

MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AUGUST 4, 2008
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Leatherman convened the regular meeting at 6 p.m. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, County Attorney, County Finance Director, members of the news media and interested citizens were present. Chairman Leatherman welcomed everyone then passed the gavel to Commissioner McClellan explaining he would be chairing the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were no announcements.

INVOCATION: Boy Scout Troop 207 from Highlands gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Boy Scout Troop 207 presented the colors and led the pledge to the flag after which Commissioner McClellan introduced the troop leaders and members.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: Narrelle Kirkland stated the weather was dry but a lot of "green" activity has been going on especially in Highlands. She explained Macon Pride had attended several events and encouraged hiring a part time recycling coordinator to attend these events or compensate members of Macon Pride who are attending. She noted the County would see returns via the increase in the volume of recycling.

John Grist stated there had been a dog bite in his community and as a result of no ordinance and/or animal control or place to board dogs the lady has to get shots. Mr. Grist encouraged continuing with plans and moving forward with animal control. County Manager Jack Horton gave a brief update on the county's efforts stating there had been some problems with the proposed shelter site but those have been worked out and the County needs to begin the process for adoption of an animal control ordinance so it will be in place when the shelter is ready.

ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Upon motion by Chairman Leatherman, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the Board unanimously voted to approve the agenda with the following additions:

Item 9A - Tourism Development Commission,

Item 9B - mental health update,

Item 10D - discussion on standardization of appeal process and

Item 10E - feasibility of flex work hours.

PUBLIC HEARING: TRANSIT/ROAP - Commissioner McClellan opened the public hearing on the proposed Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) to be submitted to NCDOT. No one wished to speak and the hearing was adjourned. Commissioner McClellan read the ROAP statement of certification per attachment #1 and Transit Director Kim Angel stated this was a continuation of current programs. Upon motion by Chairman Leatherman, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the Board unanimously voted to approve the certification as read.

REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS:

STANLEY PENLAND: Chairman Leatherman recounted the contributions of the late Stanley Penland to Macon County, especially as a member of the Farmland Preservation Committee, and presented a certificate of appreciation to his family which was accepted on their behalf by Mr. Penland's son, Stan.

MACON TRACS: Kathy Dills, Jan McGee and Rick Litchford gave a brief overview of Macon Tracs a nonprofit group that provides an equestrian therapy program for adults and children with disabilities. The group explained they meet at the Fair Grounds and are privately funded.

ADDITION TO AGENDA: Upon motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the Board unanimously voted to add a presentation on

the Natural Heritage Program as Item 8E with the explanation that the item had been omitted from the agenda in error.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION: EDC member Ed Shatley presented an economic development strategy for Macon County on behalf of the Economic Development Commission. Mr. Shatley introduced EDC members Mark West and Gary Dills, Advantage West President Tommy Jenkins and Advantage West representatives. He noted members Roger Plemons and Thomas Craig were unable to attend the meeting.

Chairman Leatherman stated he would like to go on record as saying, as recommended by this strategy, the County needs to hire an economic developer to help bring jobs to Macon County. He added he would like for the Board to have active communication on this and move forward. A joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners and EDC was scheduled for August 19th for further discussion.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT - WELL PROGRAM: Health Director Jim Bruckner gave an update on the well inspections program stating there is a turnaround time of two days adding that repairs have priority. Mr. Bruckner advised the bad news is new legislation to change water testing that would increase the workload and testing fees. He stated he would keep the Board updated on the legislation. Also present from Environmental Health were Barry Patterson, Tiffany Plemons and Harold Faircloth. No action was necessary.

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM: Edward Shartzmann with the Department of Natural Resources presented information on the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) stating the NCNHP collects information about the locations of rare native plants and animals, natural communities and special animal habitats in North Carolina as well as identifying significant natural heritage areas. Mr. Shartzmann informed the Board that an inventory had been started in Macon County in April, 2008, and would take about two years to complete at which time a report would be presented to the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION: Commissioner McClellan gave an update on the recommendation of the Occupancy Tax Force pertaining to expenditure of the occupancy tax and establishment of Tourism Development Commissions for the County. He explained the goal is to form two TDC's and the Board needs to determine the make up of those commissioners and get direction from the County Attorney on how contracts would be written. After discussion it was agreed the item would be discussed at the continuation meeting on August 19th, appointments could be considered at the September meeting with a final recommendation from the TDC at the October meeting. No action was taken.

MENTAL HEALTH: Commissioner Beale gave an update on mental health and informed the Board that the contract with the director was approved; however, every commissioner in the far west voted against approval but two of the at large representatives from Macon County voted for approval. He advised the Task Force report is being made to four other counties as a result of recent activities and he would keep the Board updated.

DONATION OF PROPERTY: Upon motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Davis, the Board unanimously voted to reject the donation of 0.27 acres (parcel #0236789) offered to the County by Carolyn R. Gale Trustee noting the property would not be of any benefit to the County.

OFFER TO PURCHASE - NANTAHALA PROPERTY: The County Manager reported an offer of \$25,000 from Robert L. Newton for purchase of .75 acres at 51 Community Circle, Topton, owned by the County has been received. He added that the property was the former Nantahala EMS base and although had been appraised at \$72,500 by a private firm in 2006, the property has limitations in terms of on-site septic and water supply. Commissioner Davis made a motion to adopt a resolution per attachment #2 accepting Mr. Newton's offer as a negotiated offer subject to the upset bid process. The motion was seconded by Chairman

Leatherman and all favored.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - FIRING RANGE: Sheriff Holland presented an update on the proposed firing range on land adjacent to the old Franklin Landfill stating a Special Use Permit from the Town of Franklin and a Land Development Permit Application has been filed. He added that with the assistance of Solid Waste Director Chris Stahl a Permit Modification for Approval of Post Closure Activities at the old Franklin Landfill will be filed. The Sheriff explained his budget includes a one time appropriation of \$10,000.00 to complete grading and make improvements to the property which was excavated to provide dirt for the Old Franklin Landfill and the basic outline of the proposed range already exists, as shown by their PowerPoint presentation. He added that sending over 50 Deputies to SCC a minimum of twice a year at \$20.00 dollars an hour for a minimum of 100 hours, the savings in training costs alone will pay for the one-time expenditure in 5 years or less.

Upon motion by Commissioner Davis and seconded by Chairman Leatherman the Board unanimously approved the proposal as presented.

APPEALS PROCESS: Chairman Leatherman stated he would like to see a procedure implemented to standardize and streamline the appeals process for the County. After a brief discussion the item was referred to the County Manager and County Attorney for a recommendation.

FLEX WORK HOURS: Chairman Leatherman also asked the County Manager to look into flex hours for county offices to determine the feasibility and if there would be any cost savings.

CONSENT AGENDA: Request for placement of a buoy on Nantahala Lake was discussed and removed from the consent agenda. Upon motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the following items on the consent agenda were unanimously approved:

Minutes - Approved the minutes from the July 14th, 17th and 21st meetings.
Finance - Capital Project Ordinances - Adopted a Capital Project Ordinance in the amount of \$3,394,000 for the East Franklin School Addition per attachment #3. Adopted a Capital Project Ordinance in the amount of \$16,606,000 for the 5-6 School Project.

Budget revisions - Approved the following budget revisions:
revision #10, appropriating a \$53,380 Governors Crime Commission Grant for the Narcotics Unit in the Sheriff's Department;
revision #11, appropriating \$15,090 Recycling Grant from NCDENR;
revision #12, appropriating \$32,454 State Aid to Counties money in the Health Department;
revision #13, appropriating \$8,242 BT Emergency Preparedness funds in the Health Department;
revision #14, appropriating \$26,288 from fund balance;
revision #15, appropriating \$20,335 WIC funds and
revision #16, correcting revenue and expenditures for Health Promotions by \$598. (Note - revisions with corresponding numbers attached.)

REPORT - As requested a written health insurance brief was presented and a review session will be scheduled at a later date.

RECESS: The meeting was recessed until 6 p.m. on August 19th at the Macon Bank Corporate Center with a reminder of the grand opening of the new Veteran's Clinic on August 18th.

C. Jack Horton, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Charles D. Leatherman
Board Chairman

