

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CONTINUED SESSION
JUNE 25, 2015
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin reconvened the meeting at 6:04 p.m. as recessed from the June 9, 2015 regular meeting and welcomed those in attendance. All board members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director and County Attorney were present, as were members of the news media and interested citizens.

Prior to addressing the items on the agenda, Chairman Corbin recognized John deVile, a Franklin High School history teacher and the president of the Macon County Chapter of the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE). Mr. deVile said that he recently attended the NCAE's lobby day in Raleigh, where the legislators were asked to "not continue down the path that we've been going for the past seven years." He discussed the status of the House and Senate budgets as they relate to education, and said that since 2008, the state's teachers have been asked to do more and more with less and less. He quoted a number of statistics regarding per pupil expenditures and declining levels in staffing. He addressed cuts in textbook funding and teacher assistants, and then offered three options for the commissioners: (1) do nothing, (2) "backfill" the system with local dollars, resulting in a tax increase or (3) to lobby the General Assembly (specifically the Senate) with an adopted resolution asking lawmakers to restore education funding to the 2008 level, or at least at the current level proposed in the House budget. Chairman Corbin said he personally favored the House version of the state budget, and Commissioner Beale added that budget negotiations are only "in the first inning" and that the legislative session is expected to extend until October. Commissioner Shields encouraged Mr. deVile to continue to be an advocate for educators and children in Macon County, telling him, "Don't withdraw from that."

"PROJECT BEEF" GRANT APPLICATION: Tommy Jenkins, the county's Economic Development Director, asked that the board consider adopting a

resolution in support of a grant application for “Project Beef.” Mr. Jenkins explained that Brasstown Beef has acquired the assets of Nantahala Meats in Franklin and is seeking a \$100,000 grant from the North Carolina Department of Commerce Building Reuse Program to renovate the Nantahala Meats facility that was built in 1947. Mr. Jenkins also noted that nine new jobs will be created as part of Brasstown Beef’s expansion. Chairman Corbin, who sits on the state board that awards these grants, explained that only 50 percent of the expected renovation cost can be awarded, and thus the amount sought in the grant was reduced from \$100,000 to \$87,777. He also noted that the county would need to provide a cash match of five percent, or \$4,389, which could come from contingency. Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the resolution and it was seconded by Commissioner Beale. Following discussion about the match from contingency, Commissioner Tate agreed to amend his motion to take the funds from next year’s contingency so as not to change the current year budget ordinance that would be considered later in the meeting, and Commissioner Beale agreed to amend his second to the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve a “Resolution of the Macon County Board of County Commissioners Supporting and Authorizing and Ratifying the Submission of an Application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division, Rural Grants Program for a Grant from its Building Reuse Program,” a copy of which is attached **(Attachment 1)** and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

REVISED LEASE WITH HARMONY HOUSE FOODS: Mr. Jenkins told the board that Harmony House Foods, Inc. would be taking over the space in the county’s Business Development Center that was vacated by Forex Currency Trade Advisors, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve a “Resolution of the Macon County Board of County Commissioners Declaring Property to be Surplus and Approving a One Year Lease of the Same by Macon County to Harmony House Foods, Inc.,” along with a “Lease to Harmony House Foods, Inc., a North Carolina Business Corporation, from Macon County.” The resolution **(Attachment 2)** and lease **(Attachment 3)** are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

FIREWORKS PERMIT APPLICATIONS: Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve applications for fireworks permits for the Franklin area on July 4th and the Nantahala area on July 5th.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT: Following brief explanations from the Finance Director, the board took the following action:

- Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, voted unanimously to approve Budget Amendments #241 and

#242 as presented. Copies of both are attached (Attachments 4 and 5) and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

- Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, voted unanimously to approve the Ordinance Amending the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget as presented. A copy of the ordinance is attached (Attachment 6) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.
- Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, voted unanimously to approve (1) the Grant Project Ordinance for the Duke Energy Income Qualified Weatherization Program and (2) the Grant Project Ordinance for Duke Energy's Helping Home Fund as presented. Copies of both are attached (Attachments 7 and 8) and are hereby made a part of these minutes.
- Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Shields, voted unanimously to approve a Grant Project Ordinance for the SFR-14 Grant as presented. A copy of the ordinance is attached (Attachment 9) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.
- Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, voted unanimously to approve a Grant Project Ordinance Amendment for WAP/HARRP Contract #6054 as presented. A copy of the amendment is attached (Attachment 10) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.
- Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, voted unanimously to approve a Capital Project Ordinance Amendment for the Parker Meadows Recreation Complex as presented. A copy of the amendment is attached (Attachment 11) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 AND UPDATE ON REVISED HEALTH DEPARTMENT FEES: Before considering approval of the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2015-2016, the County Manager requested that the board address another item on the agenda. Without objection, the board moved the update on the revised health department fees to the next item. Chairman Corbin said that while some of the fees are too high, he suggested that the board leave the budget as it is now and allow the County Manager and Finance Director to meet with Public Health Center Director Jim Bruckner to determine if the loss of revenue from the proposed cuts in the environmental health fees can be absorbed into the department's budget. This led to a discussion about the possibility of reducing the fee for well permits and the possibility of reducing building permit fees. Commissioner Higdon said he would like to see the county's rates match Jackson County's, adding that he appreciated the board's interest into looking at the fee structure. No action was taken. Following some brief comments from the County Manager, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year

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2015-2016 as presented. A copy of the ordinance is attached (Attachment 12) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR URGENT REPAIR PROGRAM:

Following brief comments regarding World Changers, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve a Grant Project Ordinance for the 2015 Urgent Repair Program as presented. Earlier in the meeting, the Finance Director had asked that this item be added to the agenda. A copy of the ordinance is attached (Attachment 13) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

WELL REPAIR FEE: After some discussion regarding reducing the well repair fee at Public Health from \$375 to \$0, the County Attorney recommended that the board delay action on this matter, and it was tabled.

NOVUS BEW ARCHITECT CONTRACT: The County Attorney said that he had reviewed the agreement with Novus BEW Asheville, LLC for architectural work on the QZAB project for Highlands School and Union Academy and recommended that the board approve the document and the fee of \$172,800. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the agreement as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 14) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

SUB-LEASE OF SPACE ON TOWER: The County Attorney told the board that he needed direction to advertise the county's intent to enter into an agreement with the owners of radio station WFSC/WNCC to sub-lease space on a communication tower to the station, and following that, the board could act on the matter at its July regular meeting. The county would receive \$500 per month for the first five years of the agreement, and in the sixth year the amount would increase to \$525. The County Attorney said this amount would cover the county's cost to the US Forest Service.

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH BOARD OF EDUCATION: The County Attorney explained that the proposed interlocal agreement with the Macon County Board of Education was in the same format as those used with other QZAB projects. Basically, the school board conveys the property for the schools to the county for security for the loan, and the county leases the property back to the school system for a nominal amount. Then, when the projects are completed, the property goes back to the school system. In this case, the County Attorney pointed out that Union Academy will not have to be pledged. Upon a motion by Commissioner Shields, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the Interlocal Agreement as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 15) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

SUB-LEASE OF SPACE ON TOWER: The board returned to the issue of the sub-lease for the space on the tower, with Commissioner Beale making a motion for the county to approve the sub-lease as presented. However, the County Attorney advised that the motion needed to be for him to advertise the board's intent to sub-lease the space. Commissioner Beale amended his motion to reflect that, and Commissioner Higdon seconded the motion. During discussion, Commissioner Tate voiced two concerns with the agreement, one regarding the setting of a precedent and another regarding the pricing structure. The County Attorney said that the agreement would be for five years and could be changed after that. Following additional discussion, the board voted unanimously to instruct the County Attorney to advertise the county's intent.

CLOSED SESSION: Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Higdon, the board voted unanimously at 7:11 p.m. to go into closed session for the purposes of preserving the attorney/client privilege under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) and to discuss personnel under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6). Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to come out of closed session at 7:24 p.m. No action was taken.

ADJOURN: At 7:24 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Derek Roland
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman