

The Beaufort County Police Force Committee met on July 22, 2021, at 6:00 PM, in boardroom located in the Financial Services Building located at 136 W. 2nd Street in Washington, NC with the following present:

Committee Members:

Chairman Hood Richardson
Commissioner Stan Deatherage
Commissioner Randy Walker

Staff Present:

Brain Alligood, County Manager
Katie Mosher, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Richardson called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Walker led the prayer. Commissioner Deatherage led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Richardson said the first item is to approve the agenda. He said I have two items to add to the agenda, with the approval of the Committee. He said one is how the Sheriff fits in and what the Sheriff is going to do if we do this. He said number two is the trip to Gaston County, which we need to discuss and talk about some more. He said with those two items do I have a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Deatherage motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Walker seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Richardson said the next is public comments. He said we didn't have anyone sign but that doesn't mean you have to sign up in order to speak so if anyone has something they want to say now is a good time.

Ms. Dot Moate said what if something comes up during the meeting that's very important. She said not a conversation but just a question.

Chairman Richardson said we try to discourage that but we do have a limited group tonight so we may ignore the question but with that understanding, yeah, we have a limited group so we should have an orderly meeting. He said no public comments. He said do we need to approve the minutes from the last meeting. He said when you send them out we'll take care of that.

Forensics

Chairman Richardson said the next thing on the agenda is forensics. He said I'll start the conversation off by saying forensics, in particular relative to the Brenda Hamilton Case has brought forth a glaring shortcoming in the way we do forensics in Beaufort County so I would ask each of these two Commissioners to speak if they would like.

Commissioner Deatherage said I'd just like to say you've been on this like a bulldog on a bone from day one and it would've been forgotten a long time ago so thank you for staying on top of it. He said it's important that we take matters seriously. He said thank you anyway.

Commissioner Walker said is there an actual team that focuses on forensics or is it all who happens to be working that day.

Chairman Richardson said from my knowledge and what I've seen it's who happens to be working that day. He said I know we have a so-called forensic vehicle but the complaints that I have heard from the public, quite frankly, are, you know, with the last sheriff, before Sheriff Coleman, if you didn't steal more than \$1,000 he wouldn't investigate it. He said stealing is still stealing, it doesn't matter what the amount is. He said I don't know what Sheriff Coleman is doing with this, but we have appropriated money in the past for a vehicle that was large enough to haul or carry, if you will, the tools that they don't call it the forensic unit but the people who take fingerprints or whatever to haul around with them. He said I never thought it took that many tools, but we have approved special sized pick-up trucks in the past for this. He said so to answer your question, unless the Manager has an answer, I've never seen anyone designated as forensics and for those of us that watch TV, it's a good place to get an education on forensics because for the most part what they do on TV is pretty much in line with what happens and what goes on. He said people dressing up in clean suits and using all the technology to find blood and all this sort of stuff. He said one of the things that has disappointed a lot of people in the County that I have talked to is well they broke into my house or the broke into my car and I would say well, didn't they take fingerprints, no, they just wrote a report and left. He said well, what's happened, nothing. He said part of forensics is record keeping over a long enough period of time. He said part of forensics is continuity of record keeping and what a lot of people don't understand is every time you elect a new sheriff, and some sheriff's departments, all of the records are abandoned, they're walked away from, literally. He said they may keep some on murder cases and important crimes but the rest of it, they start all over again. He said people who are doing forensics need to have an education that leads them, a formal education that leads them towards forensics. He said that is something like biology or one of the other technical fields that requires a knowledge of technical things and I'm positive that we don't have that. He said with a police department you can have people who have a career in forensics, and they can spend 30 years with Beaufort County doing forensics, that's their specialty. He said what you would get from that, that you don't have now, is a series of records. He said for instance we took fingerprints in a certain place, we don't know who's they are, then someone else in the neighborhood was broken into, we took some fingerprints and took some more and finally, three or four of these things match up and we know the same guy is doing it. He said maybe we identify him, maybe we can't. He said the whole point is even on routine investigations Beaufort County, to my knowledge, is not even scratching the surface on forensics from the standpoint of solving crimes. He said now the Hamilton thing, the Brenda Hamilton case, which I'll just thumbnail for you for those who don't know, was an animal attack almost two years ago, February or so, January, in the wintertime she was out walking, and it was near dark. He said she was found near death, which she subsequently died shortly thereafter. He said people started complaining to me right away that the Sheriff's Department didn't cordon off the scene. He said if you've got human blood on any scene you need to cordon it off. He said there's no way that the Sheriff could have known, and when I say the Sheriff I'm talking about his deputies who, under the law is the same as he so when I say the Sheriff it's whoever deputy was there. He said when the Sheriff arrived at the scene and blood on the scene and a woman half dead laying in the ditch there's no way that they knew whether a psychopath had attacked her, or an animal had attacked her. He said they could not possibly have known in the dark like that. He said so common sense would've told you that the scene should've been cordoned off for the collection of scientific evidence and that is forensics. He said another thing that happened is the Sheriff did not want to pursue the case and it took the Commissioners forming a committee, which I was fortunate enough to be chairman of, in order to force the investigation to come to an end and it came to a sorry end because what we found out when we forced this was that the samples had been poorly collected, had been poorly cared for and within forensics one of the things that you do for the protection of evidence, in case there was a human, a criminal in this is you divide the samples in this. He said it's called sample splitting and you divide the samples into two or three batches. He said then you can give those samples to various people and agencies to do things and normally you keep one for yourself so that if you have to prove something and duplicate a result you can pull it out and duplicate a result. He said that's

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why you do that, for the purpose of duplicating results because when you go to trial if you can't duplicate the results you don't have a case. He said so what we found out from this is that the Sheriff was doing nothing even close to normal forensics. He said the samples that he took, oh it sounded good, we tested all the dogs in the neighborhood and all that kind of stuff but the samples from Ms. Hamilton that would've shown us, specifically from the saliva, whatever animal attacked her, what it was, were not collected properly, were not kept properly, were not stored properly. He said the people that did the final testing on this, I talked to the lady in Florida who did this, and she said if I'd had better samples I could give you better results, I only had a few samples. He said she was down to finding something to test, a few samples that were so clean that she was taking a Q-tip over a flashlight over the little indentions in a flashlight to try and find something that she could use for evidence and that's where she came up with the dog stuff, from the flashlight. He said so everything pointed to a canine, but it wasn't the canines that had already been sampled and tested so we didn't have enough evidence for us to go in a direction. He said one of the things we would get out of a professional police department would be career forensic experts who would be there for years and years. He said we could select people who were well enough trained to do the work, who had a formal education that would lead them to forensics, and they could understand the data they were collecting and what it meant. He said we would also have a records department that would last 30, 40, even 50 years for that matter. He said you could probably go back after 50 years and start culling things out and throwing things away, but you would be able to keep records long enough and scientific records long enough and test records long enough so that if you had a repeat offense or a similar crime you would be able to do some real investigative work. He said we all watch TV, and we all see these cases and they're real cases where ten years later somebody is found and convicted of something, even longer periods of time than that. He said that's why we need professional forensic experts in Beaufort County. He said it will make us all sleep better at night, and it will give the public a much better feeling about investigations because at the moment, from what I know, investigations is entirely filling out that report and shoving it in a file somewhere and that's the end of it unless somebody starts pushing it. He said we all know how the Sheriff thing works so far as finding criminals and crime, the public cry comes out and the Sheriff gets on the ball. He said other than that happening if you want your loved one's case really investigated you have to go down and push for it to be done. He said that's not to say you wouldn't have to do that if you had a police department, but you would certainly not have to go to one person, the Sheriff, the only person you can go to to get a crime pushed. He said with that, do you have comments on forensics.

Commissioner Walker said yeah, are you aware if there's been forensic fumbling that has caused a court case to be altered. He said how would you even know, is this a reoccurring thing in our Beaufort County court cases that, oh, they didn't do a good job. He said we probably wouldn't have any idea or wouldn't even know of any.

Chairman Richardson said I haven't heard of any specifically but what came to light out of this, from our committee's work was that forensics is not even close to being handled properly in Beaufort County so I would presume, in a lot of other cases that's the case. He said I know that in break-ins it's a routine thing, we don't try to lift fingerprints, we don't try to do a thorough investigation that we should be doing. He said if we had a police department then we could set up a policy and know what's being done under what conditions this would be done or that would be done. He said right now we have a one-man show with the Sheriff and that is he decides everything. He said the County Commissioners cannot sit here right now and tell you what our policy is on investigating what. He said there's also many unsolved cases over the years in Beaufort County, especially murder cases, that have just died. He said if you go ask the Sheriff about them they don't know anything about them but they're there and I encourage the public to come out and tell us about those cases where people have been murdered or you had serious crimes committed and investigations have just wilted away. He said our problem, to answer Commissioner Walker is we simply don't know because the Sheriff will not make information available. He said the Beaufort Observer, which I'm associated with, we make request after request under the statute and under the law to this Sheriff and the Sheriff before him and they refused to give us the information and just shut it down so what do we do. He said do we have enough information to sue them every day, hardly. He said with a

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police department you will have a policy and you will have a chief of police; you'll have a manager you can go to, a County Manager you can go to. He said you will have seven commissioners you can go to who have influence over what goes on in that department. He said right now one man makes all of the decisions and that's not right. He said democracy, that is not democracy under any stretch of the imagination. He said I'll throw this little statement in too, the Magna Carta, 900 years or what was it, year 900.

Commissioner Deatherage said it was after William the Conqueror, so it had to be around 1016.

Commissioner Richardson said at any rate, the Magna Carta, of the items that were addressed in the Magna Carta, 1/3 of them concerned the abuse of sheriffs. He said the abuse, not of but by the sheriff on the public and one of the things that stands out in my mind, and I haven't read the thing closely is he cannot take up habitat in your home. He said it suddenly became against the law. He said can you imagine if the Sheriff wanted to move into your house and said I'm here, start cooking and saying I can live here as long as I want to. He said they were doing that; they were doing stuff like that. He said that's why we had the Magna Carta which was the beginning of democracy from the English standpoint.

Commissioner Walker said that was June 15, 1215.

Chairman Richardson said thank you for looking that up. He said that's 800 years. He said we've had the same basic system for 800 years and modern crime has definitely outrun what was crime 800 years ago, and what was crime even 500 years ago. He said most of the time the blood was there, they saw somebody shot somebody, it was simple stuff compared to what we have now and all the other things that can happen. He said this is complex criminality today and that's another reason why we need professional police, not an elected sheriff who's going to go around and tell us what he's going to do and what he's not going to do.

Commissioner Walker said I would imagine forensics is a degreed college class.

Chairman Richardson said it probably is.

Mr. Alligood said Commissioner Richardson I sent Chief Deputy Rose a quick text and asked him a question about evidence collection and he said all sworn personnel receive training on evidence collection and preservation. He read we also have several investigators who have received advanced training on how to document and work crime scenes.

Chairman Richardson said okay, well, then we need to start doing what they've been trained to do because they haven't been doing it. He said this is something we can talk more about later on, but this is just an example of when you leave it up to one person who will not tell you what's going on and you have to have the Commissioners behind it to force it to a sorry conclusion. He said it's not right, the public deserves better than this. He said we ask for, at this particular meeting, the next item on the agenda if we're done with that one, has to do with the SBI response. He said we're looking for a police presence to come to this particular meeting and talk to us a little bit about the, how they would fit if a change were to be made, if they had any advice or opinions or whatever and the Manager, I have an email from the Manager that I would like to get into the record because I think it's important. He said if I may, Mr. Manager. He said this is from, dated July 22nd, the Manager said to me "I spoke this morning with Special Agent In Charge, Marshal Rogers of the Northeastern District. She said the SBI works off of requests either from a DA or the head of a law enforcement agency, sheriff, or police chief. She said she had not worked personally with an agency like Gaston County Police but the SBI's interaction would be the same no matter what the agency, which agency made the request. She said her office would not be able to add anything, observation or advice, to the discussions the police committee was having." He said I think that's a great plus because what it says to me is we don't have a problem if you change the way you're enforcing law, criminal law in Beaufort County so nothing would change with the SBI. He said I would

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presume nothing would change with the FBI so I don't know of any reason that it would. He said for the public's information, over half of the law enforcement in the United States is done by police departments, not sheriff's, police departments. He said does anybody have anything they want to add.

Commissioner Deatherage said you're on a roll.

Chairman Richardson said I don't want to do all the talking.

Commissioner Deatherage said you're kind of summing it all up. He said I will say this, the one thing I would like to see happen is the politics be taken as much as possible out of the dealings with the people of Beaufort County. He said we're a political body, the people who work for us are political. He said it's the way it is, and the Sheriff is political. He said I'm sure that if we had a chief of police he would be political to a point, but I think he would water down the politics, to a degree. He said that's one good thing of having a police department countywide.

Chairman Richardson said I think it would be a lot less political. He said right now we have both parties represented on the Board so if you have a county police chief and a county police force it would have a tendency to be a whole lot more neutral than it is now and fair to everyone. He said it would also, again, give the public the right, you could come to Commissioners and complain about investigations and how law enforcement was being done. He said right now, who do you go to to complain, the Sheriff won't even talk to Commissioners. He said he won't even come to Commissioner's meetings. He said he sends a mouthpiece. He said this is important that the public be able to represent themselves at getting justice. He said that is very important.

Commissioner Deatherage said yeah. He said the last Sheriff in Beaufort County, and we've been Commissioners for a long time but the last Sheriff in Beaufort County who would come and speak with us on a regular basis was Nelson Shephard and he's been gone a decade and a half.

Commissioner Richardson said I was a Commissioner for about two years, but Nelson didn't mind coming and talking to us. He said if we needed something or wanted something he would come, then explain it himself. He said one of the things that's going on in the public that I hear about all the time is you're setting up two police departments. He said you're going to have a sheriff's department and then you're going to have to have a police department. He said that is not so. He said there's not a word of truth in that. He said the bailiff's, the sheriff would retain control, as the constitution provides, bailiffs, the running of the jail and serving papers so he would have a staff that would do all of those things. He said that staff is already in place now so you wouldn't add any people in that department. He said you would simply take the law enforcement part of the sheriff's department would become the police department and within that law enforcement group you would create some positions that we don't have now, like forensics and other positions that we may need to have law enforcement in Beaufort County. He said so there's no need to add more people. He said the Chief Deputy, if you would, would be the equivalent of the chief of police. He said so would the other officers in the department and right on down the line. He said there wouldn't be any change. He said there's no need to make any change. He said as a matter of fact, with the amount of overtime that I see that is paid by the sheriff's department, now I understand that they work 12 hours there's some built-in overtime with their work, regardless of what you do but it's only about 8% or 9% of their total pay. He said we've paying deputies 15%, 20% or 25%. He said we paid one deputy last year \$92,000. He said I've got the W-4 form to prove it. He said his base salary is about \$55,000 or \$60,000 maybe so there's a lot of overtime that's paid out and the Sheriff refuses to control that overtime. He said there is no control on overtime. He said if we had a police department then we would have much better management of overtime because you would have Commissioners, a Manager and a chief of police who could say why are these people working all of this overtime. He said how do you work that many hours a year to make that kind of money, are you ever at home. He said so a lot of people are making a lot of money at the sheriff's department in Beaufort County but each one of those people is a political appointee. He said keep that in mind so to keep them on your side I guess you let

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them make money and then they go out and campaign for them on election day. He said you wouldn't have to worry about that with a police department. He said a policeman is a policeman. He said look at the police departments we have in the County now. He said a policeman is a policeman, he's not out campaigning for anybody. He said as a matter of fact he's running from campaigning because he doesn't want to be political, he cannot become political. He said so he can spend his time being fair and giving everybody fair and equal treatment. He said so the cost, anybody that's saying the cost is going to go up simply does not know what they are talking about. He said if anything the cost will go down. He said now, Sheriff Coleman, during the last four years he's been in office, he's run through about an extra \$2 million a year, compared to what we were doing before. He said I know one of his big political campaign bills is "I'm saving you money". He said he hasn't saved us one thin dime; he has cost us money. He said look at the cars in the back parking lot, look at the cars with low mileage on them. He said look at the fancy cars, the 15 or so unmarked cars that re not doing any police work, actually, because there's no police markings on them. He said the big vehicles that he has bought for his favored deputies to drive, we wouldn't have that anymore because every vehicle would have a mark on it unless it was a detective car for a purpose that they didn't need to be marked. He said so you'd have at least 15 more vehicles out there in the public that the criminals would be seeing and would give us a much greater presence in the county that the police are here and a lot of times what deters crime is simply the presence of police.

Commissioner Walker said what would you envision the amount of deputies for the sheriff be reduced to under this.

Chairman Richardson said a good example of what goes on with his staffing is this year the Commissioners, I didn't vote for it, I don't know whether you guys did or not, voted to add five deputies to the sheriff, vote to add five more deputies on, why. He said we still don't know why. He said he wanted five deputies and he kept ranting and railing and his buddies that are on this Board decided we'd give him the five deputies. He said I ask, give us a report of the number of domestic contacts that you make in a month's time, during each month, give us a report on the number of criminal contacts you make in a month's time so that we can see whether you need this or not so that you can justify this expense to the public. He said the political sheriff didn't justify anything, but he kept hammering his buddies on this Board until they gave him what he wanted. He said I still don't know why he needed five more deputies. He said one of the things you will get out of a professional police department, this is true in Gaston County, if you don't believe me get on-line and pull up the Gaston County Police and start looking and you will see the report the give their Commissioners every single month. He said it's the number of domestic contacts, the number of criminal contacts, the number of juvenile contacts, it's about six pages long. He said it's more stuff than I want to look at, frankly, but we would have that information. He said the citizens of Beaufort County would have a way to judge and scale how crime is being handled in Beaufort County. He said we need that, you need that. He said you need to be able to sleep at night and right now it's all a secret and the reason it's a secret is because the elected sheriff says it's a secret and the Commissioners that you have elected can't get together and say wait just a minute bub, this isn't how this thing works because it works quite a bit different than what a lot of people in this County thinks it works. He said but as long as he has four friends on this Board he will continue to waste money and any other Sheriff will do the same thing. He said I'll talk about one more thing, there's a guy, and I'll think of his name in a minute, the Manager probably knows his name, who's the head of the sheriff's association.

Mr. Alligood said Eddie Caldwell.

Chairman Richardson said Eddie Caldwell, right now I'm going on rumor but the friend that told me this swears it's true. He said Eddie Caldwell runs the police, Sheriffs Association. He said those letters that you get in the mail, that I get in the mail, I've got a stack of them, that says please send me some money because the County won't fund me, I don't have enough money to keep you safe in Beaufort County. He said that's a big lie. He said Eddie Caldwell and the Sheriff's Association sends those letters out. He said there was a man in my office less than a year ago, he's a friend, I won't identify him, but he was somewhat, he had some problems, but he told me the Sheriff's Department loves me. He said I said oh

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really, why's that and he said I gave them \$2,100 last year. He said \$2,100 from those letters that are being mailed out with the Sheriff saying he doesn't have enough money to keep you safe and you have to make a contribution so he can do his job. He said where does that money go.

Commissioner Walker said a nice bumper sticker.

Chairman Richardson said doesn't he, it can't go towards campaigns I don't think.

Commissioner Walker said yeah but you get a really nice sticker when you give money.

Chairman Richardson said oh yeah, when you give the money. He said so, don't give money to any sheriff's department in the State of North Carolina. He said Beaufort County in particular, we've been spending more money every year than we've spent the year before and what we found out is, counting the last Commissioners meeting, was that they took \$50,000 out of one of the funds, which is the fund for telephone where we pay for 911, is what it's called, we used \$50,000 of that we weren't supposed to use and the state caught it during an audit of that fund and made us pay it back. He said all of a sudden we don't need any more money from the Commissioners to do this because we had that surplus in our budget. He said the Sheriff's budget, right now, is a fat budget. He said it's always over funded because people don't want to listen to him complain. He said it's time for this stuff to come to a halt. He said we need justice; we need people doing their jobs and we don't need to be robbed blind by the sheriff's department. He said do you guys have any comments.

Commissioner Walker said I did vote for the five deputies, but I figured he'd let so many people go and the SRO's were being altered, somebody had to do the work.

Chairman Waters said they let 12 SRO's go. He said what we did was increase his normal staff by five people, that's what we did. He said I don't see a justification yet for doing it. He said I can't see why, he can't tell you why, he wouldn't tell us why because he doesn't have to because it's so political. He said we need to get out of the politics, and we need to get professional law enforcement and get away from this stuff.

Commissioner Deatherage said if everyone remembers, I think it was before you became a Commissioner we had a problem with his request for funding. He said there was \$250,000 or so dollars sitting in his account and rather than use that money for additional deputies he wanted to use that money for magnificent raises for certain key personnel for him.

Chairman Richardson said you're talking about Sheriff Coleman.

Commissioner Deatherage said yeah. He said increasing IT staff, a lot of the money just seemed like it was going into a hole. He said I voted against it; I know Chairman Richardson voted against it, but I believe he did get it.

Chairman Richardson said he wound up giving his buddies \$15,000 raises.

Commissioner Deatherage said somehow, I don't know if he got it through the vote but somehow he worked it out.

Commissioner Walker said were these reoccurring raises towards salaries or were they bonuses.

Chairman Richardson said it wasn't a bonus, it's going to be reoccurring. He said whatever he gave them last year they're getting again this year.

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Commissioner Deatherage said that's pretty big money. He said basically I think the Commissioners, at least some of us, made the pronouncement okay, this is the people you wanted to add. He said at this time they still had the SRO's. He said this was before Sheriff Coleman decided he didn't want the SRO's anymore, but they still had the SRO's at this point. He said I think the SRO's conundrum just added more fuel to the fire to be extra political, and you're quite aware of that whole SRO situation.

Chairman Richardson said do you have anything else to say. He said I know I've done all the talking.

Commissioner Deatherage said you're on a roll.

Chairman Richardson said how the sheriff fits in, I alluded to this a while ago. He said you're still going to have a sheriff, you're still going to elect a sheriff if we have a county police force, he is going to be responsible for running the jail, managing the bailiffs in the courthouse, and serving papers. He said that's what the constitution says his duties are. He said to remind you the way that sheriffs got into enforcing criminal laws is somewhat by accident because in the old days when you had a county courthouse, and the sheriff is sitting here, and somebody needed to be arrested the Commissioners would tell the sheriff we'll pay you to go arrest this guy and pay you to put him in your jail that you're running. He said it was just a logical thing to do. He said so the body of law that has come about for sheriff's evolved from that. He said there's nothing in the constitution that says the sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer of the county. He said there's nothing. He said he has that buy the public's approval and by the Commissioners approval. He said there's no law that justifies his existence in doing that. He said so you're still going to have a sheriff and he's still going to be there and doing his thing. He said he's still going to fit in. He said we are not going to have two separate departments that are doing the same thing.

Commissioner Walker said if you had a high-profile event who would be the spokesman. He said is it still the sheriff or the regular police chief.

Chairman Richardson said the Sheriff. He said he would be political, he would be, he's a political representative I would think. He said a police chief is not a political representative, he's politically neutral.

Commissioner Walker said I'm talking about for the news services, who would they go to to say give us a comment on this situation.

Chairman Richardson said if it's criminal it would be the police chief or the manager.

Commissioner Walker said we see sheriffs from different counties for incidences that have happened. He said you've seen that all the time. He said I was just wondering who they'd go to now if we had this split, or kind of split law enforcement. He said because the police department would be the law, the sheriff would be papers, serving papers so if you had a high profile something it would seem like the police department would be the one as the speaker.

Chairman Richardson said they would have the knowledge.

Commissioner Walker said so that would sort of be a different change.

Chairman Richardson said our trip to Gaston County that we've been putting off, I think we're still putting it off mainly because Commissioners are so busy and because the public needs to find out more about this police thing and how it would work and more than they know right now. He said however, I did go to the National Association of County Commissioners meeting a week ago. He said I left on the 8th and came back on Sunday and while I was there I bumped into the Chairman of the Board of Gaston County, and he was very enthusiastic about his police force and he's very enthusiastic about us coming. He said Mr. Manager he said we'll meet you halfway if we need to, we'll set up something half way, if

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you all come we want you to meet with the Commissioners. He said he was very enthusiastic, and I think you had talked with him after I went home so they are very interested. He said they like their police force; they like the way it works, and he said back in the early days when they were thinking about starting it we had a lot of experts come and talk to us about this and we could not find a reason not to do this when all was said and done. He said so that trip will be coming up, we can talk about it more at the next meeting.

Mr. Alligood said if you all could come up with some dates that would be the next jumping off point for us. He said I just need some dates to try and coordinate with them. He said otherwise we're just kind of scrambling because they don't know when. He said so if you all could come up with some dates for us, a couple weeks, I don't know. He said take a look at your calendars and give us some dates so we can try to formalize that with them.

Chairman Richardson said we can talk amongst ourselves and see what we can come up with. He said I know Commissioner Walker is busy, Commissioner Deatherage is busy and I'm busy. He said it seems like we're the three working Commissioners. He said our future meeting date, I think the Clerk has proposed a date, the 26th of August.

Commissioner Walker said fine with me.

Commissioner Deatherage said yeah.

Commissioner Richardson said the next thing, and I haven't asked you, is there any new business or anything any Commissioner wants to bring up, say, discuss.

Commissioner Walker said I'm good.

Commissioner Deatherage said Chairman Richardson, I defer to you.

Chairman Richardson said well, I mean, I feel uneasy. He said this is something that we encourage the public to come to these meetings. He said we encourage the public to watch what's going on with this. He said we encourage the public to investigate this. He said I encourage the public, listen to this, you want to hear something odd, look up the Magna Carta and read it. He said it will give you a great insight into what goes on. He said we have one person that you go to for justice. He said that is not democracy. He said we do not need that. He said it has caused as many problems as it has solved if you look at it. He said there's a sheriff every year that goes to jail somewhere in the State of North Carolina. He said almost every year. He said it's a lot, they seize a lot of power and I want to go back to Eddie Caldwell, one of the points I wanted to make about Eddie Caldwell. He said one of the reasons that he is paid so much money and he's such a great hero with all these sheriff's is he's figured out how to raise money for them by sending out these letters that says these dirty old County Commissioners aren't funding me and you have to pony up if you want justice in this County. He said that is false. He said the other thing that Eddie Caldwell does that is a serious problem, well two things, where do they spend that money. He said we really don't know but number two, where do they get \$250,000 to \$300,000 to pay Eddie Caldwell's salary. He said where's that money, how do they generate that money. He said number three, every time you get ready to buy something you find out the sheriff's association is involved in it somehow, so I know from my business experience a lot of these associations dump money into them in order to get their best wishes, in order that nothing really bad happens. He said I remember working for a company one time, and it was a Los Angeles Rubber Group, that's what it was called, and we were making a product that went into rubber goods. He said it was \$2,500 and I said I'm not approving \$2,500 to those guys. He said this was back in the 60's. He said \$2,500 then would be \$10,000 today and I said I'm not approving it. He said finally our salesman came to me and said look, this is how this works, if we don't give them \$2,500 we will be put on a list, and we won't be selling very much stuff. He said they will go to our competitors and load up with them and they will deny us, so if we don't pay it. He said I asked what do they use this money for, parties and whatever. He said so you've got the same kind of thing going on with

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the Sheriff's Association, it's just that nobody will investigate it, and nobody will write about it. He said keep all this stuff in mind as we go through this. He said we need to clean ourselves up. He said read the magna carta, you'll see what was going on then and you'll see that a lot of that is back to going on today. He said does anyone have anything they want to say before I ask for adjournment. He said Mr. Manager.

Mr. Alligood said just whenever you are ready to give us some dates we'll reach out to Gaston County and see if we can't make this happen.

Chairman Richardson said by next month we need to, by our next meeting next month we need to come up with a date. He said I've drug my feet on this as much as anyone else but we need to go ahead and do it.

Ms. Dot Moate said I wanted to ask you if at the next meeting you could come up with some comparable figures of what we're paying for the Sheriff now versus what we will be paying if we have a police force and a sheriff.

Chairman Richardson said we will certainly take it under advisement. He said it's going to be hard to do.

Ms. Moate said an example, I know it would not be exact, but we need to get some semblance on what our extra cost is going to be.

Chairman Richardson said there won't be an extra cost, I can tell you that. He said I already know how much this guy; I already know how much has been wasted since I've been here. He said I know how much money Sheriff Coleman is wasting on unnecessary overtime.

Ms. Moate said that might be, but the citizenry does not know what you're talking about when you say he will get X dollars, or however much it has to be, and the police department has to get paid. She said give us an idea.

Chairman Richardson said we can do that split and I think we can say what, very easily, what we're paying for dispatch and what we're paying for the jail and for bailiffs. He said we can pick that stuff out. He said the rest of it would be sheriff's expense and I would be delighted to tell you where Sheriff Coleman has been wasting money.

Ms. Moate said you can also get information from the County that you're going to visit as to how their costs are.

Chairman Richardson said yeah but that will be after the next meeting. He said we can give you some comparable numbers.

Commissioner Deatherage said can I add something, this probably won't happen in the future, going with a police department, unless you have a different makeup of Commissioners up here. He said I think this group right here is just laying the groundwork. He said if you have a different makeup of Commissioners, the people that manage the money in Beaufort County that are supposed to provide oversight and budget and policy, those commissioners will have the skills to keep costs at zero. He said I can't see any adjustment upward or I'm not going to be a party to it. He said that's my opinion.

Commissioner Walker said that was my intent about the deputies because it sounds like we would just roll deputies to the police side, and it would just be a wash.

Ms. Moate said my question was you've had a lot of discussion but never come up with anything that is a semblance of what the additional cost might be. She said you say there won't be any additional costs, but I haven't been convinced of that.

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Chairman Richardson said thank you, I appreciate that. He said I can't see an additional cost. He said looking at the amount of additional overtime the Sheriff is paying now, it's not going to take much tweaking on that to save \$300,000 or \$400,000 a year. He said people are writing their own ticket over there. He said there's no control of overtime at the sheriff's department. He said there's a lot of other expense over there. He said I can recall things that have happened, I don't know when was the last time the Sheriff bought everyone a new pistol but all of a sudden, after 7 or 8 years he bought everyone a new pistol. He said well, I didn't think we killed that many people with pistols in that length of time, but he decided he wanted to go from one model of pistol to another model of pistol. He said so you're talking about \$70,000 for new pistols for no reason whatsoever, no justifications. He said the other thing is they suddenly decided they wanted to change uniforms. He said you're talking about \$150,000 to change uniforms, for what reason. He said he didn't like the looks of the ones he had. He said you get into those kinds of stuff, and you can see where money is being wasted hand over fist so again, there will be some numbers Ms. Moate. He said we're going to have to have some numbers before we make a recommendation and a presentation. He said so you'll have numbers before that happens and we can look at Gaston County's numbers.

Commissioner Walker said for the future we will have the ability to look at the SRO situation as it's changing and seeing what kind of savings with that. He said that's going to be a good indication of what this could do because of what that is doing.

Chairman Richardson said yeah, I think so. He said you mean the efficiencies that will come into a closer management of the new SRO system as opposed to the old system because they just put the deputies out there with no management and told them don't do anything anyone tells you to do. He said that was the big rub with the school board. He said the sheriff would not cooperate with the school board because he was in control, and he wanted to stay in control. He said that's one of the things that Eddie Caldwell tells his people, you're not going to lose control with me, you need to stick firm and cling and you're not going to give them information and you're independent and you're constitutional. He said well I'm a constitutional officer too. He said so is every elected official in North Carolina. He said no different than the sheriff. He said there's nothing special about the sheriff.

Motion: Commissioner Deatherage motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Walker seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kathleen Mosher, CMC, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board