

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
JUNE 10, 2014  
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, County Attorney, members of the news media and interested citizens were present.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Chairman Corbin recognized Commissioner Beale, who was one of 22 county officials from across the nation who attended the County Leadership Institute June 1-5, 2014 in Washington, DC. Chairman Corbin also recognized Dakota Holland, an eighth grader at Union Academy, who came to the aid of a fellow student who suffered a head injury when the school bus in which they were riding came to an abrupt stop. Chairman Corbin praised Mr. Holland for his actions and presented him with a small gift on behalf of the board.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Chairman Corbin asked those in attendance to observe a moment of silence.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Led by Commissioner Higdon, the pledge to the flag was recited.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE RECOMMENDED FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015 BUDGET:** Chairman Corbin opened the hearing at 6:08 p.m. and noted that no one had signed up to speak. He recognized the County Manager, who used a PowerPoint presentation to review changes that had been made to the original proposed budget following adjustments that were requested by the board during its May 31<sup>st</sup> budget work session. He explained that the updated budget contained an additional \$200,000 in recommended expenditures, including: \$10,600 for perimeter fencing at the county detention center, a \$100,000 increase in school capital outlay funding, \$30,000 for REACH, \$15,000 for the Community Care Clinic, an additional \$39,400 for Southwestern Community College, and \$5,000 more for Highlands recreation. Following a brief discussion of security issues at the detention center, the

County Manager said that he had found \$201,358 in additional operating revenue to balance the additional expenditures. Of that total, \$133,358 will come from the difference in the allocation to the Parker Meadows Recreational Complex project, with the remaining \$68,000 resulting from the renovations to the “Molar Roller” being switched from operating funds to an appropriation from fund balance. He also outlined changes in the EMS budget as the purchase of a new ambulance will be delayed, allowing for the hiring of two additional full-time EMTs for the Franklin base and the addition of shift supervisor duties for four employees. According to the County Manager, the county’s fund balance position has been stabilized, all of the recommendations from the work session have been included in the budget, expenditures are “sustainable,” there is no tax increase or reduction in the budget and service continues to be provided at the same high level. The end result is a recommended budget of \$45,721,122. Following the presentation, Chairman Corbin again opened the floor for comment, and no one spoke. Commissioner Higdon said he was pleased with the “analytical process” employed on the budget, and Chairman Corbin said he was “very pleased with the budget.” He noted that debt service in the amount of \$1.2-million was rolling off, to be followed by \$800,000 more in the next fiscal year. After further discussion, Chairman Corbin closed the hearing at 6:36 p.m. No action was taken. Pointing out that the board would need to meet again to adopt the budget, and with Franklin High School’s graduation scheduled for Tuesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, he suggested the board recess the meeting until Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Chairman Corbin noted that no one signed up to speak.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as adjusted, as follows:

- To add a presentation regarding grant opportunities for Macon County Public Health as Item 8B under Reports/Presentations, per the County Manager.
- To add discussion regarding a fire suppression system for the kitchen at the Macon County Heritage Center as Item 10G under New Business, per Commissioner Beale.

**WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA TEEN INSTITUTE:** Cindi Gatti, representing the Western North Carolina Teen Institute, introduced her two sons, Brian and Dakota, and thanked the board for its allocation that allowed students from Macon County to attend a conference at Lake Junaluska in March of this year. The institute trains, mobilizes and empowers youth to prevent substance abuse and destructive behaviors in themselves and their peers, and she noted that

one of the accomplishments was a “Sticker Shock” event aimed at helping reduce underage drinking. She explained that the institute was seeking \$1,125 in funding to send students to an upcoming conference at Mars Hill College. Brian Gatti, a senior at Nantahala High School, talked about attending these conferences, and his brother, Dakota, spoke to the “culturalization aspect” of them. Brian Gatti said he planned to try to be one of the first to continue the institute into a college campus setting when he attends Western Carolina University. No action was taken.

**REGIONAL HEALTH GRANTS:** Macon County Public Health Director Jim Bruckner alerted the board to new grant opportunities that were available and asked for letters of support from the commission and permission to apply for them. Mr. Bruckner explained that he had appeared before the board two years ago for approval to apply for a Community Transformation Grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). This grant encompassed an eight-county area, and was locally branded under the title of “MountainWise.” The problem is that funding for this program was eliminated from the Affordable Care Act as the five-year grant was cut to two years and will end September 30, 2014. However, Mr. Bruckner said new opportunities for regional collaboration are now available, including two new CDC funding opportunities. The first is a state level grant for prevention in public health funding that will address chronic disease such as hypertension, diabetes and obesity. The second is a regional level grant that would form a partnership to improve community health funding and would address active living, eating healthy and a tobacco-free environment. Mr. Bruckner provided details as to funding levels, participation from other counties and application deadlines. He also asked the board for a letter of support to the Community Foundation of WNC regarding a one-time \$30,000 grant to enhance the current “MountainMarkets” project, which is tied to the current Community Transformation Grant effort and is focused on access to healthy foods. In closing, Mr. Bruckner said some of the county health departments were considering joining together to form a 501(c)3 organization in order to apply for these types of grants. Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to grant permission for the applications to be submitted and to provide letters of support as needed.

**GRADING CONTRACT FOR PARKER MEADOWS RECREATIONAL COMPLEX:** The County Attorney told the board that he had reviewed the contract with Penland Contracting Co., Inc. to perform the sitework at the Parker Meadows Recreational Complex, and had found it to be “in good shape.” The board agreed to award the bid in the amount of \$1,225,144 to Penland Contracting at its May 31<sup>st</sup> meeting. The County Attorney said the necessary payment and performance bonds were in order, and recommended that the County Manager be authorized to execute the contract. Upon a motion by

Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve the County Attorney's recommendation as presented.

