

Camden County Board of Commissioners**Special Meeting****April 28, 2005****7:00 p.m.****Camden County Courthouse**

A special meeting of the Camden County Board of Commissioners was held Thursday, April 28, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the Camden County Courthouse, Courthouse Complex. The following members were present:

Chairman Melvin J. Jeralds
Vice Chairman Clayton Riggs
Commissioners Jeffrey B. Jennings, Carolyn O. Riggs, and Mike Andrews
County Manager Randell Woodruff
Clerk to the Board Ava Murgia

Also attending was Attorney Herbert Mullen, Finance Officer Clarann Mansfield, and Planning Director Dan Porter.

Chairman Jeralds called the special meeting to order and called upon the County Manager, County Attorney and Planning Director for their presentation.

The purpose of the special meeting was to hold a work session to discuss impact fees and county wide government issues.

Presentation by Planning Director Dan Porter

Planning Director Dan Porter gave an overview of impact fees in Camden County and spoke on the following items:

- Efforts – Durham County-collecting and escrowing; Chatham County-special legislation; and Orange County-special legislation.
- Camden has major infrastructure needs in all areas.
- Revenues from residential property taxes do not cover cost of routine services or produce enough capital for expanding infrastructure.
- Camden is the 8th fastest growing county in the United States due to residential growth.
- Reviewed and explained the county development ordinance Section 151.509.
- Types of infrastructure needed: schools, water supply capacity, wastewater treatment capacity, and public safety capacity.
- Difference between Exactions and Impact Fees: Exactions is a different kind of fee or requirements on developers based on the type of development. Impact fees are more standard, across the board, and every developer has to address the same impact fee.
- Reason for impact fees is to make growth pay for itself. New development will create need for additional facilities. The level of service to community should remain stable.
- Credit for future principal payments: A credit may be necessary to avoid potential double payment situations arising from the one-time impact fee plus the payment of other revenues that may also fund growth related capital improvements. Where new development provides front end funding of school capacity, there is a potential for double payments on existing debt for schools.
- The students generated per household: Elementary School .20; Middle School .12; High School .12. The cost per student: Elementary School \$11,598; Middle School \$35,503; High School \$31,529 and system wide \$1,555.
- Based on the school study, the cost of impact fees per housing unit is: Detached Unit \$10,249; other housing types \$3,162.
- Annual Growth Rate Projection: The annual number of future residential units based on the annual growth rate during the 2000 to 2004 period. During this time, the number of housing unites in the county increased an average of 5.5% per year.

Chairman Jeralds thanked Mr. Porter for his presentation and called upon Mr. John Morrison.

Presentation by John Morrison

John Morrison, Trestle Court, appeared before the Board as a Camden County resident and constituent regarding growth issues and impact fees.

Mr. Morrison stated residential construction does not pay for itself. Mr. Morrison talked to the Board regarding a potential growth tool and the formation of a government that would have the powers of a city and a county, therefore would be a stronger force in the control of growth and the ability to bring the power of government in a more concentrated form to serve the people better and more efficiently.

Mr. Morrison referred to a public record letter dated April 30, 2004 to the Currituck County Board of Commissioners regarding a research on incorporation because of their concerns regarding hostile annexation. Mr. Morrison gave the history of cities and counties. Counties exist to carry out state policies. Cities are municipalities. The legislature has given more county like powers to cities and more city like powers to county. The basic difference in powers is, counties can not do roads, bikeways, sidewalks, and cities can not do education.

Mr. Morrison stated that Article VII of the North Carolina Constitution says that the General Assembly can design local government however they want to. Camden County can go to the General Assembly and it is purely a political question for the General Assembly not subject to intervention by the Courts.

Mr. Morrison stated there are two (2) counties in North Carolina that do not have an incorporated community; Currituck and Hyde.

Mr. Morrison stated that intense county wide zoning does not control growth and incorporation is a potential tool to control growth for the benefit of citizens.

Mr. Morrison stated the following advantages of a single government – in theory:

- More efficient, avoiding duplication of police, planning and zoning services.
- Reduces the cost of government – keeps taxes low, no double taxation by town and county.
- Enhances economic development – businesses prefer to locate where there is only one (1) set of regulations, one (1) government to deal with.
- Increased protection of the environment.
- More political influence regionally or statewide.
- Promotes rapid response by government to countywide or regional or state issues by avoiding fragmentation with multiple local governments with the county.
- Greater ability to marshal more resources to devote to a problem arising anywhere in the county.
- Allows for more comprehensive planning for long-term solutions, not quick fixes which will exacerbate the problem later.
- Eligibility for more funding from state and federal governments; i.e. Powell Bill funds and education funds.
- Can provide more services more economically.
- More responsive government.
- Municipalities can not annex into another municipality.

Mr. Morrison stated the following arguments regarding opposition to a single government:

- Smaller government is more responsive and efficient.
- Bigger is not always better and sometimes is more expensive.
- Loss of community identity.
- Cost associated with merger.
- Opportunity for political participation as office holder is decreased.
- Dilution of minority voting strength.

- All of the “pro” arguments are theoretical – no one can state with certainty they will be realized.
- It is an “elitist” “intellectual” concept not for the real world – supported by those with an ulterior motive.
- “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”.
- Concentration of power is a bad thing.

Mr. Morrison stated that in the long run, after the costs of merger, it is more economical because taxes increase more slowly, and it enhances economic development. Mr. Morrison stated that merger is popular with academics, administration, planners, and elected officials, but is not popular with voters and meets a strong, emotional opposition in a referendum.

Mr. Morrison stated in a report presented to the Currituck Board of Commissioners by the Currituck County Incorporation Commission cited the following reasons to incorporate Currituck County reached on a 7-5 vote:

- A single unit of government is more apt to preserve and enhance the solvent county government, school system and low local taxation.
- A single government will avoid duplication of services and thereby promote administrative efficiency with attendant lower taxation.
- A single unified government is better able to control growth by virtue of a countywide, comprehensive unified development ordinance which addresses the needs and growth patterns of the county as a whole. This is preferable to multiple units of government that may have conflicting goals and regulations.
- A single government is better able to protect and nourish the school system through the application of a countywide adequate faculty’s ordinance and school impact fees. Multiple units of government could potentially adopt zoning ordinances and regulations that could negate the county’s ordinances in this regard.
- A single government promotes the concept of “One Currituck”, which speaks with a single voice rather than in fragmented, competing and therefore diluted strength.
- A single government is better able to enhance economic development in that potential businesses will prefer to locate where they must deal with but one level of government.
- A single government will have increased powers to be used in the discretion of its elected officials, such as road construction and maintenance as well as the creation of bike paths.
- A government with both the powers and rights of a city and county will be subject to increased revenues such as a share of the state franchise tax and Powell Bill Funds for road construction.
- A single government is better able to provide for environmental protection.
- A single government with the powers of a city and a county, vested in one entity, will be most responsive to the needs of its citizens in that its multiple powers can be brought to bear for the public good more quickly, efficiently, and with greater resources than if bifurcated among a county and various municipalities with conflicting, short cited interest.

The reasoning of the minority of the Currituck County Incorporation Commission on the 7-5 vote is:

- This is all theoretical.
- Even if it works out, it is not fair to disenfranchise other communities to have its own government.
- The power to build and maintain roads is also a substantial obligation.
- There is no reason to believe that incorporated communities would not be as desirous of, and as effective, at protecting the schools and environment as a single government.
- Any theoretical advantage of the economy of a single government is negated by the voluntary assessment of taxes by an incorporated community to provide services to its citizens, that they desire, and which a single government will not provide.

- The majority recommendation is that this is a drastic step and that once taken will be difficult to reverse if it is not successful.

Chairman Jeralds thanked Mr. Morrison for his presentation.

Closed Session

Commissioner Clayton Riggs made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318(a)(3) for the purpose of consultation with attorney. The motion passed with Chairman Jeralds, Commissioners Jennings, Carolyn Riggs, Clayton Riggs, and Andrews voting aye; no Commissioner voting no; no Commissioner absent; and no Commissioner not voting.

The Commissioners entered closed session at 8:34 p.m.

Commissioner Jennings made a motion to come out of closed session and back into regular session. The motion passed with Chairman Jeralds, Commissioners Jennings, Carolyn Riggs, Clayton Riggs, and Andrews voting aye; no Commissioner voting no; no Commissioner absent; and no Commissioner not voting.

The Board re-entered regular session at 9:11 p.m.

Chairman Jeralds called for any motions from the Board.

Adjournment

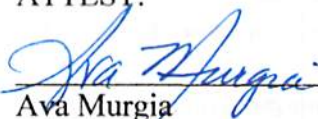
Hearing no motions, Commissioner Jennings made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with Chairman Jeralds, Commissioners Jennings, Carolyn Riggs, Clayton Riggs, and Andrews voting aye; no Commissioner voting no; no Commissioner absent; and no Commissioner not voting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.



Melvin J. Jeralds, Chairman
Camden County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Ava Murgia
Clerk to the Board