

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 18, 2013 – 6:00 P.M.
CONTINUED SESSION
MINUTES

Chairman Corbin convened the continued session at 6:02 p.m. as recessed from the February 12, 2013 regular meeting. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, County Attorney, members of the news media and interested citizens were present.

CONSIDERATION OF TAX REFUND REQUEST: Tax Administrator Richard Lightner explained that Cowee Valley Lapidary, Inc. was requesting a tax refund in the amount of \$234. Mr. Lightner said the owner stated that the business was closed in 2010 but did not notify the county until January of 2013. He told the board the refund was not justified under North Carolina General Statute 105-287 and recommended that the board not grant the request. The County Attorney reminded the board members that if they chose to grant the refund, they could be held both individually and collectively responsible for it. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to follow the recommendation and not grant the request.

CONSIDERATION OF AUDIT CONTRACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012-13: The Finance Director recommended that the board approve an audit contract with Martin Starnes & Associates of Hickory, NC for the 2012-13 fiscal year, including \$45,600 for the audit and \$14,000 for the preparation of the annual financial statements. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to approve the “Contract to Audit Accounts” as presented (Attachment 1), a copy of which is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET AMENDMENTS #111 AND #112: With regard to Budget Amendment #111, the Finance Director explained that state cuts to

the Immunization Action Plan resulted in a \$7,906 decrease in revenue and expenditures in the Health Department budget. For Budget Amendment #112, the Finance Director said that state TANF cuts were restored for the Department of Social Services, resulting in an increase of \$60,605 in TANF contract services funding. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to approve the budget amendments as presented (Attachment 2 and Attachment 3), copies of which are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

PROJECT STEEL: Economic Development Director Tommy Jenkins outlined a request for an economic development grant from the county by “Project Steel,” a business concern identified by the county. In a draft letter, the grant request was based on the hiring of 111 employees in Macon County during 2013 and five additional employees in each of the four subsequent years thereafter, plus a capital investment in excess of \$4-million. In return, the county would make a grant to Project Steel in payments of \$7,000 annually over a four-year period beginning this year. The County Attorney noted that this was subject to board approval, and based on the board’s determination of the request meeting the grant criteria, it would need to authorize the County Manager to sign and deliver the letter. Following discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to approve the request as submitted and to authorize the County Manager to sign the letter outlining the terms as presented (Attachment 4), a copy of which is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION FOR FINANCING OF EMERGENCY SERVICES EQUIPMENT: The Finance Director explained that requests for proposals for the financing of defibrillators in the amount of \$374,000 had been sent to six financial institutions, and the county had received three responses. Of those, BB&T Governmental Finance was offering the lowest rate at 1.57 percent with no bank fees and no prepayment penalty. With the financing for a period of 59 months, the county would owe semi-annual payments of just more than \$39,000, or about \$78,000 a year, and the first payment would be due in September 2013. Chairman Corbin noted the need to have such equipment be on a replacement schedule and be a part of the regular budget process, and raised the question of purchasing half of the defibrillators. Commissioner Beale pointed out that by buying all 12 as quoted, the county stood to receive some \$48,000 in free equipment, namely three Auto-Pulse machines. Emergency Services Director David Key told the board the new defibrillators were state-of-the-art and said this equipment is used on every patient. Commissioner Higdon stated that large purchases such as these should be budgeted. Commissioner Haven recommended that the county purchase and try out a few of the defibrillators first. After further discussion, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate,

the board voted 3-2, with Commissioners Haven and Higdon opposing, to adopt a “Resolution Approving Financing Terms” with BB&T (Attachment 5), a copy of which is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

PRESENTATION AND QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION REGARDING THE CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY – Chairman Corbin and the County Manager provided some history and background information on the study. The County Manager noted that there were a number of county employees in attendance, and he then recognized John Anzivino with Springsted, Inc., who presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the findings of the study. In the presentation, much like the one delivered to the board in 2012, Mr. Anzivino said the county’s salary structure had been “frozen in time” since 2008, and discussed items such as pay philosophy, job audits conducted by the firm, the creation of new job descriptions and “benchmark” communities used to collect survey data. He then offered a review of the study’s findings, which would include a new pay scale, use of the SAFE system as an ongoing means of administration, and the implementation of one of three options regarding salary adjustments. A copy of his PowerPoint presentation is attached (Attachment 6) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Chairman Corbin brought up the value of insurance benefits as part of the employees’ overall compensation package. Commissioner Haven raised questions about the county’s level of staffing, and Mr. Anzivino told the board, “You run a lean operation.” Commissioner Beale expressed the need to have a chart that compared the new pay scale to the existing one, based on positions. Commissioner Haven said he would like more time to study the findings, and there was discussion about how to plug information regarding Jackson County into the existing survey results. Commissioner Higdon said the country is still in a recession and the job market is “way down.” The County Manager said the point of the study is to provide a fair wage for a fair day’s work, and said 80 percent of the dollars needed to fund Option 2 in the study would be to bring those who are currently under the minimum for their new salary range up to that new minimum. He told the board that the county has “a reasonable way to sustain” the increased payroll cost and he hoped the board would give it favorable consideration. Commissioner Beale left the meeting at 8:02 p.m. to travel to Raleigh. With no other questions for Mr. Anzivino, Chairman Corbin noted there would be no vote at this time, and no action was taken. Upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:06 p.m.

Jack Horton, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman