

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SEPTEMBER 9, 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 County Manager announced that the second archeological excavation at the Parker Meadows Recreation Park had been completed and that “no significant cultural features were uncovered.” The board then viewed a video update from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC), which featured Commissioner Beale being sworn in as the new president of the NCACC, becoming the second Macon County commissioner to lead the organization. Commissioner Beale’s major initiative will be to emphasize the county role in the state’s efforts to revamp the mental health organizational structure, including the creation of a special task force that will study the impact of the current system on counties.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Chairman Corbin asked those in attendance to observe a moment of silence.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Led by Commissioner Tate, the pledge to the flag was recited.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **Doug Woodward** presented the board with a document called the “Macon County, North Carolina Bill of Rights” along with a petition signed by 120 people “urging the Commissioners of Macon County to do the same by adopting the standards set forth here.” Mr. Woodward said he had collected an additional 126 signatures on the petition, and asked the board to consider the “bill of rights.” **Charlie Cowie** addressed the board once again regarding economic development, and asked that the commissioners back a movement to create “a national research committee” aimed at addressing the issue of “unemployed people because of overseas manufacturing.” **Bobby**

Bishop requested the board's assistance in providing an enclosed batting cage for the female softball players at Franklin High School and Macon Middle School. He estimated the cost of materials for the cage at \$12,800, adding that he had already secured approximately \$11,000 in free labor for the project, which he would oversee. He said the 4,800-square-foot area would include space for a trainer. Chairman Corbin asked Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin if the new batting cage was a priority of the Board of Education, and he indicated that it was. Commissioner Beale made a motion to approve the request, and to take the \$12,800 from contingency. Commissioner Haven seconded the motion, and there was further discussion. The County Attorney explained that the funding should go through the school system, and as the project is taking place on school property, the Board of Education's authority would be needed. Commissioner Beale amended his motion to include the County Attorney's recommendations, Commissioner Haven accepted the amended motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

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

- To add consideration of a grant for a School Resource Officer (SRO) under New Business as Item 10.D.1, per the County Manager.
- To add consideration of a proclamation for Child Passenger Safety Week under New Business as Item 10.D.2, per the County Manager.

WORK FIRST ELECTING COUNTY PLAN FOR FFY 2016-2019: Jane Kimsey, the Director of the Department of Social Services (DSS), outlined proposed changes in the Work First Electing County Plan for Federal Fiscal Year 2016-2019. The four recommended changes are as follows:

- The Welfare Reform Planning Committee members will be appointed by position, not by person.
- The Emergency Assistance Cap will be \$400 and will no longer include a housing subsidy.
- A total of six months of supported employment activities after obtaining a job is reduced to three months of supported employment activities.
- The direct monthly cash payment was eliminated, with the approved Work First benefit made directly to the vendor of the service or services.

Ms. Kimsey noted that the last of the four changes represented an opportunity to be a pilot program used statewide. Commissioner Beale noted that Macon is one of only seven counties statewide that is an "electing" county. Ms. Kimsey said the DSS Board recommended that the commissioners adopt the revised

plan. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to adopt the Work First Electing County Plan for FFY 2016-2019 as amended. Following the vote, Ms. Kimsey announced her intent to retire from the director's position as of June 30, 2015, with the job to be advertised by October 1, 2014, telling the board she was "thankful and blessed" to have spent her career in Macon County.

PUBLIC HEALTH FEE PLAN AND BILLING GUIDE: Chairman Corbin recognized Public Health Center Director Jim Bruckner, who in turn introduced Tammy Keezer, the department's Operations Section Administrator. Ms. Keezer briefly reviewed the proposed changes to the Macon County Public Health FY 14-15 Billing and Collection Policies, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 1) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. She noted that the Board of Health had given its approval to the document on August 26th. Following her presentation, Commissioner Higdon made a motion to approve the document as presented, Commissioner Haven seconded the motion, and following additional questions from the board members, the board voted unanimously to approve. Mr. Bruckner then reviewed the changes to the proposed fee schedule, including fees related to environmental health. The board of health had also given its approval to the fee schedule at its August meeting. Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the fee schedules as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 2) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

MEDICAID COST SETTLEMENT FUNDS/BUDGET AMENDMENT #31: Mr. Bruckner told the board that Medicaid cost settlement revenue exceeded what was budgeted for Fiscal Year 2013-14, explaining that these funds are required by Medicaid to be expended in the program where the funds are earned. Therefore, he asked the board to carry forward \$127,647 into the current year budget to cover expenses in the programs where the revenue was earned, and explained that he planned to use the funds for two contract positions, a dental assistant in the Adult Dental Clinic at \$37,073 and a nurse at \$56,301. These will not be new county positions, and would require no county funds, he said, adding that if money for the contract positions is not available in the next fiscal year, they will be eliminated. Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve Budget Amendment #31, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 3) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: Chris Hanners, the chairman of the Macon County Planning Board, gave the commissioners a report on the planning board's review of the status of existing infrastructure and the possibility of future expansion. He outlined current capital improvement projects of the towns of Franklin and Highlands, as well as current developments in cellular

telephone, Internet and natural gas service. As a letter from County Planner Matt Mason to the Board of Commissioners indicates, the planning board concluded that there is currently no significant need for water and sewer expansion. A copy of Mr. Mason's letter is attached (Attachment 4) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Commissioner Tate noted that the planning board had now been tasked with studying a noise ordinance, and Commissioner Higdon asked for options to a noise ordinance, such as a nuisance law or civil remedies. The County Attorney said there are a number of pros and cons to a noise ordinance, and that he had prepared one for another county that was never implemented. Mr. Hanners asked the board members if they were expecting a document or a recommendation and/or options. Commissioner Higdon indicated he wanted options, and Chairman Corbin warned of "jumping into an ordinance." No action was taken.

GOVERNOR'S HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM 2014-2015 GRANT: Sheriff Robert Holland explained that it was time to renew the grant agreement with the Governor's Highway Safety Program that created a new position, a traffic safety officer, within his department two years ago. He asked the board to approve two items – a resolution allocating \$30,221 in funding for the position and an "Agreement of Conditions." Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve the resolution and agreement as presented. Copies of the resolution (Attachment 5) and the agreement (Attachment 6) are attached and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER: Sheriff Holland told the board that while his department had fulfilled a grant obligation by placing a School Resource Officer (SRO) at Nantahala School, there were still two schools – Cartoogechaye and Iotla Valley – without SROs. He asked the board to allow him to use a new position in the budget to place an SRO at Iotla Valley Elementary. He provided a brief history lesson in how the SRO program had developed in the county, and told the board that, "I'm a cop because of SROs." Commissioner Haven made a motion to approve the new SRO position, seconded by Commissioner Beale. Following additional discussion regarding line items in the sheriff's department budget, particularly the one dealing with medical treatment for inmates, the board voted unanimously to approve the new SRO position as presented, with Dr. Baldwin agreeing that Iotla Valley would also be his choice for stationing the new officer.

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK PROCLAMATION: At the request of Brittney Raby, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to proclaim the week of September 14-20, 2014 as Child Passenger Safety Week in Macon County in order to encourage citizens to become better educated on the requirements and

laws surrounding property child seat safety. A copy of the proclamation is attached (Attachment 7) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

LEGISLATIVE GOALS: Chairman Corbin provided some background information on the Legislative Goals process used by the NCACC, noting that he had served on this committee for the past two years and that it was “very effective.” He said the deadline for the county to submit its goals to the NCACC for consideration was September 19th. Following discussion, and upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to forward the following goals: (1) Restoration of the lottery funds to the 40-percent level; (2) No unfunded mandates from the state legislature; and (3) Restore funding to the State Aid to Public Libraries Fund to the pre-2011 level of \$15.7 million, and eliminate special provisions that distribute State Aid outside of the equitable formula developed by the State Library Commission.

CONSENT AGENDA: Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the following items on the consent agenda were unanimously approved: **Minutes** – Approved the minutes from the August 12 and August 26, 2014 meetings. **Budget amendments** – Approved the following budget amendments: #32 for the Sheriff’s Department to allocate \$1,466 in insurance settlement funds for vehicle repairs; #33 for the Department of Social Services to allocate \$203,176 in additional revenues for the TANF, TEA Foster Care and Medicaid programs; #34 for the Department of Social Services to allocate \$26,384 in additional energy administration funds; #35 for the Health Department to appropriate a \$30,000 grant from the Community Foundation of WNC, with the funds to be used for Community Transformation Grant functions; #36 for the Housing Department to appropriate a transfer of \$76,158 from the general fund into specific line items in Fund 51; #37 for the Finance Department to create Fund 28 establishing an Occupancy Tax Fund as required by local legislation. (Revisions with corresponding numbers attached) **Tax releases:** Approved tax releases in the amount of \$8,453.66 (A computer printout of releases is on file in the Tax Department and the County Manager’s office). **Monthly ad valorem tax collection report** – No action necessary.

CLOSED SESSION: At 7:57 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, 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 8:28 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to come out of closed session and return to open session. No action was taken.

ADJOURN: With no other business, at 8:28 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Derek Roland
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman