

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
January 5, 2009, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg*

**MINUTES**  
**Scotland County Board of Commissioners**  
**Regular Meeting, January 5, 2009**  
**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, Bob Davis, Guy McCook, Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Ed Johnston and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Commissioner McDow delivered the opening prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Public Forum**

Chairman Willis opened Public Forum. No one came forward to speak.

Chairman Willis introduced new Economic Development Director Greg Icard.

**Item 1. DSS 2008 Annual Report**

DSS Director Joe Knott presented the agency's 2008 annual report. Mr. Knott said the 07-08 total budget of \$92,560,292 saw actual expenditures of \$89,112,251, which was 3.73 percent under budget. Mr. Knott said Medicaid dollars returned to the County accounted for \$52,122,615.

Chairman Willis recognized Board of Education members Jimmy Bennett and Terrence Williams, who were present at the meeting.

**Item 2. Revaluation Contract Request**

Tax Administrator Mary Helen Norton asked the Board to consider contracting with Mr. John William Edmondson to serve as project manager for the upcoming 2011 revaluation.

Mr. Edmondson was introduced to the Board, and he briefly summarized his experience and work history. Mr. Edmondson said one intent as project manager would be to train staff sufficiently so they would be prepared to conduct their own in-house revaluation in the future.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the contract for revaluation services with John William Edmondson pending contract review by the County Attorney. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 3. Consent Agenda:**

- a) Approval of minutes of the Board of Commissioners December 1, 2008 regular meeting.
- b) Approve Tax Department request to release funds in the amount of \$278.58 and in the amount of \$10,963.68 and to make refunds in the amount of \$4,811.68.

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c) Approve surplus of the following vehicles: 2003 Ford Crown Victoria VIN 2FAFP71W33X129718, 2005 Ford Crown Victoria VIN 2FAFP71W85X109385, 1993 Chevrolet VIN 1GCCS14R3P8197988 and 1985 Chevrolet VIN 5CCGK24M3FF392835.

d) Budget Amendments:

- 1) **DSS:** Approve receipt of additional funds in the amount of \$104,267, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.

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

*(Commissioner McPhatter was excused from the meeting)*

#### **Item 4. Appointments to Boards and Committees**

**Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to appoint J.D. Willis as Chairman of the ABC Board for 2009. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to reappoint Dr. John Slaughter as the dentist representative on the Board of Health. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to appoint Dr. Taneka Williams as physician-representative to the Board of Health.**

Commissioner McCook noted that Dr. Williams has a Scotland County practice but has a residence in Hoke County. Commissioner McCook asked if this would allow Dr. Williams to serve on the Board of Health.

The Commissioners agreed to table the appointment of the physician-representative until the question of County residency was resolved.

Commissioner McDow said there were two applicants for the public-spirited citizen on the Board of Health – Ms. Jane Murray and Ms. Cynthia Morton.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to appoint Ms. Jane Murray to the Board of Health as public-spirited citizen. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Chairman Willis discussed a previous policy authorized by the Board that would limit terms served on local boards and committees to two consecutive terms. Chairman Willis explained that the two-term limits would give more citizens opportunity to serve the community.

*(Commissioner McPhatter returned)*

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Chairman Willis directed County Manager Kevin Patterson to draft a letter to the local boards and committees informing them of the two consecutive term limit. Chairman Willis said there should be a one-year break in between two-consecutive-terms of service. He added that Commissioners would be excluded from the rule as long as they serve in the capacity of Commissioner.

**Motion was made by Chairman Willis and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to appoint Commissioner Bob Davis to the 2009 Board of Equalization and Review. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 5. Memorandum of Agreement: Sheriff's Department Firing Range**

County Attorney Ed Johnston explained he would present a Memorandum of Agreement for consideration by the governing body since the party involved is a relative of County Manager Kevin Patterson.

Mr. Johnston said the Memorandum of Agreement would allow the Sheriff's Department to use a Sandhills property owned by private citizen Garland Patterson as a firing range. Mr. Johnston said the Sheriff's Department would be permitted to use the firing range at no cost. The owner requests the Commissioners approve a hold harmless agreement in the event an injury occurs. Mr. Johnston said the property is located near Deercroft and currently is in use as a firing range.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McPhatter and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow authorizing the County Attorney to draft the hold harmless agreement. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 6. Update from the County Manager**

Mr. Patterson said the County has been awarded a \$393,860 scattered housing site grant, which allows elderly, disabled and low-income citizens to receive improvements on homes in moderate need of repair. Mr. Patterson said the grant is in addition to the CDBG program. Mr. Patterson said it is expected the Lumber River Council of Governments would administer the new program, too.

County Manager Patterson updated the Board on the Gryphon Group conditional use application. Mr. Patterson said the Planning and Zoning Board took no action pending the receipt of more information from the Gryphon Group. Mr. Patterson said it is expected that the Planning and Zoning Board will take action on the application at its January 21 meeting.

County Manager Patterson said the retirement of Ms. Terry Williams reduced the Soil and Water staff from two to one. Mr. Patterson recommended the Commissioners make an exception to the hiring freeze for the position held by Ms. Williams. Mr. Patterson explained that school programs focused on soil and water and other environmental issues are about to begin and it would be difficult for a one-person staff to conduct the school programs and keep Soil and Water offices open for customers.

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Commissioner McCook suggested the County Soil and Water office hold off on the school programs until the next budget year.

Chairman Willis said that Soil and Water could be left without any staff if something happened to the remaining employee, which would cause the offices to close all together.

Commissioner Davis said it is important for the County to continue education programs in the schools on environmental issues.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McPhatter and duly seconded by Commissioner Davis to approve the hiring of the second position in the Soil and Water Department as recommended by the County Manager. Vote: In Favor: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioners Alford, Davis, McDow and McPhatter. Vote: Against: Commissioner McCook. Motion approved.**

Mr. Patterson said there would be a presentation on the water/waste water feasibility study at the WestPoint Stevens water plant 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. January 22 at the COG offices. Mr. Patterson said he would provide transportation for any Commissioner who wished to attend.

County Manager Patterson said the local United Way expressed interest in applying for Community Assistance Grants with the Commissioners. Mr. Patterson recommended instead that the Commissioners consider reinstating the fair-share program extended to employees as part of the United Way Campaign.

Mr. Patterson said fair-share was discontinued in 2005 when employees received three extra days off in lieu of a cost-of-living increase. Mr. Patterson said since then, employee giving to United Way decreased. An employee participating in fair-share donates one hour of wages per month for 12 months to United Way in exchange for his/her birthday off.

Chairman Willis commented that there might be more participation to United Way through fair-share than through the Community Assistance Grants.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to reinstate the employee fair-share program as part of the United Way Campaign. Vote: In Favor: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioners Alford, Davis, McDow and McPhatter. Vote: Against: Commissioner McCook. Motion approved.**

Mr. Patterson reported that 120 people using the NACo Discount Prescription card saved about \$3,000 this past month. Mr. Patterson said an estimated \$60,000 has been saved since the inception of the program. Mr. Patterson hopes the number of people using the card will increase.

*Other Information/Comments from the Chairman and Commissioners*

Commissioner Davis asked about the landfill report, specifically about past due accounts and how collections are conducted.

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County Engineer Jim Blackwell said notification letters are sent out and on occasion, small claims court becomes involved. Mr. Blackwell said attempts are made to work with businesses on a payment schedule.

Commissioner Davis said he has received feedback about the Community Assistance Grants (CAG) and how such a program is perceived by citizens, some of whom feel it is used to “buy favors.” Commissioner Davis asked that the Program be reviewed at the planning retreat.

Chairman Willis said Community Assistance Grants could be revisited during budget discussions.

Commissioner Alford said there was a savings to taxpayers when the Program was approved. Chairman Willis said the Board of Commissioners would distribute about \$75,000 to outside agencies. He added that the CAG Program requires agencies requesting funds to have 501 3(c) status.

**Item 7. Closed Session**

**Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to go into Closed Session held in accordance with N.C. General Statute in accordance with N.C. General Statute §143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with an attorney, 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, Closed Session held in accordance N.C. General Statute 143-318.11(a)(5) to establish or instruct the staff or agent concerning the negotiation of the price and terms of a contract concerning the acquisition of real property and Closed Session held in accordance with N.C. General Statute §143-318.11(a)(6) to consider qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointments, or conditions of initial employment of a present or prospective public officer or employee.**

**OPEN SESSION RESUMED**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow to adjourn. Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.**

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis  
Chairman