



2017 Chatham County Convention Resolutions

Chatham County

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CHATHAM COUNTY RESOLUTIONS

1. ACCESS TO HIGH SPEED INTERNET SERVICE

WHEREAS, Chatham County's population is growing rapidly, and people who live and/or move into the county must have access to fast , reliable and affordable Internet services for their education, work and business needs; and

WHEREAS, Students are increasingly required to use home computers to complete educational lessons and projects; and

WHEREAS, Business is attracted to areas where high speed Internet is available to the business and its workforce; and

WHEREAS, High speed Internet is also a positive factor in real estate values and economic development; and

WHEREAS, Internet providers have created geographic districts in which they exclusively provide Internet service, thus operating as an essential monopoly; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That Chatham County support the State of North Carolina in changing current law(s) such that high speed Internet service is regulated as a utility, and that Internet providers provide high-speed broadband services to all residents, as well as a forum in which consumers may provide public input about the Internet services provided; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That additional efforts should be made to change North Carolina state law to allow municipalities to provide Internet services to the residents in their areas and beyond city limits if desired.

2. CONTAMINATION FROM WOOTEN ASPHALT PLANT

WHEREAS, The 2015 NC DOT Remediation Plans as presented to the Chatham County Board of Commissioners in August 2015, called for keeping at or below detection limits the groundwater and soil contaminant levels associated with S.T. Wooten properties along Sugar Lake Road, Pittsboro, NC; and

WHEREAS, The groundwater contaminant plume at the site consists of carcinogens, toxicants, and mutagens including Trichloroethene (TCE), and elevated metals of concern, including manganese, iron, and selenium; and

WHEREAS, The memorandum of agreement between NC DENR and NC DOT established TCE and associated chemicals as target contaminants for remediation, although the monitoring and remediation efforts are insufficient; and

WHEREAS, The citizens' rights to protections are granted through North Carolina statutes, and it is the responsibility of S.T. Wooten and the NC DOT to finance and aggressively pursue remediation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party

1. Call upon NC DOT and NC DENR to increase monitoring and expand remediation activities ensuring that groundwater contaminant levels are at or below detection limits; and
2. Strongly encourage stringent limitations be enforced on S.T. Wooten to eliminate the introduction of additional contaminants at the site; and

3. Support detailed, targeted communication to citizens within the contaminant plume buffer (extending to a two-mile radius of current monitoring outcomes) with trending and current remediation activities; and
4. Strongly support rescinding all special zoning authorizations and returning the property to a status of residential/agriculture.

3. PRESERVING NATURAL SPACES

WHEREAS, Chatham County is in a period of unprecedented growth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party will support high-density, low-sprawl, and focused development to preserve our rivers, lakes, natural spaces and character.

4. PUBLIC EDUCATION

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party will protect and support free and appropriate public education for all children residing in North Carolina as well as seek to maximize its local supplement for teachers' salaries in public schools.

5. SMALL BUSINESSES

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party will do everything in its power to promote diverse small-business ventures as the backbone of the economy and the most reliable creator of jobs.

6. SUPPORT FOR A COUNTY MUNICIPAL FUND

WHEREAS, Strategically concentrating growth in the municipal areas and avoiding sprawl-like growth into Chatham County's rural areas has been a goal for Chatham County policymakers for many years; and

WHEREAS, Three municipalities—Goldston, Pittsboro and Siler City—operate completely within the boundaries of the County and have consistent need for critical infrastructure investment and community investment; and

WHEREAS, The Chatham Economic Development Corporation (EDC) utilizes a policy-driven approach to improve the lives of County residents by supporting infrastructure improvements and preservation of the County's strong quality of place; and

WHEREAS, One of the strategic goals of the Chatham Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is to support Chatham County and its municipalities in their efforts to identify critical infrastructure needs and projects that will retain and

grow businesses in Chatham County as well as attract new business opportunities for the County; and

WHEREAS, Greater financial cooperation between the County and municipalities can be advanced by direct investment from the County into its municipalities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party recommend that the County Board of Commissioners consider establishing a line item in its annual budget to provide direct funding to the municipal government units of Goldston, Pittsboro and Siler City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That said funds would be allocated on a per capita basis either using the latest population estimates from the state demographer and/or the most recent decennial census, with said funds to be allocated to requests such as matching grants; infrastructure improvements in potable water, reuse water, purple pipe, waste water; downtown redevelopment; parks and recreation projects; municipal buildings; and projects that would fall under the category of public works.

7. CHATHAM COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS AND BOARD EXPANSION

WHEREAS, Chatham County's Board of Commissioners has had five members for many years; and

WHEREAS, The current form of election, with members residing in a district and running for election countywide, has been the format for over thirty-five years; and

WHEREAS, Chatham County has experienced significant growth since 1980 and will continue to have such growth; and

WHEREAS, The demands and workload on a county commissioner have increased since 1980; and

WHEREAS, A number of counties in the Triangle have more than five elected officials representing its residents as county commissioners; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party respectfully request that the County Board of Commissioners vote to expand the Board to seven members and to

1. Immediately appoint a citizen-based advisory committee with proportional representation from county voters who are registered as Unaffiliated,

Republican, and Democrat to evaluate the pros and cons of district and countywide at-large representation, or a combination of the two, with the goal of bringing forth a recommendation to the County Commissioners by the end of 2017.

2. Begin the process to expand the County Board of Commissioners.

8. RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF NEW ACTIVISTS

WHEREAS, The Chatham County Democratic Party admires and respects the groundswell of activism following the 2016 Election and seeks to reinforce these efforts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party applaud our fellow citizens' efforts to demand responsive and responsible government.

NORTH CAROLINA RESOLUTIONS

9. ATLANTIC COAST PIPELINE (ACP)

WHEREAS, The Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) would be disastrous to our climate by requiring the continued use and movement of hydraulic fractured gas that contaminates water supplies and pollutes our air; and

WHEREAS, The scope of this 550-mile proposed construction project crossing through the Blue Ridge Mountains and ending in Roberson County, NC, particularly and unfairly impacts economically depressed communities; and

WHEREAS, Leakage and intentional venting of "natural gas" (mostly methane) will occur all the way from the drilling sites to power plants, endangering the health and safety of people living near the pipeline as well as increasing methane released into the atmosphere to unacceptable amounts; and

WHEREAS, Reliance on fossil fuel detracts from the development of much needed alternative energy sources and delays greater employment and economic opportunities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party oppose the construction of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

10. SUPPORT FOR A NONPARTISAN REDISTRICTING PROCESS (HB 200) IN 2017

WHEREAS, The system for redistricting in North Carolina has historically been unfairly manipulated by the party in power and overwhelmingly favorable to incumbent candidates; and

WHEREAS, The constitutionality of partisan redistricting is questionable; and

WHEREAS, District maps drawn for partisan advantage have led to years of expensive legal wrangling, divisive politics, and voter dissatisfaction; and

WHEREAS, Election districts created by the current partisan-drawn maps do not fairly represent the people of North Carolina and actually subvert the voting power of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, A nonpartisan, independent redistricting process is currently being successfully used in at least 12 other states; and

WHEREAS, Rep. Robert Reives II is a co-sponsor of House Bill 200, which calls for the establishment of a nonpartisan redistricting commission; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party support this bill; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party call upon the North Carolina Democratic Party to endorse this legislation.

11. TUITION-FREE UNIVERSITIES

WHEREAS, Student loan debt has become a national issue; and

WHEREAS, Public education is necessary to sustain democracy and benefit society; and

WHEREAS, Student loan debt stifles spending, slows the housing market, and holds back new businesses; and

WHEREAS, College degrees raise incomes and lower unemployment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party urge the North Carolina Democratic Party to stand in favor of tuition-free public universities that would eliminate undergraduate tuition.

12. PROSECUTE ALL YOUTH UNDER AGE 18 AS MINORS

RESOLVED, That the age of Juvenile Jurisdiction be raised to 18.

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTIONS

13. A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS, Thousands of our citizens die or suffer debilitating conditions because they do not receive quality physical or mental health care; and

WHEREAS, Every other advanced democracy delivers equal or better health care to all of its residents at significantly lower costs; and

WHEREAS, providing such care is our moral duty to our fellow human beings, is a human right to each individual person and is prudent economic practice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Chatham County Democratic Party urge the North Carolina Democratic Party to stand in favor of a health care policy that guarantees quality physical and mental health care for all of its residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the aforementioned health care be delivered in the most cost effective way regardless of the ability of individuals to pay.

14. ISRAEL/PALESTINE (Quoting Thos. Jefferson)

WHEREAS, All inhabitants of Israel/Palestine have the inherent right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”; and

WHEREAS, Such rights are secured to each person by participation as an equal citizen of a democratic and sovereign state; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the government of the United States support these rights for all, equally.

15. A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS AND OFFICE HOLDERS TO ADDRESS CITIZENS WITH RESPECT

WHEREAS, In our elections this past fall, both national and statewide, political rhetoric, at all levels but especially nationally, has been growing increasingly mean-spirited, venomously partisan, and fear-inducing; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That all elected and appointed officials be mindful that they now represent and govern all U.S. and North Carolina citizens of all backgrounds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That officeholders address all of us with respect, thoughtfully considering all of our ideas to govern fairly and reasonably. Consistent with our most traditional and respectful democratic principles, elected officials and citizens, together, can create an American society that continues to

develop peacefully, so that, as President Lincoln wisely stated, “government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.”