

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
October 3, 2016, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC*

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners October 3, 2016 regular meeting  
A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC**

Commissioners in attendance: Chair Carol McCall, Vice Chair Whit Gibson and Commissioners John Alford, Bob Davis, Betty Blue Gholston, Guy McCook and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, Finance Officer Beth Hobbs, County Attorney Ed Johnston and Clerk to the Board Ann Kurtzman.

At 7 p.m. Chair McCall called the meeting to order. Commissioner McCook delivered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the October 3, 2016, agenda as presented. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Public Forum**

**Mr. Richard Thomas**, 10620 Gum Swamp Lake Road, Laurinburg, said in 2014 Mr. Neil Shaw made a presentation on the three-cent increase in the Fire Tax, which would be used in first year to establish a substation in the northern part of the County and a substation in the southern part of the County to help decrease the ISO rating. Mr. Thomas said that two years later there are still no substations. He said he has not received insurance relief he is just paying more.

**Mr. Andre McMillan**, 805 Wiley Circle, Laurinburg, said he was banned from Parks and Recreation two years ago, which he described as an injustice. Mr. McMillan recounted the incident that resulted in his being banned while coaching a baseball game when a parent threatened him. Mr. McMillan said he had been coaching for 10 years and followed the Parks and Recreation code of conduct.

***Commissioner McPhatter suggested that Mr. McMillan make an appeal to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.***

**Mr. Phil Morgan**, 28501 Marston Road, Marston, addressed the need for a fire substation in the north end of the County. Mr. Morgan supported the increase in the fire tax because it is a safety thing and a money thing for people in the outer edges of the County. Mr. Morgan said the substations need to be built soon and operable by the middle of next year so the fire insurance can come down. Mr. Morgan said he realizes the Commissioners get a lot of criticism but he feels this is justified. He asked the Commissioners to work more for Scotland County and less for the City of Laurinburg.

**Mr. Brian Gainey**, 218 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, a candidate for School Board, said he was coming before the Commissioners as a taxpayer, voter and member of the community. Mr. Gainey said the school consolidation plans should be stopped. Schools should be community and neighborhood-based. Mr. Gainey said there is concern, in particular, about crowded cafeterias and school bus rides that are longer than an hour. Mr. Gainey also is concerned about too large classes and the estimated \$41 million debt over 25 years. Mr. Gainey said he would like a referendum on the school consolidation plan since it involves tax money and taxpayers should have a say in how the money is spent. Mr. Gainey called the consolidation plan flawed from start when other options could be explored.

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
October 3, 2016, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC**

**Dr. Matthew Block**, 1103 West Church Street, Laurinburg, addressed the Commissioners as a citizen and Mayor of the City of Laurinburg. Dr. Block said he surveyed 91 citizens and all of them opposed the school consolidation plan. He questioned whether some citizens are aware their schools are being closed. Dr. Block said people don't show up to meetings because they don't feel they are being listened to. He asked the Commissioners why they would consider doing something the citizens don't want. Dr. Block said the job loss would hurt the economy. Dr. Block said give citizens opportunity to vote on it.

**Mr. Ulysses Thomas**, who at the September meeting proposed the consideration of a joint County/City community building on the site where the American Legion Post is located on McKenzie Street. Mr. Thomas brought a copy of the deed as additional information. Mr. Thomas said a community building would benefit children and grownups in Washington Park.

Since no one else had signed up to speak, Public Forum was closed.

**Scotland County Comprehensive Transportation Plan**

LRCOG Regional Transportation Coordinator Janet Robertson discussed the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) that started in 2014. Ms. Robertson discussed volume capacity status of roads in Scotland County and a safety crash analysis was conducted. Recommended are improving Highway 401 from South Carolina to Raeford and improving 74 to Interstate standards from the Richmond bypass to Maxton. Ms. Robertson said the CTP is now at the adoption stage.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to adopt the Scotland County Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN  
FOR SCOTLAND COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner Guy McCook, seconded by Commissioner John Alford and, upon being put to a vote, was carried unanimously on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 2016.

**WHEREAS**, Scotland County, the Town of East Laurinburg, Town of Gibson, Town of Maxton, Town of Wagram, City of Laurinburg, Scotland County, the Lumber River Rural Planning Organization, and the Transportation Planning Branch, North Carolina Department of Transportation, have actively worked to develop a Comprehensive Transportation Plan for Scotland County, North Carolina; and

**WHEREAS**, the County and the Department of Transportation are directed by North Carolina General Statutes 136-66.2 to reach agreement for a transportation system that will serve present and anticipated volumes of traffic in the County and above mentioned involved local municipalities; and

**WHEREAS**, it is recognized that the proper movement of traffic within and through Scotland County is a highly desirable element of the comprehensive plan for the orderly growth and development of the County; and

**WHEREAS**, after full study of the plan, and following a Public Workshop in the County on June 27, 2016, the Scotland County Board of Commissioners feels it to be in the best interests of Scotland County to adopt a plan pursuant to General Statutes 136-66.2;

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
October 3, 2016, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC*

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Scotland County Board of Commissioners hereby adopt the Scotland County Comprehensive Transportation Plan, maps dated August 31, 2016. This plan should be approved and adopted as a guide in the development of the transportation system in Scotland County and the same is hereby recommended to the North Carolina Department of Transportation for its subsequent adoption:

**Scotland County financial update**

Finance Officer Beth Hobbs presented the Fund Balance as of June 30, 2016. She said it is expected the FY 2016 fund balance will be around 19 percent. Ms. Hobbs also discussed revenues and expenditures and landfill cash flow as of September 23, 2016.

**Consent Agenda**

- a) Approve minutes of the September 6, 2016, regular meeting, September 14, 2016 joint meeting and September 22, 2016, reconvened meeting.
- b) Approve Tax Office request for August 2016 release of funds in the amount of \$559.09 and in the amount of \$10,842.31, refunds in the amount of \$85 and discoveries in the amount of \$12,178.90. *(Incorporated by reference)*
- c) Approve 2017 Board of Commissioners meeting schedule.
- d) Approve 2017 holiday schedule.
- e) Approve Public Works request to surplus a 1994 GMC roll off truck VIN #4V2JCBBE4RR824461 and a 2009 Chevrolet Colorado pick-up truck VIN #1GCDT19EX98146465.
- f) Accept resignation of Clerk to the Board Ann Kurtzman, effective February 1, 2017.
- g) Approve request by the Sheriff's Department to surplus approximately 40 Smith & Wesson M&Ps and several shotguns that are rusted and need replacing.
- h) Budget Amendments:
  - 1) **Library:** Approve carryover of donated funds from FY 2016 in the amount of \$500 for the purchase of children's books, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money.
  - 2) **Health:** Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$2,261.34 for Summer Food Service Site Inspections, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars.

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

**Liaison Committee report**

Vice Chair Gibson said the September 20 meeting of the Liaison Committee included a follow up discussion to the September 14 joint meeting between the Commissioners and the Board of Education. Vice Chair Gibson said there was conversation on current expense funding, which would be a 2.25 percent reduction in the two years following the current funding agreement. Commissioner McCook said the school liaison members indicated the Board of Education was considering the north side of the County as a possible location for the new school. However, a site selection committee would eventually determine the best available site for new construction although there is intent to look at the north side of town.

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
October 3, 2016, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC*

Commissioner McPhatter said he was concerned about putting the buggy before the horse since a site has not yet been identified.

**Consider school construction/consolidation plan**

The County Manager reviewed the most updated information received as a result of questions asked at the September 14 joint meeting, including cost difference between Net Zero and traditional construction methods.

Mr. Patterson said the Net Zero school price increased while traditional construction came in at about \$32 million. Mr. Patterson said if class sizes decrease the traditional school would cost an estimated \$35,153,400. Mr. Patterson said that would mean the debt payment would be \$3.6 million with a \$500,000 a year saving available in first nine years, which would increase to \$1.4 million savings annually after that. Mr. Patterson said although the financial condition is improved, issuing debt is a slow process. Mr. Patterson said he and school officials will have a preliminary meeting with the LGC on October 27. The LGC needs sealed bids for construction in hand before anything can happen so the schools must hire an architect.

Mr. Patterson said the School Board is looking for approval from the Commissioners in order to move forward with recruiting an architect and reviewing site locations, which would determine cost. A minimum 20-acre site served by power, water and preferably a sewer line would be necessary. Approval would mean the School Board could move forward with the process, which will take several months. Mr. Patterson said at any point in time the Commissioners can say they are not interested if the governing body decides not to issue the debt, which could be eight months from now. The \$35 million debt estimate includes additions to the two schools along with land clearing and preparation.

Chair McCall said approval tonight would be a first step with no financial obligation. It gives permission for the school system to move forward.

Mr. Patterson said with the difference in pricing, a P3 (Net Zero) school is not in consideration anymore. He said although a General Obligation Bond is the least costly method, it would require a referendum which could not occur until March 2018. A Limited Obligation Bond (LOB) does not require a referendum for issuing debt.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson that the Scotland County Board of Commissioners endorse the consolidation plan that has been recommended by the Scotland County Board of Education, which includes the closing of the previously identified schools and expanding both Laurel Hill and Sycamore Lane schools, and building one additional school, further; that the Board of Commissioners authorize the Board of Education to move forward with the necessary process to hire an architect to develop plans for the proposed construction of the additions and the new school so that a more definite cost of the project can be obtained; that the proposed cost of the project be presented to the Scotland County Board of Commissioners for their determination of the necessary means to finance the construction, further; that the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education appoint members of their Boards and members of the public to initiate a site selection process to determine the best site for any new school construction.**

*Discussion: Chair McCall said the motion does not obligate the County to finance the project and this is just step one in the process. Vice Chair Gibson said the schools believe they can save \$2.7 million, which is money the County spent in the past, some of which could be returned to the taxpayer because the*

***Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
October 3, 2016, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC***

*County would not be supporting 50 and 60-year old schools. Vice Chair Gibson said if this is not the path, he would be the first one to say to not go forward. Commissioner Davis said when it comes to the final numbers he would like to refer them to the Capital Committee, County Manager and Finance Officer to make sure the County is going in the right direction if the Commissioners decide to obligate the County.*

**Vote: Motion for the Board of Education to move forward unanimously approved.**

**Update from the County Manager**

Mr. Patterson said an upset bid was conducted for the three bids on the parcels discussed at the September 6 regular meeting. No opposing bids were received.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Gholston and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to accept the three bids for the parcels. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Mr. Patterson said the County is looking at property for a fire substation behind the water tower on 401. The substation would be a pre-engineered steel building. The flooring would have to bear the size and weight of firetrucks. Mr. Patterson said because the City of Laurinburg owns the property, there will be a Memorandum of Understanding. The County would pay for the building and the City would pay for improvements to the site.

Commissioner Davis said the water haul conducted by the fire departments helped lower the ISO rating in most districts with the others to follow once some issues are corrected.

Mr. Patterson said closing cost on the final settlement on the purchase of 50 acres owned by St. Andrews University exceeded what was approved by \$14,000. Mr. Patterson asked for an additional \$5,000 to assist in covering the cost.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to contribute \$5,000 to the SCEDC to help cover the cost of the transaction. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Mr. Patterson said Verizon inspected the EMS radio tower and found it cannot support the Verizon cellular antenna. Verizon proposes building a new tower next to the current one, transferring County equipment onto the new tower, and giving the County ownership of the new tower in exchange for the allowing Verizon to house specific antennas on it at no charge. Verizon also would dismantle the old tower and maintain its own equipment on the new tower. Mr. Patterson explained that using the same location would be easier than getting a license for a new location. This would be a \$200,000 to \$300,000 contribution to the County in exchange to giving Verizon free space. Mr. Patterson said the negotiation would have to go through the attorney.

**Motion was made by Commissioner McPhatter and duly seconded by Vice Chair Gibson to move forward with the Verizon proposal. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner McCook suggested the County might provide assistance to the fire departments with some of their paperwork.

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
October 3, 2016, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC*

**Closed Session**

**Motion was made by Vice Chair Gibson and duly seconded by Commissioner McCook to go into Closed session held in accordance with N.C.G.S. 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 located at the certified site. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**OPEN SESSION RESUMED**

**Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Davis to adjourn. Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.**

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

Carol McCall  
Chair