

PERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

Johnny Myrl Lunsford
Jimmy B. Clayton
Kyle W. Puryear
B. Ray Jeffers
Samuel R. Kennington

AUGUST 3, 2009
OTHERS PRESENT

Heidi York, County Manager
C. Ronald Aycock, County Attorney
Brenda B. Reaves, Clerk to the Board

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Person, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, August 3, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' meeting room in the Person County Office Building.

Chairman Lunsford called the meeting to order and asked Commissioner Clayton to lead in prayer and Commissioner Kennington to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Request by Joan Stevens to rezone property located at Bessie Daniels Road and Hurdle Mills Road from Residential to Rural Conservation

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Clayton and **carried** to open the Public Hearing to hear the request of Joan Stevens to rezone property located at Bessie Daniels Road and Hurdle Mills Road from Residential to Rural Conservation.

Planning Director, Paula Murphy stated the County received an application from Joan Stevens to amend the official zoning map. The request is to rezone Tax Map A40 Parcel 263 at the corner of Bessie Daniels Road and Hurdle Mills Road from Residential to Rural Conservation. If rezoned, all land uses permitted in the RC District will be allowed. The general intent of the RC Rural Conservation District is to provide for only limited land use controls in areas with limited nonagricultural development.

Ms. Murphy noted the Person County Land Use Plan's "Future Land Use Map" shows this area as Suburban Residential. It is defined as "Residential land uses including subdivisions and manufactured home parks at densities of 1-3 dwelling units per acre; commercial, office, industrial, public/institutional uses meeting location criteria. Location criteria for non-residential uses within this land use category would include frontage and access to a major State Highway or secondary road, proximity to similar uses and spatial separation from non-compatible uses such as existing residential development. Land uses within this category could develop with or without public sewer."

Ms. Murphy quoted Section 160-5(B) of the Zoning Ordinance: “The Planning Board shall provide a written recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners that addresses that the proposed amendment is consistent with the comprehensive plan, but a comment by the Planning Board that a proposed amendment is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan shall not preclude consideration or approval of the proposed amendment by the Board of County Commissioners. Prior to adopting or rejecting any zoning amendment, the Board of County Commissioners shall adopt a statement describing whether its action is consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan and why such action is reasonable and in the public interest.

Ms. Murphy stated the Planning Board felt the Land Use Plan does not address this specific request but the following are items within the Plan for consideration by the Board:

- 1.4.1. Discourage incompatible non-farm development from intruding into prime agricultural areas.
- 2.2.1 Encourage well-planned commercial establishments to provide necessary goods and services to area employers and residents.
- 2.2.2 Encourage development of small service-oriented commercial activities only at existing intersections or median crossovers on US 501 and other major thoroughfares.
- 2.2.3 Discourage strip commercial development by limiting highway access.

Ms. Murphy stated this parcel consists of 5.71 acres and there are no one hundred year flood areas on the property. It is located within the Flat River Balance of Watershed WSIII which allows 1 dwelling unit per .5 acre or 24% built upon area for residential uses and up to 24% built upon area for commercial uses. Commercial can be expanded to 70% provided best management practices are incorporated. The property was used by the owner as a concrete contractors business. There is a structure on site which includes an office, service garage and a bathroom. There is no City water or sewer available to the site. If developed, an individual well and septic system will be required. Access to the site is on Bessie Daniels Drive and could be accessed on Hurdle Mills Road.

Ms. Murphy outlined typical uses permitted by right in the RC District are as follows: ABC store, retail sales, banks, bowling alley, carwash, convenience store, dry cleaners, single family dwelling, multi-family dwellings, fire station/law enforcement center, funeral home, golf course, nursery (plants), professional office, planned building group, construction trades, etc. There are many other uses allowed with a Special Use Permit such as auto repair, electrical generating facility, Industrial operations, Mobile Home Park, etc. The only use allowed with a Conditional Use Permit is a concrete plant. If the property were to remain residential, the following uses would be permitted by right: single family dwelling, Class “A” and Class “B” manufactured homes, modular homes, family care homes, nursery operations, horse stables, etc.

Ms. Murphy explained the Residential District allows other uses by either a special use permit or a conditional use permit. Some uses allowed with a special use permit are multiple family dwellings, Mobile Home Park, non-hazardous solid waste disposal, planned building group, quarry operations, private recreation for profit, airport operations and transmitting towers. Uses allowed with a conditional use permit are ambulance or rescue service, antique shops, bed and breakfast, camping area, commercial cemetery, church, medical and dental clinics, club or lodges, convenience store, day care center, two family dwelling, garage apartments, funeral home, golf course, hospital, library, professional office, rest home and schools.

Ms. Murphy added that an article on Spot Zoning from the Institute of Government, and a map showing the property in question and surrounding properties was included in the Board packet. The properties immediately adjacent are all zoned Residential. The area on both sides of NC 157 (Hurdle Mills Road) is all zoned Residential for a depth of 1000' on each side. The immediate area north of Bessie Daniels Road is zoned Residential. The area to the south of Bessie Daniels Road is zoned Rural Conservation (see attached map showing the zoning). There are four factors in determining a reasonable basis for spot zoning. They are as follows:

1. Size of tract. The general rule is the smaller the tract, the more likely the rezoning will be held invalid.
2. Compatibility with Plan. Need to see if the rezoning fits into a larger context involving rational planning for the community.
3. Benefits and Detriments. Who benefits and who is harmed from the rezoning. Need to look at the property owner and the neighbors.
4. Relationship of Uses. Need to look at the relationship between the proposed uses and the current uses of adjacent properties.

It should be noted that if this property is rezoned and sold for commercial purposes, the new use will need to comply with Section 81 (Site Plan Requirements) and any other requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Board held a Public Hearing on June 11, 2009 and had concerns that this rezoning could be deemed spot zoning. It was decided to add the following parcels to this request: Tax Map A40, Parcel 262, Record # 21789 owned by Glenn Stevens and consisting of 5.64 acres; Tax Map A-40, Parcel 48, Record # 6112 owned by Karen Casey and consisting of 3.08 acres; Tax Map A-40, Parcel 44, Record # 5162 owned by Janet Hayes and consisting of 1 acre; Tax Map A-40, Parcel 78 Record # 6089 owned by Michael Moore and consisting of 22.43 acres and Tax Map 102, Parcel 31, Record # 14804 owned by Nat Wiley and consisting of 22.84 acres. All property owners were mailed a notice informing them of the proposed rezoning along with a copy of the staff report. The Planning Board continued their Public Hearing to their July 10, 2009 meeting and voted unanimous to forward this request to the County Commissioners with a favorable recommendation to rezone the property from Residential to Rural Conservation with the addition of the lots listed above noting there was nothing within the Comprehensive Plan that addresses this issue.

Commissioner Clayton asked Ms. Murphy if there were citizens at the Planning Board Public Hearing in support or in opposition to this request. Ms. Murphy responded that there were many citizens in attendance that wanted to know how the proposed rezoning would affect their property, and once they learned they would not have to do anything differently with their property, they were not against the proposed rezoning.

Ms. Joan Stevens, the applicant of the requested rezoning was in attendance and spoke in support of the proposed rezoning as she wishes to sell the property for commercial use. No one from the audience spoke in opposition.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeffers, **seconded** by Commissioner Puryear and **carried** to close the Public Hearing regarding rezoning property located at Bessie Daniels Road and Hurdle Mills Road from Residential to Rural Conservation.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton, **seconded** by Commissioner Puryear and **carried** to approve the request of Joan Stevens to rezone property (Tax Map A40 Parcel 263) 5.71 acres at the corner of Bessie Daniels Road and Hurdle Mills Road from Residential to Rural Conservation as well as including the following parcels to be rezoned from Residential to Rural Conservation: Tax Map A40, Parcel 262, Record # 21789 owned by Glenn Stevens and consisting of 5.64 acres; Tax Map A-40, Parcel 48, Record # 6112 owned by Karen Casey and consisting of 3.08 acres; Tax Map A-40, Parcel 44, Record # 5162 owned by Janet Hayes and consisting of 1 acre; Tax Map A-40, Parcel 78 Record # 6089 owned by Michael Moore and consisting of 22.43 acres and Tax Map 102, Parcel 31, Record # 14804 owned by Nat Wiley and consisting of 22.84 acres, as recommended by the Planning Board.

PUBLIC HEARING:

RURAL OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ROAP) FOR FY 2009-10:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers and **carried** to open the Public Hearing designated for the Fiscal Year 2009-10 Rural Operating Assistance Program.

Gerald Lunsford, Director of the Person Area Transportation System presented the proposed Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) application that will be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Transportation no later than August 7, 2009. The programs included in the Rural Operating Assistance Program application are:

1. Elderly & Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP) provides operating assistance for the transportation of elderly and disabled citizens. This transportation assistance allows for the individual to reside for longer periods in their homes, thereby enhancing their quality of life. For the purpose of EDTAP, an elderly person is defined as one who reaches the age of 60 or more years. A disabled person is defined as one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, an individual who has a record of such impairment, or an individual who is regarded as having such impairment
2. Employment Transportation Assistance Program is intended to provide operating assistance for transitional Work First, Workforce Development Programs and general public employment transportation needs.
3. Rural General Public (RGP) Program funds are intended to provide transportation service to individuals who are not human service agency clients and live in non-urbanized areas.

The period of performance for Rural Operating Assistance Program funds is July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. The Fiscal Year ROAP individual programs totals are:

Program	Agency	Allocation
EDTAP \$46,141	Person County Council on Aging	\$19,733
	Person County Group Homes	\$13,004
	Person Industries	\$13,404
EMPL \$7,700	Person County Department of Social Services	\$7,700
RGP \$42,174	Person Area Transportation System	\$42,174
\$96,015	TOTAL	\$96,015

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Mr. Lunsford anticipates the State appropriation of \$96,015 and requested Board approval of the agency allocations as well as the Certified Statement as presented. Mr. Lunsford stated Club Creative was not included in the ROAP allocations due to their inactive status at this time. The funds that would have been allocated to Club Creative were divided equally among the eligible agencies.

No one from the public spoke in favor or against the Fiscal Year 2009-10 Rural Operating Assistance Program.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeffers, **seconded** by Commissioner Clayton and **carried** to close the Public Hearing designated for the Fiscal Year 2009-10 Rural Operating Assistance Program.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers and **carried** to approve the Rural Operating Assistance Program Application for Fiscal Year 2009-10 and the individual programs allocations and Certified Statement as presented.

**CERTIFIED STATEMENT
FY 2010**

County of Person

RURAL OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Article 2B of Chapter 136 of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Governor of North Carolina have designated the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) as the agency responsible for administering all federal and/or state programs related to public transportation, and grants NCDOT authority to do all things required in applicable federal and/or state legislation to properly administer the public transportation programs within the State of North Carolina;

WHEREAS, G.S. 136-44.27 established the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program;

WHEREAS, funds will be used for transportation related expenditures as specified in the FY2010 Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) application;

WHEREAS, information regarding use of the funds will be provided at such time and in such a manner as NCDOT may require;

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the North Carolina Department of Transportation that Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, Minority Owned Business Enterprises and Women Owned Business Enterprises shall have the opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts financed in whole or part by Federal and State funds in order to create a level playing field, and the county shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in the performance of this contract.

WHEREAS, ROAP funds will be used to provide eligible services during the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010;

WHEREAS, any interest earned on ROAP funds will be expended for eligible program uses as specified in the ROAP application; and

WHEREAS, the County will include ROAP funds received and expended in its annual independent audit on the schedule of federal and state financial assistance. Funds passed through to other agencies will be identified as such.

This is to certify that the undersigned is duly elected, qualified and acting chairperson of the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Person North Carolina, and that the following statements are true and accurate:

Check the box if the county's application includes a request for funding.

☒ Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program

1. The funds received from G.S. 136-44.27 will be used to provide transportation services for the elderly and disabled allowing individuals to reside for a longer period in their homes, thereby enhancing their quality of life.
2. The funds will not be used to supplant or replace existing federal, state or local funds designated to provide elderly and disabled transportation services in the county.

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☒ Employment Transportation Assistance Program

1. The funds will be used to assist transitional Work First participants after eligibility for cash assistance has concluded, participants in local Workforce Development Programs, and/or the general public with employment-related transportation needs
2. The funds will be suballocated to the local Department of Social Services, Work Force Development Program or the community transportation system for employment transportation.
3. The funds will be transferred to the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program or the Rural General Public Program after an assessment of employment transportation needs in the service area indicates that employment transportation needs are substantially being met. This assessment will occur prior to any transfer of funds and following submission of a statement to that effect from the County Manager to the Public Transportation Division.

☒ Rural General Public Program

1. The funds will be limited to use by the community transportation system
2. The funds will not be used to provide human service agency trips.
3. The funds will be used to provide transportation to residents in the non-urbanized area of the county.

☐ Supplemental Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program

1. The funds will be used according to the eligibility criteria and restrictions provided in the EDTAP Guidelines.
2. The funds will be used to initiate new or expanded services or continue a service that began operating after July 1, 2006 with Supplemental EDTAP funds as the funding source.

☐ Supplemental Employment Transportation Assistance Program

1. The funds will be used according to the eligibility criteria and restrictions provided in the EMPL Guidelines.
2. The funds will be used to initiate new or expanded services or continue a service that began operating after July 1, 2006 with Supplemental EMPL funds as the funding source.

☐ Supplemental Rural General Public Program

1. The funds will be used according to the eligibility criteria and restrictions provided in the RGP Guidelines.
2. The funds will be used to initiate new or expanded services or continue a service that began operating after July 1, 2006 with Supplemental RGP funds as the funding source.

WITNESS my hand and official seal, this 3rd day of August, 2009.

Attest:


Signature, Board of County
Commissioners Chairperson

Print Name: Johnny Myrl Lunsford


Signature, County Manager/Administrator

Print Name: Heidi York

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Mr. Lunsford announced to the Board that Person County Person Area Transportation received a grant from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funding.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers and **carried** to approve the agenda.

INFORMAL COMMENTS:

Sheriff Dewey Jones announced to the Board the results of two grant applications on behalf of the Person County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Jones stated the Sheriff's Office was unsuccessful in the award of the COPS grant for additional personnel. The Sheriff's Office did receive the Justice Assistance Grant award in the amount of \$46,438 to be spent on equipment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Kennington noted a correction on page 11 of the July 6, 2009 minutes under the Planning Board appointments. The phrase by unanimous vote should read by majority vote to correctly record the Board's vote.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeffers, **seconded** by Commissioner Clayton, and **carried** to approve the minutes of July 6, 2009 with the noted correction above.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Commissioner Kennington requested future Library reports to include comparison data from a year ago.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers, and **carried** to approve the Administrative Reports for the **Airport, Detention Center, Inspections, Library, Surplus Vehicles, Surplus Property, Tax Administration & Collections.**

DISCUSSION OF NO WAKE ZONES AND LAKE AUTHORITY AT MAYO LAKE:

County Manager, Heidi York stated at the Board's meeting on July 6, 2009, Commissioner Puryear asked the County Manager and County Attorney to give the Board guidance on establishing no wake zones across the channel as well as educating what authority the Board of Commissioners is vested regarding designating no wake zones as well as establishing a Lake Authority at Mayo Lake. Ms. York stated she had contacted Progress Energy and confirmed their shoreline management did not have any issues with extending the no wake zones across the channel. Ms. York noted the next step would be a meeting with the NC Wildlife Commission to officially extend the no wake zones for enforcement. Ms. York stated the Recreation, Arts and Parks Director, Mitch Pergerson would be submitting plans to request no wake zones around a new ADA pier, so the plan is to take both requests to the Wildlife Commission at the same time. On the idea of establishing a Lake Authority, Ms. York stated the representatives of Progress Energy preferred to designate staff to work with the community on any issues noting they were not in favor of establishing a Lake Authority.

PERSON FUTURE'S CONFERENCE REPORT:

Commissioner Kennington introduced Person County native, Randy Hester, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley to present a detailed report on the recent Person County Futures Project noting four of Professor Hester's graduate students developed and presented proposals at an open meeting for Person County. As Professor Hester summarized the report, he presented the preliminary goals that were an outcome from the interviews:

- Prosper by developing the new economy locally
- Foster a sense of community
- Protect Person County land.
- Encourage learning for life and lifelong learning.
- Re-imagine Person County for a better future.

Professor Hester requested the Board's consideration to adopt the report and the goals, as well as the next steps to set up or expand existing working committees for each goal headed by a commissioner, a community leader, and county staff member including interested community members for the purpose to develop objectives, prioritize actions with a method to monitor progress toward each objective by December, 2009 and suggested an open, countywide forum to be held in which each working committee would present its findings.

