

**IREDELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BRIEFING MINUTES
OCTOBER 16, 2001**

The Iredell County Board of Commissioners met in Briefing Session on Tuesday, October 16, 2001, at 5:00 p.m., in the Iredell County Government Center, 200 South Center Street, Statesville, NC.

Present: Chairman Sara Haire Tice
Vice Chairman Steve D. Johnson
Tommy E. Bowles
Karen B. Ray
R. Godfrey Williams

Staff Present: County Manager Joel Mashburn, Finance Director Susan Blumenstein, ECOM/Emergency Management Director Larry Dickerson, Planning Supervisor Ron Smith, Planning and Code Enforcement Director Lynn Niblock, County Assessor Brent Weisner, DSS Director Don Wall, Sgt. Neil Hayes with the Sheriff's Department, and Clerk to the Board Jean Moore.

CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Tice.

UPDATE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BY ECOM/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR LARRY DICKERSON: Dickerson was requested to update the board on emergency preparedness in light of national and local security concerns resulting from recent terrorist attacks. He said the full time and volunteer emergency services personnel were on alert, and they continued to train and equip themselves for emergencies. Dickerson said that all of the EMS employees were being required to attend a bio-terrorism training session this month. Mr. Dickerson said his department and the health department were sharing information with area agencies about chemical and biological materials. He said the board of health had received an update from each county water supplier about security precautions being used to protect their systems. Dickerson said the area hospitals were also busy in the development of training and educational exercises. He said the firefighters had been trained in hazardous material awareness. Mr. Dickerson said a county hazard mitigation plan was being written.

Consideration of an Installment Financing Agreement Regarding the Purchase of the former Lowrance Hospital/Lake Norman Regional Medical Facility located at 659 East Center Avenue, in Mooresville, NC, in an Amount not to Exceed \$3.4 Million: Finance Director Blumenstein said Peter Michel, the county's legal counsel for bonds and financings, had reviewed the documents for the former Lowrance Hospital purchase. She said the interest rate for six months would be 4.5%*. Blumenstein said that if the financing were approved, the closing would be in December. She said the loan cost per month would be \$7,100.

Support Services Director Jim Vernon added that \$80,400 would be needed for architectural fees for the hospital remodeling.

Blumenstein said the \$80,400 could be taken from the Capital Reserve Fund and then reimbursed when the permanent financing was implemented.

Commissioner Bowles said that when the Highway 150 (Plaza Drive) property was sold, he would like for the proceeds to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund.

(*Towards the end of the briefing session, the county manager announced he had received a telephone message from Paul Smith, of Lake Norman Regional Medical Center. Smith advised that the interest rate would be 5.5% instead of 4.5%.)

Request for a Discussion Concerning Iredell County's Transportation Improvement Program Priority Listing: Planning Supervisor Ron Smith and Planning & Code Enforcement Director Lynn Niblock reviewed the transportation improvement priority listing previously submitted to the state. Smith said the staff's recommendation

would be to continue with the present listing since it had always been best to adhere to the projects until they were funded and finished. The following priority listing was explained by Smith.

- Priority I – U.S. Highway 21/I-40 Interchange & Widening
- Priority II – Brawley School Road (SR 1100) Interchange & Widening
- Priority III – U.S. Highway 70 – Widening from Fanjoy Road (SR 2318) to Salisbury
- Priority IV – I-77/New Interchange at Cornelius Road (SR 1302) and Connector Road to
Mazeppa Road (SR 2395)
- Priority V - U.S. Highway 21/NC 115 – widening from Troutman to Barium Springs

Feasibility Request – River Highway (Hwy. 150)

Commissioner Bowles asked about Priority IV, or the connector road to Mazeppa Road. He mentioned there were houses situated on the site.

Smith said the Department of Transportation would have to purchase the properties. He said this was usually done during the right-of-way phase.

Mr. Smith said his staff had been working towards a Rural Planning Organization (RPO) program. He said that if the RPO plan succeeded, it would help in accomplishing some of the improvement projects.

No alterations were made to the transportation improvement priority listing.

SATELLITE LIBRARY FOR THE TOWN OF HARMONY: Harmony Town Mayor John Ray Campbell and Harmony Town Council Member Robert Moore attended the meeting and requested assistance on a branch library to be located in the northern part of the county.

Commissioner Williams said the board had discussed the possibility of satellite libraries at the Winter Planning Session. He said the county, at the present, did not have a policy to use in the development of branch libraries. Mr. Williams said he wanted to propose that the county manager and the library director develop a funding and operating plan for the libraries. He said the plan could later be presented to the board for review. Commissioner Williams submitted the following motion to be approved during the 7:00 p.m. meeting.

Motion that the Iredell County Board of Commissioners adopt the goal of establishing branch libraries by working cooperatively with the municipalities to jointly fund facilities and operations, and further, to direct that the county manager and the library director develop a funding and operating model for presentation to the board not later than December 1, 2001. The plan is to recognize the current funding for the libraries in Statesville and Mooresville and should only address expansion of the library system into other municipalities.

Commissioner Williams said the Harmony officials were proposing to build a “modest library building on a slab.” He said Steve Messick, the Library Director, had determined that 8,537 library cards were issued to citizens in the Harmony area. Mr. Williams said the Harmony community would supply volunteers to help staff the facility. Commissioner Williams said the Harmony officials would supply the building and the volunteers, and the county would be asked to supply one employee and the books. He added that a written policy would allow other municipalities to have a similar arrangement.

County Manager Mashburn said additional state library funds might be available if a branch library were established.

Commissioner Williams suggested that a future meeting of the board of commissioners be held at the Harmony Town Meeting Room.

Mayor Campbell asked, assuming the proposal was approved, when the town might begin construction on the building.

Mashburn said the county's next budget would not be adopted until June of 2002.

Commissioner Johnson added that the branch library policy, to be written by Mashburn and Messick, might dictate some of the financial aspects of the arrangement.

Chairman Tice said that when the policy was presented and/or adopted, it would probably offer some guarantee of the county's interest in the Harmony library proposal.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Tice adjourned the briefing at 6:35 p.m.

Approved: _____

Clerk to the Board