

FEBRUARY 22, 2016 – 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
FEBRUARY 23, 2016 – 8:00 AM – 1:30 PM
PLANNING RETREAT OF THE OXFORD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CAMP OAK HILL ACTIVITY CENTER
1528 OAK HILL RD., OXFORD NC

The Board of Commissioners for the City of Oxford met at the above-mentioned time and place. All members of the Board and local news media were notified of the same as well as the purpose of the meeting.

Present were Mayor Jackie Sergent, Mayor Pro Tem Calvin (C.J.) Harris, Jr., Commissioners James (Danny) Currin, Frank Strickland, S. Quon Bridges, Patricia Fields, Ron Bullock and Al Woodlief. Present also was Interim City Manager Mike McLaurin, and City Clerk, Barbara J. Rote. Warren Miller from Fountainworks facilitated the Retreat.

Absent: February 22 – Commissioner Frank Strickland, MPT Harris left after lunch

Absent: February 23 – MPT Harris, Commissioner Frank Strickland.

Staff attending part of the Retreat: Police Chief Al Coley, Fire Chief David Cottrell, Human Resources Director Justin Ayscue, City Engineer Amy Ratliff, Public Works Director James Proctor, Parks and Recreation Director Christine Sims and Finance Director Pat Kehoe.

Outside presenters in attendance: Bill Rivenbark, Professor of Public Administration and Government and MPA Program Director at the NC School of Government; David Ammons, Albert Coates Professor for Public Administration and Government at the NC School of Government; Elizabeth Parham, Director, NC Main Street Center, Rural Economic Development Division, NC Department of Commerce.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sergent called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM on February 22, 2016.

WELCOME BY MAYOR SERGENT

Mayor Sergent welcomed all those in attendance to the Planning Retreat. Mayor Sergent introduced Warren Miller from Fountainworks who facilitated the retreat for the third consecutive year. Facilitator Miller will provide a summary report following the meeting.

OVERVIEW OF RETREAT
MOMENTS OF EXCELLENCE

Facilitator Miller gave an overview of the Planning Retreat. The outcome of the workshop was to set the City's priorities for the next year. He asked for moments of excellence that occurred in the past year. The moments included Fire, Police, Engineering and Recreation programs and projects, the Bicentennial Committee, the Downtown Masterplan that included community involvement, opportunities for former offenders, GIS, Water Agreement with Granville County and Henderson, Fire Rating upgrade, and 401K Match for all employees.

REVIEW OF MISSION VISION AND VALUES

5-YEAR VISION

Facilitator Miller asked the Board to review the Mission Vision and Values and asked the Board to provide a 5-year vision “news headline” with priorities for achieving the vision. Suggested headlines:

Downtown – A Hub Activity: improved infrastructure, and implement Downtown Master Plan.

Growth 50% in 5 Years: code enforcement, increased businesses and industry, airport utilization

No Flight in Oxford – sound infrastructure, safety of citizens

Downtown Developed & Improved Housing Code: implement Downtown Master Plan, code enforcement

Great Day in the City, New Rec. Center Dedicated, 1,000 New Jobs – City more desirable, better education, increase staff training

From Tobacco to Technology – improved infrastructure, implement Downtown Master Plan

Oxford Once Again the Athens of the South – policies to encourage business and development, recreational amenities, cultural amenities, return on investment, performance measures

CITY MANAGER OVERVIEW

Interim City Manager McLaurin gave an overview of the departmental needs and capital requests to assist the Board during budget discussions. He suggested that the Board prioritize their capital items and work towards acquiring those items in a systematic way on an annual basis. His information was presented in an S.W.O.T. format (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and covered the Oxford Community, City government in general and individual departments. He also provided a brief review of the 2015 Board priorities. Interim City Manager McLaurin’s PowerPoint presentation was distributed to Board members and staff.

ASSESSING OXFORD’S FINANCIAL HEALTH **STRATEGIES FOR CAPITAL FUNDING**

Bill Rivenbark, Professor of Public Administration and Government and MPA Program Director at the NC School of Government presented information on Oxford’s Financial Health including defining a purposes of a Capital Budget, when to adopt a Capital Project Ordinance and reviewing the Capital Budget annually. He noted that for an item to be considered for a capital ordinance and part of a capital budget, it should be at least \$50,000-\$100,000. He used information from the most recent audit along with tools available on the State Treasurer’s website to assess Oxford’s financial health. The Water & Sewer fund was in good health. He would work on increasing the cash in the fund, but the capital asset life was good. (65% of assets have remaining life, 35% have been depreciated). He suggested to continue bumping up the cash reserve, to keep an eye on infrastructure, and to not fall below the 65% capital asset

ratio. In the General Fund, the financial health was good. Debt service ratio was good at 4%, noting that the City had room to increase its debt. Solvency was 32%. He suggested this was good but to continue monitoring this figure. The capital asset life was not good. Only 30% of assets had a remaining life. 70% was depreciated. He noted that he would not be concerned about assuming \$1.5 M in debt because it could be amortized over 15 years. Mr. Rivenbark's PowerPoint presentation was distributed to Board members and staff.

