

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners Midyear Planning Retreat  
February 4, 2010, 507 West Covington Street*

**MINUTES**

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners  
Midyear Planning Retreat, February 4, 2010  
507 West Covington Street, Laurinburg NC**

At 12 p.m. Chairman J. D. Willis called the planning retreat to order. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Willis and Commissioners John Alford, Bob Davis, Guy McCook, Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter. Commissioners not in attendance: Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston (excused prior to meeting). Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Edward Johnston and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman.

Chairman Willis asked that the Solid Waste Plan be moved to first item on the agenda.

**Solid Waste Plan**

Chairman Willis said expansion of the landfill has been discussed for about three years as Commissioners looked at post-closure options and the possibility of expanding the existing landfill. No decision will be made today, the Chairman said. Chairman Willis said he would no longer take the heat for landfill expansion talks because the future of the landfill is a Board decision, not his. Chairman Willis said the Commissioners have not met with and will not meet with anyone regarding the landfill.

Chairman Willis said the letter sent to Waste Management was a Board-approved letter and nothing “underhanded” or “under the table” was done.

County Manager Patterson said 12 years remain on the life of the current C&D landfill and three years remain on the transfer station with Republic with a five year option beyond that. Mr. Patterson said the County currently has a favorable rate with Republic, but the County will have to pay what the market will bear and renegotiate the best contract it possibly can to export its waste.

Mr. Patterson said the County will have a \$900,000 closure cost with the current C&D landfill and a \$1 million post closure cost. There is no money set aside for closure or post closure at this time. Mr. Patterson said to cover closure cost, the County would have to increase tipping fees by \$2 a ton from \$43 to \$45 beginning with the next fiscal budget and maintain that level for the next 12 years. Mr. Patterson noted the landfill had a net loss of 280,000 tons in the past year largely due to the slow economy and low housing starts.

Mr. Patterson said since most costs are fixed, it would be difficult to cut additional expenses to make up for lost revenues. He said the County could recruit additional C&D waste from North and South Carolina but with a glut of empty industrial plants and competition for C&D from surrounding counties, the recruitment effort would pose a challenge.

Mr. Patterson said another option would be for the County to increase the tipping fee an additional \$5 on top of the \$2 increase if the waste stream does not increase to help cover closure and post closure.

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Mr. Patterson pointed out that the City of Laurinburg is the biggest user of the County landfill, and a \$7 tipping fee increase might cause the City to look elsewhere for the service.

Commissioner McCook suggested the County discuss the tipping fee with the City since the County would not want to lose the City as a customer.

Commissioner Alford said he doesn't believe anyone in the City would favor an additional tax or fees. He said if the County could develop a landfill it would avoid adding on to what the City is already paying.

Commissioner McDow said the County has some responsibility for the future, which is not as far away as we think it is.

Commissioner Davis said landfills are detrimental and the Commissioners should be planning positive things like recruiting new industry and improving the airport, highways, interstate and infrastructure. Commissioner Davis said he does not want the future to bury the County's grandchildren in garbage.

County Manager Patterson said the existing 23-acre unlined landfill could be used as daily cover in an expanded lined landfill.

Mr. Patterson said leakage from the 23-acre unlined landfill is 5.7 million gallons a year while leakage from a 236-acre lined landfill would be 114 million gallons a year based on EPA and DENR statistics. Mr. Patterson said a landfill, once closed and capped, experiences negligible leakage.

Mr. Patterson discussed where an expanded landfill would be sited.

Commissioner McCook suggested the County make a map available of the landfill site and buffer area so it can be viewed by the public.

*(A break was called. Meeting resumed at 1:15 p.m.)*

**Health Department – Animal Control Ordinance**

Health Director Ron Sapp replied to public comments made at the February 1 Board of Commissioners meeting regarding the Animal Control response to the mistreatment of horses.

Mr. Sapp said there is a need to better define what a shelter is for livestock, which is different from the definition of shelter for dogs and cats. Mr. Sapp said shelter for livestock could be defined as a tree.

Mr. Sapp defended the work of the Animal Control Officers explaining that they are trained and they do work to find alternate shelter for mistreated horses although shelter is not always available.

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Mr. Sapp said the County Animal Control Ordinance is strong and it is considered a model ordinance statewide. Mr. Sapp agreed to look at the ordinance again to see if it could be tweaked.

He reminded the Commissioners that if a horse is seized it is the County's responsibility to feed and shelter the horse and to provide for its medical care. Mr. Sapp said it could wind up in the court system for up to two years.

Mr. Sapp discussed how the two situations with horses on Barnes Bridge and Smith roads presented by concerned citizens have been addressed to date.

Mr. Sapp made the following recommendations:

- Look at the ordinance again
- Look at legal action, possibly civil action
- Better define shelter for livestock
- Find volunteers willing to take in horses

Mr. Sapp reminded the Commissioners there is another side to the story and the Animal Control Officers work hard and do a wonderful job.

Mr. Sapp explained that housing for seized horses must be certified and sick horses cannot share space with healthy horses.

Commissioner McCook suggested the Health Department partner with other organizations like the Equine Rescue group to find funds and locate a place to shelter horses.

Chairman Willis told the County Manager and Mr. Sapp to compose a written response to the concerned citizens that would outline what steps would be taken to resolve any issues moving forward.

**Fire chiefs' presentation- Fire trucks**

EMS Director Roylin Hammond and Fire Commission Chairman Clyde Locklear made a presentation on capital needs for the purchase of new fire trucks for the fire departments.

Mr. Hammond explained that funds from the two-cent fire tax bring in around 220,000 a year and are distributed to the fire departments according to a property value formula. He said the previous fire truck purchases from 1997 to 2004 came out of the County's capital reserve.

Before the presentation continued, Chairman Willis asked for an update on the new fire district contracts. Mr. Hammond said the City has not yet approved the contract over concerns about the amount of money it receives for fire protection service.

County Manager Patterson said the contract has not yet been presented to the City Council and other fire chiefs are waiting in case there are modifications to what would be a uniform contract.

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Mr. Hammond said there also is some concern about the cost of providing an annual audit, although it is required.

Chairman Willis asked Mr. Patterson to find out when the contract will be presented to Laurinburg City Council.

Returning to the fire truck presentation, Mr. Hammond asked the Commissioners to consider the future needs for purchasing new, replacement trucks.

Mr. Locklear distributed a report on each truck and how often it has been used and a formula for 15-year and 20-year replacement costs for seven fire pumpers.

Mr. Hammond, Mr. Locklear, Mr. Patterson and the Commissioners discussed possible methods that would create enough funds to purchase replacements.

Chairman Willis said whatever plan is developed, it must be consistent so all fire departments are treated the same when it comes to replacing the fire trucks.

*(A break was called. Meeting resumed at 2:20 p.m.)*

### **10 Year Capital plan**

County Manager Patterson discussed the 10-year capital plan. He said the complex roof, HVAC system and lighting will need to be replaced. Administration is currently looking for alternative, significant space for DSS as well as a possible expansion plan.

Mr. Patterson said the Speller Building, if approved by the Commissioners, would be a likely site for the County Tax Office and the City of Laurinburg utility billing. Mr. Patterson said modifications to the Speller Building would have to be made to turn it into a centralized collection site. A move by the Tax staff would free Courthouse space for Child Support and give DSS eight offices.

The County Manager said he would get construction estimates and space configurations. He explained it would be a small step toward relieving DSS of some space needs.

Mr. Patterson said the Homeland Security funds will allow the EOC construction, expand the 911 space and allow for a Commissioners Chamber. The current Chamber could be transformed by DSS into a visitor room with controlled access to the building.

The County Manager briefly discussed a long term recreation capital plan, the need for a Courthouse chiller and roof repair to Laurel Hill Community Center. Electronics record storage also was identified as a County need to relieve space and storage needs.

DSS Director Joe Knott said he is concerned about records recovery should there ever be fire damage or water damage to the paper records.

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Commissioner McCook asked if the capital needs could be defined in dollar amounts over the next three to five years.

**Wagram School expansion program**

County Manager Patterson said BB&T has agreed to finance the Wagram School expansion project. Mr. Patterson asked the Commissioners to approve the financing at a percentage rate not to exceed 2.5 percent on a 15-year bond.

Mr. Patterson said if the project is approved, BB&T would also need a refunding resolution from the Board.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to move forward with the Wagram School expansion project and approve the 15-year bond financing plan with BB&T. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.**

**Budgetary Goals 2011**

County Manager Patterson said he is looking at a FY 2010-2011 budget to remain the same as this fiscal year. He asked Department Heads to prepare budgets without increase. Mr. Patterson said one exception is the budget for the Wagram Recreation Center since services cannot be provided without additional help. Mr. Patterson said he expects the Wagram Recreation Center staff to include one full-time person and two half-time people, possibly Title V workers. A utilities and insurance budget also would be needed.

Chairman Willis directed the County Manager to include Wagram Recreation Center so the Commissioners could review it at budget time.

Mr. Patterson said he recommends no cost of living for employees. He asked the Commissioners to consider approving an extended Christmas holiday similar to the one employees had in 2009.

Commissioner McPhatter asked if some cost of living for employees could not be considered.

Chairman Willis directed the County Manager to look at the cost of a one percent, one and a half percent and two percent cost of living increase for employees and compare the figures to the cost of giving employees an extra three days during the holidays.

**Financial Update**

Mr. Patterson said he expects a decline in revenues next year. The budget will remain flat despite a small increase in the sales tax. Property taxes are lower. Some recovery in general is in store for the economy. Mr. Patterson said a recovery should be reflected in the FY 2011-2012 budget.

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**Website design**

Mr. Patterson said a company proposed putting five one-minute videos for free on the Scotland County website. The videos are supported by ad space sold to local businesses. Mr. Patterson said staff also viewed demonstrations by two companies that specialize in web design. The companies would help the County develop and manage its website.

Commissioner McDow said she has received calls about litter along roads in Scotland County. She asked that a report be made at the March meeting on what the County is doing about litter and litter prevention.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to adjourn. Vote: Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.**

Ann W. Kurtzman  
Clerk to the Board

J.D. Willis  
Chairman