The full report presented by Professor Hester follows.

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Report to the Person County Commissioners on the Futures Project August 3, 2009

Johnny M. Lunsford (chairman), Jimmy B. Clayton, Ray Jeffers,
Sam Kennington, and Kyle W. Puryear

In March 2008, the Person County Commissioners held a retreat at which they voted unanimously to undertake a strategic planning process. Sam Kennington, who was assigned to lead the effort, requested assistance from Randy Hester's graduate class. In the spring of 2009, that class developed proposals for Person County. Four students presented their proposals at an open community meeting in June. These were the first steps towards a strategic plan. This report by Liza Pratt is presented to the County Commissioners as the next step and for their action.

During the last month, 60 community members and leaders have been interviewed about priorities for Person County's future and approximately 130 feedback forms regarding specific proposals for Person County have been filled out. This report summarizes the results.

The first part analyzes responses to the interview questions. The second analyzes the responses to the proposals on the feedback forms. The third part summarizes the results of these analyses and the final part suggests some next steps toward a strategic plan.

Part One

The interviews consisted of ten open ended questions (these are listed as an attachment at the end of the report). The first two were intended to gather background information about the respondents. Questions three through eight and question ten were designed to evoke as many ideas as possible about the county's values, strengths, and challenges. In open ended questions, it is rare for a quarter or a third of the respondents to echo a single theme, and when they do it is significant. Question nine asks about the specific proposals on the feedback form and will be addressed in Part Two.

1 and 2. How long have you lived here? What has been your main involvement in the community?

The people interviewed had lived in Person County anywhere from 2 to 68 years. Some were born and raised here, others moved for a job, to be closer to family, or to retire. However, the majority of people interviewed had a family history in Person County. One fifth has lived here their whole lives, and another 40% were born and raised here and returned after a few years in college or working somewhere else. Of the 40% who moved here from somewhere else, almost half had other family or a spouse from the county. Being closer to family was the primary reason people gave for moving.

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The interviewees represented a spectrum of Personians, including elected officials, City and County staff, farmers, landowners, small business owners, pastors, teachers, lawyers, parents, and retirees. They are members of the museum, hospital, and school boards of directors, and several citizen advisory committees; they are involved in civic groups such as Kiwanis and Rotary clubs; they volunteer as firefighters and with United Way, PC Partnership for Children, youth programs, and the schools; and they are involved in the Chambers of Commerce, Roxboro Development Group, and arts and recreation programs. Involvement varied from participation in one or two things to many, but there were also some who said their main involvement simply has been with their family, through their church, and by being a good neighbor.

3. How has the County changed since you first knew it?

Most people interviewed described significant changes although a few (17%) said the county “hasn’t changed a whole lot.” Nearly a fourth noted that in spite of changes, Person County is still relatively safe and rural and maintains its small town feel. The changes most often described are the following:

- **Changes in textile and tobacco industries.** The most common responses were changes in textile (45%) and tobacco (38%) industries. Most people remember when the tobacco and textile mills dominated the economy, providing stable and secure employment. People thought that would never change. Although the change was gradual, it seemed like it happened overnight. In one generation those economies turned upside down or collapsed altogether. Many laborers highly skilled in textiles and tobacco found it difficult to find employment in other industries. Hispanic laborers replaced African Americans in many jobs. The local economy and the community became, and still are, destabilized and insecure.

These economic shifts were unsettling in more ways than one. Not only was job security lost, but sense of self worth and community identity were shaken. Community leaders detailed these changes, “We still have not dealt with the loss of manufacturing and can’t move forward until we do.” One leader described how globalization has recently made this worse, “global outsourcing is hurting Person County and it’s going to hurt more.” Some leaders described this economic crisis as a chicken or egg problem. They believe that sustainable jobs today can be generated only when a widely shared and healthy local identity is reestablished and a high quality of life is enhanced.

- **Changes in community and quality of life.** A number of leaders (22%) described some weakening of community or family structure and a weakening of the rural quality of life. They worry that the small town feeling is being lost. “Major business leaders used to know people all over the county,” “We know fewer people,” and “We used to recognize more people in restaurants and stores,” they said. To them, there is less sense of community and concern for each other. Leaders say this is due to population growth and becoming a bedroom community that relates more to Durham

than to Person County; the collapse of the traditional textile and tobacco economies that used to involve the majority of the population; school consolidation that took away local community centers; the development of second-home and part time residents around the lakes; and big chain stores and corporations that replaced locally owned businesses and changed shopping habits.

As a result, the county is less sure of its shared values and more vulnerable to outside influences. For many leaders the decline of Uptown is the primary manifestation of the loss of community. Uptown was a place where residents from all over the county came together. One remembers, "There used to be so many people Uptown on the weekend you ran into people on the sidewalks." Others said, "Uptown used to be bustling, now it's not used," "There is no more downtown." They explained, "I used to shop Downtown, then Madison Boulevard, or out of town," "We lost the commercial aspect of downtown Roxboro because of big box like Wal-mart."

Another change in community has been more participation by African Americans and women in leadership roles. Some leaders said there has been progress in civil rights and working across racial and gender lines although it is still an issue.

- **Conversion of farmland to subdivisions.** Another change is the increase in residential development, population growth, and conversion of farmland to subdivisions (37%). Many leaders said sprawl is the biggest change they worry about, especially in the southern part of the county. One leader notes that the bedroom subdivisions are hurting the local economy and others said they "don't pay their way" and "many people moved here to escape taxes." It costs more to provide them services like police protection than is recouped in taxes and many shop outside Person County. Another added, "They don't know where Roxboro is."

Leaders noted that the population shift has hurt the sense of community because Roxboro is no longer the center of community life and many new residents are less involved in civic activities in Person County. On the positive side, new residents have brought new perspectives and ideas. Having lived other places, they may have a more acute appreciation for the rural character that brought them to Person County.

- **More amenities.** Other leaders (35%) point out that there are more "city" things to do than in the past. There are more "restaurants," "entertainment venues," "fast food places," and recreation opportunities at the lakes and through the recreation department. There are more commercial opportunities and services. "More people eat out" more often, noted one.
- **Changes in the schools.** The changes in the schools have been significant according some leaders. They noted that centralization made the schools too big and impersonal, "breaking up the neighborhood" feeling. Others pointed out the changes related to integration. One leader said "the schools are expected to do more than they

used to because parents do less.” The expansion of Piedmont Community College and the hospital were seen as positive changes.

4. What most distinguishes Person County from other places? What is its special identity within the region?

For people, this seemed to be a hard question to answer; few were able to clearly talk about an identity for Person County. Even after some prodding, 15% said there was nothing special about it at all, 20% pointed out negative things, such as the lack of amenities and unemployment, and 8% mentioned that it is not known well outside the county.

Others indicated the identity is changing but it is not clear to what. They said “We’ve got to reinvent ourselves” and “We do not know what is special until it’s gone.” One said Person has no single identity, but rather smaller community identities like Bethel Hill and Hurdle Mills. But most people listed the following qualities as important to distinguishing Person County:

- **Rural Scenery.** More than half noted that it is rural. There is “lots of farmland left,” the “farms,” “fields and forests,” “rolling hills,” and “lakes” were often repeated comments. Others noted that it “is more rural than surrounding counties.” To nearly half of the leaders the farmland is “beautiful” scenery, to others it is “roots,” and for some it provides places to hunt, fish, and recreate in nature.
- **A small town feel.** People here are friendly and hospitable, “everybody waves,” you can trust a handshake, and “it’s safe” are characterizations repeated by 30% of people. They recognize the friendliness and openness as why, for many people, it is easy to move here. Some appreciated the slower pace, lack of traffic, and the casual and personal life. Others described the great old buildings and Downtown as retaining the flavor of small town values. A third of the leaders pointed out the “close-knit community” and camaraderie. “No one is a stranger,” “volunteerism,” “helping each other through hard times,” and “it is still small enough to care” were repeated themes.
- **Family is important.** For some, many generations of family have lived here. For others, Person County is simply a good place to “raise a family.” Nearly a quarter of the leaders pointed out that Person County is a place with a strong sense of family heritage and history.
- **It is faith based.** Nearly a fifth of the leaders mentioned that churches play a big role in civic and social as well as religious life. One third had listed church as one of their means of community involvement. “Church is a big family,” “Life centers around churches,” and “This is a strong church community” were repeated themes.

