

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION MEETING
CROWN CENTER BOARDROOM, 1960 COLISEUM DRIVE
February 18, 2011, 8:30 AM
MINUTES

PRESENT: Commissioner Kenneth Edge, Chairman
Commissioner Marshall Faircloth, Vice-Chairman
Commissioner Jeannette Council
Commissioner Charles Evans
Commissioner Jimmy Keefe
Commissioner Billy King
Commissioner Ed Melvin
James Martin, County Manager
Amy Cannon, Deputy County Manager
James Lawson, Assistant County Manager
Rick Moorefield, County Attorney
Sally Shutt, Communication & Strategic Initiatives Manager
Juanita Pilgrim, Retired Deputy County Manager
Marie Colgan, Clerk to the Board
Candice H. White, Deputy Clerk to the Board
Press

DEPARTMENT HEADS

PRESENT: Lee Warren, Register of Deeds
James Silman, Risk Management/Benefits Manager
Julean Self, Assistant Human Resources Director
John Lauby, Animal Services Director
Bobby Howard, Solid Waste Director
Terri Robertson, Director of Elections
Callie Gardner, Director CCCJSSU
Austin Keating, Child Support Director
Ron Cooper, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor
Karen Long, Civic Center General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
Chris Ragland, Civic Center AGB/Director of Operations
Thanena Wilson, Community Development Director
Lisa Childers, Cooperative Extension Director
Kenny Currie, Emergency Services Director
Bob Stanger, County Engineer
Buck Wilson, Health Department Director
Betty Clark, Information Services Director
Jody Risacher, Library Director
Hank Debnam, MH/DD/SAS Area Director
Al Brunson, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor

Tom Lloyd, Planning and Inspections Director
Angie Cunningham, Printing/Reproduction Supervisor
Brenda R. Jackson, Social Services Director
Aaron Donaldson, Tax Administrator
Sharon Sanders, Veterans Service Officer
Geneva Mixon, Workforce Development Director
Howard Abner, Assistant Finance Director
Susan Johnson, Cooperative Extension
Danela Johnson, Communications Center Administrator

FACILITATORS: Dr. Stan Dixon and Dr. Wanda Sykes, NC State University Faculty Emeriti.

Commissioner Edge called the meeting to order and extended greetings to all in attendance. Commissioner Edge introduced the facilitators and announced the Board of Commissioners would go into a closed session for personnel matter(s) pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) during the lunch break. James Martin, County Manager, thanked everyone for being present and stated this was a great opportunity to work together to finalize the goals and develop action plans to accomplish the goals.

1. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF GOALS IDENTIFIED ON DAY ONE

Dr. Dixon briefly reviewed what transpired during the January 27, 2011 strategic planning meeting with the Board of Commissioners and stated the development of the implementation/action plan would involve attendees breaking out into five work groups during today's meeting. Dr. Sykes took attendees through an icebreaker designed to demonstrate the importance of good instructions and communication, and how directions and communications can be interpreted differently. Dr. Sykes explained that the strategic plan, objectives and action plans should be passed down to all employees so they can understand and be accountable for what needs to be done.

Dr. Dixon emphasized that the strategic plan is for the Cumberland County government as a whole and is the roadmap that will take Cumberland County where it wants to go. Dr. Dixon stated accomplishing some of the goals could take from three to five years. Dr. Dixon also emphasized that each department should know which of the goals apply to them and work to implement those goals.

Dr. Dixon reviewed the Mission Statement as "to provide quality services to our citizens while being fiscally responsible". Dr. Dixon emphasized that individuals should be able to understand the mission statement and it should be the main message put out to the county's departments/employees and to the county's citizens.

Dr. Dixon then reviewed the Vision Statement as "to grow as a regional destination for employment, economic development, commerce and cultural pursuits".

Dr. Dixon also reviewed the Core Values for serving Cumberland County with PRIDE:

Professionalism
Respect
Integrity with accountability
Diversity
Efficient customer service

Dr. Dixon elaborated on each of the Core Values and stated they should be communicated to every employee and every citizen within the county so they can fully understand the county's values. Suggestions were made for revising the Vision Statement followed and Dr. Dixon opened the floor for discussion. Dr. Sykes stated the Vision Statement should be broad and that the goals, which build on the Vision Statement, are what should be more specific. Dr. Sykes reminded attendees the goals have to be measurable because they will be held accountable for affecting the goals and making them work. Following additional discussion, the Core Value of "efficient customer service" was revised to "excellent customer service".

2. DISCUSS EACH GOAL - ASK FOR SUGGESTIONS OF OTHER GOALS THAT MAY HAVE SURFACED SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Dr. Dixon stated Goal #1 is "to ensure a safe and healthy community by providing needed services to our citizens in a timely manner". Discussion followed regarding "timely manner" and that reasonable expectations of the same would vary between the different county departments.

Dr. Dixon reviewed the following future visions that serve as the background to Goal #1:

- Reducing crime and gang involvement
- Safe, well-maintained schools
- Youth-development opportunities to decrease crime rate
- First class emergency services.

Dr. Dixon stated Goal #2 is "to provide adequate infrastructure consistent with orderly growth of a dynamic county". Dr. Dixon noted the county needs to be sure it has the capital resources and ability to accomplish this goal.

Dr. Dixon reviewed the following future visions that serve as the background to Goal #2:

- Expanded transit system to include bus, rail and air systems
- Safe drinking water for all citizens
- More esthetically-appealing communities
- Better road infrastructure
- County facilities to include school buildings; more county office space.

Dr. Dixon stated Goal #3 is "to promote economic development by creating and retaining jobs, and providing career opportunities, quality education, cultural and recreational services". Dr. Dixon noted that most counties have "economic development" as one of their goals.

Dr. Dixon reviewed the following future visions that serve as the background to Goal #3:

- Increased tax base
- Jobs paying above state average
- Stable well-trained workforce
- World class school system
- Increase county bond rating to AAA
- Cumberland County as a destination
- More corporations
- Annual economic growth of 3%
- Job retention
- Education – world class school system with funding at the national level
- Budget that represents the needs of our citizens.

Dr. Dixon stated Goal #4 is “to educate, inform and involve employees, citizens, elected and appointed officials through effective and efficient communications”. Dr. Dixon stated to his knowledge, there has never been a strategic plan without a communication goal because it serves to make sure all employees are on the same page and can work to make the strategic plan happen. A brief discussion followed regarding collaboration with municipalities and the PWC. Dr. Dixon suggested that the strategic plan be sent to the State legislature as a communications link. A suggestion was made to change the verb “involve” to “engage” and there was a consensus in favor of the change.

Dr. Dixon reviewed the following future visions that serve as the background to Goal #4:

- Enhanced communications system
- Internal communications – policies and other information well communicated to employees
- Strategic plan embraced by staff and leaders
- Enhancing collaboration between county government and other boards, committees and commissions
- Citizen involvement in board meetings, committee meetings and public forums.

Dr. Dixon stated Goal #5 is “to provide professional and well-trained employees who offer efficient customer service”. Discussion followed regarding the meaning of “well-trained” and “serving with PRIDE”. Consensus was to restate Goal #5 as “to provide passionate employees who offer excellent customer service with PRIDE”. Dr. Dixon emphasize that action plans and a measuring component will need to be put in place to ensure employees are well-trained.

Dr. Dixon reviewed the following future visions that serve as the background to Goal #5:

- Stable well-trained workforce
- Premier employees who provide exceptional customer service
- Efficient delivery of services
- Revised county policies with consistent application and well-communicated to employees
- Measuring success of customer service
- Staff training.

Dr. Dixon and Dr. Sykes lead attendees through a teambuilding and group dynamics exercise designed to demonstrate that individuals see things differently and that trust is the whole premise of working together. Dr. Sykes referenced Five Dysfunctions of a Team authored by Patrick Lencioni and stated the dysfunctions include: absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results. Dr. Sykes further stated in order for the strategic plan to work, departmentalization will have to be given up, resources will have to be shared or given away, and collaboration will need to occur. Dr. Sykes also referenced First, Break All the Rules authored by Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman.

3. DIVIDE GROUP INTO GOAL TEAMS TO DEVELOP ACTION PLANS

Dr. Dixon stated once adopted, the strategic plan will need to be updated at least annually and someone should look at the plan on a monthly basis to see if the county is on track. Dr. Dixon stated the implementation/action plan involves coordinated strategies that will have evidence of success so everyone will know the goals have actually become a reality.

Dr. Dixon divided attendees into five groups and assigned each group one to two of the five goals; templates for actions plans were distributed. Dr. Dixon provided instructions and asked attendees to write down the actions steps for the goals assigned to them (what will be done); to determine responsibility for the action steps (who will do it); to set a timeline (day/month/year); to list resources needed for the action steps (resources available; financial, human, political and/or other resources needed); and to determine the communication plan for the action steps (who is involved; what methods are involved; how often).

Dr. Dixon also asked attendees to write down the evidence of success for each goal (how to know whether you are making progress and what the benchmarks are for the same) and the evaluation process for each goal (how to determine your goal has been reached and what your measures are for determining the same).

4. LUNCH AND CLOSED SESSION FOR PERSONNEL MATTER(S) PURSUANT TO NCGS 143-318.11(A)(6)

Commissioner Council offered the invocation prior to attendees breaking for lunch.

MOTION: Commissioner Melvin moved to go into Closed Session.
SECOND: Commissioner Keefe
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Commissioner Melvin moved to go into Open Session.
SECOND: Commissioner Keefe
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

5. DETERMINE OBJECTIVES, SPECIFIC ACTIONS, RESOURCES NEEDED, PERSON RESPONSIBLE, TIMELINE AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Following the lunch break, five different groups with one to two goals each meshed together twice more and at the conclusion, attendees came back together as a whole and reported on their action plans.

GOAL #1: To ensure a safe and healthy community by providing needed services to our citizens in a timely manner.

ACTION PLANS:

1. Reduce crime and gang involvement through community watch programs and continuing education through the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office, resource officers and in Cumberland County schools.
2. Provide safe, clean, well-maintained facilities
3. Establish youth development/mentor programs to reduce crime and improve health and physical fitness through the Cooperative Extensions' 4-H Program, Junior Firefighters, and libraries; develop good and responsible citizens
4. Provide first class emergency services using Public Safety Task Force recommendations
5. Perform data gathering and assessment of all services; determine where collaboration can occur; identify gaps/barriers; program goals should relate to gang involvement, youth crime and crime in general
6. Continue to encourage and participate in 911 consolidation
7. Advocate with the Cumberland County School System and other organizations so they can look at alternatives to the academic/educational tracks and implement vocational and military tracks
8. Continue work with Sustainable Sandhills for all departments to become LEED certified

GOAL #2: To provide adequate infrastructure consistent with orderly growth of a dynamic county.

ACTION PLANS:

1. Assessment of current county facilities and inventory to include physical structures, mechanics, IT, ADA and OSHA compliance with an emphasis on the need for county administration space
2. Assessment of current transportation systems (bus, air) to identify usage, destinations and points of interest where access is needed
3. Explore best practices; tap into larger transportation systems to expand for best investment of funds
4. Strengthen ordinances/code enforcement to effect esthetically-pleasing communities and gateways; supplement City of Fayetteville's efforts when feasible; obtain informal input from citizens and developers
5. Develop natural resources

6. Explore opportunities to share and create office space, particularly for county administration
7. Continue efforts to look at all available safe water systems
8. Continue to encourage Airport Commission to obtain direct flight to and from Fayetteville to Washington, DC

GOAL #3: To promote economic development by creating and retaining jobs, and providing career opportunities, quality education, cultural and recreational services.

ACTION PLANS:

1. Development and modification of economic development incentives
2. Establish a clearinghouse/one-stop shopping for business information and business resources
3. Assign a case manager who will assist new and existing businesses, partner with the Chamber and city of Fayetteville as referral sources, and be available for questions

GOAL #4: To educate, inform and engage employees, citizens, elected and appointed officials through effective and efficient communications.

ACTION PLANS:

1. Establish an information line for Cumberland County
2. Educate the community via reports to the citizens and a “State of County” report
3. Enhance website and county intranet; make website user-friendly; establish a web team; incorporate the use of videos
4. Display the county’s mission and vision statements and core values
5. Develop a citizens’ academy and a youth academy to tie in with their civic classes and other government related courses
6. Develop a strategic plan
7. Expand the use of the county’s Facebook
8. Develop a citizen’s e-newsletter
9. Update department webpages on the county’s website to include pictures of department heads; their contact information and building address
10. Have department heads bring their administrative coordinators to department head meetings so they disseminate information received throughout the department
11. Use bulletin boards within departments to be sure employees without computer access receive all information
12. Provide better directories in the courthouse
13. Have elected officials continue their attendance of joint meetings

GOAL #5: To provide passionate employees who offer excellent customer service with PRIDE.

ACTION PLANS:

1. Recruit employees through job fairs held within the community and establish relationships with local educational institutions
2. Reinstitute employee recognition program and provide advancement based on merit/performance as a part of employee retention efforts

3. Develop succession plans by identification of key staff and cross-training
4. Provide education and training
5. Establish a customer quality assurance program
6. Have the county's Human Resources department provide training for interview skills
7. Establish a course for new managers and supervisors in order to develop their skills
8. Partner with community colleges
9. Identify internal resources to provide training to large groups of employees
10. Have the Board of Commissioners and/or county administrative staff visit county departments

Dr. Dixon and Dr. Sykes concluded their facilitation of the action plans and provided closing remarks. Chairman Edge thanked all attendees for their attendance and input. Mr. Martin and Sally Shutt, Communication and Strategic Initiatives Manager, confirmed what department heads were to do moving forward. Mr. Martin stated an additional special meeting to include department heads may be called.

MOTION: Commissioner Council moved to adjourn.

SECOND: Commissioner Faircloth

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Approved with/without revision:

Respectfully submitted,

Candice H. White
Deputy Clerk to the Board