

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 8, 2007
MINUTES

The Board convened at 5 p.m. as noticed to host a reception and present annual service awards to county employees. Tax Assessor Richard Lightner was recognized for receipt of the Tax Assessor of the Year Award from the N.C. Tax Assessors Association and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) was presented to Finance Director Evelyn Southard and the Finance staff noting the award is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting.

The following annual service awards were presented by the Board: ten years of service - Diane Alexander, Kim Angel, Wayne Clark, Kenneth Cole, Kathy McGaha, Debbie Mosteller, Pam O'Dell, Jill Picklesimer and Dennis Tippet; fifteen years of service - Lora Beegle, Lisa Henry and Lisa Hilliard and twenty years of service June Cassada and Andy Shields.

Chairman Leatherman convened the regular meeting at 6 p.m. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, County Attorney, County Finance Director, members of the news media and interested citizens were present. Rev. J.D. Watson from Trinity Assembly Church gave the invocation and Chairman Leatherman welcomed everyone present.

ADDITIONS/ADJUSTMENTS: There were no additions or adjustments to the agenda.

PUBLIC SESSION: Charlie Cowie stated housing is a large industry in the county and people bring people into the county but not the individuals recently arrested for gang violence. Mr. Cowie complimented and expressed his support for local law enforcement and asked the Board to do whatever possible to support them so the judicial system will back them (law enforcement) up. He also expressed concerns about the potential rise in taxes due to reappraisal, complimented the tax appraisers and suggested research of the landfill fee. Mr. Cowie also asked for consideration of screening of buildings so we can see trees instead of houses. Narrelle Kirkland informed the Board she is a graduate of the county leadership course, spent seven months on hurricane recovery, is currently working with the Forest Service and does not feel she is being utilized. Ms. Kirkland referenced a recent letter to the editor of the local papers concerning native and non-natives. She urged the Board to embrace new comers and not make an issue of "you and them".

MINUTES: Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Davis the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the December 4th and 18th meetings as submitted with one spelling correction.

NACO PRESCRIPTION DRUG CARD: DSS Director Jane Kimsey explained the County's eligibility to participate in the National Association of Counties (NACo) prescription discount card program which provides free cards that offer average savings of 20% off the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs. She added all county residents are eligible and there are no enrollment or membership fees. After discussion Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the contract but to leave the county logo off the card. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beale and all favored. Ms. Kimsey explained the card will have Macon County printed on it and April, 2007, is a probable implementation date.

CDBG PUBLIC HEARING: Chairman Leatherman recessed the regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. to convene the second public hearing as noticed to provide information to the public on the North Carolina Community Development Block Grant Program and to receive public comment. County Housing Director Rick Norton advised the Board that to be eligible for 2007 CDBG funds the county must hold two public hearings and noted the Board had authorized application for a 2007 Scattered Site Rehabilitation grant in the amount of \$400,000 at the previous month's

meeting at which time the first hearing was held. No one wished to comment during the hearing. Chairman Leatherman adjourned the public hearing and reconvened the meeting in regular session. No further action was necessary on CDBG funding at this time.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT-SEPTIC PERMIT UPDATE: Health Director Ken Ring gave an update on the backlog of septic applications stating there is a backlog of 187 permits representing a minimum eight week delay for current applications. He added there are still 4 applications remaining to be completed from July, 2006, 31 from August and 25 from September. Board members expressed concerns that this backlog and the delays are causing a loss of livelihood in the County and this is unacceptable. Concerns were expressed that individuals calling for information on permits, schedules, etc. do not receive a live person but an automated system. Chairman Leatherman instructed Mr. Ring to return to the February, 2007 meeting with specifics telling the Board what can be done with current resources to get the backlog to six weeks, if he can't reduce the backlog to be prepared to explain why and to have someone answering calls in the environmental health section.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT: Grant application - Sheriff Robbie Holland gave a history of the Narcotics Unit including related drug arrest statistics and requested authorization to submit the 2007 grant pre-application for continuation of the unit. The Sheriff explained the total grant amount is \$82,954.23 and requires a \$20,738.56 county match which is always included in his department's budget request. Commissioner Simpson made a motion to authorize submission of the pre-application as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McClellan and all favored.

Magistrate - Commissioner Davis referenced comments made by Mr. Cowie in public session concerning support of law enforcement and expressed concern that a magistrate allowed individuals involved in recent gang related activities to be released on unsecured bonds noting there seems to be a pattern with this particular magistrate doing similar things. After a brief discussion it was agreed that Commissioner Davis would work with the County Attorney to bring something before the Board at the February meeting for action relating to the situation.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: Electronic Records System Policy - Upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Beale the Board unanimously voted to adopt an Electronic Records System Policy per attachment #1.