- **Hardworking people.** The people were, and some think still are, skilled and hardworking. Others pointed out that Person County has an unusual number of skilled craftspeople, artisans, and trades people and that PCC has helped train the workforce. But this reputation may be changing. Some leaders described the workforce as poorly educated, obese, and generally unhealthy. Another stated that the young people are lazy and don't share this work ethic anymore.
- **Other amenities.** In addition to the land and people, other things considered unique about the county include its proximity to regional amenities (23%), its attractiveness to bedroom and retiree communities (20%), the cheap land and taxes (8%), and assets like the community college, the hospital, and the new recycling center (7%).

5. Has the County taken good advantage of these unique things to improve life here?

The community leaders were divided about this. A fifth said "yes," a third said "no," and the rest said "yes and no," "they are trying," or "things are about to change." Recent successes in the new Materials Recycling Facility, the development of arts and recreation activities, local events like "Shrimp Fest," funding for a community and senior center, and the charter schools were pointed out as positives. PCC, medical facilities, and civic club volunteerism activities are long standing sources of pride. Community involvement and volunteer activities were specifically mentioned by 15% of the leaders. A few people also mentioned the lakes as improving tourism. Others noted that the natural beauty of the rural areas has been preserved so far.

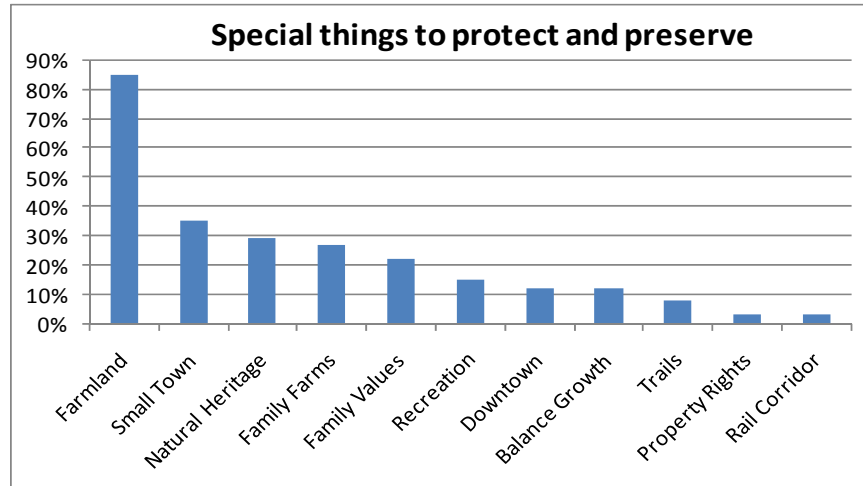
On the negative side, over a quarter of the people pointed to an old mindset as the primary reason the county hasn't improved. Some said that the community "doesn't want to change," "we're not proactive," "we're not imaginative – we just allow things to happen to us," and "we're not open to new ideas from outsiders." Others said "We don't recognize what we have, we take it for granted, then it's lost." Still others pointed out "we got behind in the 1990's" and "we have no long range plan." Some said "There is not enough regulation to protect the small town and rural livability that top quality outside industry wants." "If we create more amenities for ourselves, others will want to live here, even the top executives." There was considerable criticism for "focusing strictly on bringing in jobs instead of supporting local businesses," "We spend a lot of money to attract them, then they leave and take the jobs."

Another concern is that the county let sprawl overtake southern Person, "the bedroom is not really interested in Person County." A final concern is that the old leadership needs to reach out and involve more women, youth, minorities, and people with different ideas in order to truly grow as an inclusive community.

6. As the County changes, what are the special things about the place that you feel must be protected and preserved?

The response of community leaders to this question provides the most startling finding of the listening interviews. In open ended questions, it is unusual to have more than half of the respondents echo the same answer, yet this question received one of the clearest and strongest answers.

- **Farmland and the rural countryside.** A significant number, 85%, of the community leaders called out farmland and the rural countryside as a special thing to protect and preserve. One person said, “this place (Person County) calls a human outside.” Others said simply “farms,” “land - we’re losing it by the minute,” “farmland, don’t cut it up,” “the beauty of the countryside,” and “the rural nature of the county.” Family farms and farm heritage specifically were noted by 27% of community leaders. This attitude was best summed up by one who said “Land, like my granddaddy used to say, ‘they don’t make any more of it, so you better use it well.’” Another category of responses related to this theme; they will be discussed below.
- **Small town feeling.** Over a third of those interviewed said that the small town feeling and sense of community must be consciously preserved and planned for. “Friendliness,” “being good neighbors,” “safety,” and “knowing people personally” echo characteristics valued by residents of Person County that they wish to continue. These qualities don’t just happen, they happen by design. Similarly, family values and heritage were mentioned by 22% as important.
- **Natural heritage.** Similar to the first category of responses, elements of natural heritage like the water, forests, natural resources and general environmental quality were listed by 29% as essential to preserve. For many, these qualities are related to sound agricultural traditions in which farmers steward these resources.
- **Other aspects.** Other aspects of Person County worthy of protection and preservation include opportunities for recreation (15%), Downtown Roxboro (12%), making a place for growth without sprawling (12%), trails (8%), private property rights (3%) and transit on the rail corridor to Durham (3%).



7. What are the most serious challenges that the County faces?

There are a number of serious challenges for the county. The following were voiced as the most serious.

- **Unemployment and the economy** were at the top of the list of Person County challenges and were mentioned by over half of respondents. Nearly a third (31%) of those interviewed listed creating jobs and industrial development. Some leaders (19%) pointed to the need for rethinking the local economy. “We have to stop trying to bring in the same old manufacturing that is a thing of the past,” “The economy can’t just be real estate and housing,” “We need to have a place for pharmaceuticals and biotech,” “We need to look to green jobs, expanding the MRF,” and “create a diverse economy of agriculture, industry and tourism.” Some said economic development should deal with all of these sectors of employment. Others (17%) said the problem is workers poorly prepared for top quality industry, “We have to re-educate our workforce.” Some blame poor training, obesity and high rates of cancer, and/or poor health generally.
- **Unplanned growth** was cited by 28% of the community leaders as one of the most serious challenges. The “lack of a plan for growth” and “sprawl” typify responses. Another noted “zoning is a bad word but five acre minimum lot size is reasonable.” Nine percent recognized that one result of unplanned growth is that many people in the southern part of the county do not participate much in the county community.
- **Education** was mentioned by almost a quarter (24%) of leaders as a challenge, but the responses don’t point to a single problem. Some blamed parents and the general community, who “don’t value education.” Others blamed youth, “Children don’t share traditional values,” “Young people don’t have a strong work ethic,” and some are involved in drugs and gangs. Two employers mentioned graduates that weren’t

sufficiently prepared for employment; one graduate couldn't even make change. There was also some dissatisfaction with the schools. Some said the school system has been in turmoil since the loss of community schools and that the number of students in the high school contributes to behavior and education problems for students.

- **Quality of life** was listed by a fifth of the community leaders (21%) as a problem. They pointed to a lack of amenities to attract top quality industry and young professionals. Compared to other areas in the region, the county doesn't have the diversity and abundance of recreational, entertainment, and job opportunities to keep young people in the county. They also cited air pollution, the landfill, and trailers as creating an image of the county as a dumping ground.
- **Resistance to change and lack of vision** in the leadership and general community were again mentioned by a fifth (21%). Responses included comments like "People here are afraid of new things," "We need to change our mindset about industrial recruitment," and "We have antiquated thinking about economic development." Others pointed to an old-fashioned view of race, women and newcomers as a problem. Seventeen percent faulted the lack of vision and poor leadership. They said "We just let things happen" and "We have to learn that the smart thing is not always the cheapest."
- **Crime, drugs, and gangs** were a concern for 12%.
- **Environmental pollution** was described by 12% of community leaders as a serious challenge not just to health but also to high quality new economies.

8 and 10. If you could get the community to undertake one thing to improve the place, what would that be? Imagine it is ten years from now, and Person County has become a better place to live; Describe what the place would be like.

