

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CALLED MEETING
MAY 1, 2014
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin called to order the joint meeting with the Town of Franklin Board of Aldermen and the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners at 6:32 p.m. at the Macon County Heritage Center at the historic Cowee School. All board members (with the exception of Commissioner Higdon), the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director and County Attorney were present. All of the Franklin aldermen, Mayor Bob Scott, Interim Town Manager Summer Woodard and Town Clerk/Finance Officer Janet Anderson were present. All of the Highlands commissioners (with the exception of Brian Stiehler), Mayor Patrick Taylor and Town Manager Bob Frye were present. Also present were members of the news media and interested citizens.

Following a welcome by Chairman Corbin and an invocation by Commissioner Tate, the board members shared a meal together. Chairman Corbin reconvened the meeting at 7:08 p.m., and explained that after the reports from each government, Eric Moberg and Bill Dyar would give a report on the efforts involving the heritage center followed by walking tours around the old school.

Chairman Corbin recognized Franklin Mayor Bob Scott, who gave a report on the town's activities and accomplishments. Mr. Scott said the \$6-million renovation of the town's sewer plant is complete. He said the town has a desire to have discussions with the county regarding the gazebo area on the town square. He also noted that the eastbound bridge over the Little Tennessee River will be replaced and plans call for some type of pedestrian access. He said the town would also like to work in conjunction with the county regarding economic development efforts. In closing, he introduced Summer Woodard, the town's interim manager.

Highlands Mayor Patrick Taylor spoke next, and said that the town will have to drain Lake Sequoyah in the near future and will install new water intakes. He said the dam there is more than 80 years old and is in need of some repairs. He also noted that the town will switch to a bleach process to treat its drinking water. A “major donation” of \$1-million from Art and Angela Williams will allow the town to turn its swimming pool into a year-round facility by enclosing the pool, and some funds will be used to replace the gym floor at the town’s recreation park. Mayor Taylor closed by saying the town board may consider a tax increase that would be used for recreation.

Chairman Corbin focused his comments on the latest steps in the development of the Parker Meadows Recreational Complex, noting that the county planned to “occupy” the park in the summer of 2015. He then introduced the County Manager, adding that Mr. Roland was “doing a fantastic job.” The County Manager discussed the current budget process, saying that the county was “entering some uncertain times” with the upcoming revaluation process. He noted that county department heads have “heeded the call” to trim their budgets, and that he will present a proposed budget with no tax increase later this month. Commissioner Beale welcomed everyone to Cowee School, which he said was “worth saving for future generations.” Commissioner Tate pointed out that with the upcoming property revaluation, the county is anticipating losing \$2-billion in value. Commissioner Haven offered his congratulations to Ms. Woodard.

Chairman Corbin recognized Mr. Dyar and Mr. Moberg, who teamed up to give the board members an overview of recent and planned activities at the heritage center, with Mr. Moberg pointing out that the center has received \$70,000 in grants and has benefited from 1,500 volunteer hours in the past 15 months. Bobby Koppers presented an overview of the center’s 2014 concert series and thanked the commissioners for their support of the center, stating that he believes the center will eventually be self-sufficient.

Highlands Town Commissioner Eric Pierson asked that the county consider a change in the election process by which voters in the three individual districts would choose their representative for the county commission, at least in the primary, as opposed to the current countywide method.

With no other business, and upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

Derek Roland
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman