

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**DECEMBER 2, 2010 – 6 P.M.**  
**CALLED SESSION**  
**MINUTES**

Chairman Beale convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Board Room on the third floor of the Courthouse as noticed and welcomed everyone present. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Officer, County Attorney, members of the news media and interested citizens were present. Chairman Beale stated the purpose of the meeting was to meet jointly with the Macon County Planning Board to discuss items of mutual interest and possible action concerning appointments to the Planning Board. The meeting was recessed to reconvene in Courtroom A on the fourth floor to accommodate the large number of citizens present.

The meeting reconvened and Chairman Beale restated the purpose of the meeting adding that the meeting was called as a result of a letter from the Planning Board Chairman requesting a meeting to discuss a decision made at the November 22<sup>nd</sup> Board of Commissioners meeting. Chairman Beale stated each commissioner would be given an opportunity to speak, the County Attorney would speak to the legal issues involved and the Planning Board would be given an opportunity to speak. He stated the Planning Board needs to be recognized for the work they do whether you are in favor of their work or not. He added the goal of the Planning Board needs to be reiterated and appreciation noted. He also asked respect be maintained at the meeting and hoped the result would be in the best interest of Macon County. Chairman Beale stated, he personally, is a supporter of the Planning Board and the work they do adding that the decision made at the last meeting to replace Al Slagle on the Planning Board with Jimmy Goodman is not business as usual in Macon County and is not in the best interest of Macon County. **Commissioner Simpson** stated this would be his last board meeting and his decision to vote to put Jimmy Goodman on the Planning Board had nothing to do with Al Slagle that his appointment just came up and he was righting a wrong referring to when Mr. Slagle was appointed to replace Jimmy Goodman on the Planning Board three years ago. Commissioner Simpson stated Mr. Goodman needs to be on the Planning Board and will bring a different perspective to that board. **Commissioner McClellan** stated Ronnie Beale is a good friend and always will be noting that he does not apologize for nominating Jimmy Goodman to the Planning Board but does apologize for the way it was handled which was not business as usual in Macon County. He added that he had apologized to Chairman Beale, the Planning Board Chairman and members and would like to find a way to keep Mr. Slagle on the Board. He expressed his appreciation to the Planning Board and stated he is not against planning but is for planning and diversity of appointments. **Commissioner Davis** apologized to the citizens of Macon County stating he had apologized to Chairman Beale, Commissioner Koppers, Al Slagle and Lewis Penland for the way the appointment was handled. He agreed this was not business as usual in Macon County adding he was a proponent of wide diversity on boards, that he is grateful to the Planning Board and felt the goal of everyone involved was the betterment of Macon County and to make this work for everyone. **Commissioner Koppers** stated he felt what the Board and the county has put Al Slagle through this week is unacceptable

noting we don't put people through things like this in Macon County. He stated the Planning Board is one of the finest groups anywhere and they needed to be shown appreciation. He stated he was concerned about what is going on and advocated that conversation on the issues not be shut down adding the Planning Board has the courage to have the conversation. He also expressed concerns about where we go from here and encouraged everyone to come to the Planning Board meetings and let the conversation happen.

The County Attorney was asked what could be done to move this situation forward. He responded that he understood the Planning Board was governed by ordinance and, among other things, sets forth the membership and terms of those members. He explained to expand the Planning Board or make substantial changes to the ordinance requires a public hearing and outlined those procedures.

Planning Board Chairman **Lewis Penland** expressed appreciation to the Planning Board the Board of Commissioners and sub-committees, stating all members of the Planning Board are volunteers, are looking at critical issues and feel their work is important in the protection and preservation of Macon County. Mr. Penland stated the members are very diverse and, although there may be differences of opinions on the board, they do not "run down" the overall efforts and goals of the Planning Board. He added people come here for the clean water, low-crime rate, open spaces, fresh air, beautiful scenery, livability, etc. and real estate buyers are now at risk because they are not protected. Mr. Penland explained Al Slagle is chair of the subcommittee working on steep slopes, that there is no harder worker than Al and the county is at a critical time with two choices—visions on our mountain tops or visions of sensibility. He requested Mr. Goodman be removed from the Planning Board and Mr. Slagle be reappointed. He also asked that the Planning Board be consulted on future appointments and changes and that the Board of Commissioners and Planning Board communicate more effectively.

County Planner Derek Roland, County Permitting, Planning and Development Supervisor Jack Morgan, Planning Board Members Mark West, Susan Ervin, Larry Stenger, Evelyn Owens, Mike Guberman, Lamar Sprinkle, Karl Gillespie and Jimmy Tate were recognized and commended for their service.

Chairman Beale stated the Board would meet in continued session at 6 p.m. on December 6, 2010, and he planned to suggest starting the process to change the ordinance creating the Planning Board in order to expand the membership and some other possible changes. He also stated that the Planning Board will continue review of county's comprehensive plan and invited everyone to attend the meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Upon motion by Commissioner Kuppers the meeting was adjourned.

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Jack Horton, County Manager  
Clerk to the Board

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Ronnie Beale  
Board Chairman