

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CONTINUED SESSION
JUNE 13, 2013
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin reconvened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. in the commission boardroom as recessed from the June 11, 2013 regular meeting. All board members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk and Finance Director were present. Also present were members of the news media and interested citizens.

Chairman Corbin explained that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the budget. Prior to that discussion, the Finance Director asked that the board approve Budget Amendment #205, which involves the appropriation of \$7,200 received from Duke Energy's Nantahala Area Soil and Water Conservation Grant Program for the Conservation Field Day for Macon County 7th graders for the years 2014-2021. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the budget amendment as presented (**Attachment 1**), a copy of which is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

The board members, County Manager and Finance Director then reviewed a list of proposed changes to the County Manager's initial recommended budget (**Attachment 2**) and discussed those changes in detail. Among those, Chairman Corbin explained that he had asked the County Manager to reduce the capital expense line item for the school system by \$100,000, but in turn to add \$220,000 for school current expense. Other items discussed by the board included: \$18,000 in increased funding for the Macon County Public Library, \$30,000 in increased funding for the Community Care Clinic, \$145,000 for the purchase of property in Highlands for Zachary Park, an additional \$10,800 for equipment for the sheriff's special response team, \$56,352 for one new School Resource Officer (SRO) to cover salary and fringe

benefits, but no new vehicle, and \$30,952 to increase the salary of 16 part-time Macon County Transit drivers from \$9 to \$10 per hour. With increases and reductions, the net increase in the overall budget would be \$457,448, with the money to be appropriated from fund balance. This was followed by a lengthy discussion regarding the need for additional emergency medical technicians as well as telecommunicators. The County Manager asked the board to "leave the door open" with regard to hiring these additional emergency services personnel if a source of revenue could be found.

The discussion then turned to available fund balance, and the Finance Director provided a handout that shows the fund balance available for appropriation, as a percentage of expenditures and as a percentage of budget for each fiscal year going back to the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001. A copy of this document is attached (Attachment 3) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Commissioner Higdon asked about reducing the fund balance to 25 percent, at least for one year, allowing for a reduction in the tax rate. This led to a lengthy discussion, with no action being taken.

The board members discussed the individual tax increases requested by the Burningtown-Iotla, Clarks Chapel, Cowee and Otto volunteer fire departments.

Chairman Corbin declared a recess at 8:55 p.m.

Chairman Corbin called the meeting back to order at 9:06 p.m.

The board addressed the four requests for fire tax increases individually, beginning with Burningtown-Iotla. Commissioner Higdon, who lives in the district, said that based on telephone conversations that he had with individuals, there was no support outside the fire department members for the tax increase to support the paid firefighter. Following further discussion, Commissioner Beale made a motion to approve the requested one-cent tax increase for Burningtown-Iotla, but the motion died for lack of a second. Commissioner Beale asked the chair to call for a full vote on the matter, and upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted 4-1 to not fund the tax increase, with Commissioner Beale opposing.

Following a phone call from the County Manager to Chuck Sutton with Clarks Chapel, the County Manager reported that Mr. Sutton withdrew the department's request for a tax increase, based on current revenue remaining the same.

Following discussion, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to grant a portion of the request from Cowee, raising the rate from 8.2 cents to 8.4 cents (instead of 8.6 cents).

Following discussion, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to grant the request from Otto, which would raise the rate seven-tenths of one cent from 4.2 cents to 4.9 cents.

By consensus, the board agreed to meet at 6 p.m. instead of 7 p.m. on Monday, June 17th, primarily for a final vote on the budget. The Finance Director explained that she would present two budget ordinances, one that amends the current year budget and a second one for the upcoming fiscal year budget. She also noted that, based on the changes discussed at this meeting, the new total for the budget would be \$47,120,470.

At 9:35 p.m., and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to recess the meeting until Monday, June 17, 2013 at 6 p.m. in the commission boardroom on the third floor of the Macon County Courthouse located at 5 West Main Street, Franklin, NC.

Jack Horton, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman