

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting  
May 4, 2015, Emergency Operations Center, 1403 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, NC**

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Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Guy McCook, Vice Chair Carol McCall and Commissioner Bob Davis, Betty Blue Gholston, Whit Gibson and Clarence McPhatter. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioner John Alford (*excused*). Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Ed Johnston, Finance Officer Beth Hobbs and Clerk to the Board Ann Kurtzman.

At 7 p.m. Chairman McCook called the meeting to order. Commissioner Gibson offered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and duly seconded by Vice Chair McCall to approve the May 4, 2015 agenda as presented. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Public Forum**

**Ms. Lee Anne Venable**, Partners in Ministry, discussed the mission, ministry and service of the agency. Ms. Venable requested the Commissioners consider providing the agency \$5,000 to help purchase sports equipment for after school and summer youth programs. Ms. Venable discussed the number of children who would be served and the program schedule.

**Reverend Tim Hunt**, Fresh Manna Baptist Church, spoke of the church request to purchase Scotland Cemetery. Reverend Hunt said he believes the church would make the cemetery a beautiful place for everyone. He asked the Commissioners for consideration of the request to purchase the cemetery.

**Public Hearing continued: Conditional Use Application 481-15 – Shoe Creek Solar, LLC**

Chairman McCook reopened the public hearing and asked if anyone wished to present testimony on the application. Mr. Phil Nyborg, having been sworn in, testified on behalf of Shoe Creek Solar. Mr. Nyborg reiterated the principle benefits in the tax base for 30 years of the life of the solar array. He said the solar array emits no pollution. Mr. Nyborg addressed its proximity to the airport and submitted information on federal policy along with specific information on how an array might relate to the airport. Mr. Nyborg said the federal policy encourages off airport arrays to conform to on-airport policy. Mr. Nyborg said Shoe Creek engineers ran a solar glare analysis that states there is no hazard at LMA. It analyzed every runway approach from two miles out and observation for a single point at the airport. No one else provided testimony, and Chairman McCook closed the public hearing.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Gibson and duly seconded by Commissioner Gholston to approve conditional use application 481-15 as requested. Vote: In Favor: Chairman McCook, Vice Chair McCall and Commissioners Gholston, Gibson and McPhatter. Vote: Against: Commissioner Davis. Motion approved.**

**Scotland County Schools redistricting scenarios**

School Public Information Officer Meredith Bounds and Chief Financial Officer Jay Toland presented a brief recap on school consolidation and possible closure of some schools. There were nine public input sessions where attendees received information, asked questions and made comments. Ms. Bounds discussed some of the scenarios and summarized the school capacity study. Ms. Bounds said if there was no interest in the buildings set to close they would be demolished so there would be no empty buildings.

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She said corner stops will be implemented in the next school year whether the schools consolidate or not. Ms. Bounds discussed most of the frequently asked questions.

Commissioner Gholston asked why the School Board could not just redistrict rather than build new schools. Mr. Toland discussed the expense of renovating older schools compared to building new schools. Mr. Toland said there is a scenario where the School Board would not ask the Commissioners for funds. Commissioner Gibson and Vice Chair McCall suggested the Board of Education consider redistricting as opposed to combining whole schools.

**Detention Center inspection and response**

Sheriff Ralph Kersey reported on the February inspection of the Detention Center conducted by the State. Sheriff Kersey said listed were the same items that were problems over the last several years. He said the six cells have a problem accessing hot water. Lowest cost for material to make the hot water work is \$14,116.66 from McKenzie Supply. Sheriff Kersey said another issue is no two-way voice communication or direct observation within confinement units. He said visual observation would be corrected with the installation of 40 plus digital cameras, some of which would be funded by a \$25,000 federal grant of the \$40,361 total project price. Sheriff Kersey said he could see no way to implement communication in every cell but installation of the camera system would be a help. Sheriff Kersey said the final item where the shower had broken ceramic tile and the drain did not work would cost \$4,055 to fix.

**Consent Agenda:**

- a) **Approve minutes of the April 6, 2015, regular meeting and the April 22, 2015 special meeting.**
- b) **Approve EMS Week Proclamation for Scotland County.**
- c) **Budget amendments**
  - 1) **Sheriff: Approve receipt of \$46,000, and authorize the Finance Officer to receive and expend the monies. No County dollars**
  - 2) **DSS: Approve receipt of additional funding in the amount of \$44,847 for Child Daycare, and authorize the Finance Officer to receive and expend the monies. No County dollars**
  - 3) **Health: Approve receipt of State grant in the amount of \$2,915.31 for the Diabetes Education Program, and authorize the Finance Officer to receive and expend the monies. No County dollars.**

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

**Policy Committee**

Vice Chair McCall said the Vehicle Use Policy and Acknowledgement Form would apply to all employees with the exception of law enforcement. It was reviewed by the Policy Committee and is similar to policies being used in other counties.

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson to approve the Vehicle Use Policy and Acknowledgement Form. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Vice Chair McCall said the Policy Committee also reviewed amendments to the benefits for retirees. Vice Chair McCall said there are instances where a former employee retires and wishes to be rehired. The

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amendments address their status for health insurance. Health benefits would resume under the same qualifications as before the re-hire.

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson to approve amendments to the benefits for retirees policy. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Appointments to Boards and Committees**

The Commissioners tabled an appointment to the Southeastern Economic Development Commission private sector until it was determined if the person who currently serves is interested in reappointment.

**FY 2015-2016 proposal for availability fees**

County Manager Patterson discussed the primary goals to get back the landfill to a positive net asset and to accumulate enough cash on hand equal to closure and post-closure within 20 years. Mr. Patterson explained a two-tier fee system, which would include \$55 for all improved properties that had a structure and an electric meter base that functions. There would be an additional availability fee of \$30 per address if there is not a solid waste contract for those who do not live within a municipality. Mr. Patterson explained the \$30 would pay the additional charges the hauler would pay at the gate.

Fees would be waived at convenience sites for anybody who lives in the County with a Scotland County driver's license or other form of ID. Government buildings would be exempt from the fees. Those with Homestead Exemption would receive a 50 percent reduction on the total amount. Non-profits would be charged the fee. Mr. Patterson said the fees are not a tax. They pay for handling the waste generated. Mr. Patterson said the County hopes to reach out to local waste companies for customer lists so modifications can be made. Mr. Patterson said the fees would be printed on the property tax bill. The \$30 would be removed with proof of contract with a private hauler. The County Manager said the fees would generate about \$700,000 annually and \$2.9 million for closure and post closure costs for the landfill within 20 years.

The County Manager said he expects the LGC to write up the County for at least a decade even though the County will begin to demonstrate positive cash flow and income and reduce the negative net assets. The LGC will acknowledge the progress.

Chairman McCook asked for a simpler plan with a nod to fairness since the proposed plan seems like extra work for staff to keep up with it. Commissioner McPhatter said the flip side would be more people would come to the Tax Department to get the fee reduced by \$30 if they use a private hauler.

Vice Chair McCall and Commissioner Gibson said the Policy Committee would like to implement the fee in the next fiscal year so as not to incur more debt for closure and post closure costs. It is a strategy that can be implemented although burdensome, Vice Chair McCall said. Tax Assessor Mary Helen Norton said many counties do something similar to the plan proposed. Mr. Patterson said it would take some time to program into the tax bills and the simpler the method the easier it will be to program and get the bills out. Mr. Patterson suggested if the structure could be set this month the processing would not be as complicated. He asked the Commissioners to consider action at the budget retreat. Commissioner Davis said Richmond County has a fine structure for littering by nonresidents, and that should be built in the structure.

**Update from the County Manager**

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The Commissioners agreed to meet for budget work sessions at the SBIC 8 a.m. May 20 and May 22. Time is not yet determined for a third budget work session June 1.

Mr. Patterson said he met with Mr. James McDougald and Reverend Hunt to review financials at Fresh Manna Baptist Church from 2011 through the last completed quarter and there are financial concerns any small church might have. Mr. McDougald would be primary manager of the cemetery, which would be run as a distinct unit so the church would not specifically support it. Mr. McDougald is working on marketing plans and strategies on how to operate the cemetery. Mr. Patterson said it would be a significant undertaking, and there would be a risk for anyone owning the facility. Mr. Patterson recommended the Commissioners accept the offer from Fresh Manna Baptist Church to purchase Scotland Cemetery in the amount of \$25,000, and that would begin the upset bid process. Mr. Patterson said the County would take title to the property immediately before transferring it back to the church. Mr. Patterson said the \$25,000 would cover the taxes but not interest and penalties. It would transfer without property tax liability to the church.

**Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Gholston to accept the \$25,000 offer from Fresh Manna Baptists Church to purchase Scotland Cemetery subject to compliance regarding the sale of the property to any other entity. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Mr. Patterson said the fire tax would be used to purchase one pumper for Stewartsville Fire Department, the purchase of which was reviewed and endorsed by Fire Commission. \$250,000 would cover cost of the truck and equipment.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson to authorize the purchase of a pumper tanker through the HGACBuy program for \$25,000. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Gibson and duly seconded by Vice Chair McCall to recess to 8 a.m. Wednesday, May 20 at the SBIC. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

Guy McCook  
Chairman