

MINUTES

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners
June 6, 2013 Budget Work Session/Reconvened Meeting/Joint Session
507 West Covington Street, Laurinburg, NC**

At 3 p.m. Chairman Guy McCook reconvened the meeting for a budget work session and a joint meeting with the Board of Education. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman McCook, Vice Chair Carol McCall and Commissioners John Cooley, Bob Davis and Whit Gibson. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioners John Alford (*excused*) and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, Finance Officer Charles Nichols and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Chairman McCook reconvened the meeting with a prayer.

Resolution regarding drug testing for public assistance clients

DSS Director Robby Hall discussed three bills being considered by State legislature that involve drug testing for Work First benefits and/or public assistance. He outlined the differences among the bills and estimated that the cost to the County could range from \$43,000 to more than \$300,000 if implemented.

Mr. Hall explained the current DSS policy for Work First clients with regard to substance abuse and public assistance clients. Mr. Hall, in a written report, listed seven recommendations, which would include a random drug screening and no more than two percent sample size per month. Mr. Hall said another recommendation would be for the State to first establish reimbursement for the drug screen so the County would not assume the cost of another unfunded mandate.

Mr. Hall said substance abuse treatment services must be available for those referred in order for the program to be effective. Mr. Hall said many adults are not eligible for Medicaid but treatment costs would have to be covered.

Commissioner Cooley said he appreciates that legislature is considering this issue because the State and County should not support drug use or assist people in supporting their substance abuse problems.

The Commissioners agreed that although there is general support for drug testing there is concern such a program would result in an unfunded mandate to the County.

Motion was made by Commissioner Gibson and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley that the County send a resolution to its Senator and Representatives that tells them of the County's support of drug testing of individuals who seek public assistance and that the County adopt the seven recommendations as a basis for the resolution. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Review of 2014 preliminary budget

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County Manager Patterson said he would recommend that landfill fees remain the same but the additional \$5 per ton fee for out-of-County users be eliminated so as not to discourage out-of-County waste from coming to the landfill.

Mr. Patterson recommended that fees per pound at the recycle centers remain the same but double the fee for out-of-County users at the recycle centers. Personnel at the convenience centers are already checking driver's licenses and license plates. Mr. Patterson recommended that pick-up and trailer fees at the recycle centers be eliminated and bulky items be taken directly to the landfill.

Mr. Patterson recommended that the Palmer Road convenience center be closed and schedule the remaining convenience sites to be open two days a week instead of three. He said the recommended closure and scheduling at the remaining centers would save an estimated \$30,000. Mr. Patterson explained that Palmer Road is the least used of the centers and is used mostly for recycling.

Commissioner Gibson commented that the Deercroft community uses Palmer Road and, according to one Deercroft resident, it is requested that Palmer Road remain open.

The Commissioners discussed at length various options in scheduling at the remaining convenience sites should Palmer Road be closed. They also discussed the possibility of locating a recycling station near Deercroft to replace Palmer Road services. The option of closing Sneads Grove convenience center instead of Palmer Road also was discussed. Public Works Supervisor Bryant Higgins said closing Sneads Grove would not change the volume, which is low, coming into Palmer Road.

Chairman McCook commented that the County should not limit more populated areas in order to serve the least populated areas. Chairman McCook said he would like more information on how an unmanned site would work, and he would like a better understanding of the population densities.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to close Palmer Road and direct administration to develop a plan where the other four convenience centers rotate their days of operation so that a site is open six days a week and each site is open two days. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Finance Officer Charles Nichols said the bonds on Water District I would be paid in 2037 and on Water District II in 2043. He said the Water Districts could be refinanced, but it would be a break-even plan. There would not be a three percent net savings at this time.

Review/discussion of budget options

Mr. Patterson distributed a list of budget reductions that total up to \$600,000 if Commissioners wished to look at options to lower the tax rate from the proposed \$1.03. Mr. Patterson described the cuts as "painful," and he would not recommend them. The County Manager reviewed the proposed reductions and described how they might affect services.

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(A break was called. The meeting resumed at 6 p.m.)

Joint session with Board of Education

Board of Education members present were Chairman Charles Brown, Jimmy Bennett, Duke Williams, Pat Gates, Jamie Sutherland and Dr. Jeff Byrd. Board of Education members not present were Dr. Paul Rush and Darrel Gibson.

School staff present included Superintendent Rick Stout, Finance Officer Jay Toland, Clerk to the Board of Education Nancy Smith and Attorney Nick Sojka. County Attorney Ed Johnston was in attendance for the joint session.

Chairman Brown called the Board of Education meeting to order.

Mr. Toland via PowerPoint discussed the capital outlay for the school in a review of 2012/2013 projects and anticipated capital projects in 2013/2014. Mr. Toland discussed capital projects that would be delayed based on the school system receiving \$198,000 in capital funding from the County versus the originally requested \$515,000.

Superintendent Stout said the schools identified security corridors as a top priority, and they would not be delayed. He said the Board of Education did as much due diligence as possible in order to delay the other capital needs. He said the capital projects, although delayed, would have to be completed in the future.

Mr. Patterson, via PowerPoint, presented the County budget and the County capital budget, which is \$70,000. Mr. Patterson said that the County also is delaying much needed capital work that is estimated at more than \$500,000.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to recess to 5 p.m. Monday, June 10, at 507 West Covington Street. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

The Board of Education moved to adjourn.

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

Guy McCook
Chairman