

Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2021

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE MEETING

Due to the State of North Carolina's Declaration of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and per NCGS § 166A-19.24, the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners conducted a remote meeting using the WebEx application.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met for a Special Legislative Meeting on Friday, January 22, 2021 at 10:04 a.m. remotely with Chair Dunlap presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Commissioner Leigh Altman
Commissioner Patricia "Pat" Cotham
Commissioner George Dunlap
Commissioner Mark Jerrell
Commissioner Laura Meier
Commissioner Elaine Powell
Commissioner Susan Rodriguez-McDowell

Absent: Commissioner Vilma D. Leake
Commissioner Ella B. Scarborough

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by each participant.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Senator Natasha Marcus made introductory remarks.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY MANAGER REMARKS

Dena Diorio, County Manager, reviewed the agenda, mentioned the coordinated approach to the pandemic response in Mecklenburg County, and spoke about the great, January 21st, townhall meeting on homelessness in Mecklenburg County.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY 2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Starla Tanner, Mecklenburg County Legislative Liaison, provided an overview of Legislative Priorities. She said the County's legislative advocacy efforts revolve around four Principles that were used to analyze policy changes and that they encourage the Board, as officials, to consider when evaluating potential legislative action.

They were to:

- Support legislation that grants counties greater authority
- Support legislation that provides funding to counties
- Oppose legislation that removes authority from counties
- Oppose legislation that creates unfunded mandates or shifts costs directly or indirectly to counties

These four principles are consistently a part of our legislative agenda and align with the National Assn. of County Officials platform and the NC Assn. of County Commissioners agenda. In addition to working with all of you, another component of our legislative agenda was to maintain a proactive working relationship with the executive branch and regulatory

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agencies. She said they meet regularly with the NC Department of Health and Human Services – especially as Medicaid Transformation efforts continue, environment, finance officials and other agencies to collaborate and carry out County services. Even though some of our pandemic funding was allocated directly from the federal government, they were also involved with the State Pandemic Response Office. Strategic engagement at the state and federal levels was an essential part of our efforts. Recognizing that many policy and funding issues were connected at the State and Federal Levels the County's 2021 Legislative Agenda was composed of five priority areas.

In your meeting materials, you had a three-page document that outlines the priority areas with examples of specific policy and funding items within the priority areas. This document would also serve as a resource for our federal delegation. The examples were to provide supportive background as a reference as legislation was considered or as federal allocations were determined when received by the State. She highlighted the five legislative priority areas and a few of the examples in the longer document. The first was to advocate for additional Coronavirus Relief including, public health support including vaccine supply and distribution, flexible direct funding to local governments and flexibility in processing public assistance benefits.

Ms. Tanner said the second priority was to Support Education funding which includes investments to assist communities in eliminating achievement disparities, aligns with student enrollment and addresses the impact of the coronavirus on academic achievement and progress.

Ms. Tanner said that support for Health and Human Services delivered by the County was the largest, priority area. There were over a dozen references listed in the document that span supporting our residents from the cradle to those in their senior years. This included support for public health programs, food and housing insecurity, assistance for youth aging out of foster care, and Medicaid Expansion.

Ms. Tanner said the 4th agenda item was Infrastructure and Environment. This included support for equitable access to broadband, water quality, and updated policies and funding for electronic waste, scrap tires and white goods recycling programs. The final Legislative Priority was to Support Public Safety and Criminal Justice Programs, especially those impacting community initiatives and alternative bail structures. Those were highlights of the five legislative priorities for the County. These priorities were shared by many Counties and Stakeholders across the State. She said addition to working directly with her, you may also hear from the Counties Contract lobbyists Rob Lamme and Lori Ann Harris.

Ms. Tanner said now was when the work continues, and next steps were to have conversations with delegation Chair Senator Marcus and many of you to discuss strategy for possible bills and collaborative opportunities with stakeholders.

26TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT REMARKS

Elisa Chinn Gary, Mecklenburg County Clerk of Superior Court gave an update on the 26th Judicial District. She thanked everyone for their partnership. She said they were grateful that they believed they achieved a time in which the Courthouse was safe. She said they began the pandemic with the Courthouse bringing in thousands around the community and found their selves in an unsafe environment. She said it was no small undertaking that there was funding available for plexiglass and hand sanitizer, temperature scanners, and all of the things needed to feel safe, be safe, and ensure that the public was also safe. She thanked Public Health Director Gibbie Harris, said Gibbie was always very responsive and that they met on a regular basis. She said they were sure they were making the most informed decisions. She said she had never seen Ms. Harris hesitate or show any signs of being tired and appreciated that level of support.

Ms. Chinn Gary said they had put their civil case loads on a virtual platform and created a presumption that [inaudible] in a virtual platform. She said that took a lot of training,

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technology, and moving away from tradition and being flexible and adapting new ideas. She said they had been able to provide full access for immediate relief to the DV community and never waived in that respect. She said they were proud they did their part in protecting the community in that respect. She said the same would be true of other situations, which she listed. She said the same would also be true for the criminal-case load where there have been people in custody who needed bond hearings, arraignments and other things constitutionally protected. She said they forged a plan that moved and shifted and ebbed and flowed with the circumstances but that they did their very best to continue access to the Court.

Ms. Chinn Gary said there would absolutely be backlog but that needs of the majority were met. She said they would be in great need of resources to cure that future backlog, and it would take human capital, technology, greatest imagination and technical support do things differently, so they would be back and calling and asking and seeking their support as they thought through how to move the backlog to serve the community's needs. She said she appreciated any efforts to categorize court employees and prioritize them as to the distribution of the vaccine. She said they were on the frontlines and did not shut down one day. She said she served the largest body of judicial employees in the North Carolina branch. She said took persuasions and wanted to continue to be able to work safely and move through that backlog. She said they knew to be able to protect their selves and families and those who showed up to defend the state and defend individuals and hear cases, all of the vaccine was needed to keep them safe.

Ms. Chinn Gary said they continue as court officials with the issue around racial equity and that Race Matters for Juvenile Justice celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2020. She said they had a strong momentum and for 2020 had the charge of their Chief Justice to do better and be better, which continued to be their charge. She stated they also would be seeking support in the future, sharing ideas and getting their buy-in on ways they could on ways they continue to make their criminal justice system more equitable.

TOWN OFFICIALS REMARKS

John Higdon, Mayor of Matthews, reviewed the Town of Matthew's legislative priorities:

1. Local Government Revenues and Tax Reform
 - a. Work with our NC General Assembly delegation to allow for expanded use of the Prepared Food and Beverage tax to include flexibility to use these funds to improve landscaping and build structured parking to enhance the visitor's experience to Matthews.
 - b. Any continued tax reform efforts at the state level should be at least revenue neutral regarding its impact on Matthews.
 - c. Matthews supports efforts to enact an option for municipalities to enact a ¼ cent local option sales tax. Changes in revenue options have narrowed the ability of municipalities to respond to local needs beyond increasing property taxes. Other actions, such as providing homebuilders with tax exemptions on property, have eroded the property tax base. More local revenue options are needed to reflect the differences within municipalities across the State to order to provide the flexibility to meet those needs.
 - d. Matthews opposes efforts to changing sales tax formulas to redirect a portion of these revenues away from urban counties. The Town of Matthews urges the General Assembly to develop strategies to promote economic development activity throughout North Carolina rather than trying to divide the State. The idea that you assist areas that may be struggling economically by sending them local sales tax revenues that help pay to expand basic services to meet the need in growing communities disregards the portion of the sales tax currently distributed on a per capita basis and

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formulas that already redistribute other types of revenues in North Carolina. Sales tax changes should not penalize those areas with growing economies to the point where it undermines growing economies ability to pay for basic services and infrastructure to support that growth.

- e. Matthews opposes any legislation imposing unfunded mandates on municipalities.
2. "Government Closest to the People Governs Best" – Matthews opposes laws that centralize authority in Raleigh and Washington D.C. to undermine the ability of local elected officials, those closest and most accessible to the people, to govern. We urge the General Assembly to use this adage as a yard stick when considering legislation that impacts municipalities and replace local governance with dictates from Raleigh.
3. Planning and Providing Services for Urban Growth – Cities and towns continue to be the economic engines of the state and should be permitted to grow in an orderly and reasonable fashion that does not diminish the quality of life of current and future residents. All North Carolina citizens have gained greatly from strong and healthy urban areas

Matthews opposes state-wide or local bills that will further undermine local authority, such as tools within zoning ordinances (billboard legislation) and legislation associated with aesthetics.

4. Protection of Locally Developed Infrastructure – The Town of Matthews is opposed to the forced taking of any local government infrastructure as it sets a dangerous precedent in the State of North Carolina, a precedent that will have a chilling effect on any local government investing in needed infrastructure in the future. Matthews is opposed to legislation that forces the transfer of any municipal water system (Asheville water system) or other infrastructure to another entity (Charlotte airport). Where issues arise, a local solution arrived at by an open, collaborative process is preferable to a legislative directed disposition of local government assets.
5. Transportation - The current methods of paying for transportation improvements in North Carolina are inadequate as revenues are declining due to the structure of the gas tax; while the needs are increasing. However, it is important that proposed changes in legislation be monitored, local government input be solicited and considered and that parties work to improve the relationship between the N.C. Department of Transportation and local government.

Some state officials have discussed shifting more of that responsibility to funding State roads within cities to the respective municipalities. The fear is this responsibility would be shifted without adequate funding, as the State is already underfunding the maintenance of roads in Matthews. Matthews supports efforts to make sure North Carolina has revenue to support the schedule for Matthews and CRTPO (Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization) transportation improvements outlined in the STIP and to add critical projects as proposed.

The current transportation funding method passed by the North Carolina General Assembly, known as Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) is a data driven process. STI passage was intended for transportation projects to be funded by need not politics.

The General Assembly should continue to adhere to the tenants of STI. Mass-transit funding. Support efforts in the General Assembly to authorize municipalities through a referendum to increase sales tax, or some other revenue source to fund mass-transit.

6. House Bill 972, which passed in 2016, should be amended. The law made the courts the decision makers of whether and when the public and others could see and hear police video and recordings. The court system can be slow to respond to issues in general, particularly when civil unrest occurs. Videos and other

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recordings need to be made available to local governing bodies at the discretion of the police chief after consultation with the manager.

7. Seek Special Legislation that would allow organizations like the Matthews Free Medical clinic to lease a town-owned building for longer than 10 years.
8. Litter Pick-up on State-maintained Roads. Seek legislation to get additional litter pick-up on state-maintained roads.

Expanded Tree buffers. Support legislation that allows for expanded tree buffers

9. Making Broad Band a Utility. If the GA designed broad band a utility then towns can require all fiber optic cable be in one conduit.
10. 2019-20 NCLM and Metro Mayors Legislative Agendas – In addition the Matthews Town Board supports those items listed on the agendas of the North Carolina League of Municipalities and the Metro Mayors not covered in the items above.

Woody Washam, Mayor of Cornelius, reviewed the Town of Cornelius' legislative priorities:

- Help with revenue challenges over the past year, as it related to COVID-19, and they would like help in making up some of the deficiencies in order to get back to funding important things they had to put on hold such as police officers, park department staff, and other critical positions that, from a conservative position, they felt they needed to put a hold on.
- Accelerate the NCDOT Roadway projects – many of the Town's were delayed, and they had quite a bit of money committed and budgeted which needed to be put back into place and the schedules needed to be accelerated.
- Workforce Housing Redevelopment – the Town needed to get with a plan, and they would need some help in putting together the plan to make sure their town-wide, workforce housing plans and policies were in order as they moved into the years ahead. He stated they did not have a plan at this point and desperately needed one. He said they would be putting that together and would be asking for assistance from the County and State.
- Support legislation that provides authority to create an additional magistrate in North Mecklenburg County and support state funding of those particular positions. He said they had in or around, if not greater than, 120,000 people in north Mecklenburg that their own police officers had to travel quite a distance, which was nonproductive. He said they worked on this for years and that it was now time to act.
- Regional Community Art Center Funding – the Town was well underway to breaking ground for its regional community art center, which was called the Kane Center for the Arts. He thanked everyone for the support for the project and said they were not there yet and would probably need a little bit more. He said the Town would probably need help from the State as well as they proceed with groundbreaking on the wonderful regional facility which served north Mecklenburg. He said it was critical to the downtown redevelopment and quality of life.

Rusty Knox, Mayor of Davidson, reviewed the Town of Davidson's legislative priorities:

Mecklenburg County

- Support adequate resources and funding allocation for a magistrate to serve the north Mecklenburg area.
- Expansion and additional funding of mental health partnerships, services and programs to work collaboratively in north Mecklenburg County.

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- Seek additional funding for Mecklenburg County Mobile Crisis Unit to increase resources so response times are decreased and to provide more access to services, especially to areas of the county where resources are more limited for families and law enforcement agencies.
- Funding partnerships on Beaty Park and the River Run to Summer's Walk Greenway.
- Continue supporting the establishment of a Family Justice Center in Mecklenburg County.

State of North Carolina

- Support adequate resources and funding allocation for a magistrate to serve the north Mecklenburg area and support state law change authorizing local governments to fund a magistrate for the north Mecklenburg area.
- Seek legislation to modify SB476 and allocate funding for schools to use in the implementation of mental health training for staff and developing a suicide risk referral protocol.
- Seek additional funding for Mecklenburg County Mobile Crisis Unit to increase resources so response times are decreased and to provide more access to services, especially to areas of the county where resources are more limited for families and law enforcement agencies.
- Increase funding for regional mental health/social services for Mecklenburg County.
- Support potential legislation to enable the redevelopment of the Linden Mill and the permanent remediation solution for the asbestos contamination on the site.
- Seek the improvements/changes as requested by the town board in Resolution 2020-05 to the North Carolina Highway 73 widening projects (R-2632AB and R-5706) to better reflect the small-town character of Davidson.
- Seek legislation to allow the Town of Davidson special local authority to expand the "delay" provision to include contributing structures in National Register Historic Districts (NRHD) or designated historic landmarks, or to include denial of demolition in local historic districts.
- Seek legislation that would exempt the Town of Davidson's National Historic District from the "two-into-three" exception as described in NCGS§160A-376.
- Amend HB437, to exclude the Town of Davidson such that the town can adopt ordinances to regulate the planting, removal and preservation of trees, to include property to be developed for single-family or duplex residential uses.
- Pursue a solution through the State of North Carolina that allows Norfolk Southern Railway Company to support the implementation of the LYNX Red Line mass transit project.
- Support efforts to restore funding to NCDOT and Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) transportation improvements outlined in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- Seek legislation to modify SB25 to allow for regulation of structures located on the NCDOT highway connecting the historic downtowns of Davidson, Cornelius, and Huntersville.
- Support legislative and other regulatory changes to enhance sustainability efforts including but not limited to increased options for renewable energy procurement, increased ability for NCDOT to fund transit projects, funding for grants for land preservation, continued funding for the NC Clean Energy Technology center for grants for local governments, and other initiatives designed to preserve open space, protect water quality and reduce carbon emissions.
- The Town of Davidson Mayor and Board of Commissioners support the 2021-22 North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) Biennium Advocacy Goals. (attached)

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Federal Government

- Support COVID-19 relief funding for small businesses.
- Support legislation to provide revenue replacement for local governments due to impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Pursue additional transportation infrastructure funding to address local needs and help stimulate the economy.
- Continued support for asbestos remediation in Davidson through the work of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Support additional funding for affordable housing programs and services.
- Support the continuation of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
- Support fully funding the Land and Water Conservation fund to provide monies for states to preserve open space and protect water quality.
- Reinstate funding and adequate resources for Family Justice Centers to provide wrap around services to survivors of domestic violence.

John Aneralla, Mayor of Huntersville reviewed the Town of Huntersville's legislative priorities:

- Funding for Additional Magistrates Across North Carolina – In growing areas like ours especially, this goal addresses adverse impacts to the productivity of our police officers and residents due to lack of local services. – Supports more responsive, adaptive operations
- Pension Reform - see letter drafted by Mayor attached – sustainability of system for healthy state/local finances
- Revenue Options for all Municipalities (Without Creating Winners/Losers) – Supports flexibility for cities/towns – Support healthy finances and vibrant, resilient, adaptive municipal operations
- Cancer Registry – Recognizing increase of clusters (labeled or perceived) in occurrences of certain cancers in our region and other parts of state, a more active and responsive registry to simplify research and response to these occurrences is needed – Supports vibrant communities
- Support firmer timelines/deadlines for utility relocation and other related work needed to speed up and support infrastructure projects – Supports resiliency of infrastructure, adaptive municipal operations

Amelia Stinson-Wesley, Pineville Town Council, reviewed the Town of Pineville's legislative priorities:

- Small Business – The Town of Pineville was concerned about small businesses and their economic survival. There were many residents struggling financially, especially with loss of jobs and the need to pay for utilities.
- Transportation Infrastructure – The Town of Pineville was ever mindful of transportation infrastructure needs, as traffic presented a constant challenge in Pineville, and the roads always needed attention and maintenance.

COVID-19 RELIEF UPDATE

Gibbie Harris, Mecklenburg County Public Health Director, gave a COVID-19 relief update stating that as of that morning Mecklenburg County had 79,674 cases since March with 721 deaths. She said the numbers, over the past seven days, had started inching in the right direction. She stated they were currently cautiously optimistic. She said the number of case counts had gone down over the past couple of days and the positivity rate was now at 12.3%. She pointed out that the number of deaths experienced over the past

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couple of weeks was significant and were the deadliest couple of weeks since the beginning of the pandemic. She said Mecklenburg County had the second pediatric death due to COVID-19, which was never acceptable. She said they were down to 477 per 100,000. She said you could see that the 20 to 39-year olds lead the way since the beginning of the pandemic and they were seeing cases in all other areas and that unfortunately, in the Hispanic community, the less than 20-year olds were at least 21% of the cases in that population. She reviewed the amount of virus per zip code and stated that all of the zip codes were affected by the virus. She said there were still really high numbers in the community and serious virus here, and although some have higher rates than others, no one was left out by the virus.

Ms. Harris gave an update on vaccines, stating they continued to work closely with the hospitals, emergency management, and others in the community to try to best utilize the vaccine that they were receiving. She said the State was focused on Group 1 and 2 out of the 5 that the State defined. She said it unfortunately created some confusion for the communities as the priority groups have changed overtime. She said Group 1 was all healthcare workers who were currently in-person, patient contact and the long-term care staff and residents, many of who were being vaccinated by the federal program through CVS and Walgreens, but many did not sign up, and the Health Department was making sure they would get vaccinated as well. She said Group 2 included 65-years old and older, which was a huge group in Mecklenburg County, and last week the State added the 65 to 74, which was 80,000 individuals. She said they were working their way through it, but it had been as low process. She said the biggest issue at this point was availability of vaccine.

Ms. Harris said the Health Department was running a clinic through Bojangles Coliseum and had opened up appointments yesterday morning at 8:30 a.m. for February 1, 2021 through February 20, 2021, and they were filled by 10:00 a.m. She said the demand was significant; the volume was not. She said they knew Atrium was running a mass clinic at the Speedway today and hoping to run a mask clinic at the Bank of America Stadium next weekend, depending on availability of vaccine. Her main concern and focus were on the populations most at risk, who were quite often the ones who would not get into the clinics. She said they were looking for opportunities to go out and vaccinate them. She said the government and Secretary were very clear with them that they needed to get those vaccines in arms and did not to be sitting on vaccine, because that would impact what the allotment was from the federal government. She said as of Monday they had received 6,825 doses of Pfizer and had administered 7,516, and the way they did that was, because some of the vials contained more than what they were allotted for. She said they were just starting with second doses, and the concern there was not getting it out as quickly as they did first doses. She said they felt like they were meeting the requirements of the State, but the problem was they could use a lot more vaccine, and they were just not getting it. She said in the past week that they received some additional vaccine that they were using to go out into the community and provide to a number of clinics in specific areas where folks were most at risk who had not gotten vaccine yet. She said they were working with a couple of entities which worked with high-risk populations to get vaccine out to them as well. She said they were working with MEDIC and StarMed. She said if they had the vaccine they could do more, and they had been beating that drum on a regular basis, as has the County Manager and would continue to do that.

Ms. Harris said they were looking at the minority communities and looking at ways to get them vaccinated. She said there would be clinics this weekend and that faith-based organizations, Novant, and Atrium were working with them too. She said they were doing a clinic with Inlivium tomorrow and were looking at the 65 and older in the shelters. They have worked with the Charlotte Medical and Dental Society, which was an African American Society to ensure their medical providers were vaccinated. She said they were also working with the refugee community to get those vaccinated as well. She said a problem was vaccine willingness, so they were continuing to do a lot through the public

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information office and working with both hospital systems to develop materials, get those in the community. She said they were speaking when they could and looking to community leaders to get those messages out as well.

Ms. Harris said regardless of how much vaccine they had, it would be quite some time before enough people were vaccinated in the community to start moving them in the right direction, so everyone needed to continue to do the things that they knew worked: wearing a mask; staying 6-feet apart; and washing hands. She said they were currently in the middle of a directive where they strongly recommended strongly from the public-health perspective that people stay home unless they actively needed to be out for essential services or to work.

Michael Bryant, Deputy County Manager, said shared an update on how Mecklenburg County appropriated \$39.2 million which was received in funding from the U.S. Department of Treasury. He said the spend plan consisted of two, major components; \$24 million of the \$39.2 million was earmarked for eligible expenses that the County incurred associated with responded to the pandemic, such as: facility alterations; installing protective shields; investments in technology, such as laptops to support remote transition; and employee costs, such as salaries associated with emergency response. He stated the remaining \$15.2 million of the \$39.2 million was invested in four, broad categories supported by the Board of County Commissioners: community response; continuity of operations; economic development; and emergency response. He stated that of the \$15.2 million that was distributed to the community, a total of \$4.1 million was earmarked to provide general assistance such as mortgage, rent, and utility assistance through partnerships with the Towns and nonprofits. He explained the breakout of the \$4.1 million, stating that it included \$2.3 million to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership, which supported the expansion of their rental program to the towns and unincorporated areas, and \$1.3 million was provided to non-profits located in the town to provide general assistance, and \$500,000 went to Social Serve. He said that they earmarked \$2.2 million for a small-business grant program to provide financial support to businesses located in the Towns in the unincorporated areas of the County. He said that \$1.5 million was provided to the Towns for the reimbursement of their cost associated with their response to the pandemic, such as the purchase of personal protection equipment, cleaning supplies, and workplace alterations. He said they also provided \$1.3 million investment for senior services, which included the sanitization of homes, meals, and mental health services, specifically for senior citizens. He said they also provided a million dollars in funding for the arts, science, and creativity sector and the Board approved a million dollars for food insecurity to purchase \$1.2 million pounds of food to serve over 200,000 households throughout the entire county.

Mr. Bryant said they set aside \$600,000 for mental health services, which included substance abuse screenings and treatment for individuals whose use was related to COVID-19, counseling for domestic violence survivors and witnesses, and access to behavior-health services for uninsured and unemployed individuals. He said they invested \$500,000 for a communication and engagement plan to help promote awareness and to get the word out regarding the \$32.9 million. He said they earmarked \$200,000 to support criminal justice services for transitional housing, drug testing, and trade-school enrollment for individuals transitioning back into the community. He said they also provided \$185,000 to support workforce training and job placement for residents. He said they set aside \$150,000 for PPE, community distribution, and they received a large donation of PPE which allowed them to utilize their CARE funding for other purposes. He said the County also provided a total of \$3.3 million to the community fund, which was a partnership with the United Way and Foundations for the Carolinas, to provide general assistance throughout the County. He said one of the primary reasons why the Board was so supportive of the spend plan was because it focused heavily on the Towns and unincorporated areas of the County.

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Mr. Bryant said they learned late Wednesday night that the County would receive \$6.7 million from the second stimulus package, which would be geared towards providing rental and utility assistance as well. He said he would be meeting with the County Manager and others on the executive team Tuesday to discuss how the funds would be distributed throughout the community. He expressed his appreciation to the Towns, Mayors and all those represented from the Towns, with their support and partnership in ensuring the funds got out to the community to those in need.

LEGISLATIVE COMMENTS

Senator Natasha Marcus reviewed the priorities that she heard to demonstrate that the delegation was listening. She acknowledged on behalf of the delegation that Mecklenburg County did better than most counties in the State at supporting educators and public education, and they saw that and knew they needed more help from the State. She mentioned the excellent job that Public Health Director, Gibbie Harris and the whole Health Department had been doing and mentioned a news paper article about how the State has routinely underfunded county health departments and that it was making the role out of the vaccination particularly difficult, so she heard them on that, as well as having a lot of uninsured people due to the lack of Medicaid expansion.

Becky Carney said she was one of the recipients of having that vaccine in her arm and that she would receive her second vaccine next Thursday. She shared that in Raleigh and in speaking with people, about how Mecklenburg County has been quite affective with the rollout, which she appreciated. She stated that as a former Mecklenburg County Commissioner, she really appreciated and respected all of the Towns and Mayors and town council members and that they were all a unit. She said she wanted them to know that about the delegation, which has worked well together bipartisan. She said they were a unit, which was the most important thing they had going for them, and they had to continue while going into the new term with communication.

Senator Joyce Waddell stated she appreciated the meeting and everyone coming together, because they knew what was important to one, small town was important to the delegation. She said even though they had various representatives and senators who represented the Towns, they bring everyone together, because it takes all of them to get legislation to move forward. She said she received her vaccination yesterday at Bojangles, and it went smoothly. She said her arm was still sore, she was feeling the effects of it today, and her next one would be in February.

Senator Marcus asked everyone listening to wear a mask and stay home as much as they could.

Ms. Harris answered questions and responded to comments from meeting participants.

Senator John Autry asked if it was known how many days' worth of vaccine was available in Mecklenburg County.

Ms. Harris responded that they receive a week worth of vaccine at a time and only know a couple of days a head of time how much it would be. She said they did not want anything sitting on the shelf, so they make sure they give it all out. She said she let the State know Mecklenburg County could actually use more than what they had been receiving. She said that each week, they received two trays of Pfizer which was 1,950 doses of vaccine per week for Mecklenburg County. She said both of the hospital systems get their allotment, but it was for all of their facilities, not just Mecklenburg County.

John Higdon, Mayor of Matthews, asked if she felt the distribution of the vaccine was equitable across the State. He said he seemed as though Mecklenburg County was

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possibly not getting enough, where some less populous counties were receiving more than they needed.

Ms. Harris responded that the State stated they were not distributing the vaccine based on population. She said they did know they were trying to get vaccine out to those areas that were actually using it, and she said Mecklenburg County received an extra 800 this week which were being used in the community, but they would not receive those doses next week unless they decide they could provide more at this point.

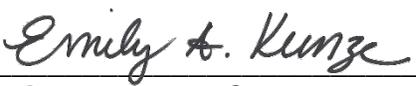
CLOSING REMARKS

Manager Diorio thanked participants for their attendance.

Chair Dunlap thanked everyone for their participation and believed it to be beneficial.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.



Emily A. Kunze, Clerk



George Dunlap, Chair