

From: **Rachel Hammer** <Rachel.Hammer@carteretcountync.gov>

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Subject: Excerpt of BOC Minutes - Regarding MaST Program

To: Commissioners <Commissioners@carteretcountync.gov>, ewheatly@ec.rr.com <ewheatly@ec.rr.com>, Mark Mansfield <markmansfield@remax.net>

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Chairman Mansfield called and asked that I look at the minutes from around this time last year regarding the funding issue for the MaST Program. I have shown below some excerpts of some of the minutes during last year's budget cycle timeframe. I have highlighted some specific language. As you know, we gave \$185,000 last year to the MaST Program, and the figure currently in this year's recommended budget is roughly \$245K.

Excerpt From May 7, 2018 Minutes

Chairman Mansfield shared that money is only generated by ad valorem taxes or sales taxes; we either have to spend less somewhere, give you more, or raise taxes; with that being said, has the Board of Education considered that in year four; what if there is not money and now \$450,000 is going to the MaST program and there is not money inside the schools; has the School thought about what they are going to do if there is not money. A member of the school board reiterated that the three items that rose to the top of their priority list was the mental health, the MaST program and the compensation item; and without that money, there would be some tough decisions; the decisions have not been made at this time. **Chairman Mansfield said if we are going to give you that \$801K and now you are obligating to spend in years two, three and four, it keeps increasing; if we do not have the money to increase, it will leave the school system deficient in those amounts of money; it will be important for you to know where you plan to cut.** Commissioner Comer stated that he feels that if the County provides the money, we are committed. Commissioner Farrington asked for trends in dual enrollment.

Excerpt From June 4, 2018 Minutes

Commissioner Comer asked for clarification on whether the State funded their portion of the MaST Program. Dr. Hauser shared they have not at this point. Dr. Hauser shared the College has figured out how to fund some of the expenses. Commissioner Comer clarified with Dr. Hauser that if they received \$185K from the County, that they could make the program move forward. Commissioner Comer shared that it will be important to figure out what they will do if they do not get the money from the State.

Mr. Bottoms shared that he emailed Representative McElraft the exact question in an attempt to ensure funding, as well as years two through six, and has not heard back. Commissioner Wheatly commented that she cannot guarantee it; Mr. Bottoms shared that she cannot; she just speaks on what they have done historically.

Commissioner Robinson noted that Commissioner Comer raised a good question and that was the reason he did not include it in his motion due to the uncertainty of additional funding.

Commissioner Comer noted that it is a two-track vocational pre-college; his concern is that he likes the vocational side; the pre-college part does not interest him as much. Commissioner Comer asked how we make sure that it stays vocational and the vocational piece grows and it does not become all pre-college. Dr. Hauser shared that they currently already have their schedules made for two of the tracks to be aquaculture and boat-building; if welding gets approved, it will start this fall.

Chairman Mansfield asked if the programs would provide employment for those in Carteret County. Dr. Hauser shared that they have apprenticeship programs with six different boat manufacturers; they will continue to work with those manufacturers and will align the curriculum accordingly.

Dr. Hauser shared that if the program is delayed, and the legislature does what they can do next year, they are OK starting next year; the point is they are ready; they are stepping forward with a strong partnership.

Chairman Mansfield asked where the Board of Education stands on the issue. Mr. Bottoms shared that they are fully supporting the early college project; the programs across the State have been successful.

Commissioner Robinson shared that they have outlined the mission of the program; those programs are currently being offered at the college; the benefit would be to avail itself to some students who start early. Dr. Hauser shared that it does start the path earlier at no cost to the student, and provides students a two-year head start if they continue to college.

Commissioner Robinson shared that aquaculture is being done everywhere in the world; it is not anything new; there are limited opportunities. Commissioner Robinson shared that it requires extensive use of the public waterways – the entire water column. The Marine Fisheries may be the medium that oversees this; they have no criteria established as to how much of the public's water column is going to be leased, what percentage of the water body would be available for these whole column leases, and how if any means would be for them to transfer from one to another. If you are not careful, you can open up a Pandora's box, and everybody that goes through the program is going to be applying for a lease for the entire water column and if it is not managed by Marine Fisheries; when this funding at the State dries up, you will have one or two big leaseholders. Commissioner Robinson noted that he wants everyone to realize that there are limits in the potential for young people to pursue. Commissioner Robinson shared that he moves not to fund it this year until they determine if they are receiving the State funding.

Excerpt From June 18, 2018 Minutes

Chairman Mansfield shared that if we were to fund the program and you do not get the State funding next year, it's important to know that we need the State as a partner. Dr. Hauser shared that they would also search for other grant opportunities in order to make it successful.

Commissioner Robinson shared that when you make this commitment, and you take an underclassman and enroll him in the program, and the funding does not come forth from the State, this Board is almost surely going to be compelled to come up with the funding. Commissioner Robinson shared that it is not actually a pilot program because these studies are currently being offered; this will be an easy program to grow due to the demand and the desire of other students to participate. Commissioner Robinson shared that he is not against the program, but does not want it to be a detriment to the other public schools in the County. Commissioner Robinson shared that he would be inclined to fund the teacher positions that were requested, but cannot understand the need for having a principal appointed and budgeted, or the need for career counselors, when those are available from the schools that the students would be pulled from. Mr. Bottoms confirmed that students can transfer back to their home school; it would look like dual enrollment.

Commissioner Comer shared that he understands Commissioner Robinson's concern on funding, but the Statute reads that we have had access to funding in the past, but no one has gone after the funding.

Commissioner Wheatly confirmed that these students would be freshmen, 14 years of age. Dr. Hauser shared that whatever vocational track they enter, they are going to have to take health and PE; they will not be losing anything by entering into the program.

Mr. Bottoms noted that the principal referenced by Commissioner Robinson would also be teaching math.

Commissioner Wheatly asked if the program were to take off and 35 of the 50 students wanted to head more towards a college curriculum and non-vocational, how would you balance that. Mr. Bottoms noted that they have thought about that; the kids will be applying to go to the school; they can express that they are interested in vocational studies.

Commissioner Farrington wanted to reiterate what was shared by Commissioner Comer. Carteret County is a unique County, but we do need help with home repairs, painting; he sees it in the second-home owners that they deal with; there is no one currently to do it. Commissioner Farrington shared that he would not be supportive of the program, if that was not a focus. We have to have jobs for people.

Dr. Hauser shared that Carteret County is not unique to this problem; it is a nationwide problem. You have the Public School System and the College standing hand-in-hand ready to move forward with what it being described. We have brought you a product, and it is now time for Commissioners to decide whether to accept it.

Motion: Commissioner Comer made a motion to add the \$445,760 to their operating budget to satisfy the need, and a motion to allow them to make a compensation alignment for the classified employees and implement it over a three-year program, **and a motion to fund the MaST program to kick it off this year.** (Ms. Meshaw shared that the three items together would be \$755,455); motion seconded by Commissioner Cavanaugh. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Rachel

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