

Chowan County Board of Commissioners  
Special Joint Meeting  
With the Edenton Chowan Board of Education  
Thursday, September 19, 2019  
6:00pm  
Northern Chowan Community Center  
Gym  
2869 Virginia Road  
Tyner, NC

Archival video of the Joint Public Hearing is available in three ways:

1) Facebook Live - Link: <https://www.facebook.com/EdentonChowan/videos/734819273649785/>

2) Archival Video - The archival video is stored in a school system Google file and is available for viewing by anyone with the link.

Link: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1W4jOI9RYv8KbC0F\\_BFfArAyUdeYUeCc1?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1W4jOI9RYv8KbC0F_BFfArAyUdeYUeCc1?usp=sharing)

3) Archival Audio - The archival audio is also stored in a school system Google file and is available for listening by anyone with the link. This was recorded through the sound system.

Link: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1W4jOI9RYv8KbC0F\\_BFfArAyUdeYUeCc1?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1W4jOI9RYv8KbC0F_BFfArAyUdeYUeCc1?usp=sharing)

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners held a special joint meeting with the Edenton Chowan Board of Education on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, at 6:00 pm in the Gym of the Northern Chowan Community Center 2865 Virginia Road Tyner, NC,

County Commissioners Present Chair Patti Kersey, Commissioners Ron Cummings, Bob Kirby, Larry McLaughlin, Don Faircloth and Ellis Lawrence (came in later).

Commissioner Greg Bonner was absent.

Edenton Chowan Board of Education Members present: Jean Bunch, Eugene Jordan, Paul Clifton, Maxine Mason, Joan White and Gill Burroughs.

Board member Ricky Browder was absent.

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).

County Staff Present, County Manager Kevin Howard and Clerk Susanne Stallings

Chair Kersey called the special meeting of the County Board of Commissioners to order.

Chair Jordan called the special meeting of the Board of Education to order.

Chair Kersey on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, thanked the public for joining this evening as the Board continues the work of addressing the facility needs of our high school. She stated that this important work will potentially impact generations of Chowan County residents. Beyond providing a place for our high school students to learn and our high school teachers to teach, the high school is an important resource for our community. She noted as we have recently experienced, it provides shelter for residents during storms, a gathering place for community events, and is in many ways the face of our county and school system. We are glad that you are here and look forward to hearing from you tonight about where you believe the new high school should be located.

Chair Gene Jordan stated he would also like to welcome the public behalf of the Board of Education to tonight's Public Hearing. Replacing the high school facility is a task that our community has worked on at various times since the 1970's. He stated we have much to celebrate in our high school community as the high school students have just posted the highest Academic Performance Score since the School Performance Grades began. He noted our high school also just celebrated the highest Cohort Graduation Rate ever as 91.6% of the Class of 2019 graduated on time. He stated our Board is grateful to be working with the County Commissioners to tackle this generational challenge and to be able to provide our high school students and teachers the building they deserve. He added we look forward to hearing from the public tonight about the location of the new high school.

Chair Jordan stated noted that this evening, we are here to hear from the public. Neither the members of the Board of County Commissioners nor the Board of Education will be responding to comments from the public. Instead, the Boards will be listening intently. It is the desire of both Boards to seek and act upon public input throughout this process.

He noted that tonight's Public Hearing is focused on the location for the new high school. Speakers are asked to limit their remarks to tonight's topic. He added that there will be other Public Hearings in the future to address subsequent topics. Tonight's hearing is being streamed live on the school system's Facebook page. It is also being recorded for future use.

He noted that speakers will have three minutes to speak. If you are representing a group, please announce the group you are representing prior to speaking and you will be given six minutes to speak. The clerk will be operating the timer. Please conclude your remarks when the time expires so that we will have ample time to hear from everyone who wishes to speak.

When you begin to speak, please carefully state your name and address for the record.

We have two microphones set-up for you to speak into. Please stand close to the microphone so that we can hear you clearly.

Chair Jordan stated he will begin by calling two names. He would ask the first two speakers to each go to a different microphone. We will follow the order that speakers signed up. After each speaker concludes, I will call another name. When your name is called, please go to the open microphone and wait for your turn to speak.

Kim Ringeisen 101 Hewes Street Edenton, stated his research of the County's Land Use Plan notes goals and objectives for growth in downtown. He noted the mention of the High School is by the Town to encourage the County and Schools to renovate the High School.

Susan Beckwith 300 North Broad Street Edenton shared some information on projects ongoing in Edenton and stated her support for the renovation of the high school in Edenton.

Ginger Vogedes 104 Blount Street Edenton shared her history with the school system. She stated her concern with the danger of highway 32 and bussing children. She asked the Board to keep John A. Holmes in Town.

Adrian Wood 105 W. King Street Edenton discussed cost and the impact. She discussed the impact on charter schools on local school budgets. She stated that if John A Holmes relocated a charter school would most likely be interested. She stated that Chowan County lost students to charter schools and lost \$500,000 annually in funds. She stated that services and positions will be lost in the public schools from that impact.

Jonathan Downing 106 Pendleton Trace Edenton stated she was unsure where she stood on the matter. She stated it seems ideal to restore the high school. She asked that people put their selfish needs away and make this a matter of the heart.

Commissioner Lawrence joined the meeting.

Joe Hollowell 509 Happy Home Road welcomed everyone in attendance. He stated that Edenton is the center of the county. He stated that it would be best to find a way to keep the high school downtown. He urged the Board to make sure the bond issue is done right.

Susan Stocks 208 West Queen Street stated she supported public education and appreciate the old building. She stated that there is an attitude that Broad Street is dangerous and she disagrees with that thought.

Julie Tunney 912 Soundside Road Edenton shared the advantages of the proximity of John A. Holmes to COA for dual enrollment. She stated the school is close to businesses, the municipal center, Boys and Girls Club and walking distance to student homes. She noted this school is closest to the homes of residents who live in the southern part of the County. She asked that the high school remain in Town.

William Miller 100 Blount Street Edenton stated he wished to reinforce the comments from Tuesday night. He discussed the volunteers and teachers as well as those that work with the students at the campus. He asked the Board to keep the high school where it is.

John Mitchener 1000 West Queen Street Edenton discussed the loss of student population to charter schools. He stated it is important to expand on the current treasure of the school and create a larger footprint. He provided an example of this done at the campus of NC State.

Claire Mills 505 Kimberly Drive discussed the unmet needs of many of the residents in Chowan County. She stated that Holmes is the center of the community and if located elsewhere it would out of sight and out of mind.

Samantha Layton 202 Court Street Edenton stated she would like for the high school to stay in its current location. She stated she would like to walk to high school as a future Ace. She sated a new swimming pool would be great.

Amber Hardy 222 East Queen Street Edenton noted that there are 166 students at John A Holmes that live within a two mile radius of the school. She stated that she volunteers at the school and with the school being located in town it is easier because it is located in Town.

Emily Nicholson 139 Mavaton Road Edenton shared information on the history of education in Chowan County. She stated that 36 community schools were originally in Chowan County. She stated that the County and Board of Education is at a crossroads at where the next chapter of our future will read. She stated that she hopes a spirit of cooperation will prevail.

Nelson Spear stated he was representing Destination Downtown Edenton. He stated that DDE strongly supports keeping John A. Holmes High School at its current location. He shared that the benefits of the location of the high school in the town to emergency services, businesses, downtown. He shared his personal experiences with Edenton-Chowan schools and the convenience.

Sally Francis Kehayes 2333 Locust Grove Road Edenton stated she supports keeping the high school where it is. She stated that as the Boards go through the process of looking at costs, look at the intangibles that have been brought to the Board.

Alex Kehayes 2333 Locust Grove Road asked how the audio or recordings will be made available to the public.

Dr. Rob Jackson noted the Facebook live will be online and on the County's website.

Chairman Jordan thanked everyone in attendance for their comments he declared the special meeting of the Board of Education adjourned.

Chair Patti Kersey declared the special meeting of the Board of Commissioners adjourned.

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Patti F. Kersey, Chair

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Susanne Stallings, Clerk