

Resolutions

CCDP Convention April 18, 2015

CHATHAM/REGIONAL

1. OPPOSING DISPOSITION OF COAL ASH IN CHATHAM COUNTY

Hadley, Hickory Mountain, Mann's Chapel

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2014, Duke Energy announced plans to close coal ash basins in North Carolina and store the coal ash at sites around the state; and

WHEREAS, this plan included a proposal to send up to 12 million tons of coal ash to the Brickhaven Mine in Moncure and 8 million tons to the Colon Mine in Sanford from coal ash currently at coal fired power plants near Charlotte (Riverbend) and Wilmington (Sutton); and

WHEREAS, on December 15, 2014, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners adopted a Resolution Opposing Coal Ash Disposal in Chatham County; and

WHEREAS, the Chatham County Democratic Party wishes to support the Board of Commissioners in opposing the disposal of coal ash in Chatham County; and

WHEREAS, Duke Energy ("Duke") has accumulated 140 million tons of coal ash at 33 coal ash basins in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the Duke Energy Moncure Coal Power Plant (now closed) in Chatham County currently has coal ash stored in five coal ash ponds that are known to be leaking into the Cape Fear River, and Duke Energy has not made public any plans to stop this pollution; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina has failed to adequately regulate Duke's storage of coal ash which actions involved a settlement with Duke of its coal ash activities for a sum of less than \$100,000; and

WHEREAS, this inadequate regulation has led to a federal grand jury investigation; and

WHEREAS, Duke's proposal to store coal ash from other counties in abandoned clay mines in Chatham and Lee Counties is being regulated as "mine reclamation" despite the fact that there will be significant new excavations to receive the coal ash in additional toxic land fills that will rise high above the existing land surface; and that protection of the liners used to encapsulate the

ash will eliminate any future use of the site; and

WHEREAS, coal ash contains many toxic and deadly chemicals, including chromium, selenium, boron, antimony, cadmium, molybdenum and thallium and high levels of heavy metals such as arsenic, lead and mercury; and

WHEREAS, the transportation and storage of coal ash with all of these toxic chemicals poses a huge threat to the health and safety of the citizens of North Carolina and, more particularly, to the citizens of Chatham and Lee Counties; and

WHEREAS, Duke proposes to enter into a contract with Charah, Inc. and its subsidiary, Green Meadow, LLC, to transport the coal ash to Chatham and Lee Counties and to assume ownership of it for a period of 30 years; and

WHEREAS, neither Charah nor Green Meadow have substantial assets or any methods otherwise of compensating the citizens of Chatham and Lee Counties for environmental or health damages resulting from the coal ash repositories; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Chatham and Lee Counties, at least after 30 years, will have no way of achieving compensation for damages to their environment or their health resulting from the storage of coal ash at the mines in Moncure and Sanford;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chatham County Democratic Party

- Fully supports the Chatham County Board of Commissioners in its efforts to prevent Duke from proceeding with its plan to move coal ash to Chatham County,
- Petitions the North Carolina General Assembly to adopt such laws and regulations as are necessary to prevent the transportation of coal ash to Chatham County and the storage of new coal ash in Chatham County,
- Petitions Duke Energy itself to abandon any plan to store new coal ash in Chatham County, and
- Petitions the relevant federal authorities, including the Congress and the Environmental Protection Agency, to take vigorous and decisive action to address the coal ash problem on site, including action that would have the effect of preventing the transportation of coal ash from other counties or states to be stored in Chatham County.

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## 2. SUPPORTING A LAND USE PLAN FOR CHATHAM COUNTY

Hickory Mountain

**WHEREAS**, the current land use plan in Chatham County (the official title is the Chatham County Land Conservation and Development Plan) was adopted by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners (“BOC”) on November 5, 2001; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the “major recommendations” of the 2001 land use plan refers to the guiding of developments “towards areas planned for urban and suburban development and away from areas with valued environmental or rural qualities;” and

**WHEREAS**, when the 2001 land use plan was adopted, the proposed map indicating rural, and developed, areas was not adopted nor was any regulatory framework established to guide development in accordance with the recommendations of the plan; and

