



**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MAY 21, 2024  
CONTINUED MEETING MINUTES**

Chairman Shields reconvened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. as recessed from the May 14, 2024, regular meeting and welcomed all in attendance. All Board Members, County Manager Derek Roland, Deputy Clerk Tammy Keezer, Finance Director Lori Carpenter, and County Attorney Eric Ridenour were present, as were a number of county employees, media, and citizens.

**PRESENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDED FISCAL YEAR 2024-25 BUDGET:**

Mr. Roland began by saying of all the budgets he has prepared over the past eleven years, this one means more to him than any other one he has presented. He said the budget he is presenting tonight is the one that he is most proud of and is a decade of fiscally responsible leadership of the Macon County Board of Commissioners and the hard work and dedication of the Macon County employees that have acted under the direction of the Macon County Board of Commissioners for that last decade. Mr. Roland stated that it is an undeniable fact that we are one of the most financially solid local government organizations in the State of North Carolina. He highlighted recent accomplishments including broadband expansion in Nantahala, economic development with the Duotech expansion project, Macon Middle School Locker Room facility and track, Southwestern Community College fire training facility, expansion of a science classroom at the Grove Center, Nantahala purchase of property to upgrade wastewater physical plant, Highlands School project, and the Franklin High School project. Mr. Roland shared his recommendations for revenue projections based on national economic assumptions and factors as well as his recommendations for expenditures including the addition of two environmental health positions, a two percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for county employees, a one STEP increase included in the pay plan for county employees, an increase in educational funding for the second year in a row due to a three percent raise for all county-funded positions in the school system (30 currently), and \$145.9 million for Capital Improvement Project (CIP) improvements. In summary he reported that his recommended budget of \$63,704,651 would allow Macon County to retain debt capacity, remain the lowest tax rate in state, maintain employee health insurance with no increase in cost, and hold the line on operating expenditures.

Chris Stahl referred to the narrative in the budget book about the Enterprise Fund. He said he is requesting a \$12 increase to the availability fee and is projecting a revenue increase of \$330,000. Mr. Stahl indicated that Commissioner Higdon had asked him to look at Convenience Center employee salaries so he has recommended a grade adjustment that would allow a five percent increase to each of the current Convenience Center grades.

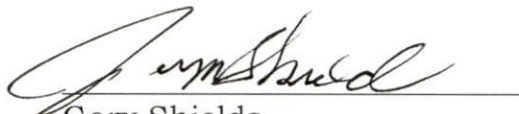
A copy of Mr. Roland's PowerPoint presentation and proposed budget are available in the office of the Clerk to the Board.

**CLOSED SESSION:** At 7:13 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Shearl, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session as allowed under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5) to discuss the acquisition of real property by purchase. At 7:30 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, the board voted unanimously to come out of closed session and return to open session.

**RECESS:** With no other business, at 7:30 p.m., upon a motion from Commissioner Shearl, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, the board voted unanimously to recess until 6:00 p.m. on May 28, 2024, for a joint budget work session with the Macon County Board of Education. The meeting will be held at the Franklin High School Fine Arts Center located at 100 Panther Drive, Franklin, NC 28734.



Derek Roland  
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board



Gary Shields  
Board Chair