

## Bond Commission Meeting

# Minutes

Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at 5:30 pm

Second Floor Conference Room

Hickory Water Treatment Plant

1560 Old Lenoir Rd

Hickory NC, 28601

A quarterly meeting of the Bond Implementation Commission was held in the Hickory Water Treatment Plant, on Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at 5:30 p.m., with the following members present:

**Bond Commission members present:** Lori Alala, Alan Barnhardt, Michael Bell, Eric Brandon, Jim Campbell, Rob Dickerson, Mackenzie Fairchild, Ed Farthing, Sandi Fotheringham, Alan Jackson, Alan Jackson, Anthony Laxton, Cliff Moone, Meg Nealon, David Roberts II, Jim Rogers, Katherine Rogers, Dan Shabeldeen, Ernie Sills, Walter Smith, Mike Thomas, James Tilton, Suzanne Trollan, Nick Walden, Walter Smith, Susan Walker, Bob Warmuth, Virginia Wright, Burk Wyatt, Jason Yates, Frank Young

**Bond Commission members absent:** David Baldwin, Jennifer Beane, Ellie Bradshaw, Paige Brigham, Kimberly George, Allison Holtzman, Clise Johnson Plant, Emma Lail, Rachel Nichols, Emma Lail, Meg Nealon, Stacey Rash, Kay Schmucker,

**Staff Present:** City Manager Warren Wood Communications and Marketing Manager Dana Kaminske, Communications Specialist Sarah Killian, Assistant City Manager Rick Beasley, Assistant to the City Manager Yaidee Fox, Public Services Director Kevin Greer, Planning Director Brian Frazier, Morgan McIlwain Freese and Nichols Consultant, Glen Walters and Nichols Consultant, Business Services Manager Dave Leonetti, Parks and Recreation Director Mack McLeod, Assistant City Manager Rodney Miller, Assistant Public Services Director Steve Miller, Planner Cal Overby, Senior Civil Engineer Rick Patton, Utilities Collections Manager Shawn Pennell, Government Affairs Analyst Sarah Prencipe, and Executive Assistant to the City Manager Deisy Zavala Vazquez

### I. Welcome – Chair Burk Wyatt

Bond Commission Chair, Burk Wyatt called the meeting to order at 5:38 pm. He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and added that he was very excited about the progress that had been made since the last time the Bond Commission met.

### II. Approval of Minutes from November 1, 2018

Mr. Rob Dickerson moved, seconded by Mr. Cliff Moone approval of the minutes from November 1, 2018. The motion carried unanimously.

### **III. Bond Project Overview- Warren Wood, Hickory City Manager**

City manager Warren Wood thanked the Bond Commission for taking the time to attend the meeting and for all of their work on these projects. He asked Public Services Director, Kevin Greer to tell the group a little bit about the building they were in. The meeting was located in the Hickory Water Treatment Plant so Mr. Greer explained the water treatment process to the group.

Mr. Wood reviewed the history of Hickory since 1999. He explained that the unemployment rate was under 2 percent at one point and things were looking very good for Hickory. However, 50 percent of the employment available at that time was manufacturing. Things became very difficult for Hickory around 2007 when the recession hit and hundreds of those jobs disappeared. He added that Hickory will always be full of makers and doers and the industries that survived the recession are now doing quite well. In 2012 they put together the inspiring Spaces plan. City Staff went on several road trips to figure out what designs would best fit the City. They wanted to see what those communities had done to reinvent themselves. In 2014, the voters approved what became known as the Bond projects. Mr. Wood added that things had been looking up since then. They have 1,000 apartment buildings coming to Hickory this year and the unemployment rate is at 3.5 percent. The average amount of time that a home is on the market in Hickory is 45 days with an average selling price of \$200,000. With the recession they lost a lot of homebuilders, but they are trying to navigate that and get more homes built. One of the ways to fix that is creating higher paying jobs so people can comfortably afford their homes.

Mr. Wood explained that in the last two years, the state has produced 100,00 jobs. Those jobs are going to Charlotte and Raleigh. This is why the bond project is so important. The communities that win the talent attraction war will win the economic development war. There are now opportunities in Catawba county that didn't used to exist. One tremendous opportunity for Hickory is 65 million dollars that the NCDOT has in store for Hickory. There will be additional lanes on I-40 and Startown Road. He asked the group if they had had a chance to see the Workforce Solutions Complex on the campus of Catawba Valley Community College. It is an enormous asset for the City of Hickory.

Mr. Wood added that they have gone from 40 million dollars to 87 million dollars in bond funds. Mr. Wood showed the group a map of the original bond projects (see Article 1). He explained that they would be receiving the Hickory trail report as well. It projects the development in the City. Mr. Wood added that they anticipate about a half a million dollars in private investment in the area of the City walk. Those numbers are half of what the model actually projected.

Mr. Wood explained that they have been able to take the original 40 million dollars and leverage that to receive more money. Mr. Wood pointed out the different parts of the Bond project that have been added.

One of the Bond Projects that is not under the bond commission is the Trivium Corporate Center. There are 270 acres of land that that have been purchased for

this project. It is a class A, high tech, business park. Mr. Wood pointed out the Corning location and the ITM building. ITM is from Germany and the City had competed with Concord and Colorado to get the company to relocate to Hickory. They were looking for a location that was close to the Charlotte airport. The individual that will be running this location is into mountain biking, so she is looking forward to the construction of the Riverwalk. Mr. Wood presented a time-lapse video of construction at the Trivium Corporate Center.

Mr. Wood shared that the City had competed with Winston-Salem and Wilmington for the Corning Site. Corning was a 60-million-dollar investment commitment while ITM was a 17-million-dollar investment commitment with 137 jobs and an average salary of \$64,000. They had the added benefit of having Workforce Solutions Center right down the road where they could train their staff.

#### **IV. Bond Project Update- Morgan McIlwain, Freese and Nichols Consultant**

##### **a. Gateway**

Freese and Nichols consultant, Morgan McIlwain welcomed the Bond Commission members and thanked them for coming.

Ms., McIlwain shared that the Gateway construction was almost complete with the addition of lighting which would be complete the following week.

Mr. Warren Wood shared that the Public Services Director from Greenville, SC had driven by the gateway and he was very impressed, so he had called the City Manager's office to ask for information about it.

##### **b. Union Square**

Ms. McIlwain updated the group on the Union Square construction. Union Square encompasses the entire block and is one of the fastest moving projects at the moment. The first bid was awarded to Neill Grading and Construction and the second would be going out in the next few weeks.

##### **c. City Walk Multipurpose Path**

The City walk spine is nearly complete. The utility relocations had been completed but they were still working with permitting. They should be advertising this project for bids soon.

#### **V. Bookwalk- Yaidee Fox, Assistant to the City Manager and Kevin Greer, Public Services Director**

Assistant to the City Manager, Yaidee Fox shared an update on the Book Walk. The purpose of this trail is to provide a connection to the City Walk multipurpose path from the Ridgeview library and over to the Northern side of Hickory. They have been very successful in securing a grant to cover this portion.

Ms. Fox explained the length of the Bookwalk and where it would be located on the map (Exhibit 1). Ms. Fox asked Public Services Director, Kevin Greer to provide further information on this project.

Mr. Greer shared that they have an engineer and an operations person assigned to each project of the Bond Projects so that they can make sure that all concepts are both attainable and innovative.

Mr. Frank Young asked for an explanation of the exact location of the Bookwalk.

Mr. Greer explained that it would start at the fountain at City Hall and he pointed to the map (see Article 1) to help guide him along the path.

Assistant City Manager, Rick Beasley added that staff had done a great job with designing everything and making sure that everything stayed similar in design throughout the project.

Mr. Greer added that they had worked closely with the stakeholders in Ridgeview and they made sure that the projects were okay with the community. During one of these meetings, City Staff was told that this project was a good way to share the Ridgeview area with the entire City.

Mr. Greer shared that the pathways would be 10 feet wide to maintain the federal eligibility. It would also be made out of asphalt since it is easier to maintain and better for your joints. The benches that will be used were already selected with the inspiring spaces plan and the stakeholders were understanding of the need to make them look similar to the rest of the path. The bike racks and trash cans will also be similar. Bond Commission member, Rob Dickerson had brought up the idea of making bike racks out of metal and spelling out "Ridgeview" or "My HKY". Another thing discussed during their stakeholder meetings was their desire for the neighborhood to retain its historic district. They liked the street sign toppers that helped them identify where they were as well. Another thing they mentioned is the desire have signs instead of just medallions throughout the pathway.

Bond Commission Member Cliff Moone shared that Kathy Greathouse was working on a mural for the undefeated football team, the Untouchables which they will be able to see from the Bookwalk.

Reverend Susan Walker thanked the City for all of the work that they had put into the South West quadrant because a lot of people did not believe that it would happen. She believes that it will change the South West part of the City and there were a lot of people that cared about this.

Mr. David Roberts II added that a lot of people that live in that area may not have a degree, so he is wondering about what they could do economically to reach the South West side of Hickory.

Mr. Greer replied that people will create businesses where people are. Private investors get to choose the locations and that will bring jobs to the area. He added that Community Development Manager Dave Leonetti would also be available to help point developers to that area.

## **VI. Action**

Burk Wyatt moved, seconded by Rob Dickerson the approval of the Book Walk alignment as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

## **VII. Riverwalk Update- Glenn Walters, Design Workshop Principal**

Consultant Glenn Walters shared an update on the Riverwalk project. Mr. Walters shared some graphics and explained that there would be a small park that would

welcome people and then they would end up on the bridge where they could travel to Geitner park. The bridge would be lit and very visible from the road. There will also be several overlooks along the bridge and the trails so people can sit and look at the water. He added that the bridge design was beautiful and simple and that they were using the architect that built the Liberty Bridge in Greenville. He showed the group a picture of the seating area (See Article 2). They would have 10 feet of space on the trails so that it would accommodate both walkers and bikers. He showed the group a picture of the lighting at night.

Chair Burk Wyatt asked if the lighting would be able to change colors for special events. Mr. Walters replied that it would be easy to do that.

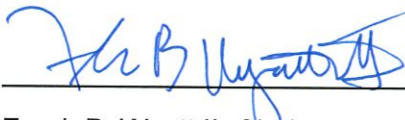
Mr. Walters said that they worked very closely with the Mountain Bike Alliance to make sure that the trails worked for both of them. They figured out some underpasses that will make a nice experience along the way for both bikers and people walking the trails.

Mr. Rick Beasley added that the trail had great overlooks. He said that they hope to bid this project by early winter, late fall.

Mr. Beasley shared with the Group that when they talked to their neighbors, they can now share all of this new information and get everyone excited and on the same page about the Bond Projects.

#### VIII. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.



Frank B. Wyatt II, Chair

Hickory Bond Commission



Deisy Zavala Vazquez

Executive Assistant to the City Manager