

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
February 7, 2011, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg*

**MINUTES**

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners**

**February 7, 2011 Regular Meeting**

**A.B. Gibson Education Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg NC**

At 7 p.m. Chairman Bob Davis called the regular meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Davis, Vice Chair Joyce McDow and Commissioners John Alford, John Cooley, Carol McCall, Guy McCook and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Commissioner McCook delivered the opening prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Public Forum**

United Way Executive Director Barbara Alexander said United Way is \$12,000 shy of meeting its campaign goal this year. She asked the Commissioners to consider support of the campaign. Ms. Alexander said funds raised are allocated to 17 non-profit agencies in the County. United Way representative Judie Beck said she realizes it is a difficult economic year and any support would be appreciated.

Ms. Leslie Womack of Church Community Services and Ms. Donna Young of Scotland Community Health Clinic discussed the funds their agencies receive from United Way and how services provided would be affected if the funds received were decreased.

Chairman Davis thanked the group and said the request would be considered at the upcoming budget retreat.

**Item 1. Update: North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature**

Ms. Nan Johnson, Scotland County Delegate to the Senior Tar Heel Legislature briefly discussed the history of the group and its advocacy on behalf of older adults in North Carolina. Ms. Johnson listed the following legislative priorities for 2011:

- a) Provide funding to sustain and expand Project C.A.R.E. (Caregivers Alternatives to Running Empty).
- b) Increase funding for home and community-based services for older adults by \$5 million in recurring funding.
- c) Increase funding for senior centers by an additional \$2 million in recurring funds for a total \$3,265,316 a year.
- d) Mandate pre-employment and random drug testing for employees of nursing and assisted living facilities.
- e) Dental care for North Carolina's adult special care population.

**Item 2. FY 2009-2010 Audit**

Mr. Carl Head of Lundin & Company said the County received an unqualified opinion. He said the Fund Balance decreased 30 percent from \$10.6 million in 2009 to \$7.4 million in 2010. Public Works

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remained negative and dropped an additional 18 percent from (\$918,052) to (\$1,084,366) in 2010. Water District I remained relatively unchanged, while Water District II funds decreased by seven percent from \$1.5 million in 2009 to \$1.4 million in 2010.

Mr. Head said the Fund Balance decrease was primarily due to a decrease in sales tax revenues from \$8.3 million in 2009 to \$5.7 million in 2010. Mr. Head said depreciation is a significant factor in the Public Works Fund negative net asset balance. Depreciation and interest payments are factors in the net assets results for Water Districts I and II.

Mr. Head recommended corrective actions for three findings. The County should search for new revenue streams and cost cutting measures for the Public Works fund. Key report dates should be monitored for timely filing of the semiannual report of deposits. Accounting personnel should obtain the necessary experience to prepare and accurately review the financial statements.

Mr. Head commented that although not a finding, the County also should work to improve internal financial controls among departments that collect revenue.

*Before continuing to the next agenda item, Chairman Davis welcomed everyone to the meeting in the Board's new location.*

**Item 3. Tax Liens and Order to Advertise**

Tax Administrator Mary Helen Norton reported outstanding taxes that are liens on real property as of February 7 were \$2,515,423.69. The figure includes County, Fire, School, Town of Wagram, Town of East Laurinburg and Town of Gibson taxes. Ms. Norton said the governing board must order and set a date for advertising tax liens. Ms. Norton requested the order to advertise the week of March 14, 2011.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McCook to order and set the date for advertising tax liens for the week of March 14, 2011. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Ms. Norton also discussed the request for review form that taxpayers can fill out in order to make an appeal on real property assessed value.

Ms. Norton answered questions from Commissioners regarding the appeals process, how the State determines land use values and why property values increased even when the economy is down.

Commissioner McCook said he would encourage anyone who appeals their assessed value to find comparables that would support what they think their value should be.

**Item 4. Consent Agenda:**

- a) **Approval of minutes of the Board of Commissioners January 3, 2011 regular meeting, January 14, 2011 reconvened meeting and January 18, 2011 planning retreat.**
- b) **Approve Tax Department request to release funds in the amount of \$1,248.37 and in the amount of \$2,777.22 and to make refunds in the amount of \$22.34 and in the amount of \$834.14.**

- c) **Approve Solid Waste Management Plan amendment.**
- d) **Authorize the Economic Developer to apply for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) through the United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development.**
- e) **Budget Amendments:**
  - 1) **Health: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$64,000, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
  - 2) **Health: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$16,000, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
  - 3) **DSS: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$107,861, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
  - 4) **DSS: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$14,085, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
  - 5) **DSS: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$78,186, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
  - 6) **DSS: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$466.85, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**

Vice Chair McDow asked for an explanation of the amendment to the Solid Waste Management Plan. County Manager Patterson said the amendment applies to recycling electronics, which can no longer be disposed of in landfills, according to a new State requirement. Mr. Patterson said the amendment would allow residents to bring electronics for recycling to the convenience centers and the landfill.

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the Consent Agenda. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

#### **Item 5. Appointments to Board and Committees**

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner McCall to appoint Mr. John Cooley as the Commissioner-representative to the Scotland-Hoke Criminal Justice Partnership Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to reappoint Mr. Sam Cribb to the Planning and Zoning Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to appoint Mr. Neil Smith to an unexpired term on the Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

#### **Item 6. Report from the County Manager**

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County Manager Patterson said the resolution supporting the continuation of the temporary sales tax was forwarded to all legislators and counties. The resolution will be sent to the Governor along with the attached cover letter, once approved by the Board. Mr. Patterson said Senator Bill Purcell indicated he is in support of the resolution. Vice Chair McDow suggested the resolution and letter to Governor Perdue also be sent to the NCACC.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the letter to Governor Perdue regarding the continuation of the one cent sales tax. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Mr. Patterson said the Jail inspection report from the State points to overcrowding is an issue, but it is not a significant item on the report. The State inspector listed as other issues that require a response: duties of jailors, space needs for Jail functions and repair items. The Sheriff will respond to the issues listed.

The Commissioners noted the latest inspection report on the Jail showed improvement over previous reports. Commissioner Alford said Sheriff Shep Jones should be commended for that.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to write a letter commending the Sheriff and staff on their responsiveness to making improvements at the Jail. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Mr. Patterson reported that federal preemption severely restricts the City's zoning authority in regards to the butane facility. The company will have to meet building codes. The State building codes will not restrict the company's ability to operate the facility. The company has not applied for a building permit. Once the permit is issued the facility will likely become operational quickly.

The County Manager said repaving of the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport runway will require a 10 percent match, which is approximately \$455,000. Mr. Patterson said the LMA Board is expected to ask Maxton, Laurinburg and Scotland County to fund the match or provide a loan to LMA for the match. Mr. Patterson said the local match must be designated by March when the paving begins. Mr. Patterson added that the match request for the County would be the most significant of the three entities. Mr. Patterson added that around six years ago, the County provided \$2.3 million to the Airport.

Vice Chair McDow said the County has provided Laurinburg-Maxton Airport significant funding yet the County does not have a seat on the LMA Board. Chairman Davis said the issue should be discussed at the upcoming retreat. He explained that the County has invested more than \$2 million in the Airport but has no say in what goes on there.

Commissioner McCall asked the County Manager to research like size airports in other counties to see if there are similar governing and funding arrangements.

Mr. Patterson reported that St. Andrews, RCC and Scotland County Schools soon will reach an agreement regarding the Scotland Schools early college program.

Mr. Patterson reminded the Board of upcoming meetings for the remainder of February. He asked the Commissioners to consider setting a date for the next planning retreat.

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*The Board of Commissioners, by consensus, agreed to have a planning retreat 9 a.m. Tuesday, February 22, at 507 West Covington Street.*

Mr. Patterson said St. Andrews announced it is partnering with another college, which is intended to strengthen its accreditation rating and financial stability.

***Other Information/Comments from the Chairman and Commissioners***

Vice Chair McDow gave a brief report on the NCACC Legislative Goals Conference and identified some priority goals.

- 1. Authorize local revenue options**
- 2. Oppose shift of state transportation responsibilities to counties**
- 3. Reinstate ADM and lottery funds for school construction**
- 4. Ensure adequate mental health funding**

Vice Chair McDow said the Commissioners soon would receive a legislative goals report from NCACC.

**Item 7. Closed Session**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Vice Chair McDow to go into Closed Session in accordance with N.C. General Statute §143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**OPEN SESSION RESUMED**

Commissioner McCook said perhaps the butane facility could be challenged because it is located so close to homes in a residential neighborhood.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McCook to recess to 6 p.m. February 16 at the Diane F. Honeycutt Center on the RCC Scotland Campus. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

Bob Davis  
Chairman