

Scotland County Board of Commissioners reconvened meeting August 5, 2020, I.E. Johnson Elementary School and Edwin Morgan Center 517 Peden Street, Laurinburg, NC

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Commissioners in attendance: Chair Bob Davis, Vice-Chair Carol McCall, Commissioners John Alford (left at 12:20 pm), Whit Gibson, Betty Gholston, Tim Ivey and Clarence McPhatter II (left at 10:00 am). Staff in attendance: County Manager Kevin Patterson, County Attorney Ed Johnston (joined at Morgan Center at 10:00 am) and Clerk to the Board Jason Robinson.

Call to Order, Invocation, and Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Bob Davis called the reconvened meeting to order, and delivered the invocation.

I. Ellis Johnson Elementary School Tour

The Board along with Laurinburg City Council Member Don Rainer, Cory Satterfield, Assistant Superintendent for Scotland County Schools, and Harry Armstrong, Maintenance Director for Scotland County Schools. After the tour of the school, **motion was made by Commissioner Ivey to recess the meeting until 10:00 am at The Edwin Morgan Center, 517 Peden Street. Motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson and the vote to recess was unanimous.**

Call to Order and Closed Session

Chairman Davis called to order the recessed meeting from earlier in the morning. **Motion was made by Commissioner Gibson to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with the county attorney to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the commissioners in litigation of McDougald vs Sheriff Kersey et al and for Owens vs Scotland County. Motion was duly seconded by Vice Chair McCall and the vote to go into closed session was unanimous.** After coming out of closed session there was no business from the session.

Land Purchase Discussion

The Board next heard from County Manager Kevin Patterson Mr. Patterson stated that the County might be interested in purchasing the land adjacent to the courthouse. Mr. Patterson stated that the County currently uses the property but there is no agreement. Mr. Patterson also told the Board that there has been conversation about purchasing this land before. Mr. Patterson further explained that the property is owned by Maxton Farms and is managed by Guy McCook and while he was a commissioner the County could not purchase the property. Mr. Patterson also stated that if the property was purchased the warehouses would be torn down and containers would be placed there as storage for the clerk of court, district attorney, and sheriff. Mr. Patterson also said that at some point the County might have to expand the jail facility. Commissioner Alford asked about the purchase price and Mr. Patterson stated that the initial offer would be \$25,000. Chairman Davis then stated that the Board needed to authorize the county manager to negotiate a price for this property. **Motion was made by Commissioner Gholston to authorize the county manager to negotiate with Maxton Farms the purchase**

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price of 107 James Street in Laurinburg. Motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Alford.

Health Department COVID-19 Update

The Board next heard from Health Director Kristen Patterson. Ms. Patterson reported 318 cases of COVID-19 in Scotland County with 249 recovered and unfortunately two deaths. Ms. Patterson reported that Scotland County had an uptick in the number of cases throughout the month of July. Ms. Patterson also reported that the health department had been involved with two testing outreach events, one at Nazareth Church on July 18th and another one at Bethlehem Church on July 24th. Ms. Patterson also informed the Board that the health department has been working with the NAACP for another outreach event in September at the high school. Ms. Patterson also stated that the health department has been handing out masks. Commissioner Gholston inquired about the results from Nazareth. Ms. Patterson responded that there was one symptomatic case that she knows about. Commissioner Gholston thanked Ms. Patterson for getting the churches involved and that she is disappointed in the amount of people not wearing masks. Chairman Davis inquired about the difference between the health department numbers and the hospital numbers. Ms. Patterson responded that the hospital services other counties and South Carolina. Chairman Davis (referencing comments by Brenda Tyson at Public Forum on Monday night) then inquired to Mr. Patterson if something wasn't done for the entire county employees. Mr. Patterson responded that time off was given at Memorial Day. Chairman Davis asked if any of the funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund could be used for monetary bonuses. Mr. Patterson stated when the governor's executive orders first went out it was for nonessential workers to stay home. Local Government because it is an essential service can designate all workers as essential so no one had to be furloughed. Mr. Patterson stated that the CARES ACT funding could only be used if an employee was substantially used for COVID related tasks. Sworn law enforcement and EMS is included in that. Commissioner Gibson asked if anything could be done. Mr. Patterson stated that he would like to work with the Board in November. Mr. Patterson also reviewed other funding that had been received from the health department and elections for COVID related expenses.

Hammond Park Update

The Board next heard from Mr. Bryan Graham, Parks and Recreation Director. Mr. Graham began by stating that the Hammond Park project has been delayed because of COVID. Mr. Graham relayed to the commissioners that the project was a \$140,000 project and that \$40,000 has been set aside in the budget for this project. Mr. Graham updated the Board that two new bathrooms are going to be added (on a timer system), and have talked with the City of Laurinburg about new lights as well. Mr. Graham also stated that they are looking to add fitness equipment and a pergola. Mr. Graham further stated that when this project is completed there will be \$250,000 in improvements at Washington Park and Hammond Park and only \$80,000 of that was County dollars. The commissioners thanked Mr. Graham for his work and vision for the parks.

Laurel Hill Community Center Update

The Board next heard from Mr. Patterson concerning the Laurel Hill Community Center. Mr. Patterson stated that a request for qualifications (RFQ) is being worked on and staff will send it out to architects and engineers that the County has worked with in the past as well as

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publishing it on the website. Mr. Patterson said that it will be brought back to the Board for a decision. Commissioner Gholston stated that the commissioners are still being asked about a facility in Laurinburg. Commissioner Alford stated that he has told people they need to support a referendum. Commissioner Gibson inquired if the County could still use the plans for the Wagram facility. Mr. Patterson responded that those plans couldn't be used because they are over 10 years old and the building code has changed significantly since it was built.

Boards and Committee Appointments

Vice Chair McCall stated that the Board has an application for an appointment to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) and to the Scotland County Memorial Library Board of Directors. Vice Chair McCall stated that Dr. Freda Singletary has applied for the JCPC Board. **Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall to appoint Dr. Freda Singletary to the JCPC Board. Motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Gibson and the vote to approve was unanimous.** Vice Chair McCall further stated that Ms. Tiffany Miles has applied to be on the Scotland County Memorial Library Board of Directors. **Motion was made by Vice Chair McCall to appoint Ms. Miles to the Scotland County Library Board of Directors. Motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Gholston and the vote to approve was unanimous.**

Confederate Monument Committee

The Board next heard from County Manager Kevin Patterson concerning the Confederate Monument Committee. Mr. Patterson stated that the Board had agreed to a board of 15 members which included representatives from the municipalities. There are 21 individuals who have applied to be a member of the committee. Mr. Patterson reviewed the questions that were asked on the application form and explained how he did a random selection of members and informed the Board that this was only a starting point. Commissioner Ivey asked if only 2 people from outside Laurinburg applied and Mr. Patterson responded that was the case. Commissioner Gholston stated that that she wanted a way to be fair. Commissioner Alford stated that one of the problems is that members can't speak for other people. Vice Chair McCall stated that naming the committee was the first step and that this could get expensive. Commissioner Alford asked if the County should find out how much it was going to cost. Commissioner Gholston stated that the committee should do that research. Chairman Davis then suggested having everyone who applied to be on the committee. **Motion was made by Commissioner Ivey to amend the number from 15 and to include a council person from Gibson and to include all applicants. Motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Gholston and the vote to approve was unanimous.** Discussion then followed about a facilitator and a chair of the committee. *The Board by unanimous consent authorized County Manager Kevin Patterson to find a facilitator and to offer the chairmanship of the committee to Robert McPhatter and Beacham McDougald as a back-up if Mr. McPhatter declined.*

County Manager's Report

The Board next heard from County Manager Kevin Patterson. Mr. Patterson began his report by stating that Sneads Grove Convenience Site will be open at some point. The asphalt was due for Monday and then the septic tank has to be installed and then it should be able to open. Mr. Patterson also supplied an update of the radio tower and stated that the public radios should be switched over at the end of the month. Mr. Patterson also stated that he had spoken with three judges about measures that are being taken to ensure the safety of everyone in the

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courtrooms including installing additional audio and visual equipment and plexiglass in certain areas. Mr. Patterson then brought to the Board's attention another safety issue. Mr. Patterson stated that there had been discussion before about a bulletproof security window in the magistrate's office. Mr. Patterson reported the cost to be about \$10,000. Discussion then followed about the cost and any measures that could be taken to reduce the cost. *Consensus amongst the Board was to move forward with the security window for the magistrate's office.* Mr. Patterson then moved to the discussion of I.E. Johnson and South Scotland Elementary Schools. Mr. Patterson stated that he felt that I.E. Johnson would get some interest and he is not sure about South Scotland. Commissioner Ivey stated that he hated to see I.E. Johnson go to waste but he realizes getting it is one thing, keeping it is another. Vice Chair McCall stated that the Board needs to keep in mind that it is a 70-year-old building and there is a reason it was closed as a school. Commissioner Gholston stated that she felt it would be too expensive for the County. Commissioner Ivey stated that it might be possible to the County have part of the building and another entity have another part, it might be impossible for one entity to keep the entire building. Commissioner Ivey also asked that is it safe to assume no one wants South Scotland. Commissioner Gholston also inquired about shelters. Mr. Patterson stated that right now there are 3 schools designated as shelters and a possible use for I.E. Johnson would be for a shelter, at least part of it.

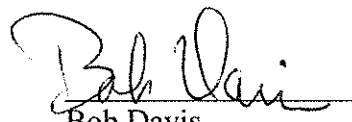
Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Gholston stated that she wanted to commemorate the late John Lewis for all the suffering and struggling he did to make sure all people had the right to vote.

Adjournment

Having no further business, **Motion was made by Commissioner Gibson to adjourn and it was duly seconded by Commissioner Ivey. Vote: Unanimous**


Jason Robinson
Clerk to the Board


Bob Davis
Chair

(County Seal)

