

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting
May 5, 2008, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, NC*

MINUTES
Scotland County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting, May 5, 2008
Scotland County Complex, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, NC

At 7 p.m. Chairman J. D. Willis called the regular meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioners John Alford, Leon Butler, Guy McCook and Joyce McDow. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioner Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Edward Johnston and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Commissioner McCook delivered the opening prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Forum

Ms. Jan Schmidt, Storytelling Festival of Carolina: Ms. Schmidt thanked the Commissioners for their ongoing support of the Festival. Ms. Schmidt said more than 2,900 people attended the Festival over a three-day period and overall evaluations were positive. Ms. Schmidt said County support to cover expenses not covered by grants and other donations is still needed. Ms. Schmidt said a complete accounting of the event's expenditures will be forwarded to the Commissioners by the next meeting.

Mr. Bill Stubbs: Mr. Stubbs said while he and his wife sit on their porch they see teenagers with pants around their knees, which Mr. Stubbs described as indecent, using filthy language. Mr. Stubbs asked if the County could create an ordinance that would impose a fine on this kind of dress and behavior. Mr. Stubbs said people can no longer sit on their porches and enjoy an afternoon.

Chairman Willis said the Commissioners and the County Attorney would take the request under advisement and look into a plan that might be implemented and enforced.

Item 1. Public Hearing: FY2005 CDBG-SSH Program Closeout

LRCOG Housing Coordinator Adrian Lowery introduced the first of two Public Hearings for the evening – one for the closeout of the 2005 CDBG program and the other for the new 2008 CDBG program.

Mr. Lowery said the State monitored the 2005 program and found it had been administered satisfactorily. He said between 43 and 46 applications have been received for the 2008 CDBG program. The applications will be processed and sent on to Raleigh by June 30.

Chairman Willis called the Public Hearing on the closeout of the 2005 CDBG-SSH program and asked if anyone wished to comment against or in favor.

Mr. Lowery noted that four homes were replaced and one repaired as part of the 2005 grant. He said the 2008 grant is expected to help replace and/or repair five or six homes.

Responding to a question by Commissioner McCook about why the grant is every three years, Mr. Lowery summarized the time frame for the three-year grant cycle and why 2005 is closes out in 2008.

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No one else came forward. Chairman Willis closed the Public Hearing.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to approve the closeout of the FY 2005 CDBG-SSH Program. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 2. Public Hearing: FY2008 CDBG-SSH Program

LRCOG Housing Administrator Adrian Lowery said this would be the first of two required Public Hearings for the FY 2008 CDBG-SSH Program.

Chairman Willis called the Public Hearing and asked if anyone wished to comment about the program. No one came forward, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Gholston and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to authorize moving forward with the FY 2008 CDBG-SSH Program. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Lowery said a grant possibility will be made available by the end of the year for the rehabilitation of single family houses.

Item 3. Presentation of the FY 2008-2009 Scotland County Schools Budget

Chairman Willis said the presentation of the FY 2008-2009 school budget would be scheduled during budget work session since several Commissioners indicated they had specific questions.

Item 4. Low-Income Housing Program: Robeson County Community Development Corporation

Ms. Gayle Fernandez, Executive Director, Robeson County Community Development Corporation, said the RCCDC enables groups of families to work together to build their own homes. She said RCCDC provides self-help, financial wellness, obtaining a home loan and the building of homes with the goal of having low-income families become successful homeowners.

Ms. Fernandez described the application process and the criteria in which applicants are selected. Ms. Fernandez said although RCCDC has a cooperative relationship with Habitat for Humanity although the agencies differ in the mortgage process and in the income level of its clients they serve. She said the agency receives applicant referrals from Habitat, DSS and the Housing Authority.

Item 5. Renovation Request: Legion Ball Park

American Legion Post 50 Commander Dan Skamperle discussed what he described as desperately needed capital improvements at Legion Ball Park.

A slide presentation of Legion Ball Park showed the general deterioration of the facility.

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Gen. Clint Willis spoke in support of the Legion request, explaining that Legion Field is an asset to the community and of importance to the many children it serves. Gen. Willis said the current condition of the facility does not speak well for the community.

He said it is important to consider the improvements because Legion Field has potential to attract visitors to the area who will spend money here. Gen. Willis asked the Commissioners for their continued commitment to Legion Ball Park. He added there would be a request for funds in the future.

Tourism Development Authority member Ron Riggins described Legion Park as the “granddaddy of all parks” in the community, one that has historic value and a great central location.

Mr. Riggins said once Legion Ball Park is in a proper state of repair, the facility would become available for more events. He explained that in order for the TDA to consider grants, the facility must ensure it would put heads in beds. Mr. Riggins also commented on the difference visitors and the community see between the condition of Legion Ball Park and the Recreation Complex.

Mr. Riggins said he would like to see the physical state of Legion Ball Park regain its former glory and placed on par with other recreation facilities in the County so it would meet tournament sanction and attract visitors.

Commissioner Alford said that he played ball in Legion Park, and it means a lot to the community. He said he hopes the Board will do the right thing.

Item 6. Consent Agenda:

- a) **Approval of minutes of the Board of Commissioners April 7, 2008 regular meeting.**
- b) **Approve Tax Department request to release funds in the amount of \$468.51 and in the amount of \$970.82 and to make refunds in the amount of \$19.18 and in the amount of \$736.79.**
- c) **Approve request by the City of Laurinburg to hold a public exhibition July 4 with use a pyrotechnics pursuant to NCGS 14-413.**
- d) **Approve the following 2009 holiday schedule, which will be observed by the State: January 1, New Year’s Day; January 19, Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday; April 10, Good Friday; May 25, Memorial Day; July 3, Independence Day; September 7, Labor Day; November 11, Veteran’s Day; November 26 and 27, Thanksgiving; and December 24 and 25, Christmas.**
- e) **Approve citizen petition request to include Horne Road as part of the State-maintained road system.**
- f) **Approve the surplus of a 1993 Dodge 350, VIN# 2B5WB35Z0RK573143 with the intent of using vehicle for emergency training.**
- g) **Budget Amendments:**
 - 1) **Health: Approve receipt of additional funds in the amount of \$250 and authorize Finance Officer to make necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money.**
 - 2) **Water District II: Approve the increase of revenues and expenditures in the amount of \$25,000 for Water District II due to the growth customers in the Water District.**

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Commissioner Butler abstained from the vote on the Consent Agenda citing a potential conflict of interest.

County Attorney Johnston made a clarification that Knapp Road is a part of the request of item e. *Approve citizen petition request to include Horne Road as part of the State-maintained road system.*

Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the Consent Agenda. Vote In Favor: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioners Alford, McCook and McDow. Commissioner Butler abstained. Motion approved.

Item 7. Historic Properties Commission Budget Request

Historic Properties Commission Chairman John Stewart provided an update on activities and asked the Commissioners for continued financial support of historic properties as a line item in the annual budget. Mr. Stewart explained that the County's financial support helps Historic Properties in grant applications, since most grantees want assurance of local support.

Mr. Stewart said the funding provided by the County basically "keeps the lights on and let's people know there is something here."

Mr. Stewart discussed successful grants and how the funding was used and how volunteers help with the upkeep of the buildings through labor and reduced cost for material. Mr. Stewart said most of the grant monies were spent in Scotland County. Mr. Stewart named some groups that use the facilities for a variety of events.

Commissioner Alford said the County should continue its support of Historic Properties so it could successfully apply for grants.

Chairman Willis said the request would be reviewed further during the budget work sessions.

Item 8. Update from the County Manager

(Vice Chair Gholston was excused at 8:10 p.m.)

County Manager Kevin Patterson said the Commissioners have that Transitional Duty Policy for review and formal introduction at a later date. Mr. Patterson said the policy outlines a return-to-work plan for employees who suffered an injury on the job.

Mr. Patterson said the faster employees are brought back to work, even with restrictions, it reduces the length of medical treatment, the person recovers faster and costs on the County are reduced.

In a financial update Mr. Patterson said as of April 30, 2008 there was more than \$15 million in cash and investments, nearly \$35 million in revenues and more than \$33 million in expended funds.

Mr. Patterson said the County received resolutions from Columbus and Wilson counties opposing the State proposal allowing for "voluntary" participation by counties in the cost of transportation projects.

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The resolutions also express opposition to the 21st Century Transportation Committee's recommendation to transfer funding from the secondary road program to the primary road program. This would leave no funding to pave secondary roads. Mr. Patterson said there are six primary roads in Scotland County. All other roads are secondary.

Mr. Patterson reminded Commissioners of upcoming meetings and events of interest. He said Operation Robin Sage is in progress and will continue through May 11.

Item 9. Appointments to Boards and Committees

Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Commissioner McCook to reappoint Ms. Joyce McDow as the Commissioner-representative to the Richmond Community College Board of Trustees. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow to appoint Ms. Beatrice Sams to an unexpired term on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Other Information/Comments from the Chairman and Commissioners

Commissioner McCook asked the Commissioners to consider approval of a resolution similar to the ones approved by Columbus and Wilson counties regarding the possibility the State might shift the burden of responsibility of secondary road maintenance to counties. Commissioner McCook said the majority of roads in Scotland County are secondary, and the County could not afford to maintain them.

Commissioner McDow asked that the hiring of a grant writer on a contractual basis be considered as part of the next fiscal budget.

Commissioner Butler asked that the Community Assistance Grant policy be reconsidered since it requires outside agencies to ask seven different individuals for funding.

Chairman Willis said discussion about the policy would be part of the budget work sessions.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to recess to 6 p.m. May 8 at Scotland Place. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis
Chairman