Some leaders used question 8 as a way to state actions that would improve Person County while others found question 10 a better way to envision the future. The combined answers reflect the following priorities:

- **New Economy.** Most leaders agree that they must envision a new economy and find an economic niche for Person County. They have specific industries they think are appropriate. About a fifth imagines a green economy (recycling, green technicians and craftsmen, and green products). A fifth imagines an expanded agriculture industry with both new crops and value added products. Almost a fifth imagines healthy living industry. Others envisioned small local businesses, agritourism, and jobs related to RTP (Research Triangle Park). Some proposed addressing all of the diverse parts of this new economy in the same economic development effort.

- **Farmland.** Over two-thirds (70%) envisioned the preservation of farms and countryside. Some called for planned protection, while others simply said, “retain the county atmosphere and maintain what we already have.” Nearly a third mentioned the need for farming to be profitable in order to protect the land and saw farming bolstered by new agriculture products, new markets and agritourism.
- **New life for Uptown.** Nearly a quarter (23%) of the leaders hopes to “make Uptown the center of community life” again. Over a fifth envisioned old buildings being reused for housing, specialty shops, restaurants, and industry processing agriculture crops into value added products. Another fifth imagined local arts, performances, crafts, and food being made and sold by trades people and local businesses. Others want to fix up buildings for new uses like the health-service industry and museum exhibits. Some envisioned being able to walk to all of these amenities from home. As more life returns to Roxboro, leaders hope to “re-attract” those who shop, recreate and work elsewhere back to Uptown.
- **Education.** Over half of the respondents (53%) imagined improved education. Some want to decentralize schools to be centers of community life again. Others want to create more high schools to decrease crowding and better serve the southern portion of the county. Some believe the key is to teach children core values. Others want community college expansion and other opportunities for workforce training, enrichment classes, and elder learning.
- **Health and Recreation.** Nearly half wish for improved health programs and services to address the impacts of polluting industry, obesity, and unhealthy lifestyles. They imagined natural parks and the new recreation wellness center as magnets and stimuli for expanded health related industries. Improved health would create a better workforce to recruit industry and be an industry in and of itself. This would build on existing hospital and medical related employment.
- **Planned growth.** Nearly half of the leaders described a future in which the county plans where growth will go, curbs growth that only serves as a bedroom for Durham, and limits sprawl. Some expect an urban services district for the Timberlake area.
- **Old and new quality of life.** Many of the leaders believe the above ideas are inter-related in a bigger picture about quality of life. They envisioned building on the County’s rural and small town values to create more things for local people to do, which in turn would attract the high quality jobs people desire, provide opportunities for more people to work in the county, and encourage young people to stay. They see a combination of country and small town life being attractive to locals and visitors and the new “creative economy”. An expanded farmers market and other local crafts would create “more of a scene.” Others pointed out that preventing more polluting or stigmatized industry would be essential to promoting this quality of life.

- **Recycling.** A third of the leaders imagined county-wide recycling and new thinking about waste as both a way to improve quality of life for residents and a niche economy for Person County. Related to recycling and the new economy, others envision certified green timber and agriculture products and solar and alternative energies.
- **Family.** A fifth of the interviewees envisioned a future in which family continues to distinguish Person County both as a great place to raise a family and as a family-like community.
- **Housing.** A few respondents mentioned housing alternatives, especially to provide choices for seniors, ensure affordable housing, and improve housing quality in Roxboro. Some of these suggestions focused on housing combined with healthy living and extended medical care.
- **Internet.** A few respondents also expect to get countywide cable or other high-speed internet access.

There were two other frequently mentioned topics but with conflicting futures – transportation and government.

- **Transportation.** Nearly a fifth hoped for light rail service to Durham and improved public transit within the county. Leaders were equally split between making 501 North four lanes and forgetting about it. A few want better roads and the north Durham loop.
- **Government.** Government produced similar disagreement. Leaders split between the desire to cut county taxes and services and the desire to increase taxes to improve quality of life and attract industry. A few people mentioned combining City and County government.

Part Two

Results of Feedback Forms

In addition to the interviews, a feedback form was used to collect opinions about fourteen specific proposals for strategies to support a local agricultural economy and protect farmland. These forms were collected at a community meeting in Roxboro on June 30, 2009, during the listening interviews conducted in June and July 2009, through civic meetings, and using the newspaper. The feedback form asked people to evaluate each proposal on a scale from one (1) to five (5). If they liked it, they marked 4 or 5, if they disliked it, they marked 1 or 2. The average rankings ranged from a low of 3.7 to a high of 4.6, indicating a positive to extremely positive response.

Priority action items: The following proposals were ranked unusually positively with almost no negative and only modest neutral responses. These would seem to be immediate priority action items.

- Create a county brand for products produced in Person County
- Reuse Roxboro buildings for secondary processing of value added agriculture products
- Expand sustainable forestry
- Propose a headwaters state park system
- Establish a farmland protection plan

Two others received almost three fourths positive response and should be given serious consideration for action.

- Use infrastructure as a magnet for growth
- Compete for funds

Need further study: Three proposals received very high positive ranking by over three fourths of the respondents, but also neutral rankings by a fifth. These would require further research and education possibly via study groups assisted by government staff.

- Establish agriculture marketing coops
- Create institutional buyer programs
- Provide additional marketing classes

Similarly, three others received over two thirds positive responses, but each was ranked neutral by approximately a quarter of the respondents, suggesting the need for further study before action is taken.

- Use community networks
- Designate a scenic byway
- Concentrate subdivisions in targeted areas

Growth management: The high positive response to the proposed actions regarding managing growth suggests that these three proposals might be considered along with others to develop a proactive plan. The listening interviews suggest that the plan should concentrate growth where it is cost efficient to service, creates centers of community life, enhances rural and small town qualities, and protects farmland. There is significant support for a plan that achieves these goals. Below is the entire list of proposals and responses

Feedback Form Responses

	Negative	Neutral	Positive*
Create a County Brand	2%	9%	89%
Reuse Roxboro Buildings for Secondary Processing	2%	13%	85%
Establish Agriculture Marketing Coops	1%	20% **	79%
Expand Sustainable Forestry	4%	17%	78%
Propose Headwaters State Park System	6%	16%	78%
Create Institutional Buyer Programs	3%	20% **	77%
Establish a Farmland Protection Plan	4%	18%	77%
Provide Additional Marketing Classes	4%	20% **	76%
Use Infrastructure as a Magnet for Growth	8%	17%	74%
Compete for Funds	10%	17%	73%
Use Community Networks to Disseminate Information	2%	26% **	72%
Designate Tobacco Road Scenic Byway	4%	24% **	72%
Concentrate Future Subdivisions in Targeted Areas	10%	23% **	67%
Establish Ag-Based Minimum Lot Size	22%	29% **	48%

*Most ideas widely supported by three fourths of the respondents, all but one supported by at least two thirds of respondents, none with more than one fourth negative response.

**Neutral typically indicates the need for more information and/or ambivalence.

Part Three

Summary

The responses to the interviews and feedback forms suggest wide community support for an updated strategic plan. Leaders support action to protect the county's land and community, fill the economic gap created by shifts in the tobacco and textile economies, and improve overall quality of life while protecting the county's rural and small town character.

This can best be summarized by five goals to guide the County in the upcoming years. These goals will develop the county's uniqueness, play to its strengths, help it control its own destiny, sustain its local economy, and make it a premier small town and rural community.

Goals to Guide the Future

1. PROSPER BY DEVELOPING THE NEW ECONOMY LOCALLY.

Leaders identified five industry types that they think are uniquely appropriate to Person County and that will enhance other community goals. Emphasis should be placed on:

- Health, healthy living and medical related research
- Agriculture and agricultural products industries
- Clean and green products and skilled trades related to these products
- Tourism based on outdoor recreation, farms, heritage, arts, crafts and trades
- Rural and small town quality of life

Economic development should focus on all of the above, especially ones that reinforce each other, meet other goals, and generate economy from within the county.

2. FOSTER A SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

Leaders note that community doesn't just happen today. It must be consciously fostered, based on shared history, values, faith and interests while understanding differences. Community requires centers of daily life where people share experiences. Primary centers must be reestablished in Uptown Roxboro and created in Timberlake. Other crossroads centers must also be enhanced. Small town qualities like volunteerism, helping others in times of need, community schools and having a sense of safety must be encouraged.

3. PROTECT OUR LAND.

Leaders appear ready to make conscious decisions to preserve the county's land and natural resources. The overwhelming support for farmland protection stands out in this survey. It stems from the many purposes the land serves – jobs, family heritage, potential for employment expansion, the enjoyment of scenery, recreation, environmental protection, the rural small town way of life, and the fact that the rural landscape is a significant amenity for the “creative economy.”

