

**ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: May 13, 2013

AGENDA ITEM No. 13-05-17

ACTION ITEM: (Y/N) Y

SUBJECT: Whitted Human Services Center - Facility Use

INFO. CONTACT: Patrick Rhodes, Superintendent **PHONE:** 919-732-8126

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Orange County Board of County Commissioners AGENDA for Public Meeting to Discuss a Board Meeting Room in the Whitted Building – April 4, 2013.
 2. Orange County Board of County Commissioners ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT – May 7, 2013.
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PURPOSE: The purpose of this item is to allow the Board of Education an opportunity to discuss recent developments associated with the use of the Whitted Human Services Center.

BACKGROUND: In September of 2010, the Board of Education considered the possibility of taking over a portion of the Whitted Building for housing administrative staff and hosting board meetings. The concept was declined and the minutes below explain the reasoning.

Excerpt from the September 7, 2010 Board of Education meeting:

10-09-12 Whitted Building Update #2 – Superintendent Rhodes reviewed previous board discussions and tour discussions related to possible use of the Whitted Building to house district administrative staff. Superintendent Rhodes is recommending the system respectfully decline the Board of County Commissioner's offer to use the facility due to: structural improvements needed in order to utilize the facility, known and unknown financial obligation which would be created by moving forward to occupy the building, unclear long-term revenue picture due to shifts and declines in both operational and capital funding, a shift of the N.C. Education Lottery funds away from school construction and toward other operational needs, the reduction in local capital appropriations which will limit the system's ability to up fit any non-classroom buildings, the end of the two-year federal stimulus funding and projected massive deficits that North Carolina is expected to experience, and probable additional state funding cuts.

Information was provided to clarify: the structural engineering study cost figure includes determining structural problems and design work; how operating costs and up fit costs were computed.

Board discussion included, but was not limited to: cost for up fit and maintenance of the Whitted Building; use of current central office building or use of other properties owned by the system; other alternatives and available facilities for housing staff; impact of pending student reassignment on central office facility needs; board subcommittee to look at other alternatives for housing staff using school-owned properties or possible lease or lease/purchase; change in financial picture since request for use of the Whitted Building was made some 3 years ago; unknown effect of future budget reductions on number of staff. Board members Donna Coffey, Brenda Stephens, and Anne Medenblik volunteered to serve on a board subcommittee to look at other possible options for housing of district level staff. Stephen Halkiotis and Debbie Piscitelli will serve as alternates.

continued

Brenda Stephens made a motion to accept the superintendent's recommendation to respectfully decline the Board of County Commissioners' offer for use of the Whitted Building by the school system. The motion was seconded by Stephen Halkiotis and unanimously approved.

On April 4, 2013, the Board of County Commissioners held a public meeting to discuss a board meeting room in the Whitted Building. An agenda is attached. Orange County Schools has been mentioned by other town and county officials as needing the space for meeting purposes. The school system already has sufficient auditorium space for large group meetings. There would also be conflicts with the Board of Education's regular meeting schedule and the Town of Hillsborough's schedule.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: There is no financial impact associated with this discussion.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education remove itself from planning associated with the future use of the Whitted Human Services Center and direct the chair to send a letter declining the invitation.

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA

Public Meeting to Discuss a Board Meeting Room in the Whitted Building

April 4, 2013

Meeting – 7:00 p.m. (Informal Facility Tours Available at 6:00 p.m.)

Richard E. Whitted Building, 2nd Floor

300 Tryon Street

Hillsborough, NC

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|---------------|----|--|
| (7:00 – 7:05) | | Call to Order and Introductions (Chair Barry Jacobs) |
| (7:05 – 7:20) | 1. | Conceptual Floor Plans & Aggregated Board Meeting Calendar Presentations |
| (7:20 – 7:35) | 2. | Town of Hillsborough Description of Potential Review Processes |
| (7:35 – 7:55) | 3. | Orange County Cultural Center (OCCC) Presentation |
| (7:55 – 8:30) | 4. | Public Comments |
| (8:30 – 9:00) | 5. | Board Comments (Hillsborough, Orange County Schools, County) |
| (9:00) | | Adjourn (Staff to Remain for Individual Questions and Discussion) |

**ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: May 7, 2013

**Action Agenda
Item No.** 7-a

SUBJECT: Whitted 2nd Floor "A" Building Permanent Board Meeting Facilities

DEPARTMENT: Asset Management Services

PUBLIC HEARING: (Y/N)

No

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 1) Design Professional Services Agreement Amendment Proposal
- 2) Conceptual Use Floor Plans
- 3) Hillsborough Zoning Definitions and Process Options

INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jeff Thompson, 919-245-2658

PURPOSE: To:

- 1) Authorize staff to move forward with the project of converting the Whitted 2nd Floor "A" building into a permanent meeting facility for use by Orange County Government;
- 2) Affirm that the meeting space is to be shared with the Town of Hillsborough, the Orange County Schools Board, and, potentially, the Orange County Cultural Center as governed by a Board approved Operating Agreement;
- 3) Affirm that an Operating Agreement to be approved by the Board with the Orange County Cultural Center, including usage scheduling procedures, rates, and neighborhood interaction, will be presented to the Board at its September 5, 2013 regular meeting in conjunction with preparation of project construction documents (any improvements associated with the needs of OCCC in utilizing the facility will not be included without adequate funding commitment from the OCCC at the time of design); and
- 4) Authorize the Manager to sign an amendment to the existing Architectural Professional Services Contract for Corley, Redfoot Architects totaling an amount of \$110,500 for the design, engineering, and construction administration of the permanent meeting facility.

BACKGROUND: On April 4, 2013, the Board of County Commissioners ("BOCC") held a public meeting to receive presentations, take public comments and discuss the possibility of renovations to the former Library space within the Whitted Building for a Meeting Room for the Board of County Commissioners (with the Meeting Room potentially being shared with the Town of Hillsborough, Orange County Schools Board of Education, and the Orange County Cultural Center).

The public meeting was held within the former Orange County main library space, which has been vacant and under-utilized since the library and the Department of Social Services relocated to their present locations at the West Campus and Hillsborough Commons in 2009.

The BOCC reviewed the history of the Whitted facility and the schematic meeting room floor plan layout options as designed by Corley, Redfoot Architects of Chapel Hill, with whom the BOCC engaged for permanent meeting room facility design in February, 2010. Although the design was contemplated for the lower level of the Link Center at the time, the resulting programming and floor planning fully inures to the use with the Whitted facility. Attachment 1,

"Design Professional Services Agreement Amendment Proposal", outlines the services rendered and those to be accomplished going forward. Attachment 2, "Conceptual Use Floor Plans", depicts these alternative floor plans:

- 1) a standard meeting layout (audience seating for 130), including multi-purposed pre-function areas, and a separate Board executive session meeting room;
- 2) a large performance alternative layout (audience seating for 286) with the same features as the before-mentioned layout; and
- 3) a standard meeting layout (audience seating for 162), accompanied by a Board executive meeting room, and administrative office space for 20 individuals.

Each of the three conceptual floor plans includes significant restroom facility improvements, improved handicap access, and parking improvements. All of these enhancements fully accommodate the most intense meeting use.

The Board also heard a presentation from Margaret Hauth, the Planning Director for the Town of Hillsborough, outlining the facility's uses allowed under the current zoning designation of Office-Institutional. Attachment 3, "Hillsborough Zoning and Process Options", depicts the allowed uses for the facility.

The BOCC also heard an introductory presentation from the Orange County Cultural Center ("OCCC") regarding potential alternative uses of the facility for arts performance, education and cultural events scheduled during periods of non-use by Orange County Government, Hillsborough Government, and Orange County Schools. The scheduling and management of the OCCC's alternative uses during these non-use periods would be governed by an Operating Agreement between the County and the OCCC, including all space upfit investments funded by the OCCC required for theatrical events (additional seating for large performance events, scaffolding, special lighting, modular staging, etc.) above and beyond the upfit requirements needed for government meeting use.

The Board may recall that all of the government meeting uses as well as all of the stated alternative uses described by the OCCC are currently allowed uses. The estimated maximum capacity of 286 individuals is possible because of the recent structural improvements and the installation of the building wide sprinkler system. The Board guidance to date has confirmed the emphasis in designing the meeting spaces with maximum flexibility. The space also accommodates a large assembly for such events as performances, speakers, and the potential for adequate "pre-function" space near the entrances. The conceptual plans also supply properly designed acoustical treatments, audio-visual and recording infrastructure, and flexible storage and logistics areas for the County, Town of Hillsborough, Orange County Schools, and other government use functions.

The proposed uses require 192 off-street, paved and landscaped parking spaces. The facility currently has 197 off-street spaces. County and Hillsborough staffs have worked together to accommodate this requirement with additional paved and landscaped parking in under-utilized areas south of Tryon Street.

The BOCC also heard public comment from interested residents from the area, where several common themes emerged:

- 1) general support of the facility as a permanent government meeting facility and the arts as an alternative use;
- 2) concern over the intensity of use within the facility, manifested by noise, congestion, traffic control, light pollution, and parking management; and
- 3) active coordination and communication between the area neighbors and the OCCC regarding potential alternatives uses, schedules, and impacts to the community.

The BOCC discussed the concept and the related Capital Investment Plan project during its April 11, 2013 budget work session.

Should the BOCC choose to move forward with this project and authorize its placement within the FY2013-14 Capital Investment Plan, the design, development and construction timeline is estimated as follows:

TASK	BEGINNING DATE	END BY DATE
BOCC Action: Authorization to proceed with Whitted 2nd Floor "A" building as permanent meeting space for Orange County Government; shared with Hillsborough and Orange County Schools and potentially for alternative arts use as governed by an Operating Agreement between Orange County and the OCCC	5/7/13	5/7/13
BOCC Action: Approval of the FY2013-14 Capital Investment Plan, including \$1.4 million for meeting room improvements for the Whitted 2nd Floor "A" building	6/18/13	6/18/13
Schematic Design Process (2 month duration)	7/01/13	8/31/13
Finalizing Operating Agreement with OCCC	7/1/13	8/31/13
BOCC Action: Approval of Schematic Design; authorization to prepare bid documents; approval of OCCC Operating Agreement	9/17/13	9/17/13
Construction document prep, bid advertisement (2 month duration)	9/18/13	11/18/13
BOCC Action: Bid award	12/17/13	12/17/13
Construction (est. 4 month duration)	1/6/14	5/6/14
Grand Opening - first BOCC meeting - (estimated date)	6/3/14	6/3/14

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Should the BOCC decide to pursue a permanent meeting facility use, preliminary cost estimates for the upfit and related site work range between \$1.2 and \$1.4 million. The Capital Investment Plan project contemplates a budget of \$1.5 million in FY2013-14, which includes adequate funds for professional design services. Should the BOCC decide to authorize the additional OCCC use as governed by an Operating Agreement, any additional OCCC facility needs in excess of those required for a permanent board meeting space would be addressed by funds raised by the OCCC.

RECOMMENDATION(S): The Manager recommends the Board:

- 1) Authorize staff to move forward with the project of converting the Whitted 2nd Floor "A" building into a permanent meeting facility for use by Orange County Government;
- 2) Affirm that this meeting space is to be shared with the Town of Hillsborough, the Orange County School Board, and, potentially, the Orange County Cultural Center as governed by a Board approved Operating Agreement;
- 3) Affirm that an Operating Agreement to be approved by the Board with the Orange County Cultural Center, including usage scheduling procedures, rates, and neighborhood interaction, will be presented to the Board at its September 5, 2013 regular meeting in conjunction with preparation of project construction documents (any improvements associated with the needs of OCCC in utilizing the facility will not be included without adequate funding commitment from the OCCC at the time of design); and
- 4) Authorize the Manager to sign an amendment to the existing Architectural Professional Services Contract for Corley, Redfoot Architects totaling an amount of \$110,500 for the design, engineering, and construction administration of the permanent meeting facility.