

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MAY 23, 2012 – 3:30 P.M.
CONTINUED SESSION
MINUTES

Chairman Corbin convened the continued session at 3:38 p.m. in the Commissioners' Boardroom on the third floor of the courthouse as recessed from the May 21st meeting. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, interested citizens and members of the news media were present.

Chairman Corbin recognized Commissioner Tate, who is the board's liaison to the Fire Commission. Commissioner Tate expressed his appreciation to the county's volunteer firefighters, and noted that five departments were seeking tax increases and had been asked to appear at the meeting to offer explanations for those, adding that "we know you're a good deal and we're not trying to nitpick."

HIGHLANDS: Highlands Fire Chief James "Popcorn" Manley said that his department was asking for an increase of one-tenth of one cent, from 0.009 cents to 0.01 cent. Mr. Manley said the department felt this was a good time to ask for a little extra money because of everything going up, and pointed out that after a recent state inspection, the department now has a "4" rating inside the town limits and a "5" outside, allowing homeowners an increase in savings on their insurance. The department has 26 firefighters on its roster, and Mr. Manley stated his belief that in the next few years there would be a shift toward a paid department.

COWEE: Cowee Fire Chief Wayne Pruett said that his department was asking for an increase of 1.2 cents, from 0.082 to 0.094, primarily to cover the cost of purchasing \$129,000 worth of new air packs. He also noted they were currently running over budget on a number of items. Mr. Pruett said the department was considering a third station that would be built on Mason Branch Road and was working to get a "6" rating. The department has 40 volunteer firefighters, one paid firefighter and 12 junior members.

MOUNTAIN VALLEY: Mountain Valley Fire Chief Dwain Picklesimer said that his department was asking for an increase of one-tenth of one cent, from 0.076 to 0.077, in order to help pay for a new 2,000-gallon pumper truck that will replace a 1,000-gallon 1971 model that can no longer be repaired. The department has 31 volunteer firefighters on the roster and eight junior members. Mr. Picklesimer said the department is preparing for an inspection in two years.

WEST MACON: West Macon Chief Josh Randall said that his department was asking for an increase of four-tenths of one cent, from 0.056 to 0.06, to help pay for rising fuel costs, the addition of a satellite station and the addition of a new pickup truck, which is used to pull a mobile command center. Mr. Randall said the department is also in need of new air packs and will soon need a new pumper and turnout gear. The department has 32 volunteer firefighters, one paid firefighter and 13 junior members.

OTTO: Otto Fire Chief Doug Cabe said that his department was asking for an increase of 1.1 cents, from 0.042 to 0.053, which would be the department's first increase since 2004-05. He said the department is considering hiring a second paid firefighter and needs funding to upgrade its radio equipment to meet new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) guidelines by 2013. Mr. Cabe said the department also needs to upgrade its outdated rescue equipment. The department has 36 volunteer firefighters and five junior members.

The board agreed to take the requests under consideration.

Chairman Corbin declared a recess at 5:10 p.m.

Chairman Corbin called the meeting back to order at 5:27 p.m.

BUDGET AMENDMENT: The Finance Director presented Budget Amendment #195 in the amount of \$115,125 for the board's consideration. The amendment would appropriate 911 funds to complete the 911 call center upgrade, covering furniture, additional equipment, cabling, video monitors, battery backup and a recorder. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to approve the budget amendment (Attachment 1) as presented, a copy of which is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. Emergency Services Director David Key said the new call center is expected to "go live" on August 7, 2012.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BUDGET: Information Technology Director Andy Muncey made a presentation on needs in his department, including new servers and switches to meet current demands and to handle upgrades to tax, finance and 911 software. Mr. Muncey also explained virtualization, Storage Area Network (SAN) and other network infrastructure items in layman's terms. He pointed out that his staff is "a couple of people down" and that he could really use one additional

person. The County Manager noted that Mr. Muncey is also working with Macon County Schools regarding technology needs there.

BUDGET WORK SESSION: Following Mr. Muncey's presentation, the board continued working through the departmental expenditure portion of the budget, reviewing line items in a number of departments until agreeing to stop at the health department portions of the budget and asking that Health Center Director Jim Bruckner attend the next work session.

RECESS: At 6:28 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Koppers, the board voted unanimously to recess the meeting until Thursday, May 31st, 2012 at 6 p.m. in the commissioners' boardroom on the third floor of the Macon County Courthouse at 5 West Main Street in Franklin, NC.

Jack Horton, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman