

Approved: November 17, 2008

November 3, 2008  
Regular Meeting

The Union County Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Monday, November 3, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Board Room, first floor, Union County Government Center, 500 North Main Street, Monroe, NC. The following were

PRESENT: Chairman Allan Baucom, Vice Chairman Kevin Pressley, Commissioner Roger Lane, Commissioner A. Parker Mills, Jr., and Commissioner Lanny Openshaw

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Al Greene, County Manager, Matthew Delk, Assistant County Manager, Lynn G. West, CMC, Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Jeff Crook, Senior Staff Attorney, Kai Nelson, Finance Director, members of the press, and interested citizens

**Opening of Meeting:**

At approximately 7:00 p.m., Chairman Baucom convened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

***a. Invocation***

Commissioner Mills offered the invocation.

***b. Pledge of Allegiance***

Commissioner Mills led the body in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

**Informal Comments:**

There were no informal comments.

**Additions, Deletions and/or Adoption of Agenda:**

Vice Chairman Pressley moved adoption of the agenda as presented.

Commissioner Mills stated that he had missed the public hearing that was held on the Water Allocation Policy. He said that he has had several conversations with one of the landscapers in the County. Commissioner Mills said that the landscaper has shown him where he believes the County could irrigate two days per week and reduce the peak usages better than can be done with the one-day per week irrigation. He requested to add a discussion of this matter on tonight's agenda.

Commissioner Openshaw requested that approval of the minutes of April 21, 2008, and June 16, 2008, (part of Consent Agenda Item 4/1) be delayed until the November 21, 2008, meeting due to his having been out of town and not having an opportunity to read them. He said he was fine with approving the minutes of October 20, 2008.

Jeff Crook, Senior Staff Attorney, recommended that the portion of Consent Agenda 4/1 pertaining to the minutes of April 21, 2008, and June 16, 2008, be removed from the agenda.

With there being no further additions or deletions, Vice Chairman Pressley amended his motion to adopt the agenda as modified. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Consent Agenda:**

Commissioner Lane moved to approve the items listed on the Consent Agenda as modified removing from Item 1 the minutes of April 21, 2008, and June 16, 2008. The motion was passed unanimously.

*Minutes:* Approved the minutes of the regular meeting of October 20, 2008 (Minutes of the regular meetings of April 21, 2008, and June 16, 2008, were removed from the agenda at the request of Commissioner Openshaw).

Tax Administrator: Approved the Departmental Monthly Report for September 2008

Report of Purchase Orders Over \$50,000 for September 2008: Accepted the report of Purchase Orders Over \$50,000 for September 2008

Union County Public Schools (UCPS) Cuthbertson Middle School/High School and Poplin Elementary School Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) and Sun Valley Middle School Addition/Renovation: Adopted Capital Project Ordinance (CPO) #110

CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT							
BUDGET	School Bond Fund - 55			REQUESTED BY	Kai Nelson		
FISCAL YEAR	FY 2008-2009			DATE	November 3, 2008		
PROJECT SOURCES				PROJECT USES			
Source	Project	Requested	Revised	Project	Project	Requested	Revised
Description and Code	To Date	Amendment	Project	Description and Code	To Date	Amendment	Project
G.O. Bond Proceeds	475,969,806	5,128,995	481,098,801	Elementary School "L" (115C-429b project allocation)	16,558,882	1,011,150	17,570,032
All Other Revenue	1,363,308	-	1,363,308	Middle School/High School "C" (115C-429b project allocation)	86,878,860	3,826,000	90,704,860
				All Other School Projects	373,895,372	-	373,895,372
				Sun Valley MS A&R (115C-429b project allocation)	-	291,845	369,219

	477,333,114	5,128,995	482,462,109		477,333,114	5,128,995	482,539,483
EXPLANATION:	Funding requests submitted by UCPS for various projects listed above pursuant to 115C-429b.						
DATE:				APPROVED BY:			
					Bd of Comm/County Manager		
					Lynn West/Clerk to the Board		
FOR FINANCE POSTING PURPOSES ONLY							
<b>PROJECT SOURCES</b>				<b>PROJECT USES</b>			
Source	Project	Requested	Revised	Project	Project	Requested	Revised
Description and Code	To Date	Amendment	Project	Description and Code	To Date	Amendment	Project
G.O. Bond Proceeds	475,969,806	5,128,995	481,098,801	Elementary School "L" (115C-429b project allocation)	16,558,882	1,011,150	17,570,032
55491100-4710-530				55559200-5586-563 Middle School "C" (115C-429b project allocation)	44,969,616	1,530,400	46,500,016
				55559200-5586-557 High School "C" (115C-429b project allocation)	41,909,244	2,295,600	44,204,844
				55559200-5586-558			

				Sun Valley MS A&R (115C-429b project allocation)	-	291,845	369,219
				55559200-5586-569			
	475,969,806						
		5,128,995	481,098,801		103,437,742	5,128,995	108,644,111
Prepared By	Dhc						
Posted By							
Date						Number	CPO - 110

Chairman Baucom announced that Agenda Item 8a would be the Water Allocation Policy discussion.

**Public Information Officer’s Comments:**

Brett Vines, Public Information Officer, shared the following comments:

1. The Department of Social Services began accepting Applications for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program today. He explained that this program offers assistance to lower income residents with a one-time payment to help with their heating costs. He said that anyone meeting the income requirements can make application for this assistance at the Department of Social Services.
2. The libraries will be closed on Tuesday, November 11, in observance of Veterans Day and on Wednesday, November 12, and Thursday, November 13, for computer upgrades and staff training.
3. Mr. Vines said that the Unionville library will be closing permanently on November 6. He stated that the resources from the Unionville branch will be transferred to the Union West Library.

4. He stated that he had spoken with John Whitley, the Board of Elections Supervisor, and Early Voting ended Saturday with 51,521 voters casting their ballots. He stated that the Board of Elections was hoping for 30,000 voters to cast their ballots during Early Voting. He noted that 5,200 voters voted by absentee ballot.
5. Mr. Vines reminded everyone of the Veterans Day event on Saturday, November 8, and Sunday, November 9 at the Monroe Airport. He stated that the gates open at 9:00 a.m. each day with the featured event “Tora, Tora, Tora” at 4:00 p.m. each day.

**Presentation Regarding Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP):**

Jamal Alavi, Metrolina Planning Group Supervisor, stated that he and Reuben Crummy are from the Transportation Planning Branch of the North Carolina Department of Transportation. He explained the Transportation Planning Branch does the long-range transportation planning for small towns, counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Rural Planning Organizations. He introduced Reuben Crummy, Transportation Engineer, Metrolina Group, North Carolina Department of Transportation. Mr. Alavi said that this plan is basically for the portion of the County outside of the MPO. He said that they are about to start the plan for Union County.

Chairman Baucom explained that MPO (federally mandated) is urban planning and the RPO is rural planning (state).

Mr. Crummy provided an overview of the Comprehensive Transportation Planning (CTP). He said that the CTP is:

- Long-range multi-modal transportation plan
- Developed cooperatively with NDOT and the MPO, County and municipalities
- CTP emphasizes incorporating local land use plans and community and statewide goals and objectives
- CTP meant to be developed concurrently with the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- CTP recommendations are concepts and any project will go through a rigorous environmental process before final alignments or designs can be determined
- CTP can be used in the same way as Thoroughfare Plan for local land use planning

He explained the purpose of the CTP and the process to be used with the Rural Planning Organization (RPO).

Mr. Crummy said the benefits of having a CTP are as follows:

- Common long range vision for facilities between NCDOT, MPO's, RPO's and local governments
- More reliable project delivery
- Better transportation planning process
- Improved planning process partnership
- Customer-friendly documentation
- Better integration of land use with transportation planning

Mr. Alavi said that they will be meeting tomorrow with the steering committee and begin the process for the study.

Mr. Crummy asked the status of the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Richard Black, Planning Director, responded that the Steering Committee will be meeting on November 20, 2008, to finalize the implementation strategies. He said that the goal is to have a draft plan to the Board by January or February for adoption. Mr. Alavi said that as long as there was a land use plan adopted by the Board of Commissioners before the completion of the CTP, that would be fine. He added that the State requires that the land use plan must be in place when the CTP is completed.

**2011-2017 Rocky River Rural Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Projects (TIP) Prioritization:**

Amy Helms, Assistant Director of Infrastructure and Environment, explained that the adopted 2009-2015 Prioritization list ranked the Monroe Bypass as number one. She said that this project is now officially a North Carolina Turnpike Authority project, and it will be removed from this list. She noted that the Rural Planning Organization still feels strongly about the project and believes it should be one of the first and foremost projects in the region.

She said that the draft 2011-2017 list was created through discussions with the Planning Department and the Town of Marshville. Ms. Helms said that the current land use plan and the proposed land use plan were reviewed along with the Thoroughfare Map. She stated that the project map included in the agenda package was for representation purposes only to provide an idea of the project locations. She said that the final alignments have not been determined. She stated that the RPO staff will be ranking the projects on November 18, and the ranked projects will be introduced to the RPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on November 20, 2008, and once adopted by the TAC, the list will be forwarded to the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

Chairman Baucom referred to Item 11 on the TIP ranking which is Highway 200 from the Cabarrus County line to Highway 74. Ms. Helms said that the project is currently ranked number 11, but it is subject to change. Chairman Baucom noted that the Highway 218 widening project is not listed and explained that the reason it is not on the list is because it is already on the TIP and funded.

Following the presentation, Vice Chairman Pressley moved to confirm the recommendations listed on the Rocky River Rural Planning Organization (RRRPO) updated Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) Prioritization.

### **Draft 2011-2017 Project List**

1 - Project:

Feasibility Study - Connect Monroe Bypass/Connector to US 601 South on new alignment.

Reason for the Project:

To connect those motorist that want to travel south on US 601 from Monroe Bypass.

2 - Project:

Landsford Road - Widen to a minimum width of 24 feet and replace older bridges and culverts where needed (may include overpass @ intersection of US 601/Landsford Road) from US 601 South to US 74 East.

Reason for the Project:

To handle heavy farm traffic / car and truck traffic from SC heading for Marshville and US 74 East.

3 - Project:

Marshville Bypass (or Monroe Bypass/Connector Extension) - Connect Monroe Bypass/Connector west of Marshville to east of Marshville.

Reason for the Project:



Improve mobility for motorist wanting to continue on US 74 from the Monroe Bypass/Connector without having to reduce speed.

NOTE: This project may include a northern route (on new alignment), a southern route (on new alignment), or upgrading US74 through Marshville to the Anson County line (widen to a six-lane facility) as noted on the map by 3A and 3B. Alignments on map are for representation purposes only.

4 - Project:

Old Lawyers Road – Extend/Connect the existing Old Lawyers Road (at bend east of Salem Creek) to Lawyers Road at NC 205 on new alignment with a bridge over Salem Creek.

Reason for the Project:

Connectivity (connects Old Lawyers Road to Lawyers Road)

5 - Project:

Old Pageland Monroe Road – Connect Old Pageland Monroe Road at Old Pageland Marshville Road to Smith Town Road at Helms Funderburke Road on new alignment.

Reason for the Project:

Connectivity

6 - Project:

Southern Connector One –

Connect Ruben Road at Plyler Mill Road to Sandy Ridge Road at Clarksville Campground Road on new alignment.

Connect East Sandy Ridge Road just south of Bruce Thomas Road to Troy Medlin Road at Stack Road on new alignment.

Connect Troy Medlin Road at Medlin Road to Claude Austin Road at Mangum Dairy Road on new alignment.

Connect Carl Funderburk Road to LJ Whitley Road at Old Pageland Monroe Road on new alignment.

Extend LJ Whitley Road to Snyders Store Road on new alignment. Also, widen whole stretch to a uniform width with strengthening where needed.

Reason for the Project:

## Connectivity

### 7 - Project:

#### Southern Connector Two –

Connect Tom Starnes Road at South Rocky River Road (NC 522) to Trinity Church Road just before Roll Baker Rd on new alignment.

Connect Trinity Church Road between WM Griffin Road and Wolf Pond Road to Jack Davis Road at Wolf Pond Road on new alignment.

Connect Jack Davis Road at Medlin Road to Hargette Road on new alignment.

Also, widen whole stretch to a uniform width with strengthening where needed.

#### Reason for the Project:

Connectivity

### 8 - Project:

Stegall Road – Extend Stegall Road at Old Peachland Road north to Marshville Olive Branch Road and extend south at US 74 to Landsford Road on new alignment with minimum width of 22 feet.

#### Reason for the Project:

Connectivity (connects Landsford Road to Marshville Olive Branch Road). This includes access to industrial zoned land with rail access.

### 9 - Project:

Thomas Helms Road – Extend Thomas Helms Road at NC 205 east to Old Lawyers Road at Hamilton Cross Road on new alignment with a uniform width of 22’.

#### Reason for the Project:

Connectivity (connects Old Lawyers Road to Forest Hills School Road)

PLEASE NOTE: All proposed projects shown on map on new alignments are for representation purposes only. Final alignments have yet to be determined.

Commissioner Lane commented that he was glad to see included on the draft list the connection for the bypass to Highway 601 South. He said that this would eliminate a tremendous amount of truck traffic. Ms. Helms shared that it has yet to be determined if the project will be in the Rural Planning Organization or Metropolitan Planning Organization's region. She said that it was included in order to bring to the Department of Transportation's attention the need to connect the bypass to Highway 601 South.

Following the discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

**UCPS Capital Bond Reimbursement Resolution:**

Kai Nelson, Finance Director, stated that he was available to answer any questions that the Board might have regarding this item.

Vice Chairman Pressley moved adoption of the following resolution (the "*Resolution*"), a copy of which was available with the Board and which was read by title:

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF UNION, NORTH CAROLINA DECLARING THE INTENT OF THE COUNTY OF UNION, NORTH CAROLINA TO REIMBURSE ITSELF FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES INCURRED IN CONNECTION WITH THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, IMPROVEMENT, EQUIPPING AND FURNISHING OF SCHOOL FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY FROM THE PROCEEDS OF CERTAIN TAX-EXEMPT OBLIGATIONS TO BE ISSUED IN FISCAL YEAR 2009.**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners (the "*Board*") of the County of Union, North Carolina (the "*County*") has determined that it is in the best interests of County to acquire, construct, improve, equip and furnish certain school facilities in the County (the "*Projects*");

**WHEREAS**, the County presently intends, at one time or from time to time, to finance all or a portion of the costs of the Projects with proceeds of tax-exempt obligations and reasonably expects to issue its tax-exempt obligations (the "*Obligations*") to finance, or to reimburse itself for, all or a portion of the costs of the Projects; and

**WHEREAS**, the County desires to proceed with the Projects and will incur and pay certain expenditures in connection with the Projects prior to the date of issuance of the Obligations (the "*Original Expenditures*"), such Original Expenditures to be paid for originally from a source other than the proceeds of the Obligations, and the County intends, and reasonably expects, to be reimbursed for such Original Expenditures from a portion of the proceeds of the Obligations to be issued at a date occurring after the dates of such Original Expenditures;

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Union, North Carolina as follows:

Section 1. ***Official Declaration of Intent.*** The County presently intends, and reasonably expects, to reimburse itself for the Original Expenditures incurred and paid by the County on or after the date occurring 60 days prior to the date of adoption of this Resolution from a portion of the proceeds of the Obligations. The County reasonably expects to issue the Obligations to finance all or a portion of the costs of the Projects and the County reasonably expects to reimburse itself in an amount not to exceed \$64,500,000 from the proceeds of the Obligations.

Section 2. ***Compliance with Regulations.*** The County adopts this Resolution as a declaration of official intent under Section 1.150-2 of the Treasury Regulations promulgated under Section 103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, to evidence the County's intent to reimburse itself for the Original Expenditures from proceeds of the Obligations.

Section 3. ***Itemization of Capital Expenditures.*** The Finance Director of the County, with advice from special counsel, is hereby authorized, directed and designated to act on behalf of the County in determining and itemizing all of the Original Expenditures incurred and paid by the County in connection with the Projects during the period commencing on the date occurring 60 days prior to the date of adoption of this Resolution and ending on the date of issuance of the Obligations.

Section 4. ***Effective Date.*** This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon the date of its adoption.

On motion of Vice Chairman Pressley, the foregoing resolution entitled “**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF UNION, NORTH CAROLINA DECLARING THE INTENT OF THE COUNTY OF UNION, NORTH CAROLINA TO REIMBURSE ITSELF FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES INCURRED IN CONNECTION WITH THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, IMPROVEMENT, EQUIPPING AND FURNISHING OF SCHOOL FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY FROM THE PROCEEDS OF CERTAIN TAX-EXEMPT OBLIGATIONS TO BE ISSUED IN FISCAL YEAR 2009**” was duly adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Chairman Allan Baucom, Vice Chairman Kevin Pressley, Commissioner Roger Lane, Commissioner A. Parker Mills, Jr., and Commissioner Lanny Openshaw

NAYS: None

-----

Commissioner Mills asked if enrollment projections are being made farther into the future to determine whether the additional schools will be needed. Chairman Baucom responded that the Manager was prepared to address these questions during his comments later in the meeting.

Commissioner Openshaw asked Mr. Nelson about the current interest rates. Mr. Nelson replied that the County is continuing to have significant challenges in finding buyers for its short-term debt. He said that while the County's credit is outstanding, there are some issues with the banks that are supporting the County's marketing efforts. He shared that as of last week, the next scheduled sale on the Local Government Commission's calendar for general obligation bonds is Union County's on December 16, 2008. Mr. Nelson said that this was an indication that none of the counties or cities in the state are bringing issues to market because the market continues to be in crisis.

**Water Allocation Discussion:**

Commissioner Mills said that he was not present for the public hearing on the Water Allocation Policy, and he has had several comments regarding the policy. He stated that one of those comments was concerning a landscaper who is working with the Manager and staff and believes he can demonstrate a way to reduce the peak usage by watering two days per week rather than one day per week. He said if that is the case, he would like for the Board to request that the staff take this into consideration.

Mr. Greene responded that the staff is working on an option for two-day per week irrigation which will probably be a seven-day option. He said that the thoughts are to continue the one-day per week plan during the weekdays, Monday thru Friday, and then offer each customer either a Saturday or Sunday to supplement the one-day. He stated that the staff is in agreement that the peaks will not be as tremendous as they were when the County had one-day per week irrigation on Saturdays and Sundays. Mr. Greene said that the staff agrees with the landscaping industry particularly with the additional allocation of capacity from Lancaster County and improved weather conditions, that the County should be in good shape for the foreseeable future with the two-day per week irrigation plan. He said that the staff would be glad to have this information available at the time that it brings the variance procedure for newly installed landscaping (45 day study).

Chairman Baucom said that he did not see any reason for the Board to take action tonight, since staff is working on this issue.

Commissioner Openshaw asked what is the County's current drought stage. He said that there are still some restrictions for power washing, etc. and asked if the County could ease those restrictions. Mr. Greene stated that the Drought Management Advisory

Group went to a two-day per week irrigation plan recently, but the statement they made when they did so was that it would only last through November and then it would reassess the situation. He said that he thought this was done for customers with new landscaping and sod, and the group plans to go back to one-day per week irrigation plan in November. He stated that the County was in the process of working on its Water Allocation Plan, and staff did not want to confuse its customers and change to a two-day per week irrigation plan if it would be going back to a one-day per week irrigation plan at the end of November. He said that the staff is waiting to see what action the Drought Management Group will take in November.

**Announcements of Vacancies on Boards and Committees:**

At the request of the Chairman, Mrs. West, Clerk to the Board, read into the record the following vacancies on boards and committees:

- a. Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC): 1) District Attorney or Designee; 2) Substance Abuse Professional; 3) Two Persons Under Age of 18; and 4) Juvenile Defense Attorney
- b. Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee
- c. Nursing Home Advisory Committee
- d. Board of Health (Vacancy as of January 2008 for a Licensed Optometrist)
- e. Union County Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee

**Manager's Comments:**

Al Greene, County Manager, provided the Board with an update on the County's current financial status and the work being done by the staff in this regards. He explained that there are three to four aspects of how the County is being affected. First, he said that the County has a considerable amount of variable rate of outstanding debt, and the interest that is being paid on that variable rate debt has been fluctuating heavily. He stated that the first goal is to restructure that debt in a way to provide stability to the County and to contain its interest costs on the debt. Mr. Greene shared that the staff hopes to have a plan for the Board's review and consideration in two to three weeks. He said that Mr. Nelson is working hard with the County's financial advisors to develop alternatives for restructuring that debt.

He stated that the second priority is the annual balance sheet of expenses and revenues. Mr. Greene said that it is expected that some of the revenues will be constrained, and there are areas where expenses may increase, one of which is the debt payments on the variable rate debts. He stated that at the October 20, 2008, meeting, the Board instructed the staff to initiate a hiring freeze and a capital expense freeze. He said that those freezes have been put in place. In addition, he said that the department heads have been asked to develop a financial plan for their departments of how they can curtail other operating expenses in the current year's budget. He stated that it is hoped that they will meet with the department heads the week of November 17 to review their plans and begin to set in place some of those additional reductions. He explained that the staff does not want to take a shotgun approach that all departments reduce their departmental expenses by a certain percentage. Mr. Greene stated that all of the departments' situations are not the same, as some of the departments such as Health and Social Services will experience an increase in the demand for services while other departments such as Building Inspections may experience a decrease in the demand for services. He stressed that the staff wants to review each department individually in order to make better decisions.

He reviewed that the Board had adopted a reimbursement resolution tonight for school related expenses to continue to fund those expenses when the current bond proceeds on hand are depleted, probably within the next month or so., with cash flow from the County. He said that the reimbursement resolution will allow the County to reimburse itself as soon as it issues up to \$64 million in additional bonds that have already been authorized but have not been sold. Mr. Greene said that as Mr. Nelson had related earlier in the meeting, the County has a date on the Local Government Commission's calendar in December, and it would be the staff's goal to work toward a bond sale in December for the \$64 million in authorized debt. He shared that the two keys in the County's ability to do that successfully and cost effectively would be to deal with the variable rate debt and the ongoing balance sheet in the next month or so.

He addressed Commissioner Mills' question regarding school enrollment projections. He said that absolutely the projections should be reviewed on a continuing basis. He said the fourth aspect would be what to do with the debt that is anticipated to be incurred in the spring through Certificates of Participation (COP's) and what capital improvements will be funded with that debt. Mr. Greene said that he thought all of these issues are subject to being analyzed and decided over the coming months. He stressed that current enrollment projections need to be reviewed and the capital needs should be analyzed in a much more critical light.

Vice Chairman Pressley said that with the current financial market status and the departments reviewing their individual budgets as to where they can make cuts, there is a sense of employees being worried about their jobs. He asked if layoffs are anticipated. He said that he thought the County owes it to the employees to give them some type of assurance or direction. He requested that the Manager address this question or if it is anticipated that employees' hours might be reduced.

Mr. Greene responded to Vice Chairman Pressley's questions by saying that he thought that the County needed to look at savings through attrition by not filling positions that become vacant. He said that he did not believe that he could rule out a recommendation that some positions might have a temporary layoff. He stated that the staff is not far enough along in its review of the situation to inform the Board what those might be at this point in time, if any. He said that he honestly could not rule out layoffs at this time. He assured that if measures that drastic are taken, he would certainly want to inform the Board and the employees as soon as possible and give the employees ample notice.

Vice Chairman Pressley also asked if County vehicle use is being studied at this time for on-call employees as a measure that might be taken away. Mr. Greene responded that this issue is not really a financial concern but is more of an overall policy to better manage the use of County vehicle. He said that the policy is underway and is due back to the Board prior to budget deliberations.

Mr. Nelson added that in September the County's and schools' Capital Improvement Programs (CIPS) were presented. He said that the site for middle and high schools "D" in the Hemby Bridge area has been acquired, and site development is underway. He noted that the original plan of several years ago was to have a bond referendum this November, which would have included the construction of middle and high schools "D." He said that the decision was made in the summer to delay that bond referendum and in lieu of the bond referendum, Certificates of Participation (COPs) were anticipated to be issued to fund that project. He stated that the original plan was to use the County's general obligation authorization to keep the project moving and bid the project in November in order for it to open in August 2010. However, he said that given the current credit crisis, the Local Government Commission (LGC) has advised that the County would have to have cash in hand to award the construction contract for middle and high schools "D." Mr. Nelson explained that while it was anticipated to award construction bids for middle and high schools "D" in November or December to be opened in August of 2010, that will not happen. He said that the recommendations would be delayed, and the plan that will be put into place is to re-evaluate the market sometime in the spring to not only look at "D" again but also to look at a number of comprehensive facility study projects which includes Piedmont High, Western Union, New Salem Elementary, Sun Valley High, etc. Mr. Nelson said that the plan under which the County is operating is to do the design of the projects, but there is no construction money and those projects would be re-evaluated in the spring to include "D." He said that this would mean that "D" is being delayed more than likely a year.

Commissioner Mills asked if the student enrollment numbers are still panning out for "D." Don Hughes of the schools responded that the numbers are panning out, and it would be placing a strain on especially Porter Ridge middle and high schools. He



said that the projection numbers are lower than originally thought but reiterated it would be placing a strain on Porter Ridge middle and high schools.

In response to another question by Commissioner Mills of whether the schools would be employing a consultant to help with the enrollment projections for the next year, Mr. Hughes said that the schools would be doing the projections. He said that the schools have the capability with its two planners to do these projections. He stated that they were already looking at how the projections differed this year and how they can project for next year. He said that the demographer was only 2.5 percent off, and the industry standard is 2 percent.

Chairman Baucom expressed appreciation for the schools' staff and the Board of Education for their cooperation during these times. He said that their cooperation has been a breath of fresh air for the school system and the County to work cooperatively to address the issues.

Mr. Hughes added that the schools have notified all of the bidders that the funding for project "D" is in jeopardy and while their bids might be accepted, the bids might not be awarded. He said that the current bidding climate is very good.

**Commissioners' Comments:**

Vice Chairman Pressley reminded everyone of the events next weekend for Veterans' Day. He expressed appreciation to all the veterans.

He also offered his prayers for former Commissioner Richard Stone and his family during his illness.

Vice Chairman Pressley also expressed appreciation to all the voters. He said that when this meeting is aired, the election would have been completed.

Commissioner Mills offered congratulations to Terry Byrum, Chief of Wesley Chapel Fire Department, on his marriage and to David Cunningham, who recently retired as Director of Environmental Health, on his award of the The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award. He asked that Mr. Cunningham be invited to one of the Board meetings so that he could be recognized.

He stated that Grace Baptist Church of South Charlotte will be holding its open house on Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. He said that the service will be involving the veterans.

He reminded everyone of the coat drive through the Christmas Bureau.

Commissioner Mills said that on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month at 11:00, World World I ended and the Armistice was signed. He said that the County is working with the City of Monroe on the Veterans Day Event which will be a two-day event. He said that he along with some of his family members will be providing a food station during the Veterans Day event, and all of the proceeds will be going toward the Dennis McCollum Scholarship Fund in Mr. McCollum's memory.

He expressed appreciation to the Chairman for a good meeting tonight.

Commissioner Openshaw said that he concurred with all of the Commissioners' comments thus far. He expressed appreciation to those who have campaigned for countless hours and said that it was great to have the number of people who have voted during early voting. He said he hoped that trend continued tomorrow.

Commissioner Lane also concurred with the comments. He expressed appreciation to Commissioner Mills for offering cleaning services for the Coat Drive.

He said that the Highway 601 South improvements are progressing well, and a goodly portion of the paving is complete on one side of the highway.

Commissioner Lane said that he had taken an hour and half flight in his light sport aircraft and took photographs of New Town, Cuthbertson, Marvin Ridge Middle and High Schools, Rea View Elementary, Sun Valley Elementary, and Stallings Elementary. He offered that, if requested, to take more detailed photographs of these school sites.

Chairman Baucom encouraged everyone to attend the Veterans Day event this weekend. He said a lot of history will be shared during this event and reminded everyone to remember Veterans Day on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

He offered congratulations to Wingate and Marshville in their cooperative efforts to move forward with their business plans. He said that the two councils are working jointly on developing a business plan. He stated that Mayor Bill Braswell and Mayor Frank

Deese are doing a great job in moving the plan forward. He said that the Partnership for Progress is cooperating with these towns on the plan.

He reiterated that by the time this meeting is aired, the voters will have exercised their right to vote. He offered congratulations to all of the candidates and thanked the candidates for their efforts.

Commissioner Lane said that he had the photographs he had taken of the schools on his computer and offered to share them by e-mail with anyone who would like to have copies.

With there being no further discussion, at approximately 8:06 p.m., Vice Chairman Pressley moved to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.