

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners March 13, 2006 regular meeting  
Commissioners Chamber, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, NC*

**MINUTES**

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting, March 13, 2006**

**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, Charles “Scoofer” Jordan, Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter (*who left the Chamber when Public Forum began*). Staff in attendance: County Manager John A. Crumpton, Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Edward Johnston and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Chairman Willis delivered the opening prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Willis asked if anyone wished to speak at Public Forum about anything other than the landfill. No one came forward, and Chairman Willis opened Public Forum to those who wished to speak about the landfill.

**Mr. Ron Riggins**, Scotland County businessman: Mr. Riggins said he was concerned about the decision by the Commissioners not to bring a landfill to Scotland County, which would have great economic impact. He asked the Commissioners if they educated the citizens about a landfill, surveyed residents or sought more information so an informed decision could be made. He said an issue this large deserves more consideration. He said the proposal that the County develop its own landfill would be costly, and the County would have the liability. He said that in the end, the County still would have a landfill without the economic benefits. Mr. Riggins said if neighboring Richmond County gets the landfill, it would get all the benefits, and Scotland County would be left with the negatives. He said regional landfills located elsewhere have helped communities to grow and thrive and property values to increase. Mr. Riggins said Scotland County cannot afford to overlook this economic development opportunity. He said the County’s opportunities are limited. He urged the Commissioners to put the landfill issue back on the table.

Chairman Willis said when a regional landfill was being considered, no large groups of citizens were coming to the Commissioners saying there is a need for a landfill because the revenues would help the County.

**Dr. Matthew Block**, Scotland County physician: Dr. Block said he supports locating a regional landfill in Scotland County. He said everything he has heard from state regulatory agencies has been positive. He said small leaks have been quickly corrected. Dr. Block urged the Commissioners not to give in to the groundswell of opposition by shelving a rare and important opportunity for significant growth.

**Mr. Murphy Evans**: Mr. Evans spoke in favor of the Commissioners reconsidering a regional landfill. Mr. Evans said with the loss of industries and

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jobs in Scotland County and industrial downsizing, a regional landfill properly constructed would have a major economic impact and would attract industry. He said otherwise, the County would face a severe tax problem down the road.

**Mr. Charles Parker**, Laurinburg City Councilmember: He asked the Commissioners to look at the issue objectively. He proposed that the governing body get the facts on the table and arrive at a decision that works for everybody.

Chairman Willis said the Commissioners did research the possibility of the County operating its own landfill, and it is not economically feasible.

**Mr. Bob Davis**, Laurel Hill: Mr. Davis gave the Chairman a petition signed by 3,000 people who oppose a regional landfill in Scotland County. Mr. Davis said he has spent many hours researching landfills and the dangers they pose. Mr. Davis said the group opposing the landfill does have its facts and does know the downsides caused by landfills.

**Mr. Jim McMillan**, Laurinburg resident: Mr. McMillan said the County's need for revenue is not being questioned. He the Commissioners received significant information on the downsides of landfills. He said grants are available that would help the County manage its own solid waste. Mr. McMillan discussed pollution and liability issues related to landfills, and any revenue gained would not offset the legal expense.

Chairman Willis said that if the landfill process continued, there would have been a series of public hearings. He said what the Commissioners did not want to see was a County divided. Chairman Willis suggested establishing a Solid Waste Advisory Committee of four people who oppose the landfill and four people who support it so the group could research and discuss the issue and bring recommendations to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Alford suggested that the group be larger to ensure all municipalities are represented.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to appoint Mr. Ron Riggins to the Solid Waste Advisory Council as a proponent and appoint Mr. Bob Davis to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee as an opponent with both inviting five more people each to sit on the Council, which would be chaired by Commissioner John Alford. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Public Forum continued.

**Mr. Robert Currie:** Mr. Currie said he is neither for nor against the landfill. He suggested that if the Board enters into any legal agreement with any company, the agreement should ensure that the company would be responsible for any future repercussions.

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**Ms. Loretta McNeill:** Ms. McNeill asked why landfills are marketing areas that need the money. She said that the words “dignity, health and welfare” are in the County’s Missions Statement, and a landfill in the area would affect the community.

**Ms. Laurene Stubbs,** realtor, 903 West Church Street, Laurinburg: Ms. Stubbs said she was speaking on behalf of her grandchildren. She couldn’t see why anyone would leave a mega landfill in Scotland County for future generations to deal with.

No one else spoke, and Public Forum was closed.

Chairman Willis recognized Rep. Garland Pierce. Rep. Pierce said he appreciates the leadership of the Board of Commissioners for allowing this type of dialogue.

*(Commissioner McPhatter returned to the Commissioners Chamber).*

**Item 1. Public Hearing: Planning and Zoning Rezoning Applications**

Planning and Zoning Board Chairman Henry McLeod introduced the following rezoning applications.

Rezoning Application Number 431-06 – Curtis Hester, Jr. requests to rezone .0578 acres in accordance with Scotland County Zoning Ordinance, Article IV from C1 (Neighborhood Commercial) back to RA (Residential Agricultural). The property is located on 9581 Malloy Avenue, Laurel Hill, NC, and is Mr. Hester’s residence. The Planning and Zoning Board recommends the application be approved.

Chairman Willis opened the Public Hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of or against the application. No one came forward and the Public Hearing was closed.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve Rezoning Application Number 431-06.**

**Discussion:** Commissioner Butler recommended the application fee be waived since the property had originally been residential for more than 50 years and he has no idea when it was then rezoned to commercial.

Chairman Willis said the Commissioners must be consistent with what’s been done in the past with regard to waiving fees.

County Engineer Jim Blackwell said he would research the issue and report back to the Board.

**Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

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Rezoning Application Number 432-06 – James W. Cox requests to rezone 5.05 acres in accordance with Scotland County Zoning Ordinance, Article IV from RA (Residential Agricultural) to HC (Highway Commercial). The property is located on 15020 Christian Way, Marston, NC. The Planning and Zoning Board recommends the application be approved without the requirement of a buffer.

Chairman Willis opened the Public Hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of or against the application. No one came forward and the Public Hearing was closed.

**Motion was made by Vice Chair Gholston and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to approve Rezoning Application Number 432-06. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 2. Presentation on 2008 Census Dress Rehearsal**

Ms. Cindy Scurry-Johnson, US Census Bureau, Charlotte Regional Office, said Scotland County is part of the 2008 Census Dress Rehearsal in preparation for the 2010 Census. Ms. Scurry-Johnson said the 2010 Census will include the first short form in decades with about seven questions. The Census Bureau will soon open an office in Fayetteville, NC. She added that up to 2,000 people will be hired for the 2008 Dress Rehearsal Census.

**Item 3. Update on Privatization of Mental Health**

Ms. Sharen Prevatte, Executive Director, Southeastern Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, provided an update on the privatization of mental health across the State and in the region. She said the mental health clinic closed in Scotland County and clients have been transitioned to private providers.

Ms. Prevatte discussed the reduction in force and the endorsement process of private providers who would bill directly for services they provide. She said the few services that remain in Scotland County would be divested by July 2006 or shortly thereafter.

The Local Management Entity (LME) responsible for oversight. Ms. Prevatte explained how clients can now access the services.

Vice Chair Gholston said she is disappointed the State is reducing mental health services. She asked what happens to those clients who have no coverage or ability to pay for private services. Ms. Prevatte said that State dollars are budgeted to serve the indigent population.

**Item 4. FY 2005-2006 Secondary Road Improvement Program**

District Engineer Kevin Hedrick presented the 2005-2006 Secondary Road Improvement Plan as follows:

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The Secondary Improvement Program Highway Funds includes a \$496,028 proposed allocation and \$66,535 in unallocated funds for a total of \$562,563. Mr. Hedrick outlined the program elements.

The Secondary Improvement Program Trust Funds include a \$419,529 proposed allocation and \$248,815 in unallocated trust funds for a total available of \$668,344. Mr. Hedrick outlined the program elements.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the NCDOT 2005-2006 Secondary Road Improvement Program. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 5. Closed Session**

**Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded Commissioner Butler to go into 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 and 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.**

*The Commissioners met for Closed Session in the Health Department Education Room.*

**OPEN SESSION RESUMED**

**Item 6. Resolution Acknowledging the Execution and Delivery by the Scotland County Board of Education of a Guaranteed Energy Savings Contract**

*The Board of Commissioners tabled this item.*

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**TABLED**

**Item 7. 2005 Community Child Protection Team Report**

Ms. Sandy Skamperle, Chair, Community Child Protection Team (CCPT), provided the Commissioners with the 2005 annual report. Ms. Skamperle said among the child abuse and neglect cases reviewed in 2005, the most significant contributing factors were parenting skills and support, poverty, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence services and support. Ms. Skamperle discussed each of these points.

Ms. Skamperle said the CCPT intends to establish a methamphetamine training program

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for SFY 05-06 where a countywide protocol would be written involving all agencies that may be involved should a methamphetamine lab be located.

Ms. Skamperle asked the Board of Commissioners to approve the current CCPT members list adding Ms. Madeline Peele, who would replace Ms. Juliet McMillan.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to approve the current CCPT members list as requested. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

*(Commissioner McDow was excused from the meeting)*

**Item 8. Consent Agenda:**

- a) **Approve minutes of the Board of Commissioners February 6, 2006 regular meeting, February 8, 2006 planning retreat and February 22, 2006 special meeting.**
- b) **Approve petition to add Sarah Lane to the NCDOT state-maintained road system.**
- c) **Approve request by Board of Elections to donate one AVM (Automatic Voting Machine) and one Registration Book dated 1902-1914 to the Department of Cultural Resources, to be placed in either the North Carolina Museum of History or the State Archives, as appropriate.**
- d) **Approve appointment of Mary Helen Norton as Scotland County Tax Assessor from April 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007, which would align the appointment schedule for that position to odd-numbered years as required by NCGS 105-294.**
- e) **Approve recommended 2005 tax valuation on parcels owned by Mr. Ed Purcell.**
- f) **Approve Resolution Acknowledging the Execution and Delivery by the Scotland County Board of Education of a Guaranteed Energy Savings Contract.**
- g) **Budget Amendments**
  - 1) **Elections: Approve an increase in revenue of \$13,785 from municipal elections and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to expend the money.**
  - 2) **DSS: Approve transfer of \$1,500 from unused Home and Community Care Block Grant funds as reported at the February 6, 2006 meeting and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to expend the money.**
  - 3) **DSS: Approve additional funding in the amount of \$1,557, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
  - 4) **EMS: Approve the transfer of \$98,247 from unappropriated Fund Balance to cover the purchase of a new ambulance as approved by the Commissioners at the February 8, 2006, planning retreat and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to expend the money.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to approve Consent Agenda with the exception of Item f, which was removed from the Consent Agenda. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 9. Health Department Updates**

Health Director Jane Murray introduced Health Carolinians Coordinator Kathie Cox, who would discuss the 2005 Community Health Assessment. Ms. Murray first thanked Cox, Ms. Barbara Mack and Mr. Andy Kurtzman for the work they did on the assessment.

Ms. Cox said the 2005 Community Health Assessment was the result of a yearlong undertaking. She explained how the document was compiled, the results of the assessment and how it could be used as a planning tool for developing priority areas and action plans. She discussed highlights of the document.

Health Director Jane Murray and DSS Director Jan Elliott said they were requesting on behalf of their respective Boards that the Commissioners consider support of Session Law 2005-168, which gives agencies the ability to create smoke-free environments within 50 feet of their facility.

Ms. Murray said eight hospitals and two coliseums in the State will go smoke-free, as will Scotland Memorial Hospital, effective July 4, 2006. Ms. Murray said the Health Department and DSS also would like to become smoke-free on the same date.

Ms. Elliott said a smoke-free environment would be good for the clients and the staff.

County Attorney Ed Johnston said the appropriate document would have to be drawn up as an amendment to the Health Board rules or as a separate ordinance. Chairman Willis directed Mr. Johnston to draw up the appropriate document. Ms. Murray asked that the effective date coincide with that of Scotland Memorial Hospital on July 4, 2006.

Ms. Murray said the Health Department was selected to go through accreditation for FY 2006-2007.

**Item 10. Update from the Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager**

Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Kevin Patterson distributed a financial report for the month of February. He said taxes are well above collection for the year. Mr. Patterson said sales taxes will at least meet budget this year. He credited Department Heads with keeping a tight rein on expenditures. Mr. Patterson said while expenditures are consistent, revenues will slow down.

Mr. Patterson said Commissioner Alford asked him to research the possibility of the County distributing NACo prescription discount cards. Mr. Patterson said member counties can participate in the prescription plan for free, which provides indigent,

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underinsured and uninsured citizens with prescription drug discounts.

Mr. Patterson said the prescription discount card should not cost the County anything other than whatever it might take administratively to get the cards out to the citizens.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to endorse the NACo prescription discount card program pending a review of the contract by the County Attorney. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 11. Appointments to Boards and Committees**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to appoint Mr. Ron Riggins to an unexpired term on the Planning and Zoning Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to appoint Mr. Charles Parker to an unexpired term on the Laurinburg/Scotland County Planning and Zoning Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to reappoint Commissioner Charles “Scoofer” Jordan, Mr. Walter Rogers, Mr. Pat Dozier, Mr. David Guy, Mr. Sam Cribb and Mr. Ken Haney to the 2006 Board of Equalization and Review. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to authorize the Chairman of the Board of Equalization and Review to set the date for appeals.**

**Discussion:** Commissioner Jordan said that was already done.

Commissioner Butler withdrew the motion, and Vice Chair Gholston withdrew the second to the motion.

**Item 12. County Manager’s Report**

County Manager John Crumpton said the City of Laurinburg and the Chamber of Commerce are in support of the Economic Development Policy found in the Agenda packet. He said this is a broad policy to help in industrial recruitment and retention.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve the Scotland County Economic Development Investment Policy. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

The County Manager said the Board is being asked to support a new AAU program called Scotland Warriors Achieving Triumph (SWAT). Mr. Crumpton said and

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endorsement by the Commissioners of SWAT would not include any expectation of County funds nor would it provide the team any discount on gymnasium use. He said the endorsement is meant to help SWAT secure AAU accreditation.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to endorse the Scotland Warriors Achieving Triumph (SWAT) basketball team and send a letter of support. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

County Manager John Crumpton said the Board of Education's 10-year capital needs study, which would exceed \$70 million over a 10-year period, is included for review in the Agenda packet.

Mr. Crumpton said he and Mr. Patterson met with Board of Education staff where it was confirmed that the new local school current expense funding calculation would increase by \$850,716, a nine percent increase over the current year.

Mr. Crumpton said the figure was double what was calculated and was based on what the other 70 low wealth counties spend. He explained that other counties have had new school construction, and the cost of operating those schools is figured into the formula along with grant monies.

Mr. Crumpton said that other counties are trying to makeup school funding because of what they are losing in State funds. Mr. Crumpton said revenue from the State lottery is earmarked for school capital projects only and cannot be used for local current expense.

In light of concerns expressed by Deercoft Homeowners about their cable service out of Wagram, Mr. Crumpton said he would be reviewing the issue.

Mr. Crumpton said the Town of Wagram is interested in contracting tax collection services with the County. Mr. Crumpton said he would like input from the Commissioners before the County Attorney works on an agreement.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to move forward on the Wagram tax collection service. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Mr. Crumpton reminded the Commissioners of a meeting March 20 in the Commissioners Chamber with the North Carolina Military Business Center regarding job creation as a result of BRAC.

He said Medicaid relief would top the agenda for a NCACC-sponsored district meeting April 18.

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

Vice Chair Gholston said she would like to receive reports from the Lumber River

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Council of Governments every few months since the agency administers grants on behalf of the County. She said reports such as that were discussed at the Planning Retreat.

***The Board of Commissioners by consensus agreed to ask LRCOG Executive Director to provide a report to the Board once a quarter.***

Commissioner Jordan said he is concerned that the local school current expense represents five-cents of the tax money. He said he is worried about the new initiative at the school to hire seven new nurses and seven new social workers that would offer more competitive salaries per position than what the County can offer. He said he would like to get the pay scales up to speed.

Commissioner Jordan said he also is concerned about the expense of some needed capital projects, the Courthouse and DSS expansion among them. He said a 3,000-square-foot facility would cost around \$200,000.

Commissioner Alford said the break on Medicaid proposed this year will not be there next year.

County Manager Crumpton said a sales tax swap for Medicaid relief still is on the table, but wealthy counties continue to oppose it.

Vice Chair Gholston said she remains optimistic that capital projects can be completed a little at a time.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Chairman Willis to adjourn. Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 10 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis  
Chairman