MINUTES
RECESS MEETING OF THE EDGECOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JOINT MEETING WITH ROCKY MOUNT CITY COUNCIL
CAROLINAS GATEWAY PARTNERSHIP, 427 FALLS ROAD, ROCKY MOUNT, NC
MAY 15, 2015 AT 11:00 A.M.

1. **RECESSED MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN LEONARD WIGGINS AT 11:00 A.M.**

Board of Commissioners present: Leonard Wiggins, Chairman, Jonathan Felton, Vice-Chairman, William Wooten, Viola Harris, Donald Boswell, E. Wayne Hines and Evelyn Powell.

Board of Commissioners absent: None.

Edgecombe County staff present: Lorenzo Carmon, County Manager, Eric Evans, Assistant County Manager and Frangie Mungo, Clerk to the Board.

Rocky Mount City Council present: David W. Combs, Mayor, Andre Knight, Reuben Blackwell, IV, Lamont Wiggins, Lois Watkins, Tom Rogers, W. B. Bullock and Christine Carroll Miller.

Rocky Mount staff present: Charles Penny, City Manager, Kimberly Batts, Deputy City Clerk, and Richard Rose, City Attorney.

Mr. Wiggins asked the Edgecombe County Board members to introduce themselves.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the County Commissioners unanimously adopted a resolution opposing the proposed county line merger. He stated that the meeting was originally intended to be a joint meeting with Nash and Edgecombe County Commissioners and the City of Rocky Mount expressed a desire to attend. Mr. Wiggins stated that Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners called a meeting with Nash County Board of Commissioners and Rocky Mount Council. He stated that Nash County Commissioners declined to attend the meeting.

Mr. Combs stated that the intent of the meeting was to hold a joint meeting of the Rocky Mount City Council, Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners and Nash County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Combs introduced Council members and Rocky Mount staff.

Mr. Combs shared the following:

- **The merger that occurred in 1991 was between Rocky Mount School System and Nash County School System and none of the students in the city limits of Rocky Mount have ever attended Edgecombe County Schools.**
- **When the merger occurred there was major support from the business community to create a cohesive school system in order to ensure the community and students count interact and move forward.**
- **Regionalism in important to move this community forward.**
- **The City of Rocky Mount is involved today because it was part of the original lawsuit in 1989.**
- **The report that Nash County has presented has some facts and figures, but has no mention of what is best for the students.**
- **There is a question of whether some Nash County schools would need to be closed should the merger occur.**
- **It is unknown whether a reduction in the students attending the Nash-Rocky Mount school system would have an impact on the athletic rating.**
- **There are many unanswered questions.**
- **If funding is an issue all parties involved in the funding need to be at the table and Rocky Mount has invested over $22 million in the Nash-Rocky Mount School System since 1992 and is a funding partner.**

- The goal is to come to a resolution with all funding partners and avoid another lawsuit.
- Rocky Mount City Council has passed a resolution opposing the dissolution of the Nash-Rocky Mount School system.

Resolutions passed by Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners and the City of Rocky Mount Council were introduced.

2. PRAYER.
Prayer was provided by Rev. E. Wayne Hines.

3. PRESENTATION FROM DR. ANTHONY JACKSON, SUPERINTENT OF NASH-ROCKY MOUNT SCHOOLS.

Mr. Penny introduced Dr. Jackson and stated that Dr. Jackson was present to provide factual information regarding the budget, the capital improvement plan and the financial impact of reducing enrollment in Nash-Rocky Mount Schools.

Dr. Jackson recognized the five members of the Nash-Rocky Mount Board of Education that were present.

Dr. Jackson stated that it is his intent to share information that is public information and has been shared with the community. He provided information along with a powerpoint presentation as follows:

- There has been a deliberate attempt on the part of the school system to ensure that all partners have met the statutory requirements.
- Provided the Boards with a copy of the Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools 2013 Capital Improvement Plan and a report containing basic historical information showing the historical involvement of the entities funding the school system
- Senate Bill 612 governs the relationship and funding formula that the school system has operated under for the past 25 years. Section 20 outlines Edgecombe County's responsibility for appropriations and Section 21(a) and (b) outlines the City of Rocky Mount's responsibility as far as meeting the differential. Rocky Mount's role is clearly imbedded in the Bill.
- The provision of capital outlay of $500,000 stipulated provisions for utilities for Winstead Avenue School are set out in the statute and those items have been monitored and adhered to each year.
- Provided information regarding financial appropriations/expense history since 1996. Rocky Mount's appropriation will show a lag on one year because of charging a projected amount and the school system having to pay money back. It was decided to true up the following year on actual fees due rather than estimating.
- Provided information outlining the annual per pupil allocation/current expense 20-year history including information regarding capital outlay and capital improvement information not mentioned in the Senate Bill as to Rocky Mount.
- Explained the procedure for calculating the per public cost per district and the mechanism for determining the differential to be paid annually by the City of Rocky Mount/
- A ten-year capital plan broken into two five-year plan has been prepared for modernization at an approximate cost of $136 million.
- Explained the bond funding structure.

Mr. Combs asked Dr. Jackson how schools are funded.

Dr. Jackson stated that the school system receives state, local and federal funding. He stated that a loss of students could create a loss of allocations for support staff, bus drivers, academic programs, athletic programs and efficiencies. He stated that every dollar that Nash Rocky Mount Schools would lose would not necessarily be

reallocated to Edgecombe County Schools, but the los would simply trigger new funding allocations.

Dr. Jackson responded to questions from the City Council and Board of Commissioners.

Mayor Combs stated that the next step would be to call a joint meeting with Nash and Edgecombe County Commissioners and Rocky Mount City Council and include finance officers for the school system in an effort to move forward and keep the school system intact and find a resolution to avoid a lawsuit.

Council members and Board of Commissioners all voiced their concerns and made comments in opposition to the proposed county line realignment.

Councilmember Wiggins moved to adopt the resolutions adopted by the Rocky Mount City Council and the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners in opposition to the proposed county line merger of the school system. Mr. Blackwell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Commissioners Felton moved to adopt the resolutions adopted by the Rocky Mount City Council and the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners in opposition to the proposed county line merger of the school system. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Councilmember Wiggins made a motion that staff be instructed and empowered to pursue a joint meeting with all funding bodies to include the Edgecombe and Nash County Commissioners and the Rocky Mount City Council as a collective body. Ms. Watkins seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Felton made a motion that staff be instructed and empowered to pursue a joint meeting with all funding bodies to include the Edgecombe and Nash County Commissioners and the Rocky Mount City Council as a collective body. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Councilmember Wiggins made a motion that discussion begin among the respective bodies, Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners and Rocky Mount City Council to commit to seek out the necessary financial, political and legal resources to combat the county line merger proposal with the utmost dispatch on a schedule to be determined by the respective boards. Mr. Knight seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Hines made a motion that discussion begin among the respective bodies, Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners and Rocky Mount City Council to commit to seek out the necessary financial, political and legal resources to combat the county line merger proposal with the utmost dispatch on a schedule to be determined by the respective boards. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Wiggins.

Commissioner Wooten moved to recess the meeting of the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners until June 1, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. to continue the budget work session. Mr. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Frangie Mungo

Frangie Mungo, Clerk to the Board