

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners Mid-Year Planning Retreat
January 18, 2011, 507 West Covington Street, Laurinburg, NC*

MINUTES

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners
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At 9 a.m. Chairman Bob Davis reconvened the meeting for the purpose of a Planning Retreat. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Davis, Vice Chair Joyce McDow and Commissioners John Alford, John Cooley and Guy McCook. Commissioners not in attendance: Commissioners Carol McCall and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Chairman Davis said Commissioner McCall could not attend because of an unexpected medical appointment.

County use of P Card/Credit cards

County Manager Patterson explained how the P Card works and how it can be adjusted to suit the individual cardholder. Mr. Patterson said Bank of America has the State contract but, if the Commissioners wish, he would contact local banks for P Card proposals. Mr. Patterson said there is no fee with P Cards and there are rebates on expenditures.

The Board of Commissioners, by consensus, authorized staff to proceed with the development of a P Card contract.

Building needs

DSS Director Robby Hall explained how the agency must soon provide the State a written multi-year plan on how it will address solutions to storage, file safety and interview space to name a few issues.

Mr. Hall said if the County elected to expand the existing facility, the agency would need a minimum 10,000 square feet to address current needs.

Mr. Hall also discussed electronic record storage for active and new files. Electronic storage could eliminate active files in boxes and in cabinets and free up space in halls and offices. Mr. Hall said he and Health Director Ron Sapp are reviewing ways to use space in both agencies more efficiently.

Mr. Hall, County Manager Patterson and the Commissioners had a lengthy discussion on electronic filing and the cost versus the cost of housing files in an unused County facility, such as Gibson Gym, provided files are safe to access.

County Manager Patterson said DSS prints in excess of 600,000 pages a year, the Health Department in excess of 300,000 pages and the County overall more than 1.1 million pages. He explained that electronic filing would produce a savings over time.

Commissioners Cooley and McCook said it is important to look at the big picture regarding space needs at DSS that would address the issues five years out and longer and not just look for quick fixes.

Mr. Hall distributed a draft outline that addresses possible solutions to short-term and long-term space issues at Social Services.

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County Manager Patterson said staff could develop a more refined action plan within the month. Mr. Patterson asked what the Board would be interested in. Mr. Patterson said an expansion would be the costlier solution. He said the use of East Laurinburg School as a space solution also could be considered if the Board wishes to do so.

Chairman Davis asked for a cost comparison on the renovation of East Laurinburg School, excluding the cafeteria and auditorium, versus the cost of an expansion to the existing Government Complex.

Chairman Davis, Vice Chair McDow and Commissioner Alford said they would prefer an expansion. Commissioner McCook said East Laurinburg School is a solid structure and with the appropriate upgrades, it could last an additional 50 or 60 years.

Vice Chair McDow said along with the cost comparison, staff should investigate possible solutions for decreasing paper storage now and moving forward.

An expansion to Scotland Place also was discussed. Mr. Patterson said a County delegation will visit North Carolina elected officials in Washington, D.C., to request \$500,000 in funding to expand Scotland Place for a senior wellness center. Mr. Patterson said funding is available from the Stadium Committee, but the Committee would want expansion on a larger scale with additional funding.

Commissioner Alford said he agrees with Laurinburg City Mayor Matthew Block that there is a need for a recreation facility located centrally in Laurinburg, one that would serve seniors and youth. Commissioner McCook said although he agrees that a recreation center is needed, he said a lot of money has been invested in the Morgan Complex where the land already is available and the construction of a recreation center is part of the long-term plan. Commissioner McCook said it is all a matter of priorities, especially in this economy.

Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton and Commissioner Alford briefly discussed alternate recreation venues, one of which might involve an agreement with the schools for community use of their gymnasiums.

Mr. Patterson said the only possible additional revenue source would a quarter percent sales tax. Mr. Patterson said the needs of the County will not go away, and new revenues will not happen unless it is through the quarter percent sales tax. Chairman Davis said that the referendum for the quarter percent sales tax failed in 14 counties last year.

The Commissioners took a break. The meeting resumed at 10:45 a.m.

The County Manager said there are plans to install an irrigation well at the Morgan Complex at a cost of about \$50,000. Mr. Patterson said staff will look at other estimates.

Mr. Patterson said collocating Tax and City utilities billing to the Speller Building with overflow offices in the Sanford Building has reached a critical timeline. RCC is preparing to release the vacant buildings — Speller to the County and Sanford to the City — in the very near future.

Reconsolidating all Tax staff to the two buildings will free space at 507 West Covington Street and in the Courthouse.

Mr. Patterson said upgrade of the Speller Building and expansion of its lobby would cost about \$225,000 not including furnishings.

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Commissioner McCook said unless the City is interested in co-locating its offices with the Tax staff , this would be an extra expense to the County. Commissioner McCook said he would like to see a letter of intent from the City.

Commissioners Alford and McCook acknowledged that upkeep of the Speller Building would be a concern but space needs at the Courthouse are at a critical level.

Commissioner McCook said he also was concerned about the condition of the parking lot at the Speller Building since it might have to be resurfaced.

County Manager Patterson said there also is a possibility of expanding the 911 center to allow for three if not four people to function in the space. An expansion would allow for consolidation of all call centers — police, Sheriff, EMS and fire — which could result in a cost savings.

Mr. Patterson said another option for sharing resources would include combining IT services between the County and the City. Mr. Patterson said he and Chairman Davis will meet with City Manager Ed Burchins and Mayor Matthew Block to discuss sharing resources to reduce future costs of operations.

Landfill

County Manager Patterson said the proposal from Robeson County to take over the Scotland County transfer station would still leave the County \$300,000 shy in operations costs. The offer does not address closure or post closure costs associated with the C&D landfill. County Engineer Jim Blackwell said the Robeson County proposal takes control but leaves Scotland County with the liability and expense.

The Board of Commissioners, by consensus, agreed that staff should write a letter to Robeson County informing it that Scotland County is not interested in the offer.

Mr. Patterson said up until this fiscal year, the tipping fee had not been increased in 10 years. Mr. Patterson said he will recommend an additional \$3.50 tipping fee increase for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Patterson explained that up until recently, the County was operating at break even with tipping fees. He said a tipping fee increase would generate a positive fund balance. County Engineer Blackwell said the increase for the current fiscal year generated \$140,000 in six months.

Mr. Patterson said he would advise the Commissioners to consider designating a portion of the tipping fee increase for closure and post closure costs of the landfill.

Commissioner McCook asked for a comparison of tipping fees with other counties so Scotland County remains competitive in the market.

Commissioner Alford complimented County Engineer Blackwell for his efforts to cut costs and save money for the County.

Commissioner meeting location options

Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to hold the regular monthly meetings of the Board of Commissioners at the A.B. Gibson Education Center for the remainder of the year. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

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Motion was made by Commissioner McCook and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to adopt a Resolution in Support of Changing the Meeting Location of the Board of Commissioners Monthly Meeting, making it effective February 7, 2011. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CHANGING THE LOCATION OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MONTHLY MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, the Scotland County Board of Commissioners wishes to take steps to relieve critical space issues at the Government Complex at 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg; and

WHEREAS, the Scotland County Board of Commissioners may change the location of its monthly meetings provided a sufficient amount of advance notice is provided the media and the public and the change of location is publicized and posted in the appropriate County locations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Scotland County Board of Commissioners does hereby agree to hold its monthly meetings for the remainder of 2011 at the A.B. Gibson Education Center, 322 South Main Street, Laurinburg, effective February 7, 2011, and said monthly meetings will be held on the following dates at 7 p.m..

**February 7, 2011
March 7, 2011
April 4, 2011
May 2, 2011
June 6, 2011
July 5, 2011 (Tuesday)
August 1, 2011
September 6, 2011 (Tuesday)
October 3, 2011
November 7, 2011
December 5, 2011**

Adopted this 18th day of January, 2011.

Policies and Procedures

The Commissioners discussed a proclamation policy that would address the recognition of individuals. Chairman Davis and Commissioners Alford and Cooley said there are many worthy people deserving of recognition and they could not see how singling out one individual could be done fairly.

Commissioner McCook suggested that a letter of recognition could be composed instead. It could be signed by the Chairman or a Commissioner and presented at the monthly meetings or mailed to the recipient.

The Board then discussed travel by Commissioners. Commissioner McCook said some trips might merit reports on what the Commissioners learned. He said it would not be necessary for all seven Commissioners to go to every event. Vice Chair McDow said continuity in attending specific events is important for networking.

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The Commissioners also looked at rules of procedure documents from other counties. Commissioner McCook asked that rules of procedure documents be sent to the Commissioners via email for review purposes.

Chairman Davis said training for Commissioners is important to help elected officials in the performance of their jobs. He added there should be a limit on the size of a delegation attending an event. Chairman Davis said once the travel budget is determined, it is important to stay within budget.

Washington, D.C. trip: Project funding priorities

County Manager Patterson outlined the four project funding priorities the local delegation will discuss with elected officials and staff during the upcoming Washington, D.C. trip. The requests include:

1. An additional \$350,000 for the EOC expansion
2. \$500,000 for an expansion at Scotland Place for a senior wellness center
3. \$1.1 million for the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport runway upgrade
4. \$500,000 to \$600,000 to expand a business incubator or for a second business incubator

Chairman Davis asked the Commissioners to make an effort to contact State legislators to express their support of the extension of the one cent sales tax that is due to expire June 30, 2011.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner Cooley to adjourn.
Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk to the Board

Bob Davis
Chairman