

MINUTES OF  
CITY OF CREEDMOOR - BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
RETREAT  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2009  
9:00 A.M.

**PRESENT:**

Board of Commissioners:

Mayor Darryl Moss, Mayor Pro-tem Tim Karan, Commissioner Jimmy Minor, Commissioner Otha Piper, Jr., Commissioner Larry Robinson and Commissioner Herman Wilkerson.

City Staff:

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer, Ms. Sandra Harper, City Clerk, Mr. Dave Roesler, Planning Director, Mr. Steve Colenda, City Inspector and Mr. Tim Benware, Police Chief

Attorney:

Mr. Tom Currin

Planning Board Attendees:

Ms. Suzanne Smith, Chairman, Mr. Wayne Cross and Ms. Mildred Goss

Board of Adjustment:

Mr. Jay Rich

TCC:

Mr. John Wilkerson and Mr. Jay Rich

Citizens:

Mr. John Greene

Granville County Commissioners:

Commissioner Hubert Gooch and Commissioner Pete Averette

Media:

Mr. Harry Coleman- Butner Creedmoor News

Financial:

Mr. Bill Tatum and Mr. Kelley Howard, II

**WELCOME & PURPOSE:**

Mayor Moss opened the Retreat by welcoming everyone. He said that he chose Jon's Main Street Bar & Grill as the location to show appreciation for a Main Street business.

Mayor Moss announced that the topic of the retreat was Creedmoor's Economic Stimulus Plan and gave an overview of the agenda.

**OPENING REMARKS:**

Mayor Moss announced that he invited Granville County representatives Chairman Hubert Gooch and Mr. Pete Averette and they should arrive shortly. Mayor Moss recognized and thanked the Planning Board members, Board of Adjustment member and The Creedmoor Collaborative (TCC) members in attendance for their participation. Mayor Moss advised that he had invited Mr. Deuard Bowden, Chairman of the Business Advisory Committee; however he was unable to attend. Mr. Bowden is scheduled to give an update at the Board of Commissioner's Work Session scheduled for Wednesday, January 14, 2009.

Commissioner Minor said that he would like to see brainstorming at this meeting to discuss where the City is today and where we need to be. He expressed that he would like for the Board to prioritize the needs of the City for the upcoming year.

Commissioner Karan expressed that he would like for the Board to focus on brainstorming at each Work Session meeting. He suggested that each committee chairman give a report at these meetings and receive feedback from the other Board members.

Commissioner Wilkerson said that he agreed with Commissioner Karan's statement. He also expressed that each Board member and staff should be accountable for getting their jobs accomplished and in a timely manner.

Commissioner Piper said that during the monthly brainstorming session the Board should listen and have good interaction with one another. He added that the Board needs to also listen to the concerns of the citizens and move forward with good planning.

Commissioner Robinson expressed that this is the fourth retreat that he has attended and the outcome has always been positive. He agreed that he would also like to see emphasis on good planning today for the future needs of the City.

Mayor Moss said that he found an interesting article titled "To Go Forward-Retreat" He said that the article spoke of coming together, priorities, efficiency, accountability, staying informed and good planning. Mayor Moss proclaimed the theme for the day "Retreating To Go Forward".

**REPORT ON FINANCE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS:**

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer addressed everyone and read the following press release he presented at the Emergency Meeting last night:

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manger expressed that under present economic conditions and pending financial reporting requirements, he found it necessary to reorganize the Finance Department. He advised that he would assume the responsibility as the Finance Officer in

addition to his present duties as City Manager. He considered the department needs and decided to eliminate the Director of Finance position. He said that he would be initially utilizing the outside services of Mr. Kelly L. Howard, II of Oxford and Mr. Bill Tatum of Creedmoor and gave an overview of their credentials.

Mr. Kelly Howard, II introduced himself and said that he was previously the Finance Officer for the Town of Oxford and he is currently the Interim Finance Director for Butner. He noted that he helped incorporate the Town of Butner and SGWASA. Mr. Howard said that he looks forward to serving the City of Creedmoor.

Mr. Bill Tatum introduced himself and said that he has been in this business for the last 41 years. He said that he would be assisting the City of Creedmoor in streamlining the operations of the Finance Department. Mr. Tatum added that he and Mr. Howard have been working with Mr. Mercer for the past couple of weeks and they are a good solid team and the City will be pleased with the outcome.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer said that at previous meetings he started out talking about the base of a triangle as 1) Trust, 2) Healthy Conflict, 3) Commitment, 4) Accountability and 5) Results.

Mr. Mercer referred to past, present and future. He said that the past consists of reconciliations and audits, which will be handled by Mr. Bill Tatum. For the present, Mr. Howard will be working on the procedures, process and system to be implemented and processing the statements. Mr. Mercer advised that once the audits are completed Mr. Bill Tatum will also help with the present and future. He expressed that there will be a 90 day plan, one year plan and five year plan. Mr. Tom Mercer said that they feel comfortable with the logics software. He said that they spent as a team approximately five hours reviewing the system and it has capabilities that have not been utilized. Mr. Mercer expressed that training will be essential as we move forward through this process. He said that he will be reviewing job descriptions to make sure that they harmonize with the new way of doing business.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer advised that he has had several discussions with Ms. Sharon Edmundson of the Local Government Commission (LGC) and she feels confident and offered her support. Her team is ready to help at a moments notice. The individual working for the IRS that is reviewing the City's appeal is back from vacation. Mr. Mercer said that he will have to get back with the Board about the given date of completion.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer said that the City is following procedure and read General Statute §159.24 Finance Officer. He also referred to General Statute §159-25; Duties of Finance Officer; Dual Signatures on checks, internal control procedures subject to Commission regulation.

Commissioner Minor commented that as a finance team he would like to see team training, team building and team work.

Mayor Moss expressed that the financial problems began in 2002 and the IRS issue has been since the year 2005. This financial issue has overshadowed everything that the City has tried to accomplish. He said that the Finance Committee is working with the City Manager hand-in-hand to get this issue resolved.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer said that he has scheduled a staff meeting for 7:30 a.m. Monday morning to explain the situation and talk about the seriousness of team work and the five-step process of trust. He said that he wanted to step up professionalism, team work, accountability and technology. Mr. Mercer noted that to do so, the employees need to understand what they are being held accountable for. He expressed displeasure with the administrative side of City Hall.

Mayor Moss advised that the City Manager is reviewing the overall operations of the City of Creedmoor; specifically the administrative side. He noted that last year focused on the Police Department side of City Hall. He said that the Police Department was re-evaluated and is working well. Mayor Moss said that the City Manager is committed and no position is safe.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Director said that he does not operate on emotions. He said that he is going to analyze the situation and once the job descriptions have been defined he will give everyone a chance to do their job properly. Mr. Mercer said that he will look at the overall objective and if it fits that is fine and if not he will have to make adjustments. He said that he has to be clear and communicate to those individuals what is expected of them and how they are doing. Mr. Mercer said that he will be looking at statistics, metrics and measurement.

Commissioner Wilkerson inquired about the system's utilization for generating a spread sheet with numbers to show the Board how the money is being spent. He said that this has been a request since the year 2005.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer said that the system has great capabilities that have not been utilized in the past. He said that they will be ready to move forward with the budget. The system has the capability to dump into excel spreadsheets and access data bases to generate reports with confident numbers. Mr. Mercer expressed that they were hesitant to send out spreadsheets in the past because the numbers would not have been accurate. He said that they should be able to supply a line item budget; however they must be sure the numbers have been reconciled. Mr. Mercer advised that they should be utilizing these capabilities by March. Mr. Jim Winston, City Auditor is on vacation until January 15 and when he returns they will be scheduling a time for the 2007-2008 audit.

Commissioner Minor asked if the City Manager would have the reconciliation in the 90 day timeframe. He said that great progress has been made within the last year.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer replied that he is 90% confident that they will have the reconciliation up to date within 90 days.

Mr. Hubert Gooch and Mr. Pete Averette the City's County representatives arrived and Mayor Moss introduced and welcomed them to the meeting.

Mr. Gooch said that these are critical times and the unemployment rate in Granville County is 8.3%. Granville County is faced with many unpleasant challenges. Mr. Gooch expressed that the Library Bond Issue passed and to fulfill this obligation there will be a tax increase in Granville County. He said that the schools are complaining about over crowdedness, the Senior Center needs more space and the Volunteer Fire Department also needs financial assistance. Safety and fire protection is a high priority. Mr. Gooch said that it is obvious that Creedmoor has a downtown traffic problem. He thanked the Board for the invitation and expressed that they are elected to serve Granville County citizens and will help Creedmoor wherever possible. Mr. Gooch said that the Granville County Board Retreat is scheduled for Friday, January 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. at the new EMS building in Wilton. Mr. Gooch expressed that he and Commissioner Averette worked hard to get the new EMS building.

Commissioner Karan commented that there has been a struggle between Creedmoor and SGWASA in reference to the Wilton water line. He commented that the two Creedmoor representatives on the SGWASA Board has been stripped of voting rights and are being punished because they want to keep the communication open to other options available.

Commissioner Karan also expressed that the City has submitted to the County an application for an ETJ expansion as well as permission to move ahead to receive permission from Legislation to get a two-mile ETJ expansion. He noted that the City is planning to pursue these applications.

Commissioner Minor expressed that the City limits go past the two-mile ETJ limits with the annexation of Walters Road. He said the City needs the expansion for planning purposes.

Mr. Gooch said that he understands the concerns Commission Karan has about SGWASA as he has been approached by others about Creedmoor's voting rights. He said that this is a separate entity and they appoint their representatives; however they do not interfere.

Commissioner Robinson questioned that the Granville County Board does not have input as to what their SGWASA representatives are doing. He said that the two Creedmoor SGWASA representatives always keep the other Creedmoor Board members updated and therefore we make decisions as a Board to forward to SGWASA. Commissioner Robinson expressed that he was elected to serve the citizens of Creedmoor and he tells the SGWASA representatives what he expects them to administer.

Mr. Gooch expressed that he felt that SGWASA should have been invited to the Retreat. He noted that he would relay back to the Granville County Board the City's dissatisfaction with SGWASA policy.

Commissioner Minor referred back to the ETJ expansion application that was submitted. He said that two years ago it was a joint effect between Creedmoor, Stoval, Stem and Oxford.

Commissioner Karan said that an ETJ subcommittee was formed and Edgar Smoak was the Chairman. He said that he believes that Creedmoor met all the criteria for ETJ expansion; however we never received a formal approval/disapproval.

Mr. Gooch said that he would follow-up on the ETJ requests.

Mr. Pete Averette said that he did not have anything to add to what Commissioner Gooch has said. He expressed that the Granville County Board did discuss the ETJ expansion requests; however they did not vote on this issue. He thanked the City for inviting him.

Mayor Moss asked that Chief Benware, Steve Colenda, City Inspector, Dave Roesler, Planning Director and Attorney Currin give an update of activity.

Attorney Currin said that the City has a lot going on and he and Attorney Lori Dutra are happy to help. He said that there has been a question of communication. He said that if something is needed right away send a fax for an immediate response. Attorney Currin said that the fax number is (919) 690-1415. He said that there are pending City issues that should not be discussed at this time. Attorney Currin said that he and Attorney Jim Cross will be meeting in reference to the water tower issue.

Commissioner Wilkerson inquired about the progress of the Fireman's Contract in reference to the retired Fireman's benefit.

Attorney Currin said that he needed to meet with Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager in reference to that contract.

Chief Benware said that things are going well. He expressed that after joining Creedmoor his priority was to do a departmental analysis and reorganization. His objective was to create a positive working environment. Chief Benware noted that most of the feedback has been positive and there have been several people inquire about employment; therefore he can be more selective. Chief Benware said that he has been sending officers to necessary training. He said that as part of the reorganization he placed a dedicated investigator for drugs and the City has received a lot of sales tax money. Chief Benware said that this money is held in a separate account and he purchased surveillance equipment with part of this money. Chief Benware gave an overview of the taser training that was held for the officers. He said that the officers have the option of carrying pepper spray, night stick or a taser. Chief Benware noted that the mobile cameras need to be replaced and spoke of individual cameras as a more economical option.

Dave Roesler, Planning Director said that it is obvious that this is a development economic down turn even with the new CVS and Cardinal State Bank. He said that prior to October, 2008 there was a tremendous amount of development interest for potential projects. Mr. Roesler expressed that he is encouraged that two of the largest development companies in North Carolina was recently here and are considering to include Creedmoor in their five year

development plan. Mr. Roesler said that there has also been a lot of interest from appraisers the last several weeks.