**FRANKLIN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FIREWORKS:** Following a brief explanation from the County Attorney, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to approve permits for fireworks displays in Franklin on July 4<sup>th</sup> and in Nantahala on July 5<sup>th</sup>.

**FENCING CONTRACT FOR PARKER MEADOWS RECREATIONAL COMPLEX:** The County Manager explained that the contract for the fencing at the Parker Meadows Recreational Complex could not be awarded at this time, as all of the necessary funding is not in place pending approval of the county's loan application to the Local Government Commission (LGC). There was discussion as to whether the county could take the approximately \$65,000 needed from fund balance and transfer it to the capital project ordinance, and then reimburse itself from the proceeds of the upcoming loan. The County Attorney is reviewing the matter and will provide the board with an opinion letter. No action was taken.

**BUILDING CONTRACT FOR PARKER MEADOWS RECREATIONAL COMPLEX:** For the board's information, the County Manager noted that one bid of \$499,500 had been received for the buildings, including two concession stands, a picnic shelter and 16 dug-outs, for the Parker Meadows Recreational Complex. No action was taken.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AT PARKER MEADOWS RECREATIONAL COMPLEX:** The County Manager asked the board to consider a proposal from TRC Environmental Corporation to provide archaeological monitoring at the Parker Meadows Recreational Complex, and to authorize charges of up to \$15,000 for the service. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to approve the proposal as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 1) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**HUDSON LIBRARY LEASE RENEWAL:** The County Attorney pointed out that it was time for the board to consider its option to renew the lease agreement regarding the Hudson Library in Highlands. The term of the lease is for \$1 per year, but the board must give appropriate and timely notice of its intent to renew, and the County Attorney recommended that the board exercise its option. Upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to exercise its renewal option as presented.

**DISCLAIMER FOR GIS WEBSITE:** The County Manager explained that employees in the county Mapping Department brought to his attention the need for a disclaimer to be placed on the county's Geographic Information System (GIS) website. Similar to one used in Transylvania County, the disclaimer would state in part that, "Mapping information is a representation of various data sources and is not a substitute for information that would result from an accurate land survey." The County Manager recommended adding this language to the website, with the County Attorney agreeing that it was "a very wise move to make." Upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to add a disclaimer to the GIS website as presented.

**"CORRIDOR K" RESOLUTION:** Chairman Corbin said that the county had received a request from Graham County officials seeking support from neighboring counties for a resolution "Advocating for the completion of the federally mandated relocation of Highway 74, also known as Corridor K, to areas currently designated as Highway 28, NC 143 and US 129." Commissioner Beale commented that this effort had been ongoing for 42 years, and made a motion to approve the resolution as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Tate. The board voted 4-1 to approve the motion, with Commissioner Higdon opposing. A copy of the resolution is attached (Attachment 2) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM FOR HERITAGE CENTER:** Commissioner Beale spoke to the need for a fire suppression system for the kitchen at the Macon County Heritage Center at the Historic Cowee School. Per Commissioner Beale, the cost of the system would be \$2,600 and would make the facility a "full commercial kitchen," which he indicated would be a big step toward the center becoming self-sustaining. During discussion, the Finance Director explained that there was approximately \$54,000 remaining in contingency. Commissioner Tate made a motion to purchase the system for the center at a cost of \$2,600, with the funding to come from contingency, and Commissioner Beale seconded the motion. The board voted 3-2 to approve the motion, with Commissioners Beale, Corbin and Tate in favor and Commissioners Haven and Higdon opposing.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the following items on the consent agenda were unanimously approved: **Minutes** – Approved the minutes from the May 13 and May 31, 2014 meetings. **Budget amendments** – Approved the following budget amendment: #183 for the JCPC Grants to appropriate \$2,258 in additional grant funds for JCPC Administration, with no match needed from the county; (Revision with corresponding number attached.) **Tax releases** – Approved tax releases in the amount of \$97.16 (A computer printout of releases

is on file in the Tax Department and the County Manager's office). **Monthly ad valorem tax collection report** – No action necessary.

**APPOINTMENTS: (1) Board of Health** – Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to reappoint Russell Stevenson, Dr. Nathan Brenner and Dr. Frederick Berger to the Board of Health, all for terms of three years, beginning July 1, 2014. Mr. Stevenson fills the engineer slot, Dr. Brenner the dentist slot, and Dr. Berger the physician slot on the board.

**FIRE DISTRICT TAX RATES:** The Finance Director questioned the final tax rates for those districts seeking tax increases so as to prepare the budget ordinance for Fiscal Year 2014-15 for the board's consideration. Commissioner Tate explained that the requested increase for Mountain Valley Fire & Rescue from 7.7 cents to 8.0 cents had been accepted. However, the request from Clarks Chapel Fire-Rescue to move from 4.2 cents to 5.9 cents was adjusted downward to an increase to 5.5 cents. There was also a brief discussion regarding the request from the Western North Carolina Teen Institute made earlier in the meeting, but no action was taken.

**RECESS:** At 7:40 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to recess the meeting until Monday, June 16, 2014 at 6 p.m. in the commission boardroom on the third floor of the Macon County Courthouse, 5 West Main Street, Franklin, NC.

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Derek Roland  
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

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Kevin Corbin  
Board Chairman