

MINUTES

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF HENDERSON

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MAY 15, 1997

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a Special Called meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Henderson County Office Building.

Those present were: Chairman Bob Eklund, Vice-Chair Grady Hawkins, Commissioner Renee Kumor, Commissioner Don Ward, County Manager David E. Nicholson, and Clerk to the Board Elizabeth W. Corn.

Absent was Commissioner Vollie G. Good

Also present were six members of the Board of Education/School Officials.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Eklund called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. He stated that this was a special called meeting for one specific issue, to discuss school facility needs with the school officials and the recent facilities study.

MAJOR FACILITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Chairman of the School Board Linda Hawk informed the Board that the Board of Education approved a Major Facility Improvement Plan at their last meeting.

Dr. Lunsford reviewed the facility needs. Dr. Lunsford stated that Mr. Pryor could not be present, sent his regrets and apologies but also stated that he is in agreement with the adopted plan.

Chairman Eklund informed all present that Commissioner Good was absent because he is still hospitalized.

Linda Hawk and the Vice-Chairman Jackie Hornsby met with Steve Metcalf of MGT Asheville since the presentation of the School Facilities Study to both Boards on May 6.

Ms. Hawk and Dr. Lunsford reviewed some specific findings and recommendations in the study (Management America Facility Study) that are significant:

May 15, 1997

Page 2

1. The need for the improvement projects at Balfour, Fletcher, Etowah, Hillandale, and Mills River Elementary Schools is valid for the purpose of expanded capacity and replacement of outdated and inadequate facilities.
2. The new elementary school project should continue within the current plan.
3. It would be more appropriate that the Fletcher Elementary and Balfour Elementary School projects be accomplished on new sites because of the limited space at the current campuses, limited options for expansion and construction difficulties.
4. The current design work on the priority elementary projects are within North Carolina guidelines, with limited exceptions.
5. The exceptions to the design guidelines include A) larger elementary gym (this is done because of the physical education program and extensive use by community groups; inclusive of County Recreation.); B) larger dining area (this design is to facilitate the Child Nutrition Program in the shortest time possible to have limited impact on the instructional program.); and C) larger primary classrooms (this design feature is due to the direct input of primary classroom teachers.).
6. There is or will be available \$3,000,000.00 in other funds to be applied to the total cost of these elementary projects.
7. The student membership is going to continue to grow with significant impact at the already over crowded middle schools.
8. A second phase study (reviewing conditions and most efficient use) is needed as quickly as possible to determine the best approach for dealing with the needs at remaining elementary schools and the middle and high school level, with the results preferably being available prior to a school bond vote.

Dr. Lunsford reviewed the second page of the Improvement Plan. These are specific recommendations that the Board of Education approved Monday night (5/12/97):

May 15, 1997

Page 3

1. Proceed as planned on the new elementary school site.
2. Increase the budget for the Balfour Elementary and Fletcher Elementary School projects to accomplish relocations to new sites.
3. Request the County Commission to fund a second level comprehensive efficiency facility study.
4. Request the County Commission to authorize the funds necessary to complete all design work for the Balfour, Fletcher, Etowah, Hillandale, and Mills River Elementary School projects.
5. Add to the current high priority projects the air-conditioning of one building at Edneyville Elementary School. (When the high priority elementary projects are completed, this would be the only unair-conditioned elementary building for instructional purposes.) Also, add the high priority projects' funds for the initial planning to implement the decisions that are the result of the second phase facility study.
6. Request that the County Commission finalize a funding plan, inclusive of a necessary bond election, for these projects:
 - a) Balfour Elementary School (with the new site) -
\$10,793,847.00,
 - b) Fletcher Elementary School (with the new site) -
\$10,428,735.00,
 - c) Etowah Elementary School - \$8,455,085.00,
 - d) Hillandale Elementary School - \$7,870,906.00,
 - e) Mills River Elementary School - \$9,659,775.00,
 - f) Edneyville Elementary School - (air-conditioning one building) - \$350,000.00,
 - g) Middle School Initiative Planning (based on the results of Phase II Survey) - \$2,000,000.00,

NOTE: The total cost is \$49,558,348.00, with \$3,000,000.00 available through other sources, resulting in a possible general obligation bond of \$46,558,348.00.

7. Request that the County Commission develop a funding plan to complete the work of the Phase II study, to make available funds within three years of the completion of the study.

The two Boards were in disagreement as to who should pay for item #3. Commissioner Hawkins stated that it really didn't matter as the taxpayers will pay for it either way.

Commissioner Kumor got up and used the flip chart to get issues on paper and try to develop a timeline.

There was considerable discussion regarding the size of the bond issue. The School Board recommended a \$46.5 million bond. The School Board suggested they would be back for another school bond in three years.

Commissioner Hawkins informed the School Board and others present that we need Senate Bill #518 (sales tax). This could help us fund the school facilities.

Commissioner Good had not supplied an absentee letter for this meeting; therefore, the Board of Commissioners decided not to vote on the issue at this time. David Nicholson said it would be on the agenda for action for next Wednesday's meeting (May 21).

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:


Elizabeth W. Corn, Clerk


Robert D. Eklund, Chairman