

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting
August 6, 2007, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, NC*

MINUTES
Scotland County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting, August 6, 2007
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, Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter (*arrived at 7:10 p.m.*). Staff in attendance: Interim County Manager/Finance Officer 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.

Chairman Willis asked if anyone wished to speak at Public Forum.

Mr. Bob Davis, Laurel Hill: asked the Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the citizens, to invite Senator Bill Purcell and Representatives Doug Yongue and Garland Pierce to a reception or meeting where they could be thanked publicly for their work on Medicaid relief.

Mr. David Burns, Chairman of the St. Andrews Presbyterian College Board of Trustees: commented on the proactive nature of the Board of Commissioners when it comes to attracting and retaining jobs in the community. Mr. Burns introduced St. Andrews President Paul Baldasare.

Mr. Paul Baldasare, St. Andrews Presbyterian College President: Mr. Baldasare discussed the College's current situation with regard to accreditation and the important role the College plays in its economic impact on the community. He said the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) indicated it would remove St. Andrews from accreditation status based not on its academics but on a perception SACS has of the College's debt. Mr. Baldasare said St. Andrews employs 250 people and attracts 15,000 visitors a year to Scotland County, all of whom have spendable income to support businesses in the community. Mr. Baldasare said St. Andrews recently raised about \$3 million that indicates to SACS that the institution has community support. He asked the Commissioners to consider a one-time Economic Incentive Grant to St. Andrews in the amount of \$500,000, which would further help St. Andrews make the strongest possible case regarding its ability to service its debt in a creative way.

(Commissioner McPhatter arrived at 7:10 p.m.)

Item 1. Public Hearing: Small Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance Grant

LRCOG Executive Director Jim Perry said a Public Hearing on the Small Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance Grant is necessary before the application process moves forward. Mr. Perry said if the grant is awarded, a more detailed Public Hearing would be required.

Chairman Willis opened the Public Hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of or against or comment on the Small Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance Grant. No one came forward, and the Public Hearing was closed.

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The Commissioners asked how the program would be evaluated if the grant is approved. They also discussed administrative costs that would be attached with the grant.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Gholston and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to approve the Small Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance Grant pre-application process. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 2. 2008 Census Dress Rehearsal update

Partnership and Data Services Specialist Laura McLettie provided an update on the 2008 Dress Rehearsal Census in which Scotland County and eight additional counties are participating. Ms. McLettie said a complete count committee would be formed to ensure everyone in the County is counted.

Ms. McLettie said there are numerous jobs available as part of the Census Dress Rehearsal. She encouraged the Commissioners to spread the word about the job availability.

Item 3. 2007-2008 Secondary Road Improvement Program

NCDOT County Maintenance Engineer Charles Vick said Secondary Road Improvement Program Highway Funds in 2007-2008 total \$662,479, of which \$625,026 is the fiscal year allocation and \$37,453 is in unallocated highway funds. He discussed the program elements.

Mr. Vick reported Secondary Improvement Program Trust Funds were \$12,300 allocated and \$202,827 unallocated for a total of \$215,127. He reviewed the Trust Fund program elements.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve the Scotland County Secondary Improvement Program for 2007-2008 as reported by the NCDOT. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 4. Four County Community Services presentation on Weatherization and Heating/Air Replacement Program

Four County Community Services Operations Manager Kim Clark provided an update on the agency's weatherization assistance program and Heating/Air Replacement Program (HARP).

Ms. Clark explained the requirements for qualification and the total number of homes served in both programs in 2006 and since 2003.

Ms. Clark said the agency does not do home rehabilitation. She said Four County did oversee an urgent repair program for one year in which about eight homes were repaired with a \$50,000 grant. She said the agency applied for but did not receive additional urgent repair grant funds.

She explained how Four County Community Services gets the word out to the community about the application process for weatherization and HARP.

Item 5. Consent Agenda:

- a) **Approval of minutes of the Board of Commissioners, June 26, 2007 (correction request) and July 9, 2007 regular meeting.**
- b) **Approve release of funds in the amount of \$10.00 and in the amount of \$946.50 and approve refunds in the amount of \$79.53 and in the amount of \$1,567.54.**
- c) **Approve resolution to accept the Richmond-Scotland County boundary line plat.**

**Resolution Approving the Scotland-Richmond County Border
as Recommended by an Appointed Committee of the Two Counties**

WHEREAS General Statute 153A-18 governs corrective measures for an uncertain or disputed boundary between two or more counties; and

WHEREAS a special boundary committee appointed by the governing boards of both counties worked together to survey, mark and map the disputed border; and

WHEREAS after careful review and research a boundary was established that varies minimally from the original boundary and was determined to be acceptable to the boundary committee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that upon ratification of the survey by the Boards of Commissioners of each county, a map showing the surveyed boundary shall be recorded in the office of the register of deeds of each county in the manner provided by law for the recordation of maps or plats and in the Secretary of State's office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the map shall contain a reference to the date of each resolution of ratification and to the page in the minutes of each board of commissioners where the resolution may be found. Upon recordation, the map is conclusive as to the location of the boundary.

Approved this 6th day of August 2007.

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

Item 6.2006 Tax Settlement

Tax Administrator Mary Helen Norton presented the 2006 Tax Settlement and the tools used to collect the taxes.

Motion was made by Commissioner McPhatter and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve the 2006 Tax Settlement. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 7. Sheriff's Office: School Resource Officer staffing request

Sheriff Shep Jones asked to convert an already budgeted a vacant Detention Officer position to a School Resource Officer position. Sheriff Jones said the schools are funding a second School Resource Officer.

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The Commissioners discussed the request in light of a recent report by the State indicating more positions would be needed in the Jail for compliance purposes.

Commissioner Alford suggested that a representative from the school system come before the Commissioners to make this request for a School Resource Officer if the need is that bad.

Motion was made by Commissioner McPhatter and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to approve converting a Detention Officer position to a School Resource Officer position. Vote: For: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioners Butler, McCook, McDow and McPhatter. Vote: Against: Commissioner Alford. Motion Approved.

Item 8. Parks and Recreation Major Event Policy

Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton discussed key points in the Major Event Policy.

- ✓ Policy for events open to the public and 200 or more attendees
- ✓ Requires commercial liability insurance, with Scotland County as additional insured on the policy.
- ✓ Event sponsor will contact law enforcement and obtain in writing security needs.
- ✓ Event would pay for any services in excess of usual level of park operation.
- ✓ Pets must be on a leash, County Attorney suggest no pets.
- ✓ For profit groups sponsoring event must make donation to non-profit, such as Relay for Life Fundraiser.

Ms. Newton said the policy received support from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Commissioner Alford suggested that pets should not be permitted because the word “pet” would be open for interpretation by the individual.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to exclude text regarding pets from the Major Event Policy. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Ms. Newton said the policy is in line with similar ones in other counties. She added that fees charged to out-of-own groups apply to major events only and not to events at the Recreation Complex.

The Commissioners discussed the use of facilities by for-profit organizations and donations from to non-profits. The Commissioners questioned how that part of the policy would be structured.

Chairman Willis suggested it might be better for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to develop a list of what for-profit activities should not occur in the County’s parks. Chairman Willis asked Ms. Newton to bring the policy back next month for review and approval.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to approve the Major Event Policy liability insurance increase effective January 2008. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 9. County Engineer: Courthouse Roof Contract

Interim Assistant County Manager/County Engineer Jim Blackwell said the initial contract from the Wooten Company for the courthouse roof was extremely high. Mr. Blackwell said he negotiated with the architect on behalf of the County with some success. Mr. Blackwell said the roofing consultant was not interested in negotiating on his bid of \$66,000.

Mr. Blackwell asked the Commissioners to consider dismissing the roofing consultant so the County could secure the services of another roofing consultant at a reasonable fee to assign to the architect.

Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to dismiss the roofing consultant for the Courthouse project. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Blackwell said that notification from Appalachian State via email confirmed that the County was selected for a landfill gas extraction project. The gas could be used to sell carbon credits to industrial customers and possibly generate some revenue to fund the cap for the landfill.

Chairman Willis directed Mr. Blackwell and Mr. Patterson to meet with DSS Director Joe Knott to review the space needs at Social Services.

Item 10. Update from the Interim County Manager/Finance Officer

Mr. Patterson said the recent auction of surplus vehicles, furniture and computers that no longer met the needs of the County brought in about \$19,500.

Referring to the West Point Stevens water plant grant application, Mr. Patterson said the Rural Center, as part of the grant process, requires a statement from Scotland County attesting that the County is organized under the laws of North Carolina.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston authorizing staff to prepare such a statement for the Rural Center that the County is in full compliance of NCGS 14-234. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Patterson said as a result of the State action to relieve counties of Medicaid expenses, counties may also take advantage of a revenue swap through local referendum to levy an additional .25 percent sales tax or to levy up to 0.4 percent in a land transfer tax. Mr. Patterson said there is no time restriction as to when a referendum can be placed on the ballot.

The Board of Commissioners by consensus agreed that it was too soon to put such a referendum on the ballot at this time.

Mr. Patterson provided an update on sewer service to Springs customers, some of whom are refusing to pay the monthly bill. Mr. Patterson said Springs has written to the customers that service would be cut off if the bills are not paid.

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Commissioner Butler asked if there was any way the County might be of help. Chairman Willis said the County cannot use public funds to assist private citizens, and the County is doing all it can through the grant process. Chairman Willis added that Springs must stay with this until it is resolved since the provision of water/sewer service to citizens began with Springs.

Mr. Patterson said Commissioner Butler has agreed to serve as Regional Land Use Advisory Committee (RLUAC) representative, replacing Commissioner McDow.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston appointing Leon Butler as Commissioner-representative on RLUAC and appointing Joyce McDow as Commissioner-alternate to RLUAC. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 11. Appointments to Boards and Committees

Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Commissioner McCook to reappoint Brooks Baines to a three-year term on the LRCOG Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow to appoint Latonia Marshall and Jeff Shelley to two-year terms on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to appoint John Alford as Commissioner-representative to the LRCOG Board of Directors and to appoint Clarence McPhatter as alternate Commissioner-representative. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Commissioner McDow said the Board should send a letter to the local legislators thanking them for their support on permanent Medicaid relief. She suggested the Commissioners host a reception in honor of the local legislators so citizens can thank them as well.

Item 12. Closed Session

Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford 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 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

Commissioner Alford said he has heard no positive feedback from citizens on the Community Assistance Policy for non-profits.

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Motion was made by Commissioner Alford to rescind the \$75,000 as part of the Community Assistance Policy for FY 2007-2008.

Vice Chair Gholston said the Commissioners agreed that this would be a one-year commitment.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Butler to recess until 1 p.m. Thursday, August 10, at 507 West Covington Street. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis
Chairman