

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners/City of Laurinburg joint session  
February 16, 2011, Honeycutt Center, RCC Scotland Campus*

**MINUTES**

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners  
Reconvened Meeting and Joint Session with City of Laurinburg, February 16, 2011  
Diane F. Honeycutt Center, RCC Scotland Campus, Laurinburg NC**

At 6 p.m. Chairman Bob Davis reconvened the meeting. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Davis, Vice Chair Joyce McDow and Commissioners Guy McCook and Carol McCall. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioners John Alford, John Cooley and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman.

City Council Members in attendance: Mayor Pro Tem Tommy Parker and Council Members Joy Ellison, Herbert Rainer, Curtis Leak and Kenton Spencer. City Council Members not in attendance: Mayor Matthew Block. City staff in attendance: City Manager Ed Burchins and City Clerk Dee Hammond. Mayor Pro Tem Parker called the City meeting to order.

Commissioner McCook delivered the opening prayer.

Mr. Clinton McRae, South Central District Extension Director, introduced Mr. Randy Wood, who will become Director of the Scotland County Cooperative Extension, effective March 1, 2011.

**BRAC-RTF Presentation**

BRAC Regional Task Force Executive Director Greg Taylor gave a PowerPoint presentation on activities and accomplishments in planning/infrastructure, economic and workforce development and education in the region.

**GS 143-128 (Requirements for Certain Building Contracts)**

Economic Developer Greg Icard said as part of the Rural Center Grant for the Green Rite Sewer Project, the Board must vote to abide by and adhere to the guidelines set down in GS 143-128 (Requirements for Certain Building Contracts), which addresses an appropriate verifiable percentage goal for participation by minority businesses in the total value of work for each building project. Mr. Icard said the Commissioners had approved such a requirement in the late 1990s, but the Statute has since been updated.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCall and duly seconded by Vice Chair McDow to approve adherence to the requirements for certain building contracts as required by GS 143-128. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Before continuing agenda items, County Manager Patterson said a request from the Storytelling Arts Center was received today for two letters of support. The letters of support are for two separate grant opportunities.

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners/City of Laurinburg joint session  
February 16, 2011, Honeycutt Center, RCC Scotland Campus*

*Chairman Davis asked the Commissioners to review the letters. Once reviewed, the Commissioners, by consensus, agreed that the Chairman should sign the letters of support.*

**Discussion: Co-location of County tax office/City billing services to the Speller and Sanford Buildings**

County Manager Patterson said the co-location of the County Tax office and the City utilities billing services have been discussed for a year now. He said options would be to share space or consolidate services. He said use of the Speller building would resolve some critical space needs for the County and the City.

Mr. Patterson said relocating the Tax staff from the Courthouse would reunite them with Mapping and Appraisal staff and bring a convenience to taxpayers who don't wish to pass through the Courthouse security system and make several trips to County and City offices in order to pay bills.

Mr. Patterson said estimated co-location cost would be \$225,000 not including furnishings and equipment. He said the cost easily could be \$300,000 to upfit the Speller Building.

City Manager Ed Burchins said cross-training would allow for efficiencies and redundancy in equipment would be eliminated. Mr. Burchins said the idea of being as efficient as possible with tax dollars is a big consideration.

The Commissioners and City Council Members had a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of using the Speller Building as a shared space.

Discussions included how to ensure both entities would pay their fair share of expenses for operations. Commissioner McCook suggested a formula could be developed based on square footage use.

Council Member Kenton Spencer asked if there would be an actual cost savings. He added that systems conversions could be messy.

Mayor Pro Tem Parker commented that both the City and the County need more space, and it comes down to renovation versus building something new. He said he believed there would be a savings down the road.

When Council Member Spencer asked how much of a savings, County Manager Patterson said there probably would not be a savings in the first three years but there could be a savings from future capital projects.

Commissioner McDow said the co-location would be user friendly, and it would make a difference to residents who would not have to travel to two or three places to pay bills.

There was some discussion about ownership and which governing entity would hold the deed to the Speller Building.

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners/City of Laurinburg joint session  
February 16, 2011, Honeycutt Center, RCC Scotland Campus*

Commissioner McCook said the Speller Building, which previously was a bank with a vault and two drive-in windows, adequate parking and a lift, lends itself well to a co-location of tax and utilities billing services in one space.

Mr. Patterson said the \$300,000 estimate would not include repairs or resurfacing of the parking lot.

Chairman Davis said in the long term and most important, the move would benefit citizens.

*The Board of Commissioners, by consensus, agreed that the County Manager and City Manager move forward in exploring the co-location of tax and City billing services in the Speller Building.*

*The City Council, by consensus, also agreed the County Manager and City Manager continue to explore the use of the Speller Building as a one stop revenue collections site.*

**Discussion: Consolidation of E911 services**

**First Step -- Fire Dispatch currently operated by the City of Laurinburg**

County Manager Patterson said the not-yet-received \$650,000 Homeland Security Grant would be used to expand the current EMS building to create an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and general meeting room when not in use as an EOC.

Mr. Patterson said the expansion would allow for consolidation of E911 services, which now are in four locations – the Sheriff’s Department, City Police Department, EMS and Fire Department. A centralized call center could accommodate up to four people. Mr. Patterson pointed out that the State intends to impose a new standard where a call center must be manned by at least two people at all times. Mr. Patterson said there would be a cost savings since there would not be a need for four separate communicators to be on duty. That number would be doubled with a new State requirement.

*The Board of Commissioners, by consensus, agreed to move forward with the call center consolidation process.*

*The City Council, by consensus, also agreed to move forward with the call center consolidation process.*

**Discussion: County/City water project**

County Manager Patterson asked the governing boards to consider consolidation of the water systems. Mr. Patterson said the City operates the water districts. The County has instituted a three-year fee increase plan to bring a previously low fee structure to a competitive one. The County approved its first water fee increase for the FY 2010-2011 fiscal year. Mr. Patterson said the three-year plan is to get the County Water Districts to a profitable situation. Mr. Patterson explained the City and the County last year agreed to look into consolidating the system.

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners/City of Laurinburg joint session  
February 16, 2011, Honeycutt Center, RCC Scotland Campus*

Mr. Patterson said the County would own the Water Districts and hold responsibility for the bond debt. The City would contract with the County to operate the Water Districts. Mr. Patterson said the bond debt on the Water Districts would be satisfied in 35 years.

Chairman Davis said the County is not in the water business, but the City is. He added that consolidation of water services would be a natural transition for the City.

Commissioner McCook asked for a cost benefit analysis before a final decision is made. Commissioner McCook said a future water plan might include a consortium, where entities participate based on the assets they bring to the system. He explained that the assets in the future could be leveraged into a separate authority.

*The County Commissioners and the City Council agreed that the County Manager and the City Manager investigate various water plans.*

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner McCall to recess to 9 a.m. Tuesday, February 22, at 507 West Covington Street. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

The City Council adjourned.

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

Bob Davis  
Chairman