

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
NEW COURTHOUSE, 117 DICK STREET, 5TH FLOOR, ROOM 564
AUGUST 24, 2009, 8:00 AM
CONTINUATION OF AUGUST 17, 2009 SPECIAL MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Jeannette Council
Commissioner Breeden Blackwell
Commissioner Kenneth Edge
Commissioner Marshall Faircloth
Commissioner Ed Melvin
James Martin, County Manager
Juanita Pilgrim, Deputy County Manager
Amy Cannon, Assistant County Manager
Harvey Raynor, Interim County Attorney
Phyllis Jones, Assistant County Attorney
James Lawson, Human Resources Manager
Laura Blackley, Human Resources Analyst
Sally Shutt, Communications Manager
Stephen K. Strauss, Ph.D, Developmental Associates
Marie Colgan, Clerk to the Board
Candice H. White, Deputy Clerk to the Board

ABSENT: Commissioner Billy King
Commissioner Jimmy Keefe

1. Continuation of August 17, 2009 Special Meeting

Chairman Council called to order the continuation of the August 17, 2009 special meeting and recognized James Lawson, Human Resources Manager.

2. Introduction of Consultant

Mr. Lawson introduced consultant Stephen K. Strauss, Ph.D. of Developmental Associates and advised that Mr. Strauss would be involved in the recruitment process for the County Attorney position depending on the Commissioners' position. Mr. Strauss provided a brief overview of his education and experience, which included work in local government and private consulting with cities and counties in their hiring and promotional processes. Mr. Strauss expressed concern regarding the usage of and reliance on interviews for top executive positions in cities and counties in North Carolina and stated research indicated interviews had about a 50% accuracy rate for selecting the best candidate for the job.

Mr. Strauss stated Developmental Associates would begin their process by meeting with the County Commissioners, County Manager and department heads to get a sense of the challenges facing the organization. Mr. Strauss stated a series of exercises would then be designed around the challenges of and skills and competencies required for the County Attorney position so the candidates could be assessed first hand on their performance. Mr. Strauss described the processes and exercises Developmental Associates recently designed for the City of Wilmington City Attorney position. Mr. Strauss explained the assessors that would be recruited would depend upon the types of exercises the candidates would

perform and might include local government managers, attorneys, county department heads, Commissioners and community representative. Mr. Strauss stated once selected, the assessors would be trained, the candidates would be sent preparatory information and given a thorough explanation of the process, and all candidates would undergo the same exercises with the same assessors. Mr. Strauss explained the Commissioners would have an opportunity to ask questions of the assessors as part of the debriefing process and a profile depicting the strengths and weaknesses for each candidate, to include an Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EQI), would be presented to the Commissioners at the end of the debriefing process. Mr. Strauss stated the Commissioners would then have an in-depth and concise understanding of each of the candidates in order to assist them with determining which candidates to invite for final evaluations.

Mr. Strauss stated as a final step, Developmental Associates could help identify gaps between the final candidates, suggest questions tailored to the individual candidates and suggest things the Commissioners may want to observe when interviewing the final candidates. Mr. Strauss responded to questions and then provided a written summary of Developmental Associates' key services and steps involved in the recruitment, screening and selection process. Mr. Strauss concluded his presentation with an overview of the EQI factors and factor definitions.

Commissioner Blackwell asked at what point Developmental Associates would become involved with the Human Resources staff. Mr. Strauss responded Developmental Associates would be able to do a portion of the process or the entire process depending on the costs; however, the county's Human Resources staff could narrow down the applicants to seven or eight candidates with which Developmental Associates could work during the two-day process. Mr. Lawson recalled the timeline provided at the August 17, 2009 meeting and stated timing would depend on the progress of the application process. Mr. Strauss advised he would be on vacation for a week in September, which could be a factor in the timing of the process.

3. Review of Next Steps in Hiring Process

Chairman Council stated this matter had been addressed during discussion of the prior item. Mr. Lawson confirmed the County Attorney position had been opened and the announcement had been published.

4. Affirmation of Consultant

MOTION: Commissioner Melvin moved to go forward with the process.

SECOND: Commissioner Edge

VOTE: Unanimous

Chairman Council recessed the meeting for ten minutes.

Chairman Council reconvened the meeting.

5. Discussion of Issuance of Additional Qualified School Construction Bonds

James Martin, County Manager, advised the Board of Education had received notification that \$86 million of the 2009 Qualified School Construction Bonds were still available. Mr. Martin stated a number of counties did not use their allocation and interested counties could make an additional application for funds. Mr. Martin advised that the Cumberland

County School System was interested in applying for an additional \$16.32 million. Mr. Martin called attention to correspondence from Tim Kinlaw, Associate School Superintendent, which stated repayment of the bonds would be the responsibility of the Board of Education through the utilization of sales tax and lottery funds. Mr. Martin advised August 26th was the deadline for applications to be received and the application could be signed by the County Manager and School Superintendent. Mr. Martin stated he was prepared to sign the application and should the funds be awarded, the Board of Commissioners would then take action to accept the funds.

Amy Cannon, Assistant County Manager, advised these particular bonds had not been sold in North Carolina, but there were five to ten other issues in different states that had been purchased by the Guggenheim Foundation. Ms. Cannon stated further that the Guggenheim Foundation had a limited amount of money and was interested in the North Carolina market. Ms. Cannon stated the bonds were interest free and had associated tax credits, which were problematic because there were not a lot of profitable businesses interested in tax credits. Ms. Cannon explained legislation was being issued to strip away the tax credits so as to make the instruments more appealing to investors. Ms. Cannon stated her opinion was that the county needed to move quickly and go to the Local Government Commission at their October meeting or at the latest their November meeting. Ms. Cannon advised should the county receive the funds, the original allocation of \$15.9 million would expire and legislation would require that the instrument be issued December 31, 2009. Ms. Cannon stated on January 1, 2010, the county would receive another allocation of \$15.9 million. Ms. Cannon stated time was of the essence and she was prepared to begin work with the county's financial advisor to determine the best way to begin the process.

Commissioner Edge inquired regarding the risk involved. Ms. Cannon stated there could possibly be a risk for the next two to three years and the School System was aware that the sales tax money may need to be reallocated should lottery proceeds not be there. Commissioner Edge inquired whether the county would be able to handle the debt service should it become necessary. Ms. Cannon responded she felt the county could handle it.

MOTION: Commissioner Blackwell moved to accept the funds.
SECOND: Commissioner Melvin
VOTE: Unanimous

6. Closed Session - Attorney/Client Privilege, Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) (3)

MOTION: Commissioner Blackwell moved to go into Closed Session .
SECOND: Commissioner Edge
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Commissioner Blackwell moved to go into Open Session.
SECOND: Commissioner Faircloth
VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Commissioner Blackwell moved to hold a public hearing on the Grays Creek District on the third Monday of October, but prior to that public hearing, that we will go to the Grays Creek community and have a community meeting so that we can better inform the community of our plans.

SECOND: Commissioner Melvin

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: Commissioner Blackwell moved to adjourn.

SECOND: Commissioner Faircloth

VOTE: UNANIMOUS

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:58 AM

Clerk to the Board