



Morrisville Board of Commissioners

Work Session

January 17, 2008

1. Call to Order

Mayor Faulkner called the meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 6:30 pm. Also present for the meeting were Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson and Commissioners Murry, Johnson, Lyons and Stohlman. Commissioner Snyder was absent. Present staff included John Whitson/Town Manager, Diana Davis/Town Clerk, Tony Chiotakis/Senior Director of Community Services, Stacie Galloway/Public Information Officer and Lauri Shedlick/Human Resources Manager.

2. Discussion Topics

- **Town Employee of the Year**

Lauri Shedlick, Human Resources Manager stated that there were several ways that employees were currently recognized. There was a Thanksgiving Luncheon, Holiday Luncheon/Employee Recognition for years of service, Police and Fire Department employee recognition, individual department recognition and a competitive pay and classification scale including regular increases in merit and COLA each year.

The recommendation for employee recognition presented by the Board was considered and Human Resources and the Public Information Officer implemented a Five Star Employee Program. Staff was trying to come up with a way to recognize employees on a more regular basis, rather than once each year. This was a program based on criteria such as performing above and beyond their regular duties, but it was not impossible to achieve. The Five Star Employee Program permitted this through a card system. An employee could be recognized by anyone. However, the recognized employee could not be a department head or senior director. The employee would be recognized in front of peers and when they received their first star they would receive a card with five stars. The employee would then have one year from the date of receipt of the first star to obtain the remaining four stars. Once an employee has all five stars they would receive an award, which was usually a gift card of their choice, and extra recognition.

The Human Resource Department has been very happy with this program, which officially started in the fall of 2007. There were currently 20 employees that had already received at least one star and there were a few that were already up to three stars. It was a simple process. A recommendation was sent to the department head first. The department head would review and forward the recommendation to Human Resources if they found it to be reasonable. This program took off slowly and then Stacie did a great job getting it advertised in the employee newsletter and the participation increased.

Commissioner Murry asked when the program started.

Ms. Shedlick stated that it started in 2007.

Commissioner Stohlman asked about keeping track of the stars received by employees.

Ms. Shedlick stated that there was a spreadsheet where the star recipient, date and reason for the star were input.

Mayor Faulkner asked for examples of receipt of a star.

Ms. Shedlick stated that there were a couple of employees on medical leave and another employee stepped in and willingly took on extra work. Another employee came in and helped out during the Pugh House move. This program also incorporated the employee's attitude. For instance, one employee was trying to complete something, a deadline was coming up and another employee stepped up without being asked. This saved time, effort and money. Innovation was another reason for receiving a star. One employee invented a prop holder for the Board Room, and spent a lot of his own time off-duty using his own equipment to perfect the design.

Commissioner Stohlman remarked on the quality of the program.

Ms. Shedlick stated that his was another way for department heads and supervisors to recognize employees. The employees so far have been extremely appreciative and it gave the employee and supervisor a chance to do this kind of thing outside of the regular review.

Stacie Galloway, Public Information Officer stated that one goal was to get recognition internally. Another goal was to get external recognition as well. The first five star employee would be publicized in the news and by other means and would also be brought before the Board for recognition.

Commissioner Murry stated that the Police and Fire personnel of the year should also be publicized.

Mayor Faulkner asked for the history of this issue.

John Whitson, Town Manager stated that this issue arose when Commissioner Snyder asked why an employee of the year program did not exist. The Town of Cary had just published theirs in the Cary News. It should be pointed out that an Employee of the Year program could be perceived as a contest. The process would involve a lot of man hours with a committee review process and a recommendation process. An appointment of employee of the year would be given and that person may in reality have been the problem of the year. This would discredit the whole program. The Five Star program did not take a lot of time and gave multiple opportunities for recognition. Several employees could receive this recognition versus just one. The employee of the year could be a good program if there was a way to ensure that the right person was recognized. There were currently a lot of employee recognition methods in place as well. The department heads were given a budgeted amount to use as they see fit for employee recognition, which was usually done in a group atmosphere. There was a merit system designed to reward good work through the pay scale. This rewarded normal performance and provided a way to receive extra points for above normal performance. If there was recognition it should be as foolproof and with as little burden as possible with no hierarchy of bureaucracy.

Commissioner Stohlman agreed that an employee of the year program could create animosity. This Five Star program was a tremendous program. It provided a reward for exceptional behavior, did not cost a lot of money and was more effective than a once a year program.

