

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MAY 13, 2014  
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, County Attorney, members of the news media and interested citizens were present.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The board members watched a brief video from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) that featured an update on the upcoming legislative session. There were no other announcements.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Chairman Corbin asked those in attendance to observe a moment of silence. Afterward, he noted the recent Supreme Court decision allowing local government bodies to begin their meetings with prayer, and requested guidance from the County Attorney regarding reinstating prayer at the board's meetings.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Led by Chairman Corbin, the pledge to the flag was recited.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROJECT CLOSEOUT:** Chairman Corbin opened the public hearing on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) project closeout at 6:10 p.m., and pointed out that no one had signed up to speak. He then recognized Macon County Housing Director John Fay, who provided an overview of the scattered site housing rehabilitation project (10-C-2124). Mr. Fay said that seven homes were rehabilitated with \$232,329.67 in grant funding expended. In addition, 19 other homes received urgent repairs using \$38,307.05 in grant funds. Of the \$400,000 available, a total of \$270,636.72 was spent, with Mr. Fay noting that the balance of the grant was unused due to a lack of capacity in the Housing Department to rehabilitate more homes. With no other

comments, Chairman Corbin closed the public hearing at 6:12 p.m. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to accept the report as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 1) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Chairman Corbin noted that no one signed up to speak.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as adjusted, as follows:

- To move Item 10F under New Business, Proclamation for Law Enforcement Memorial Day, to the first item under Reports/Presentations, per Chairman Corbin.
- To go into closed session for the purpose of preserving the attorney/client privilege (Item 13), per Commissioner Haven.
- To remove Item 10A, Resolution to reject bids for the Parker Meadows Recreational Facility, per the County Manager.
- To add Budget Amendment #164 to the Consent Agenda under Item 11B, per the Finance Director.
- To add Change Order Number 6 on the Swiss Colony Area Water System Improvements as the new Item 10A under New Business, per the Finance Director.

**PROCLAMATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT MEMORIAL DAY:** Following a brief presentation, Commissioner Beale read the “Proclamation for Law Enforcement Memorial Day” into the record. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to designate May 15, 2014 as Law Enforcement Memorial Day. A copy of the proclamation is attached (Attachment 2) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**PRESENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDED FISCAL YEAR 2014-15 BUDGET:** Chairman Corbin opened the discussion by stating the board’s desire for no tax increase and to preserve the county’s fund balance heading into the property revaluation. The County Manager told the board that he was presenting a budget that represented “financial responsibility.” He said the county’s financial position remains strong, with the lowest tax rate in the state and a 29 percent fund balance. He presented a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the major points of the proposed budget, which totals \$45,521,122. A copy of the County Manager’s budget message is attached (Attachment 3) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Among the highlights:

- A total of \$366,342 from fund balance was used to balance the budget, compared to approximately \$2.1 million in the current year.
- The budget anticipates a 2.32 percent increase in sales tax revenue.
- A total of \$1.2 million in debt service payments “roll off” in FY 14-15.
- A total of \$48,555,611 was requested.
- Roughly 70 percent of all expenditures go for public safety, human services and education.
- The budget contains one new position – a mechanic for the garage.
- Most vehicle requests were postponed, resulting in an expected increase in vehicle maintenance.
- Cuts in education totaled \$218,658, including \$200,000 to the Southwestern Community College (SCC) campus in Jackson County.
- Plans for performance measurement and internal policy review were briefly outlined.
- At this time, a 21 percent decrease in property value is anticipated due to the revaluation, which would result in a revenue neutral tax rate of 35.5 cents per \$100 valuation.
- “Inevitable changes” are coming to the county’s employee health insurance plan.
- The inability to put Option 3 of the pay plan into effect for county employees this year. There is no cost of living increase in the budget, although there is a request to grant each full-time employee an additional 16 hours of annual leave.

Chairman Corbin said the proposed budget “met or exceeded our goals” and complimented the County Manager on “an excellent job.” He pointed out that the board will hold a public hearing on the budget at its regular meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup>. The board members then discussed a number of dates for a possible budget work session before scheduling one for Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup> beginning at 9 a.m. at the SCC Macon Campus.

**UPDATE ON OFFICE SPACE FOR DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS:**

Dale West, the manager of the Haywood County NCWorks Career Center with the state Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS), explained that she had been working with the County Manager to utilize space in the Courthouse Annex due to DWS losing its lease on office space located on Harrison Avenue. That meant going from 3,500 square feet down to 600 square feet, she said. Mrs. West said the current landlord had since made a very generous offer on the existing space, but that the building was on the market and the agreement would be on a month-to-month basis. The Workforce Development Board of the Southwestern Commission had agreed to rent the property for DWS on this basis, beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. West said that group would revisit the issue in six months, and asked that the commissioners consider holding their commitment for the space in the annex if needed. No action was taken.

**SCHEDULE OF VALUES:** Tax Administrator Richard Lightner requested that the board formally adopt the 2015 Schedule of Values that had been previously presented. He asked that the board act on two separate motions, one to adopt the Schedule of Values and the second to adopt the Use Value Schedule. Once the board acts, he explained that property owners will have 30 days to appeal items contained in the schedules to the state Property Tax Commission. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to adopt the Schedule of Values as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 4) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to adopt the Use Value Schedule as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 5) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Questioned as to the cost of the reappraisal of property, Mr. Lightner said that by doing the work in-house, it averages \$6 per parcel as opposed to \$30 per parcel if contracted.

