

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH ASHEVILLE CITY COUNCIL ON MARCH 13, 2018 AT 3 P.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met in special joint session with Asheville City Council on March 13, 2018, in the First Floor Conference Room at 200 College in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3 p.m. where and when the following business was transacted:

The Chairman called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Brownie Newman, Chairman
Mike Fryar, Vice Chair
Joe Belcher, Commissioner
Ellen Frost, Commissioner
Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Commissioner
Robert Pressley, Commissioner
Al Whitesides, Commissioner

The Mayor called the meeting to order with the following Council members present:

Esther Manheimer, Mayor
Gwen Wisler, Vice Mayor
Brian Haynes, Councilman
Vijay Kapoor, Councilman
Julie Mayfield, Councilwoman
Sheneika Smith, Councilwoman
Keith Young, Councilman

Staff present: Mandy Stone, County Manager; Jim Holland, Assistant County Manager; Kathy Hughes, Clerk to the Board; Gary Jackson, City Manager; Cathy Ball, Assistant City Manager; Maggie Bureson, City Clerk.

The Chairman and Mayor opened the meeting with a welcome to City Council and County Commissioners, staff and members of the public. The Mayor said that this was a wonderful opportunity to discuss new ways to work together.

Strategic Priorities

The Chairman and Mayor each discussed the strategic priorities of their individual governing bodies. These priorities are outlined in the power point that is attached to the minutes of this meeting.

Current Partnership Initiatives and Projects

Jim Holland, Assistant County Manager, reviewed the work done to improve downtown parking with the opening of the new Coxe Avenue parking deck. The County added a total of 1,800 spaces to downtown parking as a result of the opening of this new deck. He said that the deck freed up 344 surface parking spaces.

Gary Jackson, City Manager, said that smart meters would be installed downtown in the near future which would allow parking to be paid on credit or debit cards.

Mr. Holland reported on the East Asheville Branch Library renovation/construction. The 15,000 square foot facility would incorporate community space and new library features that had been designed by the community. The City Manager said that this design would be presented to the Council soon.

Mandy Stone, County Manager, presented the County's efforts to address the impact of the opioid addiction on the County. An outline of what she presented is attached to the power point with the minutes of this meeting.

Gary Jackson, City Manager, said that all officers, school resource officers and first responders had narcan for immediate response.

Commissioner Belcher said that Commissioners Frost and Fryar had been a part of several community meetings with a very effectual presentation of the facts on opioid crisis.

Ms. Stone reviewed the County's work to address equity, working with Dr. Dwight Mullin on the State of Black Asheville. She said that the County was providing grants that support the creative work being done inside the communities; had joined the City in the City of Asheville Youth Leadership Academy development program and was supporting the African American Heritage Commission in their construction of the Historic Markers Art Project for cultural identity.

Commissioner Whitesides commented on the incident between Asheville Police and a black male resident. He said that he felt, as a taxpayer and citizen of the County, something must be done to remove the road blocks to positive progress in the community and that one of the problems was within the Asheville Police Department. He said that this problem could hurt tourism and the entire community. He said that he was sick and tired of what was going on and the excuses that were being used in this case including the time it took to remove the officer under review.

Commissioner Beach-Ferrara said that there was a lot of fear in the community, especially among parents of young African American children. She felt that new policies should be adopted to address the use of force and to recognize the role trauma plays in the lives of victims and officers in the community. She said that she continued to support the officers that serve respectfully in the community.

Commissioner Frost said that the community must address this problem.

Vice Chair Fryar said that he felt people were trying to divide the community and urged everyone to work together toward a solution.

The County Manager reviewed the work of the Justice Resource Center and Family Justice Center to address the issues of domestic violence and work toward jail diversion.

Gary Jackson said that the City plans to review protocols and continue to address the diversity issues facing the City department.

Chairman Newman and Councilwoman Mayfield outlined the Blue Horizons Project and the Energy Innovation Task Force's work toward innovative energy solutions. Commissioner Belcher said that there are lots of homes being retrofitted and this type of assistance could make a significant difference. Councilwoman Mayfield said that there would be over 2,000 homes in the Johnston School area energy retrofitted with the help of local citizens.

The City Manager said that they City was working on Affordable Housing projects including Eagle Market Street.

Commissioner Fryar questioned the City's permitting approval on an apartment in the Eagle Market Street project that he felt was done to get federal assistance without the proper construction being completed. The City Manager said he would work with the staff to get an answer on this issue.

Potential for Future Partnership/Joint Planning

The City Manager referred to the list of partnerships that the City and County share that is attached to the minutes of this meeting.

Councilman Kapoor addressed the difference in the city and county development rules. He asked the members to think about better coordination of land use and zoning to assure rational placement of development.

The Chairman said that it was possible that other Cities/towns would want to do joint planning to assure consistent growth, considering transportation and traffic included. He felt that the City and County should be discussing what they want the City and County to look like in the future.

Commissioner Belcher said that the I-26 connector would impact the entire area.

Commissioner Fryar said he was not interested in telling anyone what they could do with their property.

Commissioner Whitesides said that property planning was imperative and he felt it was the responsibility of the elected officials to take this on.

Councilman Kapoor said he felt that citizens expected the elected officials to handle the issues resulting from increased development. *(The County Manager said that the Commissioners would hold a work session on April 10 to begin addressing some of these development/zoning/planning issues.)*

Councilwomen Wisler said that there was an equity issue relative to the cost of the County collecting real estate taxes and Alcoholic Beverage Commission income collection. She requested a review of the equity of these taxes.

Councilwomen Smith said that some of the Lee Walker residents were worried that they would not have a place to live at Lee Walker when the renovations and construction was complete. She asked that current residents be assured, as part of the agreements for construction, that they would all be able to secure their place in the renovated construction.

Commissioner Belcher spoke in favor of factory built housing to be included in all City and County zoning plans.

There being no further discussion, the Mayor adjourned the Council meeting and the Chairman announced that the Board of Commissioners would need a closed session for a legal matter pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11a(3).

Commissioner Frost moved to go into closed session. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board discussed a possible legal matter regarding an existing economic incentive agreement. No action was taken.

Commissioner Frost moved to go back into open session. Commissioner Pressley seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Beach-Ferrara moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Fryar seconded the motion which passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.