

*Scotland County Board of Commissioners regular meeting
April 11, 2005, Commissioners Chamber, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg*

MINUTES

**Scotland County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting, April 11, 2005
Scotland County Complex, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, NC**

At 7 p.m., Chairman J.D. Willis called the regular meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Chairman Willis, Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioners John Alford, Leon Butler, Charles "Scoofer" Jordan, Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter. Staff in attendance: Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Ed Johnston and Clerk to the Board Ann W. Kurtzman. Vice Chair Gholston delivered the opening prayer.

Chairman Willis recognized the Scotland High School JRTC Color Guard. The Color Guard presented the Colors in recognition of County Government Week April 18 to 24. The Color Guard left after the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Willis asked if anyone wished to speak at Public Forum.

Mr. Glenn Weishaar, Deercroft: Mr. Weishaar asked the Commissioners to consider providing him with a partial refund on a Water District bill because no water was ever used. Mr. Weishaar said he came before the Commissioners because neither Engineer Jim Blackwell nor Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager was authorized to provide a refund. Mr. Weishaar said he could not recall being informed that he would be responsible for paying a water bill even if no water was used. He said Mr. Blackwell showed him a water contract with his name printed on it, but his signature was not there.

Chairman Willis told Mr. Weishaar that his request would be reviewed and resolved, and he would be contacted in the near future.

Ms. Catherine Pendergraft: Ms. Pendergraft asked why the County and City chose not to combine the Manager position.

Chairman Willis said elected officials of both the City and County met to discuss the issue. It was decided that combining the position would not be feasible at the time.

Ms. Pendergraft asked if the School Board had any money in reserve and, if so, how much.

Chairman Willis said the School Board does have a Fund Balance, but the County does not know the actual figure. He said the School Board, by law, is not required to maintain an 8 percent fund balance because it has no taxing authority unlike the City and County. He advised Ms. Pendergraft to ask the School Board about its fund balance.

DSS Director Jan Elliott and Foster Care Licensing Worker Deborah Webb distributed informational material and blue ribbons in recognition of April as

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Child Abuse Prevention Month. Ms. Webb asked the Commissioners to wear the ribbon and inform others as to what it signifies.

Chairman Willis called for a break so the Commissioners could join the public for refreshments in honor of County Government Week.

(Meeting resumed at 7:20 p.m.)

Item 1. Closed Session

Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to go into Closed Session held in accordance with N.C. General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointments, or conditions of initial employment of a present or prospective public officer or employee. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

OPEN SESSION RESUMED

Item 2. Child Fatality Task Force 2004 Annual Report

Ms. Kitty Johnson, RNC, discussed the history of the Child Fatality Task Force and explained the Task Force studies the incidence and cause of all child deaths and makes recommendations to prevent future deaths. She listed the many recommendations that were adopted.

She said there were seven child fatalities in 2004 compared to 10 in 2003. Ms. Johnson provided a summary review of the deaths and discussed Task Force recommendations that resulted from the fatalities.

Item 3. Request by Mental Health for utilities support

Chairman Willis said Southeastern Regional Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (SRMH/DD/SAS) has asked the County to pay 30 percent of the utilities cost for the 507B West Covington Street facility. Chairman Willis said SRMH/DD/SAS currently is paying utilities for the entire facility, which also is occupied by HealthKeeperz, which cost about \$2,000 to \$3,000 a month.

Motion was made by Vice Chair Gholston and duly seconded by Commissioner McDow approving the County's assumption of 30 percent of the utilities bill at the West Covington Street facility occupied by SRMH/DD/SAS. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Item 4. Consent Agenda:

- a) **Approve minutes of the Board of Commissioners: March 14, 2005 regular meeting and March 30, 2005 budget work session.**

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b) Adoption of the holiday schedule for 2006 to coincide with that of the State calendar per County policy. New Year's Day, December January 2, 2006; Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday, January 16, 2006; Good Friday, April 14, 2006; Memorial Day, May 29, 2006; Independence Day, July 4, 2006; Labor Day, September 4, 2006; Veteran's Day, November 10, 2006; Thanksgiving, November 23 and 24, 2006; Christmas, December 25 and 26, 2006.

c) Declare as surplus the following Scotland County vehicles: 1991 Dodge Sprit VIN# 1B3XA46K0MF547849; 1996 Ford Crown Victoria VIN# 2FALP71WXTX117665; 1995 Caprice Classic VIN# 1G1BL52P6SR189784; 1989 Dodge Ram Van VIN# 2B7KB31Z0KK399124; 1994 Crown Victoria 2FALP71W9RX181611; and 1992 Crown Victoria VIN# 2FACP72W4NX206584

d) Budget Amendments

- 1) **DSS:** Approve additional funding in the amount of \$2,786 and authorize the Finance Officer to make necessary budget arrangements to receive and expend this money. No County dollars required.
- 2) **Health Department:** Approve additional funding in the amount of \$4,123 and authorize the Finance Officer to make necessary budget arrangements to receive and expend this money. No County dollars required.
- 3) **Health Department:** Approve fees for the purchase of additional child restraints as follows: \$10 for backless belt, \$10 for high back belt, \$20 for forward-facing convertible seat and \$20 for rear-facing infant or convertible seat and authorize the Finance Officer to make necessary budget arrangements to receive and expend this money.

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

Item 5. County Engineer's Report

County Engineer Jim Blackwell presented the following report:

Water Districts: County staff continues to install water lines on Rockingham Road and Palmer Road. Rockingham Road has been completed and chlorinated, and is awaiting bacteria testing and state approval prior to connecting customers. Palmer Road is under construction with completion expected by the end of the fiscal year. We will continue to install water lines based on profitability of the line and the availability of funding.

Solid Waste: In the year since the start of the revised solid waste enforcement plan 797 cases were processed in the past 12 months, which resulted in 568 violations and 814 tons of waste being brought to the landfill that otherwise would be littering the community. This entire cleanup was completed without the spending any public funds. Although there is a great deal of work remaining, we are confident that we are headed in the right direction.

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April 2 was “free day “at the recycling sites, and it continues to be one of our most active days of the year. The total for free day was 240 tons of waste or 91 truckloads. This day gives County residents the opportunity to do some spring-cleaning at our expense.

Splash Pad: Final work on the splash pad will be completed this month. Paving will be laid tomorrow weather permitting. Preparation for planting trees and shrubs is ongoing with the picnic shelter scheduled for delivery next week. If the weather cooperates the facility should be ready for use by the next meeting in May.

Item 6. Monthly Update from the Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager

Mr. Patterson distributed the quarterly reports in revenues and expenditures for the third quarter. He said there is \$4 million so far that is under spent. Mr. Patterson said the \$4 million would drop dramatically by the end of the fiscal year with significant expenditures in Medicaid, liability insurance and payroll.

Commissioner Jordan asked Mr. Patterson to break the budget down into a 12-month accrual so the expenditures could be anticipated. Mr. Patterson said he would be able to do that in order to present more representative figures.

Mr. Patterson said KORDSA would have a groundbreaking ceremony for its expansion April 18, 2005 at 2 p.m. at the facility.

Mr. Patterson said DSS received additional funds in the amount of \$958 at no cost to the County. He asked the Commissioners to approve that as a Budget Amendment.

Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to approve funding for DSS in the amount of \$958 and authorize the Finance Officer to make necessary budget arrangements to receive and expend this money. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Commissioner Butler asked Mr. Patterson to develop a five-year projection in tax rate and expenditures.

Chairman Willis suggested that that project be delayed until after the FY 2005-2006 Budget is approved.

Item 7. Appointments to Boards and Committees

There were no appointments.

