

Town of PITTSBORO
2015
Board of Commissioners
Planning Retreat
February 2, 2015

Summary Report
February 4, 2015

1.0 - INTRODUCTION

The Town of Pittsboro conducted its 2015 Planning Retreat on February 2, 2015 at the Town Hall in Pittsboro. The retreat focused on the Board of Commissioners with the support of the manager and key staff. Attending and participating from the Board of Commissioners were Mayor William Terry, and Commissioners Pamela Baldwin, Michael Fiocco, J.A. Farrell, Bett Wilson Foley and Beth Turner.

David Long, a planning consultant based in Greensboro with 40+ years' experience in serving local governments throughout North Carolina, served as facilitator and prepared this summary report.

The summary report includes brief narratives describing selected elements of the retreat agenda and activities. (Additional elements may be included later as they become available from key staff.)

The consultant conferred with the Town Manager in advance of the retreat to plan the session and to develop the agenda. The retreat agenda is included as [Attachment 1](#). This summary roughly parallels the sequence of retreat agenda items.

2.0 - STATE of the TOWN REPORT/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Town Manager Bryan Gruesbeck prepared and presented an excellent *State of the Town Report* containing a wealth of statistical and baseline information and providing an overview of the Town's operations.

Key department heads also made excellent presentations. These presentations, which were commended by the Board for their thoroughness and focused approach, are incorporated by reference as [Attachment 2](#) to this report. Presenters included (in order):

Police –	Percy Crutchfield
Finance –	Nancy Emslie

Water –	Adam Pickett
Utility Services –	John Poteat
Engineering –	Fred Royal
Recreation –	Paul Horne
Planning –	Stuart Bass
Wastewater –	Randy Heard

Commissioner Jay Farrell requested that future retreats also include a presentation from the Pittsboro Fire Department.

3.0 - FOCUS TOPICS

Board members were polled in advance of the retreat and asked to suggest topics of special interest to be discussed at the retreat. Each focus topic is listed below along with the key conclusions emerging from the discussion.

Topic A – Broadband/Fiber Internet

Action Plan

What – Initiate a focused effort to gain improved broadband internet access for Pittsboro; fiber; Google/ATT/RST

Action Needed – Form a task force to explore and move forward

Initiated by – Pittsboro Board of Commissioners

Who Takes Lead – Beth Turner, Bryan Gruesbeck

Potential Partners – Chatham County Commissioners, Chatham County Schools, Central Carolina Community College, Chatham Park, local business community including home based businesses, EDC, Robert Reeves, local internet advocates, Homebuilders’ Association, Board of Realtors, Chamber of Commerce, Siler City, etc.

Projected first meeting – One month

Possible Obstacles – Low density development

Topic B – Water and wastewater plant design

Mr. Gruesbeck will meet soon with representatives of Preston Development and the UNC School of Government to discuss a potential legal/financial/administrative framework that would enable both the Town and Chatham Park to grow in step with each other. The Board enthusiastically supported this initiative and encourages constructive dialogue among the key parties.

Topic C – Fiscal impact study

Mayor Terry described a conceptual approach to preparing the Town for the impact of Chatham Park on the Town’s facilities and operations. In essence, an impact model would be built that would set out timelines and milestones for expanding services and facilities, as well as overall space needs. For example, the addition of patrol cars, expansion of recreation facilities, phased expansions of water and sewer facilities, Town Hall, etc.

The Board instructed Mr. Gruesbeck to initiate contact with consultants who could assist with this process and to gain a better understanding of the costs involved, scope of services, etc.

Mr. Messick also advised the Board that Pittsboro—unlike the vast majority of local governments in North Carolina—possesses the authority to assess impact fees.

4.0 - STRUCTURED BRAINSTORMING

The Board elected to forego this step due to the fact that prior years’ retreats have firmly established clear priorities.

5.0 - FACILITATOR’S CLOSING NOTES

The 2015 retreat marked another step forward for the Town in building consensus on important measures that will determine Pittsboro’s future. At the close of the retreat, one Commissioner remarked that, over the past 2-3 years, each retreat has steadily built on the prior years’ and the overall picture continues to come into sharper focus.

I have enjoyed very much working with the Town of Pittsboro again this year. Thank you for asking me to assist—it is an honor to serve the Town. Even more, it is an exciting time in the Town’s evolution!

—David Long

DAVID LONG CONSULTING

*Strategic Planning & Organizational Development
for North Carolina’s Local Governments*

3034 Lake Forest Drive
Greensboro, NC 27408
336.972.5216/336.545.5717
dlongwork@earthlink.net