Broadcast of Board Meetings - Chairman Leatherman stated he had asked this item be placed on the agenda and, as the County continues to grow, this is something the Board needs to think about. He explained he feels broadcast of the meetings will accommodate more citizens and allow them to have access to accurate information. He requested the County Manager to get the I.T. Department to research the idea and get some cost information together.

NCACC LEGISLATIVE LIAISON: A request from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners asking that all 100 counties appoint a legislative liaison was presented. Commissioner Simpson nominated Commissioner Beale who declined the appointment. Upon motion by Commissioner McClellan, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Commissioner Davis to the position for a period of two years.

APPOINTMENTS: Southwestern Child Development Commission - An appointment to the Southwestern Child Development Commissioner was tabled until a later meeting. Library Board of Trustees - Commissioner Simpson made a motion to accept the recommendation to appoint Ms. Avary Doubleday as a Highlands representative on the Library Board of Trustees, due to his involvement with the construction project to waive term limits and reappoint Randolph Bulgin, and reappoint Gail Criminger. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McClellan and all favored. All terms will expire February 28, 2010.

Economic Development Commission (EDC) - Upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Beale the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Ed Shatley to the EDC. Term will expire January 31, 2010.

Recreation Commission - Commissioner Simpson made a motion to reappoint Matt

Bullis and Tex Davis to the Franklin Recreation Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis and all favored. Terms are for two years and will expire January 2, 2009.

OFFER TO PURCHASE: An offer to purchase .86 acres (PIN #0107218) of County owned property located near the Co-Op property was presented. The County Manager recommended the property be declared surplus after which upon motion by Commissioner Simpson, seconded by Commissioner Davis the Board unanimously voted to declare the property surplus and authorize for sale. The County Attorney explained the three methods by which the County can dispose of real property. The County Manager advised he and the County Attorney would bring back a recommendation as to which process to utilize.

TAX RELEASES: Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner McClellan tax releases in the amount of \$4,720.06 were unanimously approved as presented. (Note: A 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: revisions #62, upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Beale, transferring \$1,000 to General Fund to close out county renovation fund; revision #63, upon motion by Commissioner Beale and seconded by Commissioner Simpson, transferring \$15,893 cash balance in Highlands Gym Project to General Fund to close construction fund; revision #64, upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Beale, budgeting \$15,602 to the Library Construction Fund for change orders; revision #65, upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Beale, appropriating \$436 controlled substance tax funds in the Sheriff's Department; revision #66, upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Beale, budgeting \$1,735 funds from Haywood Electric Energy Assistance to DSS; revision #67, upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Simpson, appropriating \$1,160 federal forfeiture funds in the Sheriff's Department; revision #68, upon motion by Commissioner Beale and seconded by Commissioner Davis, appropriating \$4,566 insurance reimbursement for damages to vehicles; revision #69, upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Beale, appropriating \$4,166 in the Health Department for Immunization Action Plan; revision #70, upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Davis, budgeting \$38,351 additional Crisis Funds in DSS; revision #71, upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Davis, appropriating \$3,100 SHIPP revenue in Senior Services; revision #72, upon motion by Commissioner Beale and seconded by Commissioner Davis, reducing fund balance appropriation of \$3,410 in Senior Services due to additional HCCBG funding; revision #73, upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner McClellan, reducing fund balance appropriation of \$3,409 in Transit Services due to additional HCCBG funding; and revision #74, upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Beale, appropriating \$523 controlled substance tax funds in the Sheriff's Department. (Note: revisions with corresponding numbers attached)

LIBRARY/ADDITIONAL STAFFING: Librarian Karen Wallace and Library Board Chairman Randolph Bulgin were present to present statistics and answer questions concerning a request for funding of additional positions at the new library beginning in February, 2007. After discussion Commissioner Simpson made a motion to appropriate \$99,940 from Fund Balance for staffing costs of the new library beginning in February, 2007. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McClellan and all favored. (See attached budget revision #75) County Manager Greenwood noted this would mean an approximate additional quarter million dollar allocation in FY 07/08 budget.

CLOSED SESSION: Upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Commissioner Simpson the Board unanimously voted to go into closed session as provided for

attorney/client privileges and to discuss personnel. During closed session certain personnel issues were discussed and it was agreed the County Attorney's Office would have a full-time paralegal and a part-time clerk. The County Manager, Deputy Clerk and Finance Officer were excused during the attorney/client discussions. No action was taken and the Board returned to regular session.

ADJOURNMENT: Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson the meeting was recessed until noon on Saturday, January 27, 2007 at Macon Bank Corporate Center.

Sam K. Greenwood, County Manager
Clerk to the Board
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Charles D. Leatherman
Board Chairman