4. ENCOURAGE LEARNING FOR LIFE AND LIFELONG LEARNING.

This survey reveals a desire for lifelong education. Some leaders say parents must convey to youth the importance and joy of learning. Others urge the community to help students individually achieve the type of education suited to them and to the demand of future economies. Others say we must have more community involvement to tutor students in basic skills, creative thinking, and in personal and civic responsibility. Leaders indicate the need to make schools more vital to local communities through decentralization. Others want job training for local employment so people can stay in the county to work. Leaders say that emerging economies will require continuous learning, retraining and enrichment.

5. REIMAGINE OUR COUNTY FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

For Person County to achieve the above goals requires changes in how the county is perceived by insiders and outsiders. For too long Person County has been viewed as a place to put unwanted land uses like polluting industry, low value housing, and landfills. This new vision of high quality industry requires an identity makeover, and leaders seem eager to do that.

Part Four

Next Steps

One way to proceed would be for the County Commissioners to adopt this report and the five goals and set up or expand existing working committees for each goal headed by a commissioner, a community leader, and a government staff member. They would in turn invite interested community members to join the committees to develop objectives, prioritized actions, and a method to monitor progress towards the objectives.

Liza Pratt will provide each committee a set of objectives for each goal based on the survey data. The working committees could use those as a starting point. Each working committee would engage others in community conversations, fact finding, and seeking new solutions, leading to the priority actions that would inform budgeting, resource allocation, public private partnerships, and volunteerism.

Each committee would undertake:

- 1. An immediate action based on the results of this survey and**
- 2. A long range set of goals, objectives, actions and measures.**

For example,

- A. The working committee for **“Prosper by Developing New Economies Locally”** would implement branding and sustainable forestry while developing details of the strategy for new economic development and recruitment addressed above.
- B. The **“Foster a Sense of Community”** committee would target the reuse of an Uptown building for a new use like secondary agricultural products while developing a plan for centers of community life.
- C. The **“Protect Our Land”** committee would complete the Farmland Protection Plan already in process while developing longer range actions to expand agricultural diversity and value added product industries.
- D. The **“Encourage Learning for Life”** committee would help increase volunteer tutors in basic skills and civics while addressing long range priorities for lifelong education.
- E. The **“Reimagining Our County for a Better Future”** committee would initiate a plan for the Headwaters State Park while making longer term priority actions for creating and marketing the new identity.

The goals, objectives, actions, and methods to evaluate progress would be created by December 2009, although the committees should consider continuing to complete projects and serve as study groups in the future.

In early 2010, an open countywide forum might be held in which each working committee would present its findings to the other committees and the public to find symbiotic ways of implementation.

This is a rare moment in the county's life. Based on the community response, there is a mandate for action. Community leaders are ready to undertake specific new directions and other projects that expand existing efforts. Government staff is poised to help. Liza Pratt has pledged her assistance as part of the completion of her graduate work. Many community members are eager to participate in substantive ways. Together these create an opportunity to achieve goals for which the next generation will be grateful.

Attachment

Interview Questions

1. How long have you lived here?
2. What has been your main involvement in the community?
3. How has the County changed since you first knew it?
4. Given the whole region, what do you think most distinguishes Person County from other places? What is Person County's special identity within the region?
5. Has the county taken good advantage of these unique things to improve life here? If yes, how? If not, why not?
6. As the county changes, what are the special things about the place that you feel must be protected and preserved?
7. What are the most serious challenges the county faces?
8. If you could get the community to undertake one thing to improve the place, what would that be?
9. We suggested 14 possible strategies for Person County to pursue. These include: (List them out from feedback form.) Which do you think are good ideas and which are not so good?
10. This next question requires a bit of dreaming. Imagine it is ten years from now, and Person County has become a better place to live. Describe what the place would be like.
11. Are there any other ideas you would like to share with me?

Commissioner Jeffers asked Professor Hester about the demographics of the 60 interviewees in which he replied there was good representation in gender and race, with many older adults being the leaders of the County noting an attempt to include high school students and younger adults in the community.

Chairman Lunsford thanked Professor Hester for the presentation while noting his first chance to review the report and asked the Board for their comments for further action.

Commissioner Kennington stated his readiness to take action at this meeting but understood and wanted all Board members to have a chance to review the material presented and be ready to commit to the next steps noting the professional research and information presented statistically validates what has been said over the years.

Commissioner Clayton stated time was needed for choosing staff for each committee as well as consideration of any costs involved.

Commissioner Puryear wanted a chance to review information and would like to have input at the next meeting.

It was the consensus of the board to bring back this item back to the next Board meeting on August 17, 2009.

Commissioner Kennington publicly acknowledged the time and efforts by Professor Hester, his wife, Marsha, the four graduate students, noting Liza Pratt (one of the four graduate students) has already committed to assist Person County should the project proceed. Ms. Pratt is currently working on her master's degree in City Planning & Design and would like to make this project part of her master's thesis. Commissioner Kennington further acknowledged and thanked the 60 citizens that were interviewed, and the 100 plus people that attended the presentations. Commissioner Kennington thanked the families that took in the students, Rufus Johnson, pastor of Union Grove Baptist Church for the historical tour of the church, Jean Newell for the guided tour of the Person County Museum and the many others in City and County government participating in this project, as well as the County Manger, Heidi York for all her assistance.

The Board members commented on the excellent report, extended thanks and gratitude to Professor Hester and all involved. Commissioners Lunsford, Clayton, Jeffers and Puryear thanked Commissioner Kennington for his leadership and effort.

TAR RIVER LAND CONSERVANCY:

Commissioner Kennington stated as an outgrowth of the Person Future's Project, people in Person County feel farmland and rural countryside is worthy of protection as illustrated in Professor Hester's Future's Report. Commissioner Kennington introduced Mr. Derek Halberg, Executive Director of the Tar River Land Conservancy based in Louisburg, NC. Mr. Halberg stated Tar River Land Conservancy (TRLC) is a 501c3 non-profit land trust that works with landowners in Person, Granville, Vance, Franklin, Warren, Halifax, Nash and Edgecombe Counties to protect water, wildlife, farm and forest resources. Since 2000, TRLC has worked with over 130 landowners to protect with conservation easements and fee acquisition over 14,500 acres and 100 miles of streams across the service area. The service area includes the entirety of the eight counties mentioned. Mr. Halberg explained that much of TRLC work has been undertaken in Granville County, with approximately 50 easements totaling 5,400 acres. TRLC works with private landowners – both individuals and businesses – as well as public entities such as municipal and county governments, to achieve mutually beneficial conservation goals. Mr. Halberg noted that TRLC does much work in the Tar River Basin as well as conservation work in the Neuse and the Roanoke River Basins.

Mr. Halberg told the Board that TRLC has undertaken significant planning to determine its conservation priorities. Currently, these priorities include the Tar River and its main tributaries. In 2005-2007 TRLC partnered with The Nature Conservancy to conserve and find a conservation buyer for a parcel located at the Tar River headwaters in Person County on Polk Huff Road, east of Allensville. That property, now owned by a private individual, is protected with a conservation easement and is monitored by TRLC annually. While the headwaters of the Tar continue to be a priority for TRLC, other priority focus areas in Person County include Deep Creek and Flat River. Mr. Halberg stated TRLC is also interested in working with landowners to protect working farm and forestland and drinking water.

Tar River Land Conservancy staff was invited to attend the Person Futures meeting in July and were pleased to hear many of the planning recommendations made by Dr. Randy Hester and his graduate students from the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Community Planning Department at Berkeley. Many of the recommendations they have made are in alignment with Tar River Land Conservancy's own mission to protect the natural and agricultural resources important to the health, economic well-being and scenic beauty of Person County. Mr. Halberg expressed to the Board TRLC's interest in playing a role in the protection of these tremendous assets, in working with Person County's landowners, and in assisting the County in its own pursuit of any goals that are congruent with these efforts and our conservation mission. Mr. Halberg noted that in response to the interest expressed by several of the landowners who attended the Person Futures meeting, and with the encouragement of Commissioner Sam Kennington and Derek Day of the Person County Cooperative Extension Service, TRLC will hold an information session about conservation easements on August 13th from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., in the City Hall Council Chambers and invited all the Commissioners to attend.

