

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
APRIL 4, 2005
MINUTES

Chairman Bryson convened the meeting at 6 p.m. All Board Members, the County Manager, County Attorney, Staff Attorney, Interim Finance Director, Deputy Clerk, members of the news media and interested citizens were present.

The meeting was immediately recessed to Courtroom B in order to accommodate the large number of citizens present. Commissioner Shepherd gave the invocation.

MINUTES: Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Shepherd the minutes of the March 7, 2005 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

ADDITIONS/ADJUSTMENTS: Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson, seconded by Commissioner Leatherman, the Board unanimously voted to add to the agenda a closed session to discuss a contractual matter concerning an agency that receives county funding and support, and a personnel item.

Discussion of an ordinance regulating sexually oriented businesses was also added to the agenda upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Shepherd.

RECOGNITION OF FHS STUDENT KAILA RAMSEY: Chairman Bryson recognized Kaila Ramsey, FHS student who was recently named one of the top youth volunteers in North Carolina for 2005 and received a Prudential Spirit of Community Award. Miss Ramsey outlined some of the projects she has been involved in including a coat drive she organized working with various local organizations.

PUBLIC SESSION: Skip Howell, President of the Macon County Humane Society, presented a chronology of the Society's efforts to establish a contract with the County and questioned what they needed to do to finalize the contract.

Gail Chapman expressed opposition to the proposed changes to the area surrounding the clock tower, showed a 1982 print of the original landscaping around the area and suggested duplication of the original plan. Ms. Chapman also suggested a contest to let residents pick design. Hal Chapman also expressed opposition to the proposed plans for the clock tower area and stated the area needs to complement the Rankin Square and downtown areas.

Neal Hearn representing Friends of Animals stated when the original spay/neuter program was approved it was for all citizens of the county regardless of income and the proposed resolution on the agenda has stipulations for DSS qualifications. Mr. Hearn requested the Board amend the proposed resolution establishing guidelines of \$35,000 annual income for a family and \$25,000 for single individuals.

Buck Trott, Town of Highlands Mayor, stated he and the Highlands Town Board were representing the citizens of Highlands because of their increasing distress about the county's lack of commitment to support infrastructure development in partnership with the county's municipalities. Mayor Trott stated the \$450,000 previously appropriated to the Towns for infrastructure is less than one percent of the 2004-05 budget and they did not think that is an unreasonable amount to invest in the water and sewer infrastructure of Macon County.

Terry Wilyoung stated she is a local realtor and the downtown area is special and an asset in her business. She added that she felt the clock

tower project was done to hastily and the project needs to be considered carefully so it will balance with Rankin Square and the downtown area which the proposed project will not. Ms. Wilyoung reminded the Board that government is of the people, by the people and for the people.

Sharon Archer informed the Board that the Humane Society needed communication with the Board. Ms. Archer explained the reason the Society stopped taking animals from animal control was due to lack of a contract between the Society and the County and quoted statistics on animals served through the Humane Society. Ms. Archer requested clarification and communication on the contract. Don Chapman stated there is a real problem with animal control and animals were running wild in his neighborhood adding that something needs to be done. Ray Harrell stated he came to Franklin in 1985, loved the kind gentle people and moved here two years ago. Mr. Harrell stated he has two dogs of his own that he takes care of and they are no problem to his neighbors. However, he has to constantly chase stray animals out of his yard, listen to excessive barking of his neighbor's dogs and beseeched the Board to do something.

Erin Rio stated he was a former member of the Franklin Garden Club and he is not happy with the club's decision on the clock tower project.

He added he felt more people should be involved in the decision.

Nancy Taro representing the Franklin Garden Club presented the plan for reworking the clock tower area, showed a sample of the artificial turf to be used stating once installed no maintenance, mowing, etc. would be involved. She asked that everyone read Barbara McRae's editorial in the day's edition of the Franklin Press which addresses the need for change in the area. Ms. Taro added the wrought iron fence is being reworked and will be used in select areas, there will be no waterfalls but boulders with water seeping out that moss will grow on.

Barbara Setser stated she was a twenty-seven year member of the Franklin Garden Club and all those years of hard work that had gone into the clock tower area was now gone with nothing left. Ms. Setser stated she was also representing long time garden club member and downtown beautification chairperson Merle Dryman and expressed adamant opposition to the proposed changes to the area.

Carole Rogers stated she wanted to address animal abuse in the county, that animals have attacked her and her family and everyone refuses to help even after appearances on WLOS-TV. She asked that all organizations work together to help get laws that protect dogs and families.

RECREATION PROGRAM - DISTRICT I: A proposal for the County to take over funding and operations for all recreation in District I, specifically Highlands and Scaly Communities, was presented and discussed. The County Manager explained if approved the plan could be effective July 1, 2005 and would require an interlocal agreement between the Town of Highlands and the County. The Manager stated the County currently has \$287,000 budgeted for Recreation in Highlands and to operate at the same level could entail additional County funding of approximately \$250,000 noting this figure may be reduced by inclusion of revenue from fees, etc.

After discussion Commissioner Simpson made a motion to authorize the County Manager to work out details of the proposal as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shepherd and all favored.

Highlands Mayor Buck Trott noted the Town had not approved this and it would be a decision of the citizens of Highlands.

SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM: A proposed resolution implementing a spay/neuter program for domestic dogs and cats was presented and discussed after which Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the resolution without income restrictions but if someone qualifies for state program allowable reimbursement should be requested. The motion was seconded by

Commissioner Leatherman and all favored. (See attachment #1)

WORK FIRST PLAN: Commissioner Leatherman outlined recommended revisions the State had made to Macon County's Work First Electing Plan for 2005-2007 explaining changes will not significantly alter the Plan and were recommended for approval. Upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Leatherman the Board unanimously voted to approve changes as submitted. Both Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Leatherman complimented the Department of Social Services on the outstanding Work First Program they have developed.

REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY: Upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Leatherman the Board unanimously voted to adopt the attached resolution requesting the General Assembly to enact legislation enabling the creation of the Macon-Jackson Regional Airport Authority. (Attachment #2)

OFFER TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY: An offer from Ricky and Kathy Snyder to purchase Lot #7 (parcel #110579) and Lot #13 (parcel #110576) of the C.C. Copeland property obtained by the County in 1992 through tax foreclosure was presented. The general consensus of the Board was that the precedent of the Board was to accept the tax appraisal as a minimum offer. Commissioner Simpson made a motion to refuse the Snyder's offers of \$3,900 for Lot #7 and \$2,800 for Lot #13 and counter offer with the current tax appraisal of Lot #7 at \$11,140 and Lot #9 at \$8,980. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis and all favored.

APPOINTMENTS: Town Board of Adjustments - Commissioner Simpson made a motion to appoint Dave Jones to fill the vacant position on the Town Board of Adjustments (ETJ). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis and all favored. Term of appointment will expire January 31, 2008.

Community Funding Pool - Commissioner Simpson made a motion to accept the recommendation to appoint Vince West from the Nantahala area to fill the position on the Community Funding Pool vacated by the resignation of Mary Berry. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shepherd and all favored. Term will expire March 1, 2007.

Board of Adjustments - Upon motion by Commissioner Leatherman and seconded by Commissioner Shepherd the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Sue Waldroop and Dwight Vinson to the Board of Adjustments. Terms will expire April 23, 2008.

Planning Board - Upon motion by Commissioner Leatherman and seconded by Commissioner Simpson the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Neville Bryson and Lamar Sprinkle to the Planning Board. Terms will expire April 23, 2008.

TAX DEPARTMENT: Upon motion by Commissioner Leatherman and seconded by Commissioner Shepherd the Board unanimously approved tax releases in the amount of \$1,490.25 as submitted. (A computer printout of releases is on file in the Tax Department and the County Manager's Office.)

BUDGET REVISIONS: The following budget revisions were unanimously approved: revision #91, upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Simpson, appropriating \$1,474 Community Foundation grant for jail inmate clothing; revision #92, upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Leatherman, appropriating \$4,750 additional DSS Crisis Intervention funds; and revision #93, upon motion by Commissioner Shepherd and seconded by Commissioner Simpson, appropriating \$10,579 Scrap Tire Disposal Grant. (Note: revisions with corresponding numbers attached.)

SEXUALLY ORIENTED BUSINESS ORDINANCE: Commissioner Simpson reported the Town of Franklin was holding a hearing on their proposed Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance and stated that a Town ordinance would not

do any good until the County adopts a similar ordinance.
Commissioner Simpson requested the County to develop an ordinance for outside the city limits and the Staff Attorney was instructed to draft a proposed ordinance.

CLOSED SESSION: Commissioner Simpson made a motion to go into closed session to discuss contractual and personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leatherman and all favored. During closed session a financial contractual matter involving another agency and personnel were discussed with no action being taken. Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson, seconded by Commissioner Davis the Board unanimously voted to return to regular session.

ADJOURNMENT: Upon motion by Commissioner Davis the meeting was adjourned.

Sam K. Greenwood, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Daniel A. Bryson
Board Chairman

Minutes
04/04/2005
Page #1