

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners
March 4, 2013 regular meeting, 507 West Covington Street, Laurinburg, NC*

**MINUTES
Scotland County Board of Commissioners
March 4, 2013 Regular Meeting
A.B. Gibson Education Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg NC**

At 7 p.m. Chairman Guy McCook called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman McCook, Vice Chair Carol McCall and Commissioners John Alford, John Cooley, Bob Davis, Whit Gibson and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Ed Johnston, Finance Officer Charles Nichols and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Commissioner Gibson delivered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Vice Chair McCall to approve the March 4, 2013 agenda as presented. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Public Forum

Chairman McCook said although retired County Engineer and Facilities Manager Jim Blackwell was unable to attend the meeting, he wanted to recognize Mr. Blackwell for more than 22 years of service with the County. Chairman McCook said Mr. Blackwell was integral in development and implementation of major capital projects for the County. Chairman McCook read the plaque: *Presented to Jim Blackwell in recognition and appreciation of 22 years of public service to Scotland County as Scotland County Engineer and as Facilities Manager January 1, 1991 to February 8, 2013 and in grateful appreciation of your invaluable commitment, dedication and loyalty to all citizens.*

Mr. Noran Sanford, member of the Laurinburg/Scotland County Drug and Crime Committee, presented a summary of a pilot program at Covington Street Elementary School. The program involves soliciting nominations from elementary school students for a positive adult male in their life who agrees to volunteer for one day at the school. Mr. Sanford said the men, who are vetted, greet children in the hallway, read in the classroom and serve as extra eyes and ears in the school.

No one else came forward to speak at Public Forum.

Public Hearing: Economic Incentive agreement

Economic Development Director Greg Icard said the County is required to hold a Public Hearing on the incentive grant, which spans six years for the industrial prospect. He said the incentive grant is similar to one previously approved by the Commissioners.

Chairman McCook called the Public Hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to the incentive agreement. No one came forward, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and duly seconded by Vice Chair McCall to approve the incentive grant. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Public Hearing: Land acquisition at industrial site

Mr. Icard said a Public Hearing is required for the land acquisition of 24.02 acres at the industrial park.

Chairman McCook called the Public Hearing and asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the land acquisition. No one came forward. Chairman McCook asked if anyone wished to speak against the land acquisition.

Mr. Charles Parker questioned the price per acre that would be paid for the land which, in his opinion, is excessive, compared to the going price of other land. Mr. Parker called attention to current economic conditions in the County as a reason why he thought the price per acre was excessive.

No one else came forward to speak, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Chairman McCook said price per acre is factored when there is a willing seller and a willing buyer. He said all the pieces are in place to make this project work, and the property was identified by the industrial client. Chairman McCook said the industrial client intends to create significant job numbers and make a significant capital investment and, for those reasons, the land acquisition is worth it.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson to approve the acquisition of 24.02 acres for the development of an industrial site. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Icard said he received word from the NCDOT late Friday that it wants a resolution of support from the County Commissioners and Laurinburg City Council regarding making a change of traffic pattern at the site, which would satisfy the needs of the industrial client.

Mr. Icard read the resolution.

**SCOTLAND COUNTY RESOLUTION REQUESTING
THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PERFORM UPRADES TO FACILITATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AT THE NEW
LAURINBURG/SCOTLAND COUNTY BUSINESS CAMPUS**

WHEREAS, the Scotland County Board of Commissioners indicated its desire to assist in economic development efforts within the County; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners is currently working with the North Carolina Department of Transportation in order to facilitate the location of a new industry that will bring jobs and significant new investment; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners will also work with the City of Laurinburg in order to facilitate this industry.

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NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Scotland County Board of Commissioners formally requests that the North Carolina Department of Transportation work with Scotland County to make the necessary changes and roadway improvements in order for this economic development project to be successful and to thrive.

Adopted this 4th day of March

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve the Resolution Requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation to Perform Upgrades to Facilitate Economic Development at the New Laurinburg/Scotland County Business Campus. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Safety procedures at Scotland County Schools

Associate Superintendent of Auxiliary Services Larry Johnson summarized safety measures the Schools plan to accomplish. He said currently all schools have keyless entry, 100 percent lockdown capabilities and quarterly safety meetings with law enforcement. Mr. Johnson invited a Commissioner to participate in the quarterly meetings. Mr. Johnson said plans are ongoing for a cafeteria and media center lockdown plan.

Mr. Johnson said perimeter connectors are needed for the following schools: North Laurinburg, I.E. Johnson, Shaw and Scotland High. Mr. Johnson asked the Commissioners to approve reallocating \$115,000 from unspent Wagram qualified construction bonds to construction of perimeter connectors.

Chairman McCook said the Board would take the request under advisement and put it on the agenda for the next meeting following staff review of the request.

Consent Agenda:

- a) **Approve minutes of the February 4, 2013, regular meeting.**
- b) **Approve Tax Department request to release funds in the amount of \$2,257.16 and \$40.20 and approve discoveries in the amount of \$723.89.**
- c) **Budget Amendments:**
 - 1) **CJPP: Approve decrease of budgeted \$150,000 in Criminal Justice Partnership Program, responsibility of which reverted to the State.**
 - 2) **QSCB/School Fund: Approve closeout of QSCB (Wagram School expansion) project and apply the \$28,800 balance to the bond principal.**

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

Award bid for the 507 West Covington Street administration building roof replacement

Public Buildings Supervisor Mike McGirt said six contractors returned sealed bids for the 507 West Covington Street roof project. Mr. McGirt asked the Commissioners to consider awarding the contract to Thames Construction, the low bidder at \$128,900.

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Chairman McCook asked why there was such a discrepancy in bids from a high of more than \$341,000. Mr. McGirt said all procedures were followed, which included the mandatory pre-bid meeting and receipt of the scope of work. Mr. McGirt said everyone had the same opportunity to look at the roof, and all contractors were provided the same information.

Mr. McGirt said there is a lower layer on the roof, which is an unknown until the top layer is removed. Mr. McGirt explained that the condition of the second layer might affect the price. Mr. McGirt said that once replaced, the roof will have a 20-year manufacturer's warranty. The roof will be similar to those placed on the Government Complex and Courthouse.

Chairman McCook indicated that \$160,000 was budgeted for the project, and there is an expectation the roof replacement will not cost more than that.

Commissioner McPhatter said he appreciates that the low bid came from a local contractor and taxpayer.

Motion was made by Commissioner McPhatter and duly seconded by Commissioner Davis to award the contract for the replacement of the roof at 507 West Covington Street to Thames Construction. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Patterson asked that the Commissioners to approve that payment for the project in cash rather than financing the project since the funds are available in the budget.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson to pay cash for the 507 West Covington Street roof project. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Eastpointe update

Vice Chair McCall said current legislation would reduce the number of members on the Eastpointe Board of Directors for the 12-county region from 27 to 21. Vice Chair McCall said Senate Bill 191 has created a lot of conversation among counties concerned their representation might be compromised. Vice Chair McCall said she would take any input from the Commissioners back to the Area Board.

Vice Chair McCall read a portion of a proclamation approved by the Eastpointe Area Board that identifies March as *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month*.

Appointments to Board and Committees

Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to reappoint Mr. Walter Neal Currie to a four-year term on the Scotland County Planning and Zoning Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson to appoint Ms. Leigh Carter to a three-year term on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

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Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to appoint Mr. Lewis Stroud to the Laurinburg/Scotland Drug and Crime Committee. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson to appoint Ms. Dee Hammond and Ms. Elizabeth Cooley to three-year terms on the Board of Equalization and Review. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Update from the County Manager

County Manager Patterson asked the Board for authorization to finance up to \$195,000 for one year for six vehicles for the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Patterson said the County would make a deposit of approximately \$32,500 and finance the remainder, which would require approximate debt service of \$145,600 for the six vehicles in the 2014 budget.

Motion was made by Commissioner McPhatterl and duly seconded by Commissioner Davis to authorize the financing of \$195,000 for vehicle purchase for 12 months and authorize the budget amendment for the same. Vote For: Chairman McCook, Vice Chair McCall and Commissioners Alford, Cooley, Davis and McPhatter. Vote Against: Commissioner Gibson. Vote: Motion approved.

Mr. Patterson discussed the white letter from the LGC and the County response to the letter. Mr. Patterson said although the general fund fund balance is above eight percent, the LGC indicated that the average balance among counties is 25 percent. Mr. Patterson said he expects positive cash flow from the Water Districts, but Public Works continues to be an issue as the County attempts to get it in a positive cash-flow position.

Commissioner Alford said with the Scotland County tax base an ad valorem being what it is, could the County even carry a 25 percent fund balance. Chairman McCook said staff would look at benchmark communities similar to Scotland County so the Commissioners would be able to set a long term target fund balance.

County Manager Patterson said a bid in the amount of \$4,500 was received for the foreclosed property at 109 East Vance Street. Mr. Patterson said the bid exceeds the amount of taxes owed. He asked the Commissioners to consider an upset bid process.

Motion was made by Commissioner Gibson and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to accept the bid and authorize advertisement in the upset bid process on the foreclosed property at 109 East Vance Street. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Closed Session

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to go into Closed Session in accordance with N.C. General Statute §143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

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OPEN SESSION RESUMED

Commissioner Davis said he received calls from individuals complaining about the Tax Department. He said the Board might know who the individuals are since several Board members received the same calls. He said the individuals frequently complain about the Tax Department.

Commissioner Davis said the County instructs the Tax Department to collect the taxes, whether it is collected from a Commissioner or anyone else. Commissioner Davis said the Commissioners should not allow individuals to constantly “harass” the Tax Department for doing its job.

Commissioner Cooley said the Tax Department does make mistakes. Commissioner Davis agreed that mistakes might be made but he doubts the Tax Department makes mistakes that repeatedly involve the same individuals. Commissioner Davis said the Tax Department staff should not be made to feel intimidated as long as they do their job.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to adjourn.
Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

Guy McCook
Chairman