

**Hillsborough Board of Commissioners  
FY2009 Budgetary and Strategic Planning Retreat  
February 2, 2008, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Holiday Inn Express, Hillsborough, NC**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Commissioners present:** Tom Stevens, Mayor; Commissioners Frances Dancy, Mike Gering, Eric Hallman, Evelyn Lloyd, and Brian Lowen.

**Staff present:** Eric Peterson, Town Manager; Donna Ambrister, Town Clerk/Director of Administration and Human Resources; Nicole Ard, Assistant Town Manager/Public Works Director; Zina Barnett, Accreditation Manager/Crime Analyst; Clarence Birkhead, Police Chief; Emily Bradford, Budget & Management Analyst; Margaret Hauth, Planning Director; Ken Hines, Public Works Supervisor; Darren Koch, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor; Kenny Keel, Town Engineer/Utilities Director; Greg Siler, Finance Director; Catherine Wright, Public Information Officer.

**Advisory Board members:** Dan Barker, Water & Sewer Advisory Board; Gail Cooley, Tourism Board; Matthew Farrelly, Planning Board; Elizabeth Read, Tourism Board; Phil Ray, Tree Board; and Bryant Warren, Parks and Recreation.

**Public:** Joe Rees

**Facilitator:** Donna Warner, UNC-CH School of Government

**RETREAT TOPICS**

1. Department updates
2. Feedback on strategy map
3. Priorities for FY 2009
4. Feedback from Advisory Board Chairs

**DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

**A. Planning Department**

1. Council can anticipate funding request to maintain parks.
2. Ordinance re-write is a priority for this year and will have impacts on future planning and zoning.

**B. Water and Sewer**

1. Residential irrigation: The council may want to consider what to do to conserve water if the drought continues. One option is to discourage residential irrigation systems.

### C. Fleet Maintenance

1. Staff are creating a replacement schedule to determine what vehicles need to be kept or replaced.
2. Feedback from staff on the condition of the fleet will be solicited.

### D. Public Works

1. With growth and development comes the need for oversight of construction projects to ensure compliance with Town ordinances.
2. Trash removal: The addition of new parks is resulting in an increase in trash pick-up. Additional receptacles have been ordered. Also, special events and growth require planning for trash removal. The Public Works Department is reviewing ways to increase recycling and composting through public education and placement of additional trash receptacles.
3. Work is progressing on cleaning out drains.
4. Additional staffing requirements will result in increased training with new employees.
5. The move to contract grass cutting has worked well.
6. Staff will create a system to pick up debris and trash from rental properties.

### E. Emergency Preparedness

1. Request for citizen's email addresses will be added to the utilities bills so citizens can be notified in the event of an emergency.

### F. Public Safety

1. Turnover, while at an average rate, is a concern. New officers are staying with the department on an average of 9 to 18 months. It is competitive market, with officers leaving Hillsborough for other municipalities and counties in the region. The department is looking at ways to encourage police officers to stay in their jobs. Ideas considered include housing, increases in pay, and use of Town cars.

### G. Clock Maintenance

1. The town clock is wound once a week and a maintenance check is done yearly.

## **FEEDBACK FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS ON STRATEGY MAP**

The department heads reported favorably on using the strategy map as a way to guide Town operations. They believe the map keeps them focused on the "big picture" and is a useful tool in developing staff. Department heads understand it is important for council to know what the departments are doing and whether or not the managers are meeting their goals.

## **FEEDBACK FROM ADVISORY BOARDS**

The council set aside time in the retreat to hear from advisory board members about their issues and concerns. Advisory board chairs were encouraged to update the council members about advisory board activities and also about what they needed to improve council/advisory board relations. The following is a summary of the reports and the discussion.

### **Historical District Board**

1. Town growth is having an impact on the advisory board's work. There is a surge in the need for Certificates of Appropriateness and training for board members on new building materials.
2. The board's work could be enhanced by increased communication with the Board of Adjustments and training for new board members on historical district guidelines.

### **Parks Board**

1. A goal is to connect various parts of Town with sidewalks to enhance the sense of community. The connectivity plan is begun with an anticipated deadline of spring 2009.
2. The Town is meeting its goals of providing more parks for citizens. Several new parks have opened or are due to be opened including Hillside Park; Gold Park (Fall 2008) and Riverwalk (2012).
3. There are plans at the county level for connecting the Town of Hillsborough with other municipalities in the county.