Mr. Whitson stated that with a paramilitary group, a hierarchy could arrive at a police/fire personnel employee of the year easily. Everywhere else there was a mix in levels of employees. For instance public works employees that do a great job and then you have a fire fighter that saved a baby. Those were two different things and hard to compare.

Commissioner Lyons asked if an employee could get more than one star for an event.

Ms. Shedlick stated that had not been the practice.

Commissioner Martin asked about a situation where one employee received an overabundance of stars.

Ms. Shedlick stated that the program was monitored centrally in Human Resources. If there was a repeat winner, then the situation would be discussed with the department head.

Mayor Faulkner stated that the Board seemed satisfied with the program and this should be run by Commissioner Snyder as well.

Commissioner Lyons asked about a person recognizing themselves to their department head.

Ms. Galloway stated that technically, they could talk to a coworker about recommending them.

Mayor Faulkner stated that the department head would sign off and review the recommendation.

- **Town Survey**

Stacie Galloway stated that the last town survey was done in 2001 by mail. The response was good with about a 30% response rate with an expenditure of \$8500. There were 32 questions including sub-questions that followed general themes and inquired about the quality and importance of different services. The responses were coded by district and were anonymous, although several citizens wrote their name on the survey. Staff felt it was time to conduct another survey, especially with the updated technology. This would help find out how citizens were connected to the town, their response to the town website and how they get their information and general questions answered. Several different companies were contacted. One was the same company that completed Cary's bi-annual survey. It was done by phone and received a 70% response rate. Several that were called were invited to attend a more extensive focus group and hammer out the details.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson asked if every citizen was called.

Ms. Galloway stated that the calls were random and completed by census block.

Commissioner Stohlman asked how many calls were made.

Ms. Galloway stated it was about 400 random calls.

Commissioner Stohlman asked about the population during the last survey.

Ms. Galloway stated that there were about 1000 residents and there was a good response by mail when the survey was done.

Mr. Whitson stated that there were about 5000 households now including apartments.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that there seemed to be a better response by mail than with random calls.

Mr. Whitson stated that statistical sampling was better than a mass mailing. If you get a good response from a statistical sample, that was good representation. When you send out a mass mailing to everyone the people are respond may all be from one area of town and that would skew the survey results.

Ms. Galloway stated that those that took the time to respond by mail were statistically more motivated to do so in order to give negative input. Those that took the time to respond usually had something in particular to include. On the other hand, if a phone survey was done, there would probably be more positive responses.

Commissioner Stohlman asked what the cost would be for the random call survey.

Ms. Galloway stated that it would cost about \$12,000. This included the telephone calls, writing the survey and writing the report. There would be no staff involvement except to provide question topics. If the focus groups were included as well the cost would be \$23,000.

Commissioner Lyons stated that if residents thought it was a telemarketer, they may not answer.

Ms. Galloway stated that the intent was to heavily publicize the survey, which would take about 15 to 18 minutes to complete.

Commissioner Lyons stated that the survey should be kept short.

Ms. Galloway stated that there would be no more than 30 questions.

Commissioner Stohlman asked about other options, possibly internet responses.

Commissioner Murry stated that Morrisville's demographics were different than Cary's, with younger residents with children that would not want to stay on the phone.

Commissioner Martin asked what would be a good percentage of response.

Commissioner Murry stated that 45% would be a good return.

Commissioner Lyons stated that it would be important to advertise.

Commissioner Murry stated that certain households could be chosen and let them know they have been picked versus random calling and this would work better to not skew the data and provide better a better response rate.

Ms. Galloway stated that it would be made sure that it was representative.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson asked about the focus groups.

Ms. Galloway stated that it would be two hours at town hall and would be voluntary. Residents would be asked at the end of their survey if they would participate.

Mr. Whitson stated that he previously spoke with two different professors at two different universities. Both were specialists at conducting surveys. They both felt that 300 good surveys back from a town of 6000 was a balanced survey. It did not matter how the survey was conducted. There were lots of schools of thoughts on what is a good number. There was a scientific approach to selecting the sample and then deciding what the threshold should be to ensure the sample was representative.

Commissioner Martin stated that there should be a plan for the results.

Mr. Whitson stated that was true. Tonight the goal was to get some general subject matters for the survey. Once the direction was given, the survey would move forward and the results would be brought back to the board. After the subject matter was decided the survey would be left in the hands of the experts to decide what questions should be asked and how they should be worded. After the survey was launched, the Board would not hear about it again until the results were received and analyzed by the consultant. Staff would handle the publicizing.

Commissioner Martin stated that it may be too much with the Land Use and Transportation Plan being worked on.

Ms. Galloway stated that there were many other areas to focus on. Transportation would always be an issue, but other issues were not always asked about.

Mr. Whitson stated that the survey would be about how services were being delivered, not how plan updates were being conducted. The goal was to ensure that the right services were being delivered at the right time to the right place. Also to make sure citizens were aware of the different services and make sure that the current services available were the desired services. Another important issue was to make sure that they felt that there were enough opportunities for participation with the town.

Commissioner Stohlman asked for the list of questions that Cary asked when they did their survey.

Ms. Galloway stated that she had a copy of that survey.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that sounded expensive but it may be important to get a response from those that do not normally respond to get a true sense. Otherwise, only those with negative responses would be heard from.

Ms. Galloway stated that the cost for the mailed surveys was \$8,500 in 2001 for a mail service and it would be much more now. So, that provided a cost comparison. There was not total confidence in web surveys.

Commissioner Murry stated that there should be a targeted group of citizens that would be given a specific log in code. It could be used once and then expire.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that one concern was multiple entries and no real way of knowing who was taking the survey and if it was, in fact, a Morrisville resident.

Mr. Whitson stated that the technology was out there to do the survey. The important thing was to not use the town website or the town staff so the survey remains unbiased.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that the Board and residents needed to be comfortable with the survey results and know that there was a third party involved.

The Board requested a copy of the most recent Cary and Morrisville survey questions. In return, they would send staff suggested topics for areas they would like surveyed. Staff would reconcile, compile and return the results to ensure satisfaction.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson asked about the turn out in Cary for the in depth focus groups. There were 400 that responded to the phone survey.

Ms. Galloway stated that there were two focus groups. One focus group had six attendees and one had eight attending. The questions were studied more in depth. They were asked at the end of the survey if they would participate in the focus group. Not everyone that agreed to attend was asked to do so. Those that attended were whittled down probably based on the demographics.

- **Board Meeting Conduct**

John Whitson, Town Manager stated that this item was generated because the meetings were a little long. Commissioner Snyder asked that this item address conduct itself. This item was being opened to the Board for discussion. It had been suggested that the Town Manager could manage the time, but there was no way to control how much time was spent on each item. The only thing you could do was estimate.

Commissioner Murry suggested a time limit of three minutes for each Commissioner to discuss per item.

Commissioner Lyons stated that there may be some other thoughts.

Commissioner Martin suggested a meeting cut off time. Items left could be heard at the next meeting.

Diana Davis, Town Clerk stated that there would be problems with different folks fighting to get their items first on the agenda.

Commissioner Murry stated that the items would just carry over and the next agenda would be long.

Mr. Whitson stated that some items required public hearings. This was discussed with the town attorney. This was attempted in Clemmons as they were experiencing the same problem. They adopted a 10:00 pm meeting ending time. If that time was reached it would require a majority vote of the Board to end the meeting. This ended up falling to the wayside

because they never voted to stop the meeting. It was one thing to have a policy and another to execute a policy.

Commissioner Lyons stated that most time was spent during briefings. Maybe the cut off time could be 10:00 pm and items left could be moved to the next meeting.

Mr. Whitson stated that staff could brief some items on voting night if the Board wanted. However, even on voting night, the projected end time was way off.

Commissioner Lyons some items take a lot longer such as Everett Crossing and Wal-Mart.

Mayor Faulkner suggested an assigned amount of time per item in an attempt to shorten meetings. Then that could attempt to be followed. If the Board felt that an item needed more time, then that item may require another briefing.

Mr. Whitson stated a column could be added to the item sign up process for the presenter to put in their estimated presentation time. This would be helpful with this process.

Mayor Faulkner agreed and then the Mayor could drive the time frame and if necessary suggest moving on from an item and possibly request another briefing.

Mr. Whitson stated that the Board needed to be comfortable with the fact that they may not be seeing all information before prescheduled public hearings. These require a certain amount of public notice and all materials may not be received by the Board if an item was not fully briefed.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that another way around that would be for the Board to be prepared. Read the material. Very often the same questions were being asked that had already been addressed. The goal should be to work smarter and the meetings would be shorter.

Mayor Faulkner stated that with Park West questions were emailed to staff and returned to the Board with answers during the public meeting.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that a log could be used for larger projects.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that staff prepared a lot of documentation and they did a good job. If the material was reviewed, there was probably very little that was not already answered. Staff may not need to go through everything that was already in the agenda. Then all the information would be available at the first briefing.

Commissioner Lyons stated that the public needed to hear the discussion.

Mr. Whitson stated that it was usually the same group of citizens that were very involved and it seems that meetings were not always attended and more folks were getting their information from the internet.

Tony Chiotakis, Senior Director of Community Services stated that recent discussion amongst the Board and staff was to permit staff to take more responsibility for some things that could be handled administratively, instead of taking items that require minimal consideration to the Board. These would be items that already had parameters in place through the code to guide

staff on the Board desires. This would significantly improve response time for the customer and shorten meeting time without taking away the Board's authority.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that the Planning Director was already working on that and looking for those types of items.

Mr. Chiotakis stated that was probably occurring, but staff was reluctant to bring things to the Board to change and instead try to take advantage of opportunities during discussions with the Board to recommend some items be handled administratively. That was not a long term solution.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that an example of something that could be administratively handled would be if the entire subdivision was approved and there were some minor changes to the clubhouse.

Commissioner Lyons stated that it was just like a voluntary annexation.

Commissioner Murry stated that was on the consent agenda at every meeting.

Mr. Whitson stated that this issue went back to the town 20 years ago. It would be refreshing for the Board to relinquish some mundane work back to staff and that was the way it should be. The Board would continue to take of things that were minor but required by statute such as destruction of public records. The Board was always welcome to suggest putting particular items on consent automatically in the future or set a schedule for types of item as they desire.

Mayor Faulkner stated that would put items through the system faster.

Commissioner Martin stated that sometimes developers came to the microphone and took up a lot of time.

Mr. Whitson stated that developers came to the microphone as requested by the Board or staff and the Board could always decide to not let them speak. Although sometimes consultants come up to support staff and a developer may be asked to come to the microphone if a question was asked of staff that the developer could better answer.

Commissioner Lyons stated that there were too many items on the agenda. Every time a developer comes in their item was put right on the agenda.

Mr. Whitson stated that developers were always anxious because they had a contract with deadlines and with the pressure on; they usually call the Board to insist that staff work harder on their item.

Commissioner Lyons stated that it took time.

Mr. Whitson stated that there was no problem with staff taking the necessary time needed for each project as long as the Board backed this up when a developer called. Staff did not show favoritism and every developer wanted their item done first. Staff was constantly trying to make the first submission correct before the schedule started, which made the suggested schedule more likely to be exact. The schedule fluctuated when items had to be resubmitted for whatever reason.

Mr. Chiotakis stated that if there were several projects on the agenda and it became very late, the developer would start complaining that there was an item on the agenda that did not get heard versus staff did not prepare the item in time. The Board may get hammered quite a bit if items start coming off the agenda.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that if items started coming off, they would just start backlogging. The solution was to do the homework, control the time and work smart. Seems like when a big project was considered it was not really that bad because a lot of work was done in preparation by the Board.

Mr. Whitson the next big item would be the Long Range Financial Plan (LRFP), so the work load would not lighten anytime soon.

Board Consensus was to try to control the length of meetings. An estimated briefing time should be added to each briefing item.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that this plan would work. If the Board continued to meet until midnight, another plan may be necessary.

- **Consultant Fees**

Mr. Whitson stated that Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson had asked for this item.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that there were several consultants hired and a lot of money spent on them. There were various things for the right reason at the right time where consultants were utilized and the goal should be to make sure the Board knows where all the money was going. One thing that could be considered would be to hire for particular positions instead of using a consultant.

Mr. Whitson stated that there would be needs for consultants in specific situations, but maybe in other situations hiring a new staff member may be more effective.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that if it was something that a consultant always had to do, it may be a situation where staff should be hired that would stay up to speed.

Mr. Chiotakis stated that some things that a consultant was hired to do would take a lot of support for staff to do themselves.

Mr. Whitson stated that the other thing to consider was that consultants sometimes had software necessary to do a job, such as traffic modeling software. There was a consultant that passed out information at the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) Conference regarding obtaining federal money for municipal governments. The first year would be making the appropriate contacts with federal officials and agencies. There would be discussion on what types of funds were needed, such as fire station funds, open space funds or maybe some homeland security funds for the Police Department. There may be some help with road money. The bottom line would be \$48,000 at \$2,000 per month for the first year and the agreement could be severed with 30 days notice at any time if the Board felt necessary. They did have several clients in North Carolina and most were beach towns. There was a lot of money for beach towns and that probably helped their statistics. They claimed in their letter that their success rate was high.

Commissioner Lyons asked how long they had worked with their customers.

Mr. Whitson stated that research had not gone that far unless the Board was interested.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that he was a little skeptical and asked about paying a portion of any profit.

Commissioner Murry stated that they would probably not do that.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that she thought the Town of Cary utilized such a service and got more funding than they paid.

Commissioner Murry state that there was a lot of front end costs involved with a lot of risks.

Commissioner Martin asked for a little more detail.

Mr. Whitson stated they would make presentations to the Board, make field trips to other towns to get support or meet with leadership to help identify things that need funding. They would make reports on where potential funding was located and if matching funds were needed as they usually were. They would help stack the deck and go after things were a source of funds was known to be available.

Commissioner Martin stated that he was skeptical because the town would be paying a fee to get funds that may not be for what was needed or planned for in the budget.

Mayor Faulkner stated that the Long Range Financial Plan (LRFP) would weigh into that.

Mr. Whitson stated that the agency would not look into things the town does not want.

Mr. Chiotakis stated that they listed funding for such things as historical purposes. It would be helpful if they could secure grants for some of the things in the plan and get them completed sooner. The Pugh House was one thing these funds could be used for.

Mayor Faulkner stated that it may be helpful to get this same sort of proposal from two or three different other agencies as well to ensure the best rate. Also, check their reputation with some of the towns that were not beach towns.

Mr. Whitson stated that the Board should consider if they wanted to spend funds on this type of consultant. The numbers stated were only rough estimates, but more accurate proposals could be brought forward if the Board was interested.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that they should be asked about the beach town focus.

Commissioner Lyons stated that it should be known how long they had worked with each town.

Mr. Whitson stated that the individual towns listed would be contacted.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated that the town manager list serve could be used.

Commissioner Murry concurred.

Mr. Whitson stated that the gentleman that worked for this agency came into the RDU airport and visited the area during the Pugh House move. He was driving around getting familiar with Morrisville and noticed that there was no downtown.

Commissioner Martin stated that their rating with the Better Business Bureau (BBB) should be checked.

Mr. Whitson stated that would be done.

- **Railroad Negotiations**

The Board decided to let staff introduce a short topic regarding railroad negotiations as the listed agenda items discussion was completed and there was still some time remaining.

John Whitson stated the associated with the intersection improvements at Hwy 54/Morrisville-Carpenter was the closure of Page Street. That road right-of-way would have to be split between the property owners. Part would go to the town and part would go to North Carolina Rail Road (NCRR). Their lot runs along the road and they would want to claim half of the road. But they probably would want the entire road. The town needed a sewer easement to widen Morrisville Carpenter, so this negotiation needed to be concluded quickly to continue construction. That was a short update on current progress.

Commissioner Stohlman asked what the railroad's interest was in the additional land.

Mr. Whitson stated that additional land would provide a wider corridor. Currently there were a lot of encroachments in the corridor, which was a hazard if a train derailed. This could be helpful with current negotiations. The current thought was to obtain all of the parcels of land along the railroad corridor from the 3rd parcel up to the 4th property from Morrisville Carpenter, which totaled 11 properties. The town owned the Fire Station and the Ruritan Club owned the house right next to it. The Triangle Transit Authority owned a narrow strip of property near Ashe Street. The rest were privately owned. Currently the town was not permitted to widen on the other side of Hwy 54 because of the corridor. The town was able to get permission to widen the corridor by giving up the crossing at Barbee Road. If the town obtained the 11 properties and gave them to the railroad, about one per year over the next 10 years, in exchange for permission to widen on the other side (east side) of the corridor. Town give 50 more ft on this side and widen their corridor 50 ft to west clear over time, maybe 10 years, in return, cart blanche authority to the east in their corridor. Also, the town would be permitted to keep Barbee Road open until these properties were deeded during that 10 year period. If any portion of the agreement was not met by the town, such as a property was not deeded one year, NCRR could immediately close Barbee Road. If JNCRR wanted the additional corridor enough, that could help keep Barbee Road open a bit longer.

Commissioner Murry stated that was a lot of property and asked the value.

Mr. Whitson stated that it was worth about \$1 million in property taxes.

Commissioner Martin stated that people lived in these homes.

Mr. Whitson stated that some did.

Commissioner Martin stated that they should not be forced to move.

Mr. Whitson stated that the Board indicated that they would not use eminent domain authority in the downtown area if was not for roads or utility easements. If the town entered into this agreement with NCR, the thing for the Board to consider would be if the trade of these properties was worth however many years of the use of Barbee Road. This was brought up in an attempt to negotiate a way to keep Barbee Road open a little bit longer. The property owners would probably be willing sellers as portions of their properties were already encroaching on the corridor and they could be asked to move the structures by NCR at any time.

Commissioner Murry stated that there had been discussion related to property acquisitions and during that discussion the Board and staff talked about the focal point being around the downtown area.

Mr. Whitson stated that the downtown area was still a focal point. There were other southern properties for a possible Heritage Park, a historical house, a historical park and potential properties that were discussed for the Open Space Plan. The goal with the purchase of property along the railroad corridor was to come up with collateral and a good negotiation position. These houses in this area were also at risk due to being in a flood plain.

Commissioner Stohlman asked if the town did this and gained Barbee for a while and additional right-of-way, would the width of the road be able to be doubled.

Mr. Whitson stated that there was some surveying currently going on and that would need to be measured.

Commissioner Lyons asked about the plan for another set of railroad tracks.

Mr. Whitson stated that there was a study regarding potential high speed commuter trains and some sections of dual rail for passing lanes would be needed.

Commissioner Lyons stated that initial discussion was regarding dual lanes all the way.

Mr. Whitson stated that was a plan at one point and some property was acquired in anticipation of this. The town could attempt to purchase some of that land back.

Mayor Faulkner stated that this may be an option for widening Hwy 54.

Mr. Whitson stated that it was unsure if there would be enough room for two lanes, but there was enough room for one more lane. The area to the east of the railroad tracks would stretch from the mini-storage to the Morrisville Café. This authority for the town would be forever if NCR was willing to negotiate. That way if the Department of Transportation (DOT) wanted to widen Hwy 54, they could.

Commissioner Lyons asked about the contaminated land in that area.

Mr. Whitson stated that property was were the Cruizers would be built and the developer would be completing intersection improvements that would make way for the potential

widening of Hwy 54 and any disturbed land that was contaminated had to be removed and properly disposed of.

Commissioner Stohlman stated that this land should be purchased because citizens were always talking about traffic.

Mr. Whitson stated that this area and the location of the railroad track had been a block for road improvements for a long time. The current improvements at the intersection were a big leap. If the authority to do road work in the railroad corridor was granted, that would be a huge gain. If the town acquired the necessary land and gave 50 feet to NCRB to increase their corridor, they would probably consider this.

Commissioner Murry stated that with the properties currently encroaching on the railroad corridor, they could be easier to obtain.

Mr. Whitson stated that Norfolk Southern used to own the property and now that NCRB owned the corridor, they were taking every opportunity to clear that area.

Commissioner Martin asked about the cost.

Mr. Whitson stated this was an initial discussion with the Board to see if they wanted staff to consider something like this. This was only conceptual at this point and there was no cost estimation.

Commissioner Lyons asked if Barbee would stay open if the town did this.

Mr. Whitson stated that it would for a while.

Commissioner Murry stated that either way it will close eventually.

Mr. Whitson stated that this negotiation plan accomplished more than one thing. Barbee would remain open for some period of time near 10 years. Without NCRB's blessings Hwy 54 would never be widened. This would grant authority for that within their corridor indefinitely. With Barbee open a little longer, it buys time.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson asked how many property owners had expressed interest in selling.

Mr. Whitson stated that there had not been any town initiated inquiry, but two property owners had expressed interest in selling.

Board Census was to discuss this with NCRB and make sure that Commissioner Snyder, who did not attend, was brought up to speed.

Diana Davis, Town Clerk stated that she would get an audio recording of the meeting to him tomorrow.

Commissioner Lyons asked when this discussion with NCRB would occur.

Mr. Whitson stated it would be in the next two weeks.

Mayor Faulkner adjourned the meeting at 9:03 pm.

Adopted this the 26th day of February, 2008.

Jan Faulkner, Mayor

<SEAL>

Diana R. Davis, Town Clerk