**WHEREAS**, in November 2008, following a series of public meetings, the BOC adopted a Strategic Economic Development Plan, which stated that “quality of place [as well as infrastructure and other elements] is necessary for economic development;” and

**WHEREAS**, on July 15, 2013, the BOC unanimously adopted a “conceptual land use plan” that had been prepared by the Economic Development Corporation (“EDC”) with the help of County and municipal planners and following public meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, the conceptual land use plan approved by the BOC in July 2013 re-affirmed the major goals of the 2001 land use plan by adopting the combined growth scenarios of “Conservation/Farmland Preservation” and “Targeted Employment,” which action was explained as “directing growth away from working farms and conservation areas and simultaneously encouraging employment in economic development areas;” and

**WHEREAS**, then-BOC Chairman Walter Petty reiterated those goals by stating that the EDC “know[s] that a land use plan is critically needed to help us attract more jobs to the county and preserve the jobs we already have, including preserving our working farms;” and

**WHEREAS**, the major goals of the 2001, 2008 and 2013 plans and policies reflect a consensus that the rural and environmentally sensitive areas of the County should be preserved, and that developments of various kinds should be

promoted in the municipalities and other commercial areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the achievement of these goals hasn't been fully realized because they haven't been effectively incorporated into the County's regulatory structure; and

**WHEREAS**, further development of the County's regulatory structure is necessary both to provide certainty for businesses considering locating in Chatham County and to provide assurances to farmers and other property owners who otherwise would be concerned about, and threatened by, uses of contiguous and near-by properties that would undermine the enjoyment of their full property rights; and

**WHEREAS**, developments such as Chatham Park just east of Pittsboro and the potential development of the Chatham-Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site near Siler City with all of their merits, also threaten even more developments in areas of the County where farmers and other home and land owners located outside the currently zoned areas of the County are now unprotected,

**THEREFORE**, BE IT **RESOLVED that the Chatham County Democratic Party fully supports** the Chatham County Board of Commissioners in its plan to develop a fully effective land use plan for the County.

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3. REQUIRE WATER QUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS OF CHATHAM PARK

Oakland

WHEREAS, Chatham Park as situated will have major impacts on the Haw River and Jordan Lake,

WHEREAS, Jordan Lake is the major water supply for Chatham County,

WHEREAS, no analysis of the environmental impacts Chatham Park will have on Jordan Lake and the Haw River has been undertaken,

Now therefore, the Chatham County Democratic Party requests the Chatham County Board of Commissioners to write a letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requesting the Corps to not issue any 404 permits for Chatham Park Investors or the Town of Pittsboro to undertake construction actions in Chatham Park until a complete and thorough environmental analysis of the impacts Chatham Park will likely have on Jordan Lake and the Haw River is

completed and approved.



4. ROCKY RIVER

Oakland

WHEREAS, the Rocky River from the Charles Turner Reservoir downstream for 6.7 miles to Varnell Creek has been designated as being impaired by the State of North Carolina because dissolved oxygen levels do not meet State water quality standards,

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina has failed to undertake research to determine why the Rocky River below the Charles Turner Reservoir is impaired,

Now Therefore, the Chatham County Democratic Party requests the Chatham County Board of Commissioners undertake needed research to determine both the reasons the Rocky River below the Charles Turner Reservoir is impaired and the type of corrective actions that are needed to remove this stretch of the river from the 303d list of impaired waters in North Carolina.



5. CHATHAM COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS

Pittsboro

Whereas, Chatham County's Board of Commissioners has had five members for a number of 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 quite a bit of growth since 1980 and the demands of a county commissioner has increased since 1980; and

Whereas, a number of counties in the Triangle have more than five (5) elected officials representing its residents as county commissioners;

Therefore be it Resolved, the Chatham County Democratic Party respectfully requests that the County Board of Commissioners appoint a non-partisan, citizen based committee to evaluate the pros and cons of potential election

options after 2016 that would include, but not be limited to district voting (elections), countywide elections and/or a hybrid of both options.

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**6. EXPAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO SEVEN MEMBERS**

**Pittsboro [Retracted by Pittsboro precinct... covered by Resolution #5]**

**7. FREEZE REAL ESTATE TAXES ON SENIORS IN CHATHAM COUNTY**

Albright

**WHEREAS**, in many counties in Northeastern states and even in some communities in North Carolina the real estate taxes have risen so high that residents can no longer afford their "paid for" homes and therefore these "taxes" force long time residents to sell their "old home place" and move elsewhere;

**WHEREAS**, This rapid tax rise is particularly virulent in communities undergoing rapid development and

**WHEREAS**, the development of Chatham Park will double the population of the county and

**WHEREAS**, A resident should only have to pay for their home once. Yet in some coastal communities and selected high growth areas in the Northeast region of the country, senior citizens can take their current tax bill, divide it by twelve, and see that one twelfth of their tax bill surpasses what their original mortgage payment was on the property they own and

**WHEREAS**, Senior citizens have earned the right to live in a community without fear of being priced out of it because their fixed incomes are unable to keep pace with a rapidly growing county's cost of living and

**WHEREAS**, Our sister county of Chatham, Ga., has adopted this policy so as to maintain its elder population, now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Democratic Party of Chatham County work to support actions to freeze the real estate taxes on senior citizens, (taxpayers 65 years of age or older - whose primary residence is in Chatham County).

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8. ESTABLISH VOTING CENTERS

Pittsboro

Whereas, Chatham County has had a high rate of voter participation; and

Whereas, Chatham County is a large and diverse county with urbanized and rural areas; and

Whereas, Chatham County has a large number of precincts to administer on election day;

Therefore be it Resolved, The Chatham County Democratic Party respectfully requests that the County Board of Commissioners seek to establish permanent areas to vote during early voting in Chatham County and work with its Director of Elections, Dawn Stumpf, and its local NCGA representation to establish six to eight "voting centers" that would be open permanently during early voting and election day with aforesaid "voting centers" replacing the precincts that are utilized on election day.

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## 9. ESTABLISH A REGIONAL SOLUTION FOR WASTEWATER

Pittsboro

**Whereas**, investments in infrastructure are key to the long term prosperity of Chatham County; and

**Whereas**, Chatham County and the Town of Pittsboro have studied the prospect of cooperating with each other with waste water processing and discharge; and

**Whereas**, Chatham County and the Town of Pittsboro conducted these studies with Sanford as a partner for a regional waste water;

**Therefore be it Resolved**, The Chatham County Democratic Party respectfully requests that the County Board of Commissioners seek to conclude studies and implement a reasonable method of regional cooperation between the City of Sanford, the Town of Pittsboro and Chatham County regarding a long term and affordable solution for Pittsboro and Chatham County wastewater needs in the Cape Fear River basin.

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NORTH CAROLINA

10. SUPPORTING HOUSE BILL 76 TO DISAPPROVE MINING AND ENERGY COMMISSION RULES FOR NATURAL GAS EXTRACTION

Chatham County BOC, Hadley, Mann's Chapel

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly directed the Mining and Energy Commission to draft rules concerning the extraction of natural gas in this State; and,

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly, has the power to disapprove these draft rules as presented by the Mining and Energy Commission; and,

WHEREAS, the Mining and Energy Commission is ignoring the majority of the 217,000 comments from the public on the inadequacies of these rules; and,

WHEREAS, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners feels that the draft rules do not adequately protect our environment, our County, or our State; and,

WHEREAS, in addition to the effects on the environment, neither legislation nor the draft rules provide any compensation to Chatham County, or any other county affected by hydraulic fracturing, for the impact of natural gas extraction on both the local economy and infrastructure.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chatham County Democratic Party joins the Chatham County Board of Commissioners in opposing the extraction of natural gas in Chatham County and in North Carolina for the following reasons:

- 1) The draft rules do not adequately protect the environment of our state and do not promote the welfare of the citizens of Chatham County or of the State of North Carolina.
- 2) The legislation and draft rules remove all local authority with respect to the extraction of natural gas and fail to provide local governments with compensation, either direct or indirect, for the impact of the extraction on local economies and infrastructure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chatham County Democratic Party joins the Chatham County Board of Commissioners in asking its local delegation to oppose the rules drafted by the Mining and Energy Commission in order to preserve the safety and welfare of the citizens of Chatham County and the State of North Carolina.

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**11. PROPOSING A FREE CLASS AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS**

Pittsboro

**WHEREAS**, seniors need opportunities for life-long learning through taking continuing education or curriculum courses; and

**WHEREAS**, students of all ages benefit from the diversity in the classroom, and seniors can contribute worthwhile experiences to the class, and their attendance might make the difference in a course being able to “make” with low enrollment; and

**WHEREAS**, seniors on limited budgets need opportunities to learn and grow, to participate in enrichment opportunities like a pottery or writing class; and

**WHEREAS**, taking a class provides brain stimulation and social interaction which may be needed for the elderly to thrive in their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, for some retirees, a senior citizen community college tuition waiver for a free class may be the only way to get out and be less isolated; and

**WHEREAS**, for the community college system, offering a free course for seniors fulfills one of its missions to improve the lives and well-being of individuals by providing services to communities and individuals which improve the quality of life; and

**WHEREAS**, seniors were once shown respect by allowing them a tuition waiver, first authorized in NC in 1975, and they still deserve this basic recognition of the financial limitations some older citizens face; and

**WHEREAS**, seniors who paid decades of taxes as workers should not be denied the same opportunity offered to previous generations;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Chatham County Democratic Party calls on

our entire NC legislature to restore the senior citizen community college tuition waiver which was eliminated in 2013, and allow senior citizens to take one tuition free course per semester at the community colleges, thus providing them the opportunity to socialize and participate in life-long learning.



**12. REPEAL INCREASED NC TAX ON SENIORS' PENSIONS**

Pittsboro

**WHEREAS**, House Bill 998, effective Jan.1, 2014, increased the taxes retirees must pay on their pensions; and

**WHEREAS**, placing more burden for the state's revenue on elderly women and men through eliminating the tax exemption for part of their retirement funds is unfair when other sources of revenue are available; and

**WHEREAS**, some North Carolina retirees with fixed and limited incomes are now unfairly burdened by changes in the tax structure; and

**WHEREAS**, some of our former state workers and other retired employees in their late 60's, 70's and 80's (and beyond) have FIXED small incomes with which to pay rent or mortgages, to heat homes, or cover basic bills and medical expenses such as insurance co-pays; and

**WHEREAS**, retirees who worked at low North Carolina wage scales have contributed services, valuable experience and skills for the betterment of society through workplace settings and they paid state income taxes for decades, and may already have low incomes from pensions, need and deserve these funds to face the rising cost of living;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that The Chatham County Democratic Party calls on the state legislature to repeal the increased tax on seniors' retirement pensions.



**13. ESTABLISH NONPARTISAN PROCEDURE FOR REAPPORTIONING LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS West Williams**

Resolved, that the Democratic Party make every effort possible to pass legislation establishing a nonpartisan procedure for reapportioning legislative

districts.

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## NATIONAL

### 14. JUST SAY NO TO FAST TRACK FOR “TRANS PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP”

Hadley, Mann’s Chapel and Pittsboro

**WHEREAS**, the rising gap between rich and poor is deepened by an increasingly rigged global economy where new rights for corporations and wealthy individuals are created by NAFTA style agreements like the proposed Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP); and

**WHEREAS**, the secretly negotiated TPP forces government to defend standards for health, safety and the environment against claims of “lost future profits” in rigged tribunals populated by the same lawyers who specialize in filing such claims; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of defending such claims from all the Trans Pacific partners is predictably huge and would discourage passage of responsible legislation; and

**WHEREAS**, under 20 years of NAFTA, NC’s working people have lost earning power exceeding by \$3300 per worker per year the savings created by cheap imports [cited by Global Trade Watch in “Nafta at 20,” based on data from Center for Economic and Policy Research, US Census Bureau and Social Security Administration]; and

**WHEREAS**, “Fast Track” status allows only an up or down vote, denying Congress its right to correct or amend harmful provisions in a bill hundreds of pages long, that’s not currently accessible to Congress or the public;

And **WHEREAS**, increasing economic rights for the few while diminishing economic prospects for working people is a self defeating attack on the base and the natural allies of the Democratic Party;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, The Chatham County Democratic Party calls on all our NC representatives in Congress to oppose Fast Track status for the TPP, and if Fast Track is achieved by the Republican majority, to VOTE NO to the TPP when it comes for a vote.