REQUEST APPROVAL OF AN AUTISM SCREENING FEE:

Health Director, Janet Clayton requested the Board to approve the addition of an autism screening fee to the Person County Health Department Fee Schedule. Ms. Clayton stated beginning July 1, 2009, Medicaid implemented a requirement specifying that all Medicaid recipients receive a validated screening for autism at the ages of 18 and 24 months, therefore, mandating the Person County Health Department to offer this screening to all patients and to establish a fee. On July 20, 2009, the Person County Board of Health approved the addition of the Autism Screening to the Health Department Fee Schedule. In accordance with the North Carolina General Statute 130A-39(g), the Board of Health requests the approval of the Board of Commissioners to implement the proposed new fee. The fee and code are listed below:

Procedure / Code	Procedure Code	Requested Fee
Autism Screening	99420	\$15.00

Ms. Clayton confirmed the requested fee was comparable to surrounding counties noting it was slightly above the actual Medicaid reimbursement rate which allows some administrative costs to be paid. Ms Clayton also stated this fee would be on the poverty sliding scale fee schedule to be used as appropriate.

The autism prevalence rate in Person County has increased according to the Health Director. The Health Department will use an autism assessment tool and based on the score make referrals to local physicians.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jeffers, **seconded** by Commissioner Clayton and **carried** to approve the addition of an autism screening fee to the Person County Health Department as presented.

2008 PROPERTY TAX COLLECTOR ANNUAL SETTLEMENT:

Tax Administrator, Russell Jones stated as required by General Statute. 105-373(a)(3), an annual settlement for taxes for the fiscal year 2008-2009 and all previous years must be made with the governing body of the taxing unit.

ATTACHMENT I

**PROPERTY TAX SETTLEMENT
2008**

COLLECTION ACTIVITY FOR PERSON COUNTY AND ROXBORO

	LEVY	COLLECTIONS	RECEIVABLES	PERCENT
2008	31,163,980.20	30,337,620.75	826,359.45	97.35%
2007	653,873.62	442,605.80	211,267.82	67.69%
2006	171,380.55	69,817.47	101,563.08	40.74%
2005	91,459.82	31,489.89	59,969.93	34.43%
2004	52,772.91	13,506.16	39,266.75	25.59%
2003	39,428.23	6,214.43	33,213.80	15.76%
2002	36,652.66	4,168.51	32,484.15	11.37%
2001	27,893.32	2,266.80	25,626.52	8.13%
2000	23,938.89	1,805.03	22,133.86	7.54%
1999	20,378.49	818.92	19,559.57	4.02%
1998	16,512.70	1,972.82	14,539.88	11.95%
TOTAL	32,298,271.39	30,912,286.58	1,385,984.81	

August 3, 2009

**PROPERTY TAX SETTLEMENT
2008**

COLLECTION ACTIVITY FOR PERSON COUNTY

	LEVY	COLLECTIONS	RECEIVABLES	PERCENT
2008	27,099,342.34	26,392,937.02	706,405.32	97.39%
2007	560,368.07	379,103.18	181,264.89	67.65%
2006	146,619.23	61,746.65	84,872.58	42.11%
2005	74,072.90	25,543.65	48,529.25	34.48%
2004	40,510.17	10,968.18	29,541.99	27.08%
2003	28,943.70	4,874.19	24,069.51	16.84%
2002	26,742.25	3,267.45	23,474.80	12.22%
2001	20,479.92	1,633.42	18,846.50	7.98%
2000	17,527.80	1,269.58	16,258.22	7.24%
1999	14,993.91	601.63	14,392.28	4.01%
1998	12,240.50	1,674.70	10,565.80	13.68%
TOTAL	28,041,840.79	26,883,619.65	1,158,221.14	

**PROPERTY TAX SETTLEMENT
2008**

COLLECTION ACTIVITY FOR ROXBORO

	LEVY	COLLECTIONS	RECEIVABLES	PERCENT
2008	4,064,637.86	3,944,683.73	119,954.13	97.05%
2007	93,505.55	63,502.62	30,002.93	67.91%
2006	24,761.32	8,070.82	16,690.50	32.59%
2005	17,386.92	5,946.24	11,440.68	34.20%
2004	12,262.74	2,537.98	9,724.76	20.70%
2003	10,484.53	1,340.24	9,144.29	12.78%
2002	9,910.41	901.06	9,009.35	9.09%
2001	7,413.40	633.38	6,780.02	8.54%
2000	6,411.09	535.45	5,875.64	8.35%
1999	5,384.58	217.29	5,167.29	4.04%
1998	4,272.20	298.12	3,974.08	6.98%
TOTAL	4,256,430.60	4,028,666.93	227,763.67	

**PROPERTY TAX SETTLEMENT
2008**

**RECEIVABLES FOR REAL PROPERTY AND OTHER PROPERTY
PERSON COUNTY AND ROXBORO**

	RECEIVABLE	REAL PROPERTY	MOTOR VEHICLES	OTHER PROPERTY
2008	826,359.45	443,511.72	337,536.89	382,847.73
2007	211,267.82	146,773.98	49,148.64	64,493.84
2006	101,563.08	66,932.12	25,455.16	34,630.96
2005	59,969.93	33,217.68	21,622.78	26,752.25
2004	39,266.75	18,829.98	15,887.21	20,436.77
2003	33,213.80	11,936.74	16,377.81	21,277.06
2002	32,484.15	9,275.58	18,224.17	23,208.57
2001	25,626.52	5,460.29	14,244.50	20,166.23
2000	22,133.86	3,862.85	13,743.90	18,271.01
1999	19,559.57	3,070.01	10,624.85	16,489.56
1998	14,539.88	2,308.81	8,676.59	12,231.07
TOTAL	1,385,984.81	745,179.76	531,542.50	640,805.05

**PROPERTY TAX SETTLEMENT
2008**

**RECEIVABLES FOR REAL PROPERTY AND OTHER PROPERTY
PERSON COUNTY**

	RECEIVABLE	REAL PROPERTY	MOTOR VEHICLES	OTHER PROPERTY
2008	706,405.32	400,530.10	270,580.43	35,294.79
2007	181,264.89	132,238.90	35,592.16	13,433.83
2006	84,872.58	59,107.04	18,420.87	7,344.67
2005	48,529.25	29,644.73	15,330.98	3,553.54
2004	29,541.99	16,063.83	10,468.69	3,009.47
2003	24,069.51	10,066.12	10,844.01	3,159.38
2002	23,474.80	7,936.07	12,391.44	3,147.29
2001	18,846.50	5,018.53	9,895.90	3,932.07
2000	16,258.22	3,493.01	8,884.90	3,880.31
1999	14,392.28	2,736.91	7,410.64	4,244.73
1998	10,565.80	2,028.16	6,173.58	2,364.06
TOTAL	1,158,221.14	668,863.40	405,993.60	83,364.14

**PROPERTY TAX SETTLEMENT
2008**

**RECEIVABLES FOR REAL PROPERTY AND OTHER PROPERTY
ROXBORO**

	RECEIVABLE	REAL PROPERTY	MOTOR VEHICLES	OTHER PROPERTY
2008	119,954.13	42,981.62	66,956.46	10,016.05
2007	30,002.93	14,535.08	13,556.48	1,911.37
2006	16,690.50	7,825.08	7,034.29	1,831.13
2005	11,440.68	3,572.95	6,291.80	1,575.93
2004	9,724.76	2,766.15	5,418.52	1,540.09
2003	9,144.29	1,870.62	5,533.80	1,739.87
2002	9,009.35	1,339.51	5,832.73	1,837.11
2001	6,780.02	441.76	4,348.60	1,989.66
2000	5,875.64	369.84	4,859.00	646.80
1999	5,167.29	333.10	3,214.21	1,619.98
1998	3,974.08	280.65	2,503.01	1,190.42
TOTAL	227,763.67	76,316.36	125,548.90	25,898.41

Mr. Jones gave the following presentation:

2008 Tax Collector Settlement

2008 Tax Base

- Budgeted tax base for 2008- \$3.86 billion
- Actual tax base for 2008- \$3.865 billion
- Tax base was over by .14%
- Tax base for 2007- \$3.846 billion
- Increase in base was \$19 million

2008 tax year collections

- Budgeted collection rate for 2008– 97%
- Actual collection rate for 2008– 97.39%
- Collection rate was over by .39%
- Collections was \$574,266 more than anticipated on current year collections
- Average collection rate for Person County for last 10 years is 97%

