

OCTOBER 22, 2019

**MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in Budget/Public Policy Session in Conference Center Room 267 on the 2nd floor of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center located at 600 East Fourth Street, Charlotte, NC at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2019.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** Chair George Dunlap and Commissioners  
Patricia “Pat” Cotham, Trevor M. Fuller,  
Susan B. Harden, Mark Jerrell, Vilma D. Leake,  
Elaine Powell, Susan Rodriguez-McDowell, and  
Ella B. Scarborough  
Assistant County Manager/Chief of Staff Derrick Ramos  
County Attorney Tyrone C. Wade  
Clerk to the Board Janice S. Paige

**Absent:** None

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***Commissioners Powell and Scarborough were absent when the meeting was called to order and until noted in the minutes.***

***The meeting was called to order by Chair Dunlap, after which the matters below were addressed.***

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**19-5620      2019 MECKLENBURG COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

The Board received as information a presentation from Dr. Monica Allen, Strategic Planning and Evaluation Director, regarding the results from the 2019 Community Survey.

*Note: Each year, the County’s Office of Management and Budget - Strategic Planning & Evaluation unit administers the Community Survey to gather data on Mecklenburg County residents’ perceptions on various aspects of County operations, particularly the level of awareness about County services, the perception of the value of County services provided and the level of satisfaction residents have with opportunities for citizen involvement, and insight into the most important issues facing Mecklenburg County. The perceptions are important to know*

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*because they inform the Board, County Management and employees, and the public about how well the County is performing in the eyes of the community and where there are opportunities for improvement.*

Director Allen provided an overview of the methodology and demographics used for the survey; survey results with respect to residents' Perceptions about the Mecklenburg County Community; residents' Attitudes & Awareness about Mecklenburg County Government Programs and Services; and Communication Practices. Director Allen also highlighted survey results for the following County Departments: Park and Recreation, Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA), Charlotte Mecklenburg Library; and the Elections Office.

***Commissioners Powell and Scarborough entered the meeting during the presentation.***

Director Allen noted that while vision and benchmark questions declined from the previous year, the community still compares favorably to other cities and the U.S. overall. She said the most important issue for respondents was affordable housing followed by crime and infrastructure. Director Allen said the results were useful for guiding outreach and programming efforts. She said the survey revealed a continued need to promote and market County programs and services to increase resident awareness.

Director Allen said staff would continue to monitor and inform for FY2021 planning, work with departments to make the data actionable, collaborate with others in the organization that could benefit from the survey results; and communicate to the public, post on MeckNC.gov and send to all employees via Employee NewsNow.

***A copy of the presentation is on file with the Clerk to the Board.***

Comments

Commissioner Harden asked was there an age demographic and the response was yes (slide 7).

Commissioner Harden asked were respondents provided choices to select from with respect to the question regarding what's the most important issue facing Mecklenburg County today. *The response was no, because staff did not want to bias their thoughts.*

Commissioner Harden asked for clarity on the Community Vision FY19 Results by gender, race-ethnicity, & age, specifically, the results for ages 18-34, which was addressed.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell asked for clarity on the Communications: Communicating Information to Public (FY19) results. She suggested that perhaps the County needed to be more

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creative when it came to getting the County's message out.

Commissioner Jerrell asked about Program Awareness: Pre-K Programs. He said he noticed that social media wasn't listed. He also noted the increase in awareness for the PrEP Program, which he said was great. He expressed concern, however, that there was not a significant increase with respect to testing.

Commissioner Jerrell said County policies may have to be more specific to address some of the target groups, especially African Americans. He said there was a race problem in the community.

Commissioner Leake noted that sometimes the faith community takes issue with discussing sexuality issues, even though they should.

Commissioner Leake said economics was an issue, that affordable housing was needed, as well as, small markets in food desert areas.

Commissioner Fuller addressed people being disconnected in the community and about where the power and money was in the community. He said affordable housing was one indicator of disconnection economically. He said it didn't appear that the community was doing very well with respect to eliminating racial inequity.

Commissioner Fuller said the County's communication with the public had to be changed. He said there needed to be more focus on the results and determining were people doing better.

Commissioner Cotham asked if the City of Charlotte conducted a survey. *Director Allen said she didn't think so, but would check.*

Commissioner Cotham commented on the language used in the survey. She asked if persons under age 18 were surveyed. *The response was no and that there were other mechanisms within the community to capture data from youth.*

Commissioner Cotham asked about the international community and whether the survey was offered in other languages. *The response was that the results were in English, but that staff would check.*

Commissioner Cotham asked if there was anything asked regarding the LGBT community. *The response was no.*

Chair Dunlap said he was optimistic about the results of the survey. He said it represented 10 months of the current Board being in place. He said as the Board continued to pursue its

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priorities, public awareness would go up.

Chair Dunlap asked if staff determined the survey categories. *The response was that these were the things County Public Information determined that they wanted to know.*

Chair Dunlap noted with respect to those things respondents thought were the most important issue facing the County, that Park and Recreation was not on the list.

Chair Dunlap said the County needed to do a better job of educating the public, to know what these things meant.

Chair Dunlap encouraged Board members to let Director Allen and her staff know if there were other things Board members would like to see included in the survey going forward.

This concluded the discussion.

*Note: The above was not inclusive of every comment but was a summary.*

#### **19-5751          PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATES**

The Board received a presentation from Health Director Gibbie Harris on Public Health Updates.

Note: 1.        *Mecklenburg County Health Department is required to conduct and present a State of the County Health Report every year between County Health Assessments. The Report serves to update the community on the health status of our community.*

2.        *Public Health is required to provide an annual Communicable Disease report to the Board of County Commissioners.*

Director Harris gave an update on the status of the Getting to Zero Meck Plan, our community HIV Plan and the national Ending the Epidemic efforts related to our community.

*Note: North Carolina requires each local health department to conduct a Community Health Assessment (CHA) every four years for accreditation and as part of its consolidated contract. During the years between health assessments, health departments submit an abbreviated State of the County Health (SOTCH) report. In Mecklenburg County, this report consists of an overview of selected health indicators presented in tables and charts. Sections include information on demographics, maternal and child health and leading causes of morbidity and mortality. The report highlights progress in addressing the top four health issues as identified by Mecklenburg*

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*County residents; those include mental health, access to care, chronic disease prevention and violence prevention.*

***A copy of the presentation is on file with the Clerk to the Board.***

Comments:

Commissioner Harden requested information on the other southern counties included in the report.

Commissioner Harden commented on the Births & Birth Outcomes data in the report. She highlighted the death rate between white and black children and asked how could that disparity be gotten to zero and what were other communities doing to reduce the disparity.

Director Harris said she was unaware of other communities that were close to a zero disparity with a comparable population of Mecklenburg County. She said this was something staff would be working on, trying to find a community comparable in size to Mecklenburg County. She said she just recently heard about some things that Wake County was embarking upon.

Commissioner Harden said the disparity was unacceptable. *Director Harris said she agreed. She said there were many different causes for the disparity, per research that's been done. She said there wasn't one solid answer or explanation. She said the death rate was the same for "educated, well off," African American females, as they were for "uneducated, poor," African American females.* Director Harris said some studies had shown it was related to the care received.

Commissioner Jerrell noted that per the report, one quarter of the County suffers from hypertension. He said it would be good to know how much this, as well as, the other indicators impact the County in terms of cost and was there an opportunity to redirect dollars. *Director Harris said she would provide the cost data related to the various indicators.*

Commissioner Leake asked about the new health facility built by Michael Jordan near the Valerie C. Woodard Center and whether there would be any intermingling between that facility and the County. She also questioned why County Officials weren't involved in the announcement process with respect to Mr. Jordan's facility, like Charlotte City Council was.

Director Harris said she could not address the question of why County Officials weren't included in the announcement process. She said the facility was built by Michael Jordan in collaboration with Novant Health.

Commissioner Leake, Chair of the Board's Health and Human Services Committee noted that the Committee had been holding meetings out in the community, in hopes of increasing public

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awareness of health and human services through the dissemination of information and to obtain citizen input and address concerns

Commissioner Leake questioned whether public health information was being disseminated at Johnson C. Smith University and Clinton College. She said if not, it should be.

Chair Dunlap requested that there be consistency in terms of how data was reported. He said in some instances in the report, information was listed as a 3-year average, rather than showing the yearly average.

Chair Dunlap commented on the Crisis Intervention Team training. He said he would be interested in knowing the retention rate of those trained, because a lot of the officers that had gone through the training had retired or were retiring.

Chair Dunlap said in an effort to get the total picture of public health in the community and with so many different agencies collecting data, that it would be good to collect data from all the various medical facilities. *Director Harris said with respect to the diseases that were in the report, these were reportable diseases. She said the health department receives information from every clinic and every hospital system. She said they were required to report that information.*

Commissioner Leake said she would like to see the County Manager's name listed on all future reports, in addition, to the presenters. Commissioner Leake said the County Manager was in charge and that the Board holds her accountable. She said it would also inform the public of who they could reach out to if they had questions. Commissioner Leake asked that her statement be reflected in the minutes.

Chair Dunlap said that would be the County Manager's decision to make and that she may or may not want to do that. He said otherwise, it would take a vote of the Board and that no one had made such a request.

Commissioner Fuller said the County was making progress with respect to the Getting to Zero (G2Z) Objective for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). He complimented staff. He noted also that the PrEP initiative was something that he and Chair Dunlap found out about, per a conference they attended in San Diego and they brought the idea back to the County and funds were subsequently placed in the budget for this effort.

Commissioner Leake noted that former and the late County Commissioner Valerie C. Woodard was a big advocate for addressing HIV/AIDS in the community and worked to ensure the County's attention to this matter.

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This concluded the discussion.

*Note: The above is not inclusive of every comment, but was a summary.*

With there being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Dunlap declared the meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

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Janice S. Paige, Clerk

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George Dunlap, Chairman