

# THE NASHVILLE GRAPHIC

## **Nash Board identifies top goals at retreat**

By: Amanda Clark, Graphic Staff Writer

Nash County Commissioners pulled together its top goals and priorities for the coming years and also hit on a few key issues during an all-day retreat on Friday.

The retreat, held at Wordsworth Farm on the Edgecombe County side of Rocky Mount, provided an opportunity for commissioners and department heads to meet and review existing goals and also to set new ones for the future. The retreat was also an opportunity for commissioners to relay their concerns to County Manager Bob Murphy and other department heads. The retreat was facilitated by Chris Aycock, of The Aycock Group.

Some of the issues discussed included education, capital projects, economic development and ETJ expansion. The day also included a presentation of general information so commissioners could get an idea of how the county was doing.

Rosemary Dorsey, Planning Director for the County, presented some demographic information to commissioners during the first round of the meeting.

Nash County has seen slow growth in the past eight years, Dorsey said.

In 2000, the county had 87,000 people. In 2008, it had 93,981.

"We've had some steady but slow growth throughout the years to 2008," Dorsey said.

Dorsey also showed commissioners where most of the growth is with new construction permits. From 2005 to 2008, many of the new construction permits were from the areas around the reservoir, around Nashville and Red Oak and scattered throughout the southern end of the county.

"We're seeing those areas being sort of high growth for us," Dorsey said. "The northern part of the county is a little bit slower."

Dorsey also gave commissioners a glimpse into age projections for the county as well as the median household income for 2008 and unemployment rates from 2007 until now.

In 2007, the county's unemployment rate was between five and six percent. In 2008, the rate jumped to peak at around 10.6 percent at the end of the year. Today, that rate is even higher.

"They're not good," Dorsey said. "They're up around 13, 12 percent."

Dorsey also provided municipal populations to commissioners.

Rocky Mount has the largest population out of the municipalities. In 2000, Rocky Mount had 38,563 people. In 2008, that number jumped to 42,018. Nashville went from 4,417 in 2000 to 4,841 in 2008.

At the end of the day, commissioners worked together to form a list of goals and priorities to move forward with in the coming years. Those goals and priorities included:

- 1.) Strengthening the relationship with the Nash-Rocky Mount School Board
- 2.) Improving safety by reducing crime and promoting public health
- 3.) Developing a five year funding plan for capital projects
- 4.) Entering into discussion with municipalities to discuss ETJ
- 5.) More involvement by the Board of Commissioners on economic development
- 6.) Developing a county-wide water, sewer system
- 7.) Improving/developing parks/recreation and senior services for the county

For more detailed information on some of the issues discussed at the Commissioner's retreat, see next week's Graphic.

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