

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners reconvened meeting
September 25, 2007, 507 West Covington Street, Laurinburg*

MINUTES

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners
Reconvened Meeting, September 25, 2007**

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

At 5 p.m. Chairman J. D. Willis reconvened the meeting. 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 5:05 p.m.*). 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.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow to go into closed session 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. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

OPEN SESSION RESUMES

The Commissioners discussed options for filling the economic development position to succeed Chamber of Commerce President Jim Frank Henderson, who will retire.

Commissioner Alford said it would be good to try something new in order to turn the current situation around. He said the County has been losing blue-collar jobs, not high tech jobs, to surrounding counties, and that situation should be remedied.

Chairman Willis suggested that an economic developer could be hired by the County and the City with the person answering to a board composed of three Commissioners and two City Council Members.

Commissioner McCook said a person in economic development/industrial recruitment should not work under a government entity because it would be difficult to recruit the support of community volunteers. Commissioner McCook said the job is bigger than industrial recruitment since it focuses on community image and work force development, key to attracting more jobs to the County.

Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioner McPhatter agreed with Commissioner Alford that a government position dedicated only to bringing jobs to the County would be of more benefit.

Commissioner McCook explained how industrial recruitment has changed because there is now international competition. He said recruiting an industry to an area is more like winning the lottery these days.

Commissioner McCook said it would be better to keep the position in the current facility where existing resources could be leveraged to the fullest.

Motion was made by Commissioner McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to move forward with plans to meet with the Laurinburg City Council to discuss a shared economic

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development position. Vote: For: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioners Alford, Butler, McDow and McPhatter. Vote: Against: Commissioner McCook.

Commissioner Butler said he voted for the motion because he is still undecided but willing to explore another option at this point.

Chairman Willis directed Interim County Manager Kevin Patterson to contact City Manager Craig Honeycutt so a joint meeting between the County Commissioners and the City Council could be scheduled as soon as possible.

Mr. Patterson noted that the five-year loan on the spec building was restructured so the first two years would be an interest-only payment followed by three years of interest and principal payments. Mr. Patterson said the County would not be negatively affected by this since the loan is at two percent interest and the county is earning five percent on investment.

Mr. Patterson said the County will hear in October whether it will receive a Clean Water grant for the Springfield Village water/wastewater treatment plant project. Mr. Patterson said if the grant is not successful, Springs Industries intends to move on with the abandonment process.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow to adjourn. Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis
Chairman