

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners reconvened meeting
October 3, 2007, 507 West Covington Street, Laurinburg*

MINUTES

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners
Reconvened Meeting, October 3, 2007**

Joint Session with Laurinburg City Council

Scotland County Government Offices, 507 West Covington Street, Laurinburg, NC

Commissioners in attendance: Chairman J.D. Willis, Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioners John Alford, Leon Butler, Guy McCook and Joyce McDow. Commissioners not present: Commissioner Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: Interim County Manager/Finance Officer Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Edward Johnston, Human Resources Manager Susan Butler and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman.

City Council Members in attendance: Mayor Ann Slaughter and Council Members Amanda Faulk, Curtis Leak and Tommy Parker. Staff in attendance: City Manager Craig Honeycutt and City Clerk Dee Hammond. City Council Members Rembert Deberry and Herbert Rainer were not present.

At 5:35 p.m. Chairman Willis reconvened the meeting and Mayor Ann Slaughter called the City Council meeting to order.

Chairman Willis said the Fair Housing Policy was distributed to Commissioners for review and approval. Mr. Patterson reported that the Policy is among the documents required for the CDBG loan application for the shell building.

Motion was made by Commissioner Butler and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the Recipient's Plan to Further Fair Housing as part of the shell building loan application. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Chairman Willis explained that the purpose of the joint session was to discuss a possible partnership between the City and the County in the hiring of an economic developer.

Chamber President-elect Harry Yeatman was recognized. Mr. Yeatman discussed the history of the Chamber and its partnership with the City and County. Mr. Yeatman said the Chamber over the last 18 months has redefined economic development in the community since industrial recruitment continues to decline. Mr. Yeatman said this is a time to look for other avenues for the community's collective economic well-being.

Mr. Yeatman said although the hiring of an economic developer by the County was not what was envisioned by the Chamber, the Chamber would support any effort by the County to improve economic development.

Mr. Yeatman asked what role the Chamber would play in the community if the County assumes the industrial development role. Mr. Yeatman asked if the Chamber would continue to receive funding through the end of the fiscal year and could it expect to be funded by the City and County in the future in support of economic development. Mr. Yeatman said without funding there is concern that the large volunteer support of the Chamber would dry up.

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Chairman Willis said it is time for a change, and many surrounding counties have an economic developer who does not report to the Chamber. He said now the City is being asked to partner with the County in this endeavor.

Chairman Willis said he would expect the new position to recruit industry and retail businesses to the County in an effort to bring in jobs and increase the tax base. Chairman Willis suggested that the position would answer to a reporting board made up of three Commissioners and two City Council Members. The County Manager, the City Manager and the Chamber President would serve as *ex officio*.

Chairman Willis said if the City and County move forward with this plan, the by-laws to the Scotland Development Corporation would have to be amended.

City Council Member Tommy Parker said he is open to the concept but he also would like to protect the existing LDRC, TDA and Chamber, which serve to enhance what the community can offer.

City Council Member Leak said if the County has a vision, and the City will be a part of it, then he is for trying.

City Council Member Amanda Faulk said that with retail promotion added to the plan, it does give the City more of a vested interest in the joint position. Ms. Faulk said it is important to give the City entities protection by offering the same promotion and attention as industry would receive.

Chairman Willis said that a small committee could be formed to work out the details, and the City would be included in that to protect the retail interests.

City Council Member Parker motioned and City Council Member Faulk seconded the motion to explore a partnership with the County to try to protect the City's interest to try to develop an industrial/retail base to improve the quality of life for the community. City Council Members Parker, Faulk and Leak voted in favor of the motion.

Chairman Willis said a task force would be put together, which would include the City Manager and County Manager, to develop a plan for both governing boards to consider.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gholston to recess to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 17, at 507 West Covington Street. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

The City Council adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis
Chairman