

*Note: Prior to the joint session with the Board of Education, Commissioners met with regional officials 4 p.m. Monday, January 25, at McDuff's, to discuss the future of water opportunities for the region, including the WestPoint Stevens Water Plant. Commissioners in attendance were Chairman J.D. Willis, Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioners Bob Davis, Guy McCook and Joyce McDow. Although a quorum was present, a meeting was not called to order and no action was taken. Other officials attending the meeting represented Moore, Robeson and Hoke counties, the City of Laurinburg, Lumber River Council of Governments and several State representatives. There was a PowerPoint presentation, discussion and question and answer session.*

## **MINUTES**

### **Scotland County Board of Commissioners and Board of Education Joint Meeting, January 25, 2010 Scotland County Complex, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg NC**

At 7 p.m. Chairman J. D. Willis called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioners John Alford, Bob Davis, Guy McCook and Joyce McDow. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioner Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman.

School Board Members in attendance: Chairman Jimmy Bennett and Dr. Cal Newton, Dr. Paul Rush, Ms. Mary Evans (Vice Chair) and Mr. Charles Brown. School Board members not in attendance: Dr. Jeff Byrd, Mr. Terence Williams and Mr. Darwin Williams. Board of Education staff in attendance: Superintendent Rick Stout and Clerk to the Board Nancy Smith.

Chairman Willis delivered the opening prayer.

Superintendent Stout discussed the Average Daily Membership (ADM). The student population at the beginning of the school year was 6,640. It is now down 60 to 70 students, but the ADM does fluctuate throughout the year.

Mr. Stout said the \$344,000 the Board of Education asked for and received from the Board of Commissioners earlier in this fiscal year was used for clerical and custodial personnel. Mr. Stout said without the additional monies, the personnel would have been lost. He said a portion of the funds also was used for early college transportation costs.

Mr. Stout said FY 2010-2011 State budget projections include a shortfall of up to \$1 billion, and sales taxes are down. He said the local schools might expect a three percent, five percent or seven percent cut, which is about \$2.2 million at the seven percent level. No textbook funding is expected.

Scotland County Schools lost \$1.1 million in FY 2009-1010, but stimulus money helped fill the shortfall, he said. More federal dollars are expected this year, but that money will run out.

Superintendent Stout said the Board of Education is studying some cost-saving measures: a personnel review on a case-by-case basis, a possible increase in class size and a hiring freeze, although there currently is not one.

There is no new salary study, and principals are paid with State dollars. Mr. Stout said State dollars are used first before local dollars. He discussed how local supplements are disbursed.

Mr. Stout then discussed the facility plan for the next five years, which will remain the same as the previous five years at a little more than \$13.2 million. Mr. Stout said that as part of the facility plan, roof and HVAC replacements remain priority projects.

The Superintendent discussed the Wagram expansion project. If it moves forward, East Laurinburg would close and its students moved to Shaw.

Commissioner Davis asked if it was discovered what caused the School Fund Balance discrepancy of about \$500,000.

Superintendent Stout said that the monies supported programs and personnel and every penny has now been accounted for.

Dr. Rush said the Board of Education approved the programs but was not kept apprised of the expenditures from an accounting standpoint. Superintendent Stout assured there would be accountability from now on.

Mr. Stout returned to discussions on the Wagram expansion, in which BB&T has agreed to buy school construction bonds at a two percent rate. He said the schools would owe \$283,000 over a 12-year period instead of \$250,000. Mr. Stout said despite the two percent rate, this is a good time to pursue the project because the price per square foot is much more affordable.

Mr. Stout assured the Board of Education would take responsibility for payment and would not ask the Board of Commissioners for more money.

School Facilities Supervisor Roger Ammons said the Wagram expansion project could go out for bid in three to four months after approval by the Board of Commissioners.

County Manager Patterson explained the County would own the school and hold title to it as collateral because it is an installment purchase project.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Davis and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to adjourn. Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.**

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis  
Chairman