue categories remain in line with budget and previous year patterns

- Expenditures
  o   General Fund expenditures remain in line with budget and previous year patterns

- Crown center expense summary/prepared food and beverage and motel tax
  o   Total year-to-date event income and expenditures are slightly higher than this time last fiscal year

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED ACTION:
No action needed – for information purposes only.

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Vicki Evans, Finance Director, reviewed the background information recorded above and stated ad valorem tax collections exceeded budget reaching 98.97% of the tax levy for the year which is .05% better than last year. Ms. Evans stated Crown Center expenditures and prepared food and beverage and motel tax are trending slightly higher than last year but still within budget.

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5.   PRESENTATION ON THE FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAM BUSINESS PROCESS REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS DIVISION OF INFORMATION SERVICES

BACKGROUND:
As a part of the Board of Commissioners approved Business Intelligence Initiative, the Enterprise Solutions Division within Information Services recently conducted a comprehensive business process review for the Department of Social Services. The business process review concentrated on the Food and Nutrition Services within the Economic Services Division. Through this business process review, several opportunities for business process improvements were discovered.

The presentation will review the current processes, business process improvement opportunities and recommended solutions to improve these business processes.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED ACTION:
Information Services asks that the Finance Committee endorse the Enterprise Solutions Division's continued work on a phased-in approach and monitoring of the business process improvements for FNS and provide bi-monthly reports to the Finance Committee.

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Ms. Cardinali reviewed the background information recorded above and introduced Enterprise Solutions Division Manager Kim Honan and team members Sabrina Patterson, Jimmy Platter and Lynn Smith.   Ms. Cardinali stated the team worked with DSS in three areas: applications, recertification and training. Ms. Cardinali stated the presentation that follows will be on the applications portion and the recertification and training portions will be brought to the Finance Committee at a later time. Ms. Cannon recognized Social Services staff Claretta Johnson, Vivian Tookes and Gale Bullard.

Ms. Honan provided the following overview of the Enterprise Solutions Division and process reviews:

The Enterprise Solutions Division (ESD) was created to conduct business process reviews to analyze and identify process improvements and efficiency opportunities with a technology focus around the County enterprise systems, such as Tyler Munis for Financials, HR, Payroll, Benefits and Utility Billing, and Laserfiche, the County's content management system.

The Business Intelligence initiative expands the business process reviews to include all business processes to maximize efficiency opportunities. ESD's initial business process reviews included the Jury process and Veteran Services, and the majority of those recommendations have been implemented with great success. The Jury summons processing time was projected to be reduced by 50.52%; however, ESD recently completed its 6-month evaluation and observed a reduction of 81.05%. In Veterans Services, 22 of 44 steps were eliminated from their intake process.

The business process reviews are comprehensive and many techniques are used. They include:

- A Voice of Customer questionnaire that's provided to the department head prior to our kick-off meeting to gain insight into their department and processes
- An initial kick-off meeting to review the questionnaire, obtain input and feedback, and to explain our process
- Observation visits and one on one discussions with subject matter experts
- Additional research using internal and external resources
- Site visits and web meetings with other County agencies
- Ongoing internal collaboration with our Information Services team to obtain input and feedback from the Applications and Infrastructure teams. This helps us get an understanding of what's been done in the past, what technology plans may be in progress or in consideration for the future, and determine any relationships or dependencies that we need to know about.

Some of our upcoming initiatives include Animal Control, DSS Medicaid and the Tax office. Currently, ESD is conducting business process reviews for the Mail Room, Print Shop and Graphics, the Commissioners' agenda process, Central Permits and Environmental Health, and the Food and Nutrition Services areas of DSS.

Ms. Honan recognized Ms. Patterson who provided the following presentation which detailed the division's business process review and collaboration with DSS relating to FNS Applications and Central Records.

Ms. Patterson stated the agenda for presentation includes:
- Organizational Structure
- Current Applications
- Fact Findings
- Statistical Data
- Known Pain Points
- Applications Improvement Areas
- Central Records
- NCFAST Help Desk
- Value Added Summary
- Recommended Rollout Phases
- Operational Support Team (OST) Comments
- Strategic Goals
- Future Endeavors

Ms. Patterson reviewed the organizational structure as follows:
- Program Manager
- 2 – Supervisors
- 2 – Lead Workers
- 24 – Income Maintenance Case Workers
    - 12 – Process EPASS, Dropbox, Mail-in and Faxed Applications

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- • 6 – Resource Center Staff to conduct interviews and process customer's applications for expedite service
  - • 6 – Time Limited Staff
- • 2 – Vacant Approved Full-time Case Workers as of May 1st Organizational Chart
- • 2 – Vacant Time Limited Case Workers as of May 1st Organizational Chart

Ms. Patterson stated it is important to note that the above information is just in time data and is subject to change based on FNS workloads. Ms. Patterson stated the Department of Social Services (DSS) has approximately 701 employees and Economic Services has approximately 272 employees.

Ms. Paterson stated FNS currently uses at least 5 of the 8 software applications to complete FNS applications:
- • North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NCFAST) for FNS, Medicaid and TANF
- • Online Application System known as Electronic Pre-Assessment Screening Service (EPASS)
- • Document Imaging System (EAGLE) with Laserfiche to be implemented
- • Web Identity Role Management/Online Verification System (WIRM/OLV)
- • Electronic Benefit Transfer Edge (EBT) or food stamp card
- • Data Warehouse
- • Microsoft Access – Client Tracking
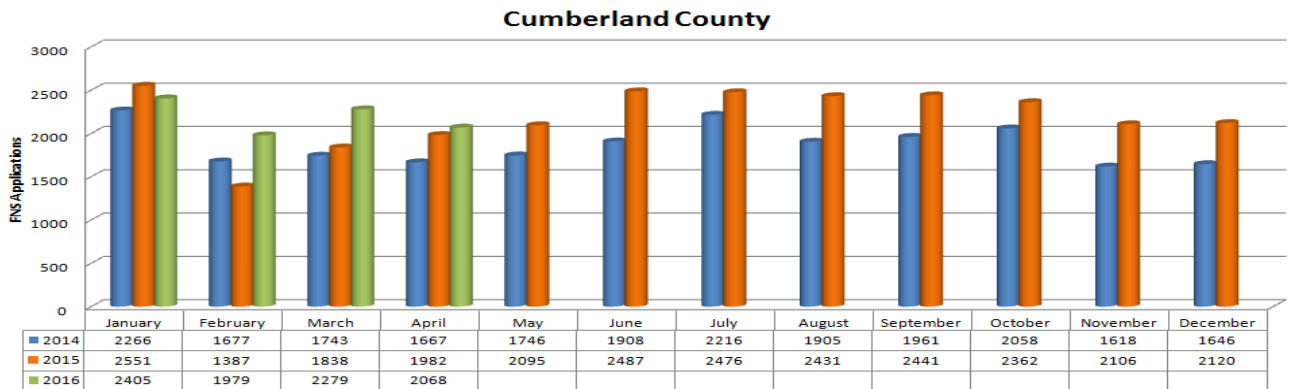- • Microsoft Excel – Reports, Workflows, etc.

Ms. Patterson stated discovery produced the following fact findings:
- • As of May 2016, according to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) there were approximately 69,005 individuals receiving FNS, which makes up 33,240 active cases. This represents 21% of the Cumberland County population (329,403) receiving assistance in Economic Services and DSS.
- • In FY2015, DSS Call Center handled approximately 271,805 calls of which 117,809 (43.3%) were for Economic Services; whereas, FNS made up 57,768 (21.3%) of those calls.
- • DHHS did a full implementation of NCFAST to all 100 North Carolina counties in Fall 2013 and stopped using Food Stamps Information System (FSIS) in December 2013.
- • Over 17,300 NCFAST Help Desk tickets were received across the state when NCFAST first went live. A total of 16,900 of those tickets were closed, but the remaining 400 help desk tickets were placed on a backlog which continues to grow.
- • DHHS plans to implement the Subsidized Child Care Assistance (SCCA) and Energy in early 2017 and plans to implement Child Services and Aging and Adult Services portal between now and June 2017.
- • For the FY15-16 Proposed Budget (March 18, 2015), 38 Income Maintenance positions were requested to support Medicaid and FNS workload.*
  - • Time Limited Staff members were reduced from 45 to 35.*
  - • 13 full-time FNS positions were approved (6 for Applications and 7 for Recertification).*
- • In order to meet the June 2016 federal deadline it was estimated that an additional 15 full-time FNS positions were needed.*

- On January 9, 2016, County Commissioners approved overtime/exempt time payment for employees whose work was related to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) mandate for FNS until June 30, 2016.
- From January 4th through May 6th, 2016, DSS timeliness and accuracy rate has increased by 10.27%.

*Source: Buncombe Business Enterprise Model – Revised FNS Staffing Analysis October 5, 2015

Ms. Patterson provided the following overview of FNS application monthly totals for CY2014 – 2016* and stated the statistical data was acquired from Data Warehouse.

Cumberland County

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
2014	2266	1677	1743	1667	1746	1908	2216	1905	1961	2058	1618	1646
2015	2551	1387	1838	1982	2095	2487	2476	2431	2441	2362	2106	2120
2016	2405	1979	2279	2068								

*For CY2015 Expedited Applications averaged approximately 45% of the applications received, which equals to 11,824
*Total for 2014: 22,411
*Total for 2015: 26,276
*Increase of 3,865 applications

In response to a question posed by Commissioner Keefe, Ms. Patterson stated these are straight numbers but there can be changes as a result of Turbo Tax, when school is out and teacher assistants apply for supplemental services, from the Affordable Care Act and changes in income levels.

Staffing Analysis
Ms. Patterson stated a business process review will need to be completed in all areas of DSS Economic Services Division before staff recommendations can be determined and staffing formulas such as the one below will be used as part of the process.

CY2015	FNS Apps Taken	State Average Processing Time	Staff Required	Current Staffing	Staffing Differential
January	2551	2	36.44	18	-18.44
February	1387	2	19.81	18	-1.81
March	1838	2	26.26	18	-8.26
April	1982	2	28.31	18	-10.31
May	2095	2	29.93	18	-11.93
June	2487	2	35.53	18	-17.53
July	2476	2	35.37	18	-17.37
August	2431	2	34.73	18	-16.73
September	2441	2	34.87	18	-16.87
October	2362	2	33.74	18	-15.74
November	2106	2	30.09	18	-12.09
December	2120	2	30.29	18	-12.29
Average	2190		31.28		-13.28

*The Staffing Formula used was taken from the Buncombe Study of 2014 (Work Days per Month: 20; Work Hours per Day: 7; Work Hours per Month: 140; Work Days per Year: 245)
*Processing Time
(1 hr 45 mins would equal to a staffing differential of -9.37)
(1 hr 30 mins would equal to a staffing differential of -5.46)
*Observed Processing Time: 1 hour to 1 hour and 52 minutes (This time varied due to the Household Composition and the length of the phone interview)

Ms. Patterson reviewed overtime/exempt time compensation totals as outlined below.

Pay Periods	Comp & Exempt Time Hours	Overtime Hours
Jan 10th - Jan 23rd, 2016	87.9	7
Jan 24th - Feb 6th, 2016	353.56	0
Feb 7th - Feb 20th, 2016	18.45	12
Feb 21st - Mar 5th, 2016	167.2	103.8
Mar 6th - Mar 19th, 2016	58.9	24
Mar 20th - Apr 2nd, 2016	63.38	37.3
Apr 3rd - Apr 16th, 2016	0	0
Apr 17th - Apr 30th, 2016	130.08	97.6
May 1st - May 14th, 2016	50.6	39.15
Total	930.07	320.85

- The overall total for overtime and comp/exempt time hours equal 1,250.92 hours.
- This graph represents only the FNS Applications employees who were identified by the FNS Manager and the Lead Supervisor.
- These hours were accumulated from employees working one or two Saturdays a pay period and a few hours over the normal 8 hour work day.
- After reviewing the bi-weekly timesheets it showed that 18 FNS employees accumulated overtime hours and 31 FNS employees and other qualified staff (Lead Workers & Supervisors) accumulated comp/exempt hours during the above payroll periods.

Ms. Patterson presented the following timeliness and accuracy rates and stated USDA requires a 95% timeliness and accuracy rate for completed FNS applications.

| Date | County | All Approved | | | |
| | | Timely | | Untimely | |
		Pct	Count	Pct	Count
Dec 28th - Jan 1st, 2016	Cumberland	89.69%	235	10.31%	27
Jan 4th - Jan 8th, 2016	Cumberland	86.18%	393	13.82%	63
Jan 11th -15th, 2016	Cumberland	85.24%	387	14.76%	67
Jan 18th - 22nd, 2016	Cumberland	82.69%	234	17.31%	49
Jan 25th - 29th, 2016	Cumberland	78.73%	322	21.27%	87
Feb 1st - 5th, 2016	Cumberland	83.90%	344	16.10%	66
Feb 8th - 12th, 2016	Cumberland	85.68%	341	14.32%	57
Feb 15th - 19th, 2016	Cumberland	90.00%	279	10.00%	31
Feb 22nd - 26th, 2016	Cumberland	82.50%	297	17.50%	63
Feb 29 - Mar 4th, 2016	Cumberland	92.79%	399	7.21%	31
Mar 7th - 11th, 2016	Cumberland	92.19%	413	7.81%	35
Mar 14th - 18th, 2016	Cumberland	90.09%	382	9.91%	42
Mar 21st - 25th, 2016	Cumberland	92.94%	316	7.06%	24
Mar 28th - Apr 1st, 2016	Cumberland	90.49%	238	9.51%	25
Apr 4th - 8th, 2016	Cumberland	97.34%	403	2.66%	11
Apr 11th - 15th, 2016	Cumberland	95.41%	395	4.59%	19
Apr 18th - 22nd, 2016	Cumberland	95.59%	347	4.41%	16
Apr 25th - 30th, 2016	Cumberland	96.68%	291	3.32%	10
May 2nd - 6th, 2016	Cumberland	96.45%	408	3.55%	15

Ms. Patterson outlined the following known pain points discussed with her during observation:
- Staff members are overwhelmed
  - Heavy caseload volume.
  - Lack of personal leave coverage.
  - Working late evenings, one mandatory Saturday per month, and two voluntary Saturdays.
  - High amount of reorganizational movement and staff turnover driven by demands associated with state and federal mandates, state issues with NCFAST, etc.
    - $80 million in federal funding is at risk statewide and $2 million for Cumberland County if the 95% accuracy rate is not met.
- Processing time limit constraints due to change in state mandates and policy
  - State requirements for Expedite application processing time. (Must be processed by the 4th day).
  - State requirements for Non-Expedite application processing time. (Must be processed by the 25th day).
- NCFAST issues
  - Slowness or unavailability of the NCFAST system, which produces unplanned downtime and reduces productivity.
  - NCID and Log in problems to include not being able to locate server.
  - Receiving error messages while processing applications.

In response to a question posed by Commissioner Keefe, Ms. Patterson stated there have been improvements in the NCFAST system so that it now stays open until around 9:00 p.m.

Ms. Patterson outlined areas for improvement as follows and stated this does not mean staff have not doing their jobs and there has not been a reason behind what they have been doing.

- Staffing Workload
  - To cross train case workers in the two major program sections (FNS and Medicaid)
    - To eliminate the need for customers to see two different case workers.
    - To enhance FNS case workers' ability to efficiently serve customers better.
    - To continue to improve the organization's timeliness and accuracy rate.
    - To have the ability to do same day processing as best practice.
    - To reduce the need to work evenings and mandatory Saturdays.
- Applications Teams
  - FNS Pending Applications Team - To allow external FNS applications (mail-in and faxes) to be pended within NCFAST the same day as they are received instead of going to the End of Day report for processing the following day.
  - FNS Expedite Team (2nd floor) – To ensure all expedite FNS applications that are mailed in, dropped off, or faxed are entered and processed within the state mandated four days.
- Customer Phone Interviews
  - To reduce the average application processing time for FNS case workers by 15-30 minutes.
  - To reduce the number of applications closed due to not being able to conduct the phone interview.
- Standard Phone Interview Template
  - To ensure all FNS case workers are asking the same questions in the same order so it's quicker and easier to reference.
  - To allow FNS case workers to copy and paste questions and customer answers directly into NCFAST.
- Phase out internal and external drop boxes
  - To encourage timely submittals.
  - To avoid missing opportunities to conduct face-to-face interviews as the FNS applications are being dropped off.
  - To minimize need to call customers for phone interviews.
  - To eliminate the need to add them to the End of Day report for processing the next day.

Ms. Patterson outlined of central records are for all divisions and stated even though records are scanned, they are still copied and placed in folders. Ms. Patterson stated some of the records cannot be destroyed.
- There are approximately 1,007 – 5 drawer file cabinets which contain customers' file records.
- There is approximately 7,455 square footage that is being utilized for the 4 storage areas: (Room G16: 205 sq ft; Room G19F: 550 sq ft; Room G19G: 550 sq ft; Room N101E: 6,150 sq ft).
- There are an enormous number of boxes in all of the file storage areas.
- Keeping up with "Retention Schedule" is a big issue.

Ms. Patterson reviewed storage costs for DSS to use the Patterson Storage facility:
- DSS has been using Patterson Storage facility since 1999.

- Being utilized for purchasing storage boxes, shredding/destruction of documents, and storage.
- The monthly charge ranges from $1,100 to $1,300.
- Payment history:
  FY2013 ($12,824.00)
  FY2014 ($13,766.50)
  FY2015 ($16,687.90)
  FY2016 ($13,886.25) As of March 21, 2016
- In October 2014, 1,500 boxes of FNS documents were shredded by Patterson Storage.
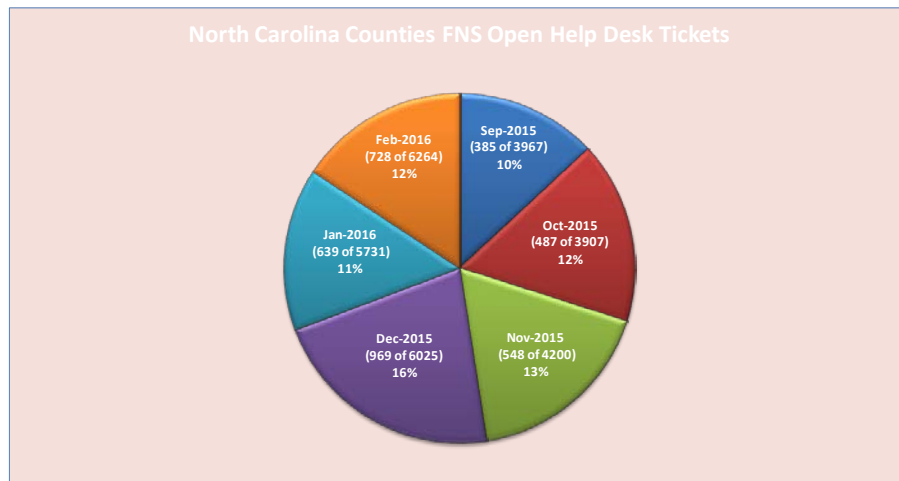- There are exactly 5,367 file boxes over at Patterson Storage.

Ms. Patterson outlined central records improvement areas:
- Minimize overcrowded file cabinets
  - To reduce the amount of documents being scanned and saved.
  - To improve records management, reduce file maintenance, and decrease storage requirements and related cost.
  - To free up 7,455 space for future growth.

Ms. Patterson reviewed central records recommendations and stated the state is trying to encourage all counties to work towards going paperless.
- Continue to implement Laserfiche
  - To create green efficiencies by reducing paper and to increase operational efficiencies and assist in records retention.
  - To incorporate the county electronic content management system.
  - To follow the state initiative for all counties to work toward becoming paperless.
  - To provide document management in one central location.
  - Fail safe security and auditing features.
  - Provide consistent and reliable information on demand.

Ms. Patterson reviewed usage of the NCFAST help desk stating there are only two people that can open tickets and one of those had 45 tickets open in January, 66 open in February and 34 open in March. Ms. Patterson stated in February 2016, 728 of the 6264 tickets were for FNS only.

North Carolina Counties FNS Open Help Desk Tickets

- Sep-2015 (385 of 3967) 10%
- Oct-2015 (487 of 3907) 12%
- Nov-2015 (548 of 4200) 13%
- Dec-2015 (969 of 6025) 16%
- Jan-2016 (639 of 5731) 11%
- Feb-2016 (728 of 6264) 12%

Ms. Patterson reviewed NCFAST help desk improvement areas:

- NCFAST help desk submittal process
  - To reduce the need to email help desk request to the NCFAST Help Desk Administrators.
  - To improve how help desk tickets are being tracked.
  - NCFAST Problem Solving Manual
  - To enable employees to resolve NCFAST issues themselves, eliminate wait times and reduce the number of duplicated help desk tickets.
  - To reduce delays in FNS applications processing.

Ms. Patterson reviewed NCFAST help desk recommendations and stated a lot of problems arise from simple errors that can be avoided.
- Create a problem solver/resolution manual for previous help desk issues for reference.
- Create a "What-If" this happens then "Do-That" or "Check This" manual.
- Recommend case workers, lead workers, and supervisors to use the Troubleshooting Job Aid within NCFAST before submitting a help desk ticket to the NCFAST Help Desk Administrator.
- Add NCFAST Help Desk Administrators to the existing internal help desk system (SpiceWorks).
  - To eliminate the personal email communication going back and forth.
  - To provide the ability to track and monitor issues.

Value Added Summary
Ms. Patterson summarized the process improvements as presented during her presentation and the value added from those improvements as outlined below.

Process Improvement	Value Added
Enhance file maintenance (Laserfiche)	• Reduces the number of paper files. • Ability to dispose of approximately 1,007 file cabinets. • Redeems approximately 7,455 square footage of space for future growth. • Enables the ability to be notified when files are reaching the state retention date. • Ability to share information across various county agencies while limiting access.
Enhance intake process (Laserfiche)	• Ability to search and query specific files and data. • Ability to provide faster customer service. • Reduces redundancy of entering information. • Reduces the number of duplicated errors.
Develop a Phone Interview Team & Create a Phone Interview template	• Decreases and streamline the current FNS application processing time by approximately 15 to 30 minutes for case workers. • Enhances FNS case workers ability to focus on processing the application. • Ability to complete more phone interviews in a timely manner. • Ensures that all FNS case workers are asking the same questions in the same order so it's quicker and easier to reference.
Develop a Pending Applications Team	• Enables all external FNS applications (mailed-in, faxed, and dropped off) to be pended within NCFAST the same day it is received. • Improves employee productivity rate. (Average of 593 applications are pended on a daily basis)

Process Improvement	Value Added
Develop an Expedite Team (2nd floor)	• Enhances the ability to process the expedite FNS application the same day but no later than the 4th day. (Expedites makes up 45% of FNS applications.)
Universal workers (Cross train employees in two programs: FNS and Medicaid)	• Enables the ability for same day processing and improves the organization's timely and accuracy rate in both areas. • Improves the business processes and improves the level of customer service.
Phase out internal and external drop boxes	• Increases the ability to conduct same day face-to-face interviews. • Reduces the need to call the customers for a phone interview. • Reduces the need to enter the customer's information onto the End of Day log for next day review. • Reduces the number of unsuccessful phone interview attempts.
Develop a NCFAST problem solving manual on the intranet	• Enables employees to resolve the NCFAST issues themselves. Reduces the number of help desk tickets submitted to allow for faster processing times.
Add NCFAST Help Desk Administrators to the current IT help desk Spiceworks application	• Provides an internal tracking system for NCFAST issues. • Ability to run reports.

Ms. Patterson outlined the recommended rollout phases for FNS.

Rollout Phases	Recommended Suggestions
1st	Continue to implement Laserfiche
2nd	Add NCFAST Help Desk Administrators to the internal help desk system (Spiceworks)
3rd	Develop a Phone Interview and a Pending Applications Team
4th	Develop an Expedite Team for the 2nd floor
5th	Train employees in two programs (FNS and FCH/Adult Medicaid)
6th	Phase out internal and external drop boxes
7th	Create a NCFAST problem solving manual

Ms. Patterson stated DSS staff accompanied her to the Mecklenberg site visit; the ESD team also conducted site visits to Guilford and Onslow counties and talked with Wake, Forsyth and Buncombe counties. Ms. Cannon stated other counties have adopted many of the recommendations presented. Ms. Patterson stated for the universal worker concept, Mecklenberg stated on January 1, 2016 the accuracy rate was 83.82% and by March 11, 2016 the accuracy rate increased to 94.42% which was a 10.6% increase; by April 8, 2016 the accuracy rate was 96.9% or 13.8% increase. Ms. Patterson shared overall comments received from Operational Support Team Representatives with NC-DHHS.

Ms. Patterson than shared the following DSS and County strategic goals:

County and DSS Strategic Goals
❖ Goal 2 – Objective 3: Advance the county's automation and technology capabilities (County)

Continue implementation of digital records system to include Child Support, DSS and Veterans Services.

❖ Goal 2 – Objective 1-2: Defining and measuring our department's effectiveness (DSS)

To obtain a clear picture of staffing, outcomes, and efficiency.

To identify programmatic needs.

❖ Goal 4 – Objective 1: Sustaining a combined workforce in an ever changing world (DSS)

To hire, develop and promote employees who support the mission, vision, value and core standards.

❖ Goal 5 – Objective 1: Optimize service delivery through innovation, automation and technology to enhance current services and create new service opportunities (County)

Ms. Patterson stated future endeavors of the ESD team are to:

- Continue to review, evaluate and recommend changes to the department business processes to make workflow more efficient, more effective and more client friendly.
- Conduct evaluations every three months after the implementation of the accepted recommendations.
- Benchmark improvements against the baseline measurables (monitor improvement results).
- Evaluate how the July 2016 roll out of Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) will affect FNS.

Comments followed. Ms. Cannon stated Deputy County Manager James Lawson will work with the ESD team and Social Services Director Brenda Jackson on an aggressive implementation plan and as part of the recommendation, bring bi-monthly status reports to the Finance Committee.

MOTION: Commissioner Council moved that the Enterprise Solutions Division move forward to begin working with DSS on the implementation plan and provide bi-monthly progress reports.
SECOND: Commissioner Keefe
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (4-0)

At the request of Chairman Faircloth, Ms. Johnson, Ms. Tookes and Ms. Bullard spoke to future challenges that may affect DSS Economic Services. Ms. Cannon explained the ESD team will lead the implementation process in collaboration with DSS which is critical because the next phase includes a review of the Medicaid program. Commissioner Adams stated monthly reports might work better to keep things on track.

AMENDED MOTION: Commissioner Lancaster moved that the Enterprise Solutions Division move forward to begin working with DSS on the implementation plan and provide monthly rather than bimonthly progress reports.
SECOND: Commissioner Keefe
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (4-0)

6.   OTHER MATTERS OF BUSINESS

There were no other matters of business.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.