Mr. Dave Roesler said that the City is currently working on a strategic plan and a downtown streetscape plan. He expressed that the City Manager has asked that he review uses for the other side of Lake Rogers.

Commissioner Piper noted concern of abandoned buildings on Highway 15 and the liability. He said that he has received several phone calls in reference to the cleanup of Hwy. 15.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer expressed that he asked the Planning Director to gather information and bring forth a plan for discussion to move forward with a five-year plan.

Mr. Steve Colenda, City Inspector expressed that as mentioned earlier construction is down. There have been a few new residential, several remodels and the two commercial developments. Mr. Colenda said that he has been hearing that construction will begin to pick up in the near future. He said that he would like to see training for staff on how to communicate with the public.

Commissioner Minor said that he would like to see improvement in communication as to Inspections and Planning letting staff know when they are going to be out and where they will be.

Steve Colenda advised that commercial tenants have to apply for a privilege license and they must see Dave and Steve for approval. He said that this gives him the opportunity to inspect the buildings before approval. Mr. Colenda said that he does an inspection and gives a verbal approval; however they must make the proposed improvements before receiving final approval.

Ms. Suzanne Smith, Planning Board Chairman said that her goal for the Planning Board this year is to include in the guidelines the greenest growth. She said that Energy Star is a good start; however she would like to see the developers go beyond that. Ms. Smith said that it has been proven that property built with the energy efficiency and cleaner materials hold their value. She said that she is in the process of searching for an expert to speak on high-end green growth development. She said that she would like for green growth to be spread county wide. She realizes that Creedmoor is considered a bedroom community and she would prefer to think of Creedmoor as a rural community. Ms. Smith encourages low volume growth. Ms. Smith said that she would also like to see more activity in local farming to provide food for the local communities rather than having food shipped from California. This all ties into green growth for the future and this is the perfect opportunity for Granville County. She would like to see the City and County provide incentives for the farmers of Granville County.

Commissioner Minor said that he has a contact spokesperson for green growth and he will forward the information to Ms. Smith.

Mildred Goss, Planning Board member commented that she was impressed with the new Automatic Meter Readers (AMR) and thanked the City Manager for including her in the pilot program.

Commissioner Karan spoke in reference to UNRBA and the pre-treatment of storm water. He also made reference to the Mt. Olive pickle barrels that the City can purchase for \$5.00 each and resale to citizens for approximately \$6.00 each to cover transportation costs. These barrels can be used for rain barrels and compost barrels.

Commissioner Karan expressed that Hwy. 56 West is prime real estate and he would like for the Board to consider a Special Use District overlay.

Mr. Dave Roesler, Planning Director said that this was an issue that the Planning Board is currently reviewing.

**BRAINSTORM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS:**

Commissioner Wilkerson expressed the need to prioritize the street needs of Creedmoor and surrounding areas.

Mayor Moss said that he serves on the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission Committee and he gave a brief overview of the Kerr Lake inner basin transfer and said that Creedmoor is listed as a potential customer for Oxford. Mayor Moss said that storm water regulations are going to be an issue in the near future.

Mr. Dave Roesler, Planning Director said that the Creedmoor storm water management is in compliance. The storm water design manual was developed through the Wooten Company.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Officer gave an update of the Lake Rogers dredging project. He said that he plans to open the lake by May 1, 2009.

Mayor Moss referenced the Main Street Economic Recovery and the goal is to identify local projects and a list of projects to send for possible stimulus money. He said that there were ten identified categories for Stimulus Legislation funding in the amount of 800 billion dollars. Mayor Moss expressed that the categories that would be of interest to the City are CDBG grant, Energy Block Grant, City Streets & Metro, Public Safety and Water/Waste Water categories.

Commissioner Minor presented a spreadsheet of projects and description. The Board discussed the following projects and estimated cost:

<u>Water/Sewer Improvements:</u>	
Water/Sewer New Capacity	\$20 million
Water/Sewer Internal Upgrades	\$ 7 million
Complete the dredging project	\$ 6 million

<u>Streets:</u>	
Storm Water	\$ 2.5 million
Sidewalks	\$10 million
Resurfacing	\$ 3 million

<u>Public Facilities:</u>	
Public Safety Building	\$ 4 million
Fire Department Substation	\$80,000
Police Officer	\$80,000
Recreation Park	\$10 million

<u>Public Safety:</u>	
Ladder Truck	\$950,000

<u>Technology:</u>	
Wi-Fi	\$100,000

<u>Other:</u>	
Downtown Development & Public Parking	\$ 4 million

Commissioner Minor expressed that the Volunteer Fire Department could use two people on 12 hour days. He said that the Creedmoor Fire Department started a Junior Fire Fighters program approximately four years ago and as they turn 18 years old 90% are joining the department. Commissioner Minor advised that currently there are a lot of new Junior Fire Fighters at the Creedmoor Volunteer Fire Department.

Ms. Suzanne Smith inquired about horse trails at the proposed recreational facility. She noted that Southern Granville County has a major horse population.

Commissioner Wilkerson advised that at the last greenway meeting they discussed adding horse trails on the edge of the park and this is still being reviewed.

Mr. John Greene, Lyons Street suggested that the City use bricks and sand for sidewalks for economical reasons.

Mayor Moss expressed that this year there is great pressure on the General Assembly in reference to annexation law and he felt this was going to hurt municipalities.

Mr. Tom Mercer said that with the TCC five year plan the City may want to consider a full time grant person to market Creedmoor in many different ways. He noted that looking at the zoning map there should be a study as to where the smart growth is and where it should be so that the City can drive growth instead of growth driving us.

Mr. Harry Coleman, Butner Creedmoor News said that Oxford has a Downtown Re-development person that effectively spends all of his time marketing Oxford. Mr. Coleman said that he has been impressed with what he has seen accomplished by the Re-development person and this may be something that the City of Creedmoor should consider. He expressed that commercial development is the City's best chance to generate tax dollars.

Commissioner Wilkerson expressed that Granville County Economic Development has not done anything to help Creedmoor. He said that the City asked that they help bring small businesses to Creedmoor that do not require large amounts of water and this was never accomplished.

Mayor Moss expressed that in previous years Creedmoor contributed \$10,000 per year to the Granville County Economic Development; however Creedmoor stopped contributing because Granville County made the decision that Creedmoor would be a bedroom community.

Commissioner Minor suggests the website as a great way of advertising and recruiting businesses.

Mr. Jay Rich expressed that he and the City Manager met a few weeks ago in reference to technology to help utilize the website more efficiently.

Commissioner Karan expressed that the website needs to be proactive as well as reactive. He also expressed that Wi-Fi would be an excellent asset to the City of Creedmoor as a money maker and as an incentive.

Mr. Tom Mercer, City Manager/Finance Director said that the City may want to consider an assisted living facility.

Commissioner Karan expressed that if the City wants an assisted living facility the ordinance will need to change. He explained that there is a one-half mile rule for group home facilities.

#### **CLOSING REMARKS:**

Mayor Moss advised that Ms. Scottie Wilkins has requested that the Board identify projects that the City wants to move forward through NCDOT. He noted that Hwy. 50 is already on the list. He said that R2542 and the sidewalk down Hwy. 56 from Food Lion to Creedmoor Elementary should to be added.

Commissioner Wilkerson advised that at the next Granville Greenways meeting the Committee will be prioritizing streets for NCDOT. He said that he would also like for Hwy. 15 to be repaved from I-85 to the Virginia line.

Mr. Dave Roesler, Planning Director said that he will provide the Board with the list of proposed improvements from the Granville County Transportation Plan on Monday.

Mr. Harry Coleman inquired about an Emergency Management Disaster Center.

Commissioner Minor advised that would be part of the new Public Safety Building, which will include a commercial kitchen and shower facilities.

Commissioner Wilkerson inquired about the progress of a location for the Creedmoor Farmer's Market.

Mayor Moss said that a location has not been found and he asked that Mr. Dave Roesler, Planning Director search the Granville County GPS system for the name of the owner of the Red Front lot.

Mr. Harry Coleman expressed appreciation for the decision to hire Bill Tatum and Kelly Howard to join the finance team.

Mayor Moss thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

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Mayor

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Clerk