Item 8. Other Information/Comments from the Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Willis discussed the Pemo Stewart budget. He said Pemo Stewart representatives request an additional \$5,000 for the program to get them through the

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current fiscal year. He reminded the Commissioners that the Pemo Stewart budget had been cut in the current fiscal year from \$10,000 to \$5,000. Chairman Willis said Pemo Stewart fundraising efforts have not been able to make up the difference due to the number of children aging out of the program, which has decreased the revenue through participation fees.

Commissioner Alford said the \$5,000 would be a small amount to pay considering the number of kids, some 250, who benefit from Pemo Stewart.

Motion was made by Commissioner Alford and duly seconded by Commissioner McPhatter to approve the allocation of \$5,000 to Pemo Stewart for the remainder of the FY 2004-2005 fiscal year. Vote: For: Chairman Willis and Commissioners Alford, McDow and McPhatter. Vote: Against: Vice Chair Gholston and Commissioners Butler and Jordan. Motion Approved.

(A break was called. Meeting resumed at 8:15 p.m.)

Item 9. Budget Work Session

EMS Director Roylin Hammond requested that the Commissioners consider budgeting \$8,000 for medic uniforms and \$93,430 for a one-ton ambulance. Both items, he said, were removed from the FY 2004-2005 budget.

Mr. Hammond said that a one percent cut from his budget, not including the two above-mentioned requests, would be \$12,432. That figure would include \$3,000 for non-emergency convalescent transport services through Braveheart.

Mr. Hammond responded to questions about Braveheart and its collection rate compared to the collection rate for emergency transport.

Mr. Hammond proposed that the analog phone budget be eliminated since most medics now have their own cell phones, which are more reliable.

He proposed a \$1,000 cut from the training budget, \$2,000 from medical supplies, \$500 from office supplies and \$150 from subscriptions.

Mr. Hammond said a two percent cut would include all of the above and added to it would be eliminating on-call pay. Mr. Hammond said the on-call cut was proposed last year, and the Commissioners agreed to keep it in the budget.

By eliminating the on-call budget, there is a possibility that it would affect up to 250, or five percent, of calls per year. Mr. Hammond said he has great concerns about eliminating on-call emergency coverage from the budget because it is a valid service when a third call comes in at the same time for an emergency vehicle.

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The Commissioners and Mr. Hammond discussed the pros and cons of privatizing EMS. Chairman Willis said that in his opinion it was in the best interest of the citizens of Scotland County to maintain the service as it is, although it would be up to the Commissioners to revisit the privatization issue, if they wished.

Mr. Hammond said the downside to privatization is if the contractor chose to no longer extend the contract, the County would have to start from scratch at a tremendous capital investment. He said that the County still would be liable even if EMS was contracted out.

Mr. Hammond said the NC Department of Transportation reimburses the County 90 percent for capital expenses and 85 percent for administration. The County supports fuel and vehicle maintenance. He said in the event of a disaster, the vans would be used as emergency vehicles.

Consensus of the Board was not to eliminate the \$14,000 on-call and the \$8,000 for uniforms from the EMS budget.

(Commissioner McPhatter was excused from the meeting at 8:40 p.m.)

Planning and Zoning Administrator Jim Blackwell distributed copies of the proposed new fee structure. He said the revenues from the fees totally support Planning and Zoning. He said some fees, for plat approval and abbreviated plat review, was reduced. Anticipated revenue is \$19,050. Mr. Blackwell said the number of times the Planning and Zoning Board and the Board of Zoning Adjustment meet have been reduced. Mr. Blackwell explained the Planning and Zoning budget is activity driven, which keeps the costs fairly stable.

Finance Technician Anne Tindall asked the Commissioners to clarify what percentage of utilities cost the County would assume at the Mental Health facility on West Covington and at what point would the County assume responsibility for the payment.

Consensus of the Board was to pay the percentage most recently requested by Mental Health and to pay that percentage of utilities cost from February 2005 forward.

Motion was made by Commissioner Jordan and duly seconded by Commissioner Alford to recess until the Annual Retreat 1 p.m. April 13, 2005 in the Commissioners Chamber. Vote: Motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann W. Kurtzman
Clerk

J.D. Willis
Chairman