**CHANGE ORDER NUMBER 6 FOR SWISS COLONY AREA WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS:** The Finance Director told the board that the final change order, Number 6, for the Swiss Colony Area Water System Improvements had been submitted for approval. The change order results in a \$816.51 decrease in the contract price and adds 240 days to the contract time. Upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the change order as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 6) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**FUNDING REQUEST FROM REACH:** Bonnie Peggs, the Board President for REACH of Macon County, outlined the organization's efforts to develop a new shelter facility for victims of family violence and sexual assault. During the first three quarters of this fiscal year, she said the shelter had to turn away 14 families due to lack of space. The new shelter is expected to cost approximately \$1.2 million, and Ms. Peggs said that REACH has applied to North Carolina Housing Finance for \$908,555, and will receive notification of funding in July. The remaining \$302,852 will need to come from private foundation grant requests and local fundraising, and she asked the board to consider a one-time allocation of \$50,000 for the project. She noted that REACH has also requested \$25,000 in funding from Jackson County, as the Macon site provides assistance to families from that county since the Jackson shelter closed. Commissioner Beale said the funding from the North Carolina Housing Finance agency "looks promising," and recommended that the board take the request under advisement and discuss it further at the upcoming budget work session.

**AMENDMENTS TO PERSONNEL POLICY:** Human Resources Director Mike Decker asked the board to consider two amendments to the county's personnel policy. The first deals with the conditions under which a retired employee could continue to participate in the county's group health insurance plan, and the second deals with the pay out of longevity pay for those employees who resign without providing proper notice. Following discussion, and upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Higdon, the board voted unanimously to amend "Article VI, Section 2 Hospitalization and Medical Benefits" of the Macon County Personnel Policy as presented. Upon a motion by Commissioner Haven seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to amend "Article VIII, Section 2 Resignation" of the Macon County Personnel Policy as presented. The effective date of the amendments is July 1, 2014, and will affect employees hired or rehired on or after that date. A copy of the memorandum with the specific policy language is attached (Attachment 7) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR AIRPORT RUNWAY REHABILITATION PROJECT:** The Finance Director presented a proposed Capital Project Ordinance for the Airport Runway Rehabilitation project in the amount of \$2,909,566 for the board's consideration. The project will widen the runway to 100 feet and includes a local match of \$290,957. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve the capital project ordinance as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 8) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**BUDGET AMENDMENTS #130 AND #131 FOR THE AIRPORT APRON IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT:** The Finance Director explained the need for two budget amendments involving the apron improvements project at the airport. The first, #130, is a transfer of design funds to construction funds in order to close out the project, and requires no additional money from the county. The second, #131, involves several transfers of funds and will be used to close out the project as well as to reimburse the county for expenses related to a no-rise study, for AWOS repair and beacon light repair. This amendment requires \$5,815 in additional county funding, which will come from contingency. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve the budget amendments as presented, copies of which are attached (Attachment 9 and Attachment 10) and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

Chairman Corbin declared a recess at 7:53 p.m.

Chairman Corbin called the meeting back to order at 8:06 p.m.

Before proceeding with the agenda, Commissioner Tate pointed out that two of the county's volunteer fire departments – Clarks Chapel and Mountain Valley – were seeking small tax increases for their respective fire districts and representatives from each should be invited to attend the upcoming budget work session.

**FRANKLIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FIREWORKS DISPLAY:** Upon a request by Linda Harbuck, the executive director of the Franklin Chamber of Commerce, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve a fireworks display to be held on July 4, 2014 at the Macon County Veterans Memorial Park.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the following items on the consent agenda were unanimously approved: **Minutes** – Approved the minutes from the April 8, April 29, May 1 and May 5, 2014 meetings. **Budget amendments** – Approved the following budget amendments: **#157** for the JCPC Grants to appropriate \$231 in additional grant funds for Project Challenge, with no match needed from the county; **#158** for the Health Department to appropriate \$2,228 in funding from BCBS to reimburse the department for mileage, meals and a hotel stay in conjunction with a workshop on oral health practice; **#159** for the Health Department to appropriate \$2,678 in additional funds received from the state for family planning; **#164** for Transit to appropriate \$15,090 from the sale of transit vehicles (Revisions with corresponding numbers attached.) **Tax releases** – Approved tax releases in the amount of \$13.74 (A computer printout of releases is on file in the Tax Department and the County Manager's office). **Macon County Public Health Fee Changes** – Approved a change to the Macon County Public Health Fee Schedule increasing the cost of a DOT Physical from \$90 to \$105, due to the additional training and certification required to complete these physicals beginning April 2014. **Monthly ad valorem tax collection report** – No action necessary.

**APPOINTMENTS:** **(1) Community Funding Pool** – Postponed action on appointments to four seats, pending verification that those currently serving are willing to continue. **(2) Planning Board** – Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to reappoint Bill Futral and appoint Karl Gillespie to the Macon County Planning Board, each for terms of three years, pending compliance with the county's policy for board appointments. **(3) Library Board** – Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to appoint Lawrence (Chip) Robert and Lenny Jordan to serve on the Macon County Public Library Board, each for terms of three years.

**CLOSED SESSION:** At 8:15 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session for the purpose of consulting with the attorney under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3). At 8:45 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to come out of closed session and return to open session. No action was taken.

**RECESS:** At 8:46 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to recess the meeting until Saturday, May 31, 2014 at 9 a.m. in the conference room of the Cecil L. Groves Center on the Macon County Campus of Southwestern Community College located at 44 Siler Farm Road in Franklin, NC.

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Derek Roland  
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

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Kevin Corbin  
Board Chairman