### **Planning Board**

1. The re-write of Town ordinances is the number one priority for this year. The board will provide input and feedback to Margaret Hauth, Planning Director.
2. Understanding Council priorities is important. Council members can help the advisory board by making explicit the Town's vision, priorities, and mission. Meeting together before public hearings was suggested.
3. Advisory board members need direction on what to comment on. A checklist will be developed by the Planning Department for advisory board use. For example, the advisory board will consider quality of life in its recommendations to the board.

### **Tourism Board**

1. Signage program is almost complete.
2. Improving the Town's web presence: The board wants the town to be "visitor friendly" and is interested in coordinating its site with the Town's website. They would like the Town's website to be the portal. Council members are encouraged to view efforts at [www.slideshare.net/alliance](http://www.slideshare.net/alliance).
3. Brand ambassador program: The board is proposing to train business and governmental representatives to answer questions visitors might have about the town and to generate interest.

4. Funding: The board would like feedback on the question of future support for its efforts and wants to know if the meal tax is sufficient to support efforts or if Town funding is needed

#### Tree Advisory Board

1. All planting is postponed due to the drought.
2. Builders are encouraged to adhere to plantings that are site appropriate which means taking into consideration plants' needs above and below the ground; sunlight and shade; and protection and maintenance.
3. The board clarified that it has jurisdiction over Town property only.

#### Water/Sewer Advisory Board

1. The continuing drought raises questions for the future including the possibility of rate increases to curb use. The question of banning irrigation systems is on the March 2008 agenda for the board to consider.
2. The aging sewer plant needs replacement and it will be expensive. The fees associated with the sewer use will double with the new plant.

### **COUNCIL SUGGESTIONS FOR BUDGET 2009**

The council members suggested the following ideas and issues be addressed as part of the 2009 budget considerations.

1. Transportation plan: The Town should look ahead to determine how it will respond to the 2011 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality standards.
2. Public art: There is currently no mechanism for the Town to receive donations of funds/art/objects from private donors.
3. Housing Trust Fund. Staff will report.
4. Information management technology: There is a need for staff to manage IT. One option is to explore sharing services with Orange County.
5. Clock Tower: Consider illuminating historic clock tower. A suggestion is to share the cost with Town, county and Tourism Board.
6. Connectivity: There is a need for more sidewalks. Council members want to look to the future and gain an understanding of what is next in terms of sidewalk construction.
7. Public safety: As Hillsborough grows; there is a need for more police stations and cars and trucks for fire protection.
8. Water and sewer: Need to upgrade the water and sewer lines and plants.
9. More street lights.
10. Funds to incent compliance with sign ordinance.
11. Way finding funds.
12. Need for larger, up-to-date council chamber and office space for Town staff.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Catherine Wright
  - a. Forward branding report from Tourism Board to council members.
2. Margaret Hauth
  - a. Add collector plan to list for ordinance re-write.
  - b. Share notes with Planning Board members.
  - c. Create a check list for planning board use. The goal is to align the vision with the ordinance re-write.
  - d. Consider tree protection in re-write of ordinances.
3. Nicole Ard and Mayor Stevens: Examine the Town's financial contribution to special events. Explore and make recommendation regarding where the Arts Council fits in Town roles and responsibilities. Suggest possible management and staff roles and responsibilities. Provide analysis of Town expenditures on police and public works support for Hog Day, Last Fridays and other major events.

## **ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

1. Water/sewer advisory board will discuss irrigation systems at the March 4 2008 workshop.
2. Police officer retention: need for an innovative proposal to increase retention.
3. Trees: identify "legacy" trees. Check the notice from the Council of Government regarding tree identification. Consider tree protection in ordinance re-write.

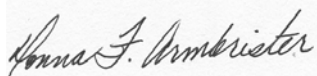
## **MEETING EVALUATION**

What worked well?

1. Having a facilitator to guide and focus discussion
2. Including volunteer boards
3. Having the staff and boards meet together
4. Focusing on items other than mission and vision
5. Good participation
6. Adjourning ahead of schedule

What needs improvement?

1. The council needs larger up to date meeting space



Donna F. Armbrister, MMC  
Town Clerk