

**Special Joint Meeting**  
**Monday, November 9, 2015**  
**6:00pm**  
**John A. Holmes High School Media Center**  
**Edenton, NC**

Minutes

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners held a special joint meeting on Monday, November 9, 2015 at 6:00pm at the John A. Holmes High School Media Center. Present: Chairman Jeff Smith, Commissioners Keith Nixon, Emmett Winborne, Alex Kehayes, and John Mitchener.

Commissioners Ellis Lawrence and Greg Bonner were absent.

Staff present: County Manager Kevin Howard, Finance Officer Willie Carawan and Board Clerk Susanne Stallings.

Edenton Chowan Board of Education Members present: Richard Browder, Gil Burroughs, Jean Bunch, Glorious Elliott, Eugene Jordan, Kay Wright and John Guard.

Edenton Chowan Schools Staff present: Dr. Rob Jackson Superintendent and Sarah Hare, Clerk

(Minutes of the Board of Education meeting are summarized below an official copy of the Board of Education minutes can be obtained through the Clerk to the Board of Education's office).

**Special Meeting**

Board of Education Chairman John Guard called the meeting of the Board of Education to order and welcomed all in attendance.

Chairman Smith called the special meeting to order and welcomed both boards.

**Approval of Agenda**

Gill Burroughs moved to approve the agenda as presented, Ms. Elliott seconded the motion.

Chairman Guard asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Commissioner Mitchener moved to approve the agenda as presented. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**Presentation – 2008 School Improvement Study of John A. Holmes High School**

Jim Copeland with Moseley Architects stated that he was asked to perform a facility improvement study of John A. Holmes High School back in 2008. He stated he was not able to present the study to the Boards and requested the opportunity to come back and provide a presentation. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is in the meeting file labeled November 9, 2015. He noted in the PowerPoint that several of the improvements to the school have been addressed. He also noted that the student population projection most likely has decreased. He

noted that in the plan originally were 5 different options. He stated the committee selected an option that built on to the school on the left side which allowed the green space in the front of the school to remain. He stated this option also called for an administration wing to be built in front of the existing building. The PowerPoint included slides which detail the phases of the construction. He stated estimated costs were around \$33 million and would allow for 161,500 square feet of new space and 31,300 square feet of renovated space. He stated that the plan would need to be reviewed to reassess current needs, it would involve planning and phasing and new cost estimates. If the Boards decided to do this construction would not begin until 2017 or 2018. He asked if either of the Boards had any questions or comments.

Mr. Burroughs stated he felt that the student demographics needed to be reevaluated and noted that the proposed developments that were to be built in the county were never built and that would impact the proposed student population.

Mr. Guard discussed the desire of the committee to keep the high school located on the existing campus.

Commissioner Winborne agreed that the design would also need to be looked at stating that student population has decreased.

Dr. Jackson stated that there has been a decrease in enrollment.

Commissioner Winborne asked if the former DF Walker School (behind the high school) campus was considered.

Commissioner Mitchener stated that he would not want the façade of the existing building to change. He stated that with regards to an auditorium the use of Swain should also be considered.

Commissioner Nixon asked if there were other plans presented.

Mr. Browder stated there were several designs considered.

Commissioner Nixon stated that he has concerns with changing the façade of the building. He stated that in his opinion the high school is the highest priority with regards to capital needs for the school. He stated that he felt the Boards should consider all options including demolition. He stated he felt it may be good to survey previous students about the conditions at the high school. He stated he is favor of discussing a plan to move forward with something in the future.

Mr. Guard stated that this high school is 65 years old.

Ms. Bunch stated that she appreciated the comments regarding the desire to move forward. She stated that she also has concerns with changing the façade of the existing building. She stated she felt both boards needed to determine what the next step will be.

Chairman Smith asked about the state standards and what population the current building was constructed for.

Mr. Copeland stated that DPI sets the standards. He stated that there are many changes from the construction era of the existing building as the teaching methods have changed greatly.

Mr. Jordan stated he felt the Boards should also consider looking at a different site for the high school. He stated that there have been concerns about safety raised over the current location. He stated the space is limited at the current campus.

Commissioner Winborne stated he shared the same concerns over lack of space on the existing campus for growth. He stated that the County owns property and the Boards may wish to consider looking at other sites.

Mr. Browder stated that the Boards should also consider the condition of the middle school in the planning.

Commissioner Nixon stated that he felt it was important to address demographics during the planning because of possible decline in population. He stated this is important in considering the location of the high school because of the cost to bus the students out of Town if the population is greater in Town. He stated that he also had great appreciation for the existing architecture of the current high school.

Commissioner Mitchener discussed the curriculum needs and stated he felt it should be based on state trends. He stated that he felt it was more important to consider what goes on inside that school than the demographics.

The Boards discussed the current debt for school construction.

Mr. Howard stated that the current payment is \$600,000- \$700,000 on \$2.5 million in debt. He stated that rough estimates on payments for \$35 million in debt would be \$3.5 million annually.

Mr. Jackson stated that his focus has been on the student's perception of their high school and comparing it to neighboring schools.

Ms. Elliott stated that the Boards will have to be united when this project is planned and presented.

Board members discussed their desire to work together to reach a solution for the future of the high school.

Mr. Browder asked if the Boards agree to pursue feasibility studies, considering all factors to lay the foundation for a plan.

Mr. Copeland stated he felt the Boards want him to include consideration of other locations also.

Commissioner Kehayes asked if the "bones" of the existing building are good.

Mr. Copeland stated that some places are better than others. He noted that the existing footprint is not congruent to current teaching methods.

The Boards discussed the manager and Superintendent getting together to plan a walking tour of the high school.

**Adjourn**

Ms. Elliott moved that the Board of Education meeting be adjourned. Ms. Bunch seconded the motion. Chairman Guard asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Being no further business, Commissioner Nixon moved that the meeting be adjourned. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (5-0).

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Jeffery Smith  
Chairman

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L. Susanne Stallings, Clerk