Collection activities

- Total payments for all years, including City of Roxboro-
 - \$30,912,287
- Total payments for all years, Person County-
 - \$26,883,620
- Processed 82,776 payments
- 2009 Prepayments were \$53,507

Prior year tax collections

- Unpaid balances on July 1, 2008-
 - \$942,499
- Unpaid Balances on June 30, 2009-
 - \$451,816
- Collections on Prior Years-
 - \$490,683

Forced Collections

- Garnishments- 3,178 payments
 - \$369,780
- Attachments- 386 payments
 - \$176,538
- Debt Setoff- 341 accounts collected
 - \$68,580 for Tax Office
 - \$57,565 for EMS
 - \$15,554 for Health Department

2008 Tax Year Uncollected Balances

- 2008 uncollected taxes-all
 - \$706,405
- 2008 uncollected real only-
 - \$400,530
- 2008 uncollected vehicle only-
 - \$270,580
- 2008 uncollected other-
 - \$35,295

All Years Uncollected Balances

- All years uncollected- \$1,158,221
- 1998 uncollected- \$10,566
- 1998 uncollected (vehicle only)- \$6,174
- Percentage uncollected after 10 years- .06%

The County Manager, together with the Board praised Mr. Jones for his leadership for the outstanding job collecting taxes and asked him to extend the same to his staff.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Clayton and **carried** to approve the annual settlement for taxes for the fiscal year 2008-2009 and all previous years as presented.

ISSUE AN ORDER OF COLLECTION TO TAX COLLECTOR:

Mr. Jones requested the Board to make a motion to direct the Tax Collector to collect taxes for 2009 and any delinquent taxes from prior years. General Statute 105-321 states the governing board of the taxing unit must issue an order of collection to tax collectors. This order gives the tax collector legal authority to collect taxes.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers and **carried** to issue an order of collection to the Tax Collector to collect taxes for 2009 and any delinquent taxes from prior years.



PERSON COUNTY

OFFICE OF THE TAX ADMINISTRATOR

Person County Tax Office
P.O. Box 1116
13 Abbitt St
Roxboro, North Carolina 27573-1116
(336) 597-1721 Fax No. (336) 322-8619

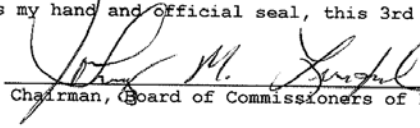
ATTACHMENT II

County of Person

To the Tax Collector of the County of Person:

You are hereby authorized, empowered, and commanded to collect the taxes set forth in the tax records filed in the office of Person County Tax Office and in the tax receipts herewith delivered to you, in the amounts and from the taxpayers likewise therein set forth. Such taxes are hereby declared to be a first lien upon all real property of the respective taxpayers in the County of Person, and this order shall be a full and sufficient authority to direct, require, and enable you to levy on and sell any real or personal property of such taxpayers, for and on account thereof, in accordance with law.

Witness my hand and official seal, this 3rd day of August, 2009.


Chairman, Board of Commissioners of Person County

Attest:


Brenda B. Reaves

August 3, 2009

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES CONTRACTS FOR LEGAL SERVICES:

Beverly Warren, Director of the Department of Social Services (DSS) appeared before the Board requesting approval of the contracts for legal services to be paid at an hourly rate to DSS's primary attorney, Tom Fitzgerald, and secondary attorneys, Walter Cates, Julie Ramsey, and Joe Weinberger. Ms. Warren stated there are separate contract for Child Support services noting there are two contracts per attorney.

Commissioner Kennington inquired about the contracts being bid out, if there was a requirement to do so. Ms. Warren stated the contracts are advertised for bid and the primary reason being Mr. Fitzgerald has been the primary attorney for the DSS contracts for over 20 years and his knowledge of the child welfare laws and his ability to expedite services saves staff time as well as serving and protecting the children versus DSS staff having to coach a new attorney each year or so, or wait until issues are researched by someone unfamiliar noting this a specialized field of work. Ms. Warren noted the secondary attorneys all have worked with DSS 17 years or more with the exception of Julie Ramsey.

The County Attorney confirmed the general law dictates no requirement to bid out contracts for personal services nor is advertising required, but permitted.

When asked if the contract maximum amounts were reached, Ms. Warren noted the expenses were very close to the contract limits and mentioned this past fiscal year the contracts were reduced from the previous year.

Commissioner Kennington asked Ms. Warren if a full time staff attorney would be more beneficial versus contracting. Ms. Warren felt in her opinion after paying salary, benefits and work space expenses, there may not be savings as well as turnover would impact their services considering once an attorney was on board, trained and familiar with the field and then resigning to work elsewhere.

Ms. Warren confirmed that travel and expenses may not exceed \$325 per year for training registration, mileage, lodging and meals.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers and **carried** to approve of the contracts for legal services including child support services to be paid at an hourly rate to DSS's primary attorney, Tom Fitzgerald, and secondary attorneys, Walter Cates, Julie Ramsey, and Joe Weinberger.

DESIGNATION OF VOTING DELEGATE TO NCACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

Chairman Lunsford requested the Board to designate a voting delegate for Person County at the 102nd Annual Conference of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners to be held in Catawba County, NC on August 27-30, 2009.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Kennington and **carried** to designate Commissioner Ray Jeffers to represent Person County as the voting delegate at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference to be held in Catawba County on August 27-30, 2009.

BUDGET AMENDMENT:

County Manager, Heidi York presented and explained the following Budget Amendment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Clayton, and a second by Commissioner Jeffers and majority vote, the Board of Commissioners of Person County does hereby amend the Budget of the General Fund(s) on this, the 3rd day of August 2009, as follows:

<u>Dept./Acct No.</u>	<u>Department Name</u>	<u>Amount</u> Incr / (Decr)
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	
	Public Safety	46,438
	Human Services	(46,867)
<u>REVENUES</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	
	Intergovernmental Revenues	(429)

Appropriate: JAG Grant awarded to the Sheriff's Office from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for \$46,438, a Bioterrorism Grant for the Health Department from the NC Division of Public Health for \$21,532, and various DSS adjustments for (-)\$68,399.

August 3, 2009

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Lunsford had no report.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

County Manager, Heidi York announced that UNC-TV was interested in featuring Person County in the coming months. Ms. York stated she will work with the production schedule to get Person County highlighted on two of their television shows.

Ms. York stated Progress Energy had agreed to sponsor the Council of Government (COG) Banquet that will be held on September 24, 2009.

Ms. York requested Board input on a draft insert that would be mailed with the property tax bills that would communicate to citizens how the County uses the their property tax dollars.

COMMISSIONER REPORT/COMMENTS:

Commissioner Kennington recognized the County Manager for being a presenter at the NC Local Government Budget Officers Association Conference at the School of Government in Chapel Hill and asked Ms. York to further describe her presentation. Ms. York stated her presentation was titled "*Budgeting during Economic Downturns*" which addressed the process by which Person County came to adopt its budget by implementing a zero based budget, furlough days, 401K reductions. Ms. York stated many towns and cities were interested in following some of the initiatives Person County implemented.

Commissioner Kennington thanked Ms. York for sending the NC Department of Transportation correspondence regarding the delay in repairing the Rolling Hills Road Bridge.

Commissioner Puryear stated that federal government stimulus funds will be released via grants for rural broadband. The deadline for the grant application is August 14, 2009. The High Speed Internet Committee will be meeting later this week to discuss the a recommendation to the Board.

Commissioner Jeffers told the Board the National Association of Counties Conference was very productive and he would be forwarding via email links to materials.

Commissioner Jeffers stated the Material Recycling Facility is citizen friendly based on his own personal experience and urged everyone to visit and use the facility.

Commissioner Jeffers announced the figures on the Food Stamp Report he had received at a recent Department of Social Services Board meeting noting there was an increase of 438 food stamp cases over last year.

Commissioner Clayton stated information would be forthcoming from his attendance at the NACo. One issue of interest was the federal stimulus funds at the conference. Commissioner Clayton noted the Person County Courthouse should be a prime project.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers and **carried** to have a five minute recess after which the Board would go into closed session at 8:55 p.m. per General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6) for the purpose of the Evaluation of the County Manager.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, seconded by Commissioner Jeffers and **carried** to return to open session at 9:45 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear, **seconded** by Commissioner Jeffers, and **carried** to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m.

Brenda B. Reaves
Clerk to the Board

Johnny Myrl Lunsford
Chairman

August 3, 2009