

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HIGHLANDS CONFERENCE CENTER
NOVEMBER 1, 2004
MINUTES

Chairman West convened the meeting at 6 p.m. at the Highlands Conference Center as noticed. All Board Members, the County Manager, Staff Attorney, Deputy Clerk and Finance Director were present. Rev. Dan Robinson from Highlands First Baptist Church gave the invocation.

MINUTES: Upon motion by Commissioner Bryson and seconded by Commissioner Shepherd the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the October 4th meeting as submitted.

ADDITIONS/ADJUSTMENTS: Commissioner Bryson made a motion to add an item dealing with updating of the County flood plain maps. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Simpson and all favored.

PUBLIC SESSION – Mayor Buck Trott expressed appreciation to the Board for meeting in Highlands and commended the County's efforts during the last two hurricanes stating the emergency management team is outstanding. Narelle Kirkland expressed appreciation for paving of Fulton Road and Lower Burningtown Road, stated she had read articles about dogs attacking a child and urged the Board to adopt some sort of ordinance to prevent dogs from being allowed to run free, stated after riding her bike through the smoke from the burning of poisonous plants she had to go to the doctor. She added this is not addressed by EPA and urged adoption of an ordinance that requires disposal, rather than burning, of poisonous plants. Mark Meadows stated, from a Republican standpoint on the eve of election, he would like to compliment Chairman West on the campaign he has conducted and his service to the County adding that he had gone beyond campaign promises. Mr. Meadows also requested the Board to consider funding one-stop voting in the Highlands area.

Chairman West recognized Highlands Town Board of Commissioners Dennis Dewolf, Amy Patterson, Alan Marsh, Hank Ross, Herb James, Town Administrator Richard Betz and Mayor Buck Trott.

REGISTER OF DEEDS: Discussion continued on the request presented at the September meeting by Register of Deeds Adelaide Green for lease of computer software from ISSI. After discussion Commissioner Leatherman made a motion that Ms. Green present a total of three bids to the County Manager and instructed him to summarize the bids for the Board, make a recommendation and, in order to be expeditious, poll the Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bryson and all favored.

TRANSIT APPLICATION – PUBLIC HEARING: Chairman West recessed the regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. and convened the public hearing on the proposed Community Transportation Application to be submitted to NCDOT as noticed. Transit Director Kim Angel explained the application and stated she had received no written or oral public comments. No one wished to speak and Chairman West adjourned the hearing. The Board returned to regular session and upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Leatherman the Board unanimously voted to adopt a resolution seeking permission to apply for funding, entering into agreement with NCDOT and providing the necessary assurances per attachment #1.

WATER/SEWER RESERVE FUNDING: Commissioner Bryson reported he and Commissioner Shepherd were liaisons to the Water/Sewer Committee and several items of concerns have come up and, as a starting point, conditions for application for funds from Infrastructure Reserves had been proposed per attachment #2. In response to questions from members of the Highlands Town Board Commissioner Bryson noted these are proposed conditions and requested input from other members.

DEBT ISSUE – PUBLIC HEARING: Chairman West recessed the regular meeting at 6:45 pm. and convened the public hearing on debt issue for construction of the Macon County satellite campus of Southwestern Community College and a new County library facility

as posted. Shirley Clouse stated she liked the library in its current location explaining when her children were high school students they could walk there from school to study, do research, etc. and it was also more convenient for her to use in the present location. Ms. Clouse stated the Macon County News had mentioned a tax increase to fund the new construction. She expressed her opposition and suggested fundraisers to help defray a tax increase. The Board explained they do not intend to raise taxes to pay for the construction and with recent refinancing and future pay off of other county debts do not feel a tax increase will be necessary. Narelle Kirklund also encouraged the Board to not pursue payment of the construction through a tax increase. Tom Napier asked if SCC could set up something at the current library site for kids. There were no further comments and the hearing was recessed. The meeting reconvened in regular session. No further action on the debt issue was necessary at this time.

TAX DEPARTMENT: Refund - Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Bryson the Board unanimously voted to approve a tax release for Hazel Peek in the amount of \$35.23 due to incorrect age exemption. Releases - Upon motion by Commissioner Bryson and seconded by Commissioner Leatherman the Board unanimously voted to approve tax releases as submitted in the amount of \$695.87. (A computer printout of releases is on file in the Tax Department and the County Manager's Office.)

CELL TOWER APPLICATION - PUBLIC HEARING: Chairman West recessed the regular meeting at 7 p.m. to convene the public hearing on a cell tower application from Pegasus Tower requesting a permit to locate a tower on the top of Dills Knob off Peeks Creek Road on property owned by Robert Stanfield. Larry Stenger stated there is no cell phone service in Ellijay or Cullasaja and something needs to be done to enhance the service. He also asked if the County could require something so the towers aren't just "sticking there". No one else wished to speak and the hearing was adjourned. The meeting reconvened in regular session and Harold Timmons from Pegasus Tower explained some areas still will not have service but this tower will significantly improve the signals. Camouflage of the tower, location of utility lines, access and other issues were discussed after which Commissioner Bryson made a motion to table the request until the December meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Simpson and all favored.

PLANNING BOARD - HIGH IMPACT MORATORIUM: Planning Board Chairman Ronnie Beale presented a request from the Planning Board for a three month moratorium on high impact uses. The County Manager advised the Board would need to adopt the concept of adoption of a High Impact Ordinance prior to placing the moratorium. Upon motion by Commissioner Shepherd and seconded by Commissioner Leatherman the Board unanimously voted to adopt the concept of adopting a High Impact Use Ordinance for Macon County. After discussion of high impact use definitions Commissioner Leatherman made a motion to adopt an ordinance establishing a six month moratorium on certain high impact uses as presented with the following changes: public or private airfield/airstrips which are currently in use for aviation purposes and any temporary or emergency solid waste facilities to be used as transfer stations, landfill or recycling facilities for processing the debris generated by any natural disasters were excluded. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bryson and all favored. (See attachment #3)

LEGAL - LAND RECORDS MODERNIZATION: Upon motion by Commissioner Bryson and seconded by Commissioner Simpson the Board unanimously voted to amend the Macon County Code by creating Title XIV designated as Land Records and adopt Chapter 140, Macon County Modernization of Land Records Ordinance, as set out in the attached document. (Attachment #4)

GREENWAY: A resolution that the Board of Commissioners supports the efforts of the Friends of the Greenway (FROGS) and Duke Power Company in developing a vegetation management program along the Greenway was presented. Chairman West requested permission to abstain due to a potential conflict of interest because he is employed by Duke. Upon motion by Commissioner Leatherman and seconded by Commissioner Bryson the Board unanimously voted to allow Chairman West to abstain. Commissioner Bryson

made a motion to adopt the resolution as presented per attachment #5. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leatherman and passed 4-0 with Chairman West abstaining.

FLOOD PLAIN MAPS: County Planner Stacy Guffey presented a resolution requesting the General Assembly to appropriate funds for updating the flood plain maps for Macon County and the other western counties in the State. Upon motion by Commissioner Simpson and seconded by Commissioner Shepherd the Board unanimously voted to approve the resolution per attachment #6.

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

Sam K. Greenwood, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Mark B. West
Board Chairman

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