

MINUTES

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners
September 6, 2011 Regular Meeting**

A.B. Gibson Education Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg NC

At 7 p.m. Chairman Bob Davis called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Davis, Vice Chair Joyce McDow and Commissioners John Cooley, Carol McCall and Guy McCook. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioners John Alford and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Ed Johnston and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Commissioner McCall delivered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to approve the September 6, 2011 agenda. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Public Forum

Mr. Joe Manis asked the Commissioners for assistance with a tax problem regarding his company Crestline Homes. Mr. Manis outlined the history of his company and described himself as a good citizen who employed many people over the years and never received any incentives when his company expanded. Mr. Manis said he believed the value of his property should be reduced. He said several separate appraisals performed on his business support the reduction. Mr. Manis asked the Commissioners for help in getting his property in line with its real value.

Ms. Doris Williams said she was born and raised in Laurinburg and she is now a grandmother concerned for the younger generation because they don't have a center where they can go for safe haven, recreation and access to computers. Ms. Williams said children need and deserve a place where the best possible is made available to them while they are still here. Ms. Williams said for years the community has knocked on the door when discussing a recreation center. She said it is now time to open the door.

Mr. Joe Sojka said he would like to make improvements to Jaycee Park as his Eagle Scout project. Mr. Sojka asked the Commissioners to approve his proposed project. Mr. Sojka said his budget would be \$3,500 and he is now in the process of raising the monies. Mr. Sojka thanked Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton and County Engineer Jim Blackwell for assisting him with the project plans.

No one else spoke at Public Forum.

Item 1. Public Hearing: 2008 Community Development Block Grant close out

LRCOG Housing Coordinator Adrian Lowery said it is time for close out of the 2008 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and to solicit comments in Public Hearing as required by the closeout.

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting
September 6, 2011, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC*

Chairman Davis called the Public Hearing and Mr. Lowery made a PowerPoint presentation showing photos of the homes of individuals that qualified for the program and photos of the homes the individuals received as a result of the CDBG funds.

Mr. Lowery said CDBG improves the quality of life for people, and it is an excellent program that helps citizens who cannot help themselves, largely due to economic issues. Mr. Lowery said the future of the CDBG program might be subject to budget cuts by 50 percent or eliminated all together. Mr. Lowery said he is composing a letter, which he will ask counties to sign, asking for CDBG funding to continue.

Chairman Davis asked if anyone else wished to speak. No one came forward, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Vice Chair McDow to approve the close out of the 2008 CDBG program. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 2. WestPoint Stevens Water and Wastewater Utility Study

WK Dickson and Company Project Manager Angie Mettlen provided a brief overview and recommendations from the study of the WestPoint Stevens Water and Wastewater Plant. Ms. Mettlen said all parties interested in access to water and wastewater treatment options were queried about their anticipated needs through 2050.

Ms. Mettlen said acquiring the water side of the plant would cost an estimated \$24 million. She said Moore County demonstrated the most urgent need for water over the long term. Ms. Mettlen said it is recommended that a public entity rather than a private entity purchase the water plant. Ms. Mettlen explained that a public entity would be more successful in generating funds through grant opportunities to purchase and sustain the plant.

Ms. Mettlen said no public entity questioned had a real need for a wastewater service through 2050. Ms. Mettlen said that an industry that would use large amounts of water or wastewater coming to the area would impact that need and create an immediate demand. Ms. Mettlen said it is recommended that a public entity also consider acquiring the wastewater treatment plant at an estimated cost of \$16 million. Ms. Mettlen said a public entity would be able to pursue grant dollars for the project, especially one that would be associated with job creation and retention.

Ms. Mettlen said it is important for Scotland County to be a player in the venture. She said the County's unemployment rate would make it more competitive in securing grant dollars for water/wastewater projects. Ms. Mettlen urged the Commissioners to get the WestPoint Water/Wastewater plant in the hands of a public entity if at all possible.

Commissioner Cooley asked for more explanation on the numerous acronyms referred to in the document, especially one that is so technical in content.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner McCall to approve the WestPoint Stevens Water and Wastewater Utility Study. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 3. Rockingham District Partners in Ministry on use of East Laurinburg School

Dr. Melba McCallum, executive director of the Rockingham District Partners in Ministry (RDPM), asked the Commissioners to donate East Laurinburg School to the non-profit organization. Dr. McCallum said RDPM addresses issues of poverty in communities as well as the needs of youth. Dr. McCallum briefly reviewed the resources available through RDPM. She said RDPM gives a hand up rather than a hand out.

Item 4. Consent Agenda:

- a) **Approval of minutes of the Board of Commissioners August 1, 2011 regular meeting.**
- b) **Approve Tax Department request to release funds in the amount of \$865.76 and in the amount of \$3,617.04 and to make refunds in the amount of \$8.38 and in the amount of \$1,537.87.**
- c) **Approve FY 2011 Single Family Rehabilitation Program Procurement and Disbursement Policy**
- d) **Approve Single Family Rehabilitation Program Assistance Policy for FY 2011 Cycle**
- e) **Budget Amendments:**
 - 1) **Health: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$2,500 for the CDC TB Control Program, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
 - 2) **Health: Approve receipt of funds in the amount of \$25,488 for the NC Public Health Preparedness and Response System, and authorize the Finance Officer to make the necessary arrangements to receive and expend the money. No County dollars involved.**
 - 3) **Scotland-Hoke Criminal Justice Partnership Program: Approve reduction in State funds by \$660 from 153,850 to \$153,190.**

Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner McCall to approve the consent agenda. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 5. Laurinburg/Scotland County Incubator status report

Economic Developer Greg Icard discussed the total \$1 million in grants the County received to build a business incubator on 7.41 acres of land off U.S. 401. Mr. Icard said there would be an 18,000 to 20,000-square-foot building with lease bays for start up businesses and entrepreneurs. Mr. Icard gave an approximate time line for the project beginning with closing on the property to the RFQ process. Mr. Icard hopes to select an architectural firm by mid-October with construction bids in by December. Mr. Icard estimated construction period at six months. He said office space would include a conference room and an area for training.

Item 6. Appointments to Boards and Committees

Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to appoint Ms. Donna Stone, Ms. Pat Fields, Ms. Amanda Martin and Mr. Tony Harrington to the Laurinburg/Scotland County Drug and Crime Committee. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner McCook to appoint Mr. Terry Taylor and Mr. Brent Plyler to three-year terms and to reappoint Ms. Jan Schmidt to a three-year term on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to appoint Ms. Shannon Newton to a four-year term on the Historic Properties Committee. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chair McDow and duly seconded by Commissioner McCall to appoint Ms. Carole Gaskill to a four-year term on the Scotland County Memorial Library Advisory Board. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 7. Report from the County Manager

Mr. Patterson said Mr. Joe Sojka, who proposes to work on his Eagle Scout project by making improvements to Jaycee Park cannot begin until the Commissioners approve his request to work on public property.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner McCall to approve the request by Mr. Joe Sojka to make improvements at Jaycee Park. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

County Manager Patterson said the proposed 2012 meeting schedule is for the first Monday of each month except for January, July and September. The exceptions accommodate holidays with July moved to allow for an additional week between the likely last meeting in June and the July meeting. Mr. Patterson said Water Districts Board meetings are scheduled for January and June at 6:30 p.m. just before the 7 p.m. regular meeting.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCall and duly seconded by Vice Chair McDow to approve the 2012 meeting schedule. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

**January 4, 2012 (Wednesday) 6:30 p.m.
(meeting as the Water Districts Board)
January 4, 2012 (Wednesday)
February 6, 2012
March 5, 2012
April 2, 2012**

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting
September 6, 2011, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC*

May 7, 2012
June 4, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.
(meeting as the Water Districts Board)
June 4, 2012
July 10, 2012 (Tuesday)
August 6, 2012
September 4, 2012 (Tuesday)
October 1, 2012
November 5, 2012
December 3, 2012

Mr. Patterson said Scotland Correctional Institution discussed a contract with the County for inmate labor from the minimum security prison at a cost to the County of \$1 per day per inmate. County staff would be trained in appropriate supervision, and the County would be required to provide transportation.

Mr. Patterson said inmates would perform a wide variety of functions but are not allowed to perform any duties that can be considered hazardous such as using heavy equipment or working in confined spaces. The prison would not send sex offenders. The prison would pick up any inmate if there was an issue. The supervision requirement does not include keeping visual contact on the inmate at all times. This would allow for one person to run several crews.

County Attorney Johnston said he has concerns about the contract since the County might be sued if there is an escape or someone is harmed. Mr. Johnston said wording in the contract also should assure there would be no sex offenders participating in the program.

The Commissioners directed the County Manager to gather input from Mr. Johnston, Sedgwick and parties involved with the contract and present it to the Board at the October meeting.

The Board set October 17, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., for a strategic planning session. Mr. James Perry from LRCOG would facilitate.

County Manager Patterson presented a budget amendment for Inspection, which would represent a 20 percent increase in revenues from the budgeted \$130,000 to \$156,000. Mr. Patterson said the \$156,000 would still be less than the amount actually collected last year. Mr. Patterson said the increase in funds along with other cuts in the Inspections Department would allow the County to keep the third inspector at 90 percent time.

Mr. Patterson said he would recommend keeping the third inspector at 90 percent versus the possible future cost of bringing in a new inspector when construction resumes. Mr. Patterson said it took a year to hire someone and another year to get the inspector certified at an estimated cost the County of more than \$100,000. Mr. Patterson said the investment has already been made in the third, current inspector. Mr. Patterson said it was his opinion that keeping the investment would be less expensive than making the new investment in the future. The County Manager said revenue to pay for the third inspector would be from Inspections fees and not from shifting revenue from another area.

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting
September 6, 2011, A.B. Gibson Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, NC*

Mr. Patterson said if the Commissioners choose not to approve the budget amendment, the third inspector position would be eliminated the end of September.

Commissioner Cooley asked whether the County could afford to hold a position while waiting for the economy to turn around. He said Inspections should be self-sufficient. Commissioner Cooley questioned whether the Board should revisit issues already approved in the FY 2011-2012 budget.

Commissioner McCook said even though there might not be large projects there is plenty of work for Inspections in business and residential. Commissioner McCook said it would not be a bad idea to keep a person because of the significant investment the County made.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner McCall to approve the Inspections budget amendment to increase revenues by 20 percent. Vote: For: Chairman Davis, Vice Chair McDow and Commissioners McCall and McCook. Vote: Against: Commissioner Cooley. Motion approved.

Chairman and Commissioners: Comments, activity updates and Committee reports

Chairman Davis reported he met with Mr. James “Sunbeam” Sutherland, the County Manager, Finance Officer and Commissioner Alford to address concerns Mr. Sutherland had about the Water Districts budgets. Chairman Davis said Mr. Sutherland indicated after the meeting he was satisfied with the answers he received.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCall 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.

OPEN SESSION RESUMED

The Commissioners agreed that people who address the Board during public forum should receive a response in writing to their questions or comments.

The County Manager said there is a campaign underway to build community support for using the old prison in Wagram as a center for juvenile offenders and troubled youth.

Vice Chair McDow said in November she will travel to Louisiana for a national Chamber of Commerce event at no cost to the County.

Motion was made by Commissioner McCall and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to adjourn. Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

Bob Davis
Chairman