MEASURING PRODUCTIVITY

David Ammons, Albert Coates Professor for Public Administration and Government at the NC School of Government presented information on measuring productivity in the workplace. He explained how to establish and implement the measures on all levels of City Government by 1) setting a mission/goal, 2) establishing objectives, 3) setting performance measures, and 4) measuring performance management. Mr. Ammons talked about setting up a strategy map, which establishes priorities based on strategic objectives. Mr. Ammons' PowerPoint presentation was distributed to Board members and staff.

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Amy Ratliff, City Engineer presented information on the state of the City's infrastructure, and current and long-term needs and goals. She spoke about the Connect NC Bond initiative and the impacts it could have on Oxford, if passed by the voters. She explained the projects currently underway and the direction of the Public Works and Engineering Department. City Engineer Ratliff's PowerPoint presentation was distributed to Board members and staff.

MAIN STREET PROGRAM

On Tuesday, February 23rd, Liz Parham, Director, NC Main Street Center, Rural Economic Development Division, NC Department of Commerce, spoke about the Main Street Program and what it offers to communities the size of Oxford. She reviewed its structure, organization, program requirements, and how the program assists communities through financial assistance, promotions, workshops, design assistance, and training. Ms. Parham stressed that Main Street is economic development within the context of historic preservation. She noted the requirement of having a full-time position (40-hr) within the City to maintain the Main Street status that we currently have. This position could involve 2 employees. Ms. Parham's PowerPoint presentation was distributed to Board members and staff.

LISTING & REFINING GOALS

Led by Facilitator Miller, The Board began a list of goals for 2016 on Monday, February 22. The list was refined on Tuesday, February 23. The following list was provided by Facilitator Miller:

City of Oxford Potential 2016-17 Priorities
(provided by Warren Miller)

1) Develop Capital Improvement Plan (\$\$\$) (a systematic, thoughtful and long-term process) (begin work on a five-year plan – develop capital needs for this year as part of budget process)

- Streets
- Water/ Sewer
- Purchase fire truck
- Recreational facilities/ public swimming pool
- Boat ramp @ Lake Devin
- Cemetery Roads
- Cover railroad tracks (will be done by June 30th)
- Review of existing facilities (demolition, what do we do with existing bldgs.)
- Maintenance of existing facilities

Infrastructure Planning: Public works committee - critical

- 2) Street projects (planning & design)
- 3) Water/ Sewer projects (planning & design)
- 4) Coordinate with downtown master planning (also downtown)

Strong Downtown:

- 5) Implement Downtown Master Plan (\$) Danny's committee/ Downtown Committee
 - Full time DOEDC Director/ Evaluate alternative staffing options
 - develop design standards in downtown

Setting Conditions for Economic Development

- 6) Policies to incent economic development downtown businesses and industry (also downtown) Danny's Committee/ working w/ manager and with staff at County Economic Development
- 7) Explore utilization of Orphan Landfill property (more information will be provided to the Board to understand potential options) Public Works committee and engineer and James Proctor
- 8) Airport utilization plan (property committee/ manager)
- 9) Discussion about municipal service districts with a goal of supporting downtown Oxford's growth (Danny's Committee/ Finance – City and 2 MSD boards work together)

Curb Appeal/Beautification

10) Citywide Code enforcement for housing and business (\$) Danny's Committee and planning department/ staff

Consider new code enforcement policy lever

- 10.5) Review/ update Oxford ordinances (UDO) \$ – Get started but will take 2-3 years
- 10.6) Encourage litter reduction efforts (work with public works and community groups) (public works committee and department) start with on college and MLK streets, ask police to increase enforcement
- 10.7) Encourage user friendly nature of Historic Preservation Commission (Mayor)

Recreation:

11) Strengthen recreation (coordinating with county, school & other partners) Recreation Committee including Mayor and Director of Recreation

Excellent Management

12) Performance measurement initiative (City Manager/ Dpt. heads – each department submit 2 measure of performance)

13) Garbage contract/ truck location (Manager/ Public Works Committee)

14) Continue to work on communication with community

--City calling tree (\$) Barb and Fire Chief

TEAMING UP FOR SUCCESS

Facilitator Miller worked with the Board on team building exercises and assigned a task for the Board to complete prior to Tuesday’s meeting. He began with an introduction on how successful teams function. The group discussed what was working well, what each member appreciated about each of their fellow Board members, and what is still needed. The take-home assignment was to think about what each member is going to do to strengthen the team going forward. On Tuesday, the Board reviewed their results.

MEETING RECESSED AND RECONVENED

At approximately 5:00 p.m., Mayor Sergent recessed the Planning Retreat until 8:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 23, 2016 for breakfast with the retreat to reconvene at 8:30 a.m.

At approximately 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, February 23 2016, Mayor Sergent reconvened the Planning Retreat.

ADJOURNMENT

FOLLOWING LUNCH IN THE DINING HALL, AND THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, AT APPROXIMATELY 12:45 P.M., COMMISSIONER CURRIN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. ALL VOTES WERE IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. **THE MOTION CARRIED.**

Barbara J. Rote, CMC, City Clerk

ATTEST:

Jacqueline vdH Sergent, Mayor