

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CONTINUED SESSION
FEBRUARY 18, 2014
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin reconvened the meeting at 6:04 p.m. in the commission boardroom on the third floor of the Macon County Courthouse in Franklin as recessed from the February 11, 2014 regular meeting. All board members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, County Attorney, members of the news media and interested citizens were present.

Pointing out that even though it was not a regular meeting, Chairman Corbin opened the floor for public comment. **Bryon Lamb** shared his strong support for recreation and asked the board to proceed with the entire project at the proposed Parker Meadows Recreational Park, telling the board that “two fields won’t cut it.” **Brittney Parker** informed the board of an upcoming car seat safety event. **Butch Jean** reiterated his support for the Parker Meadows project.

Commissioner Beale requested that an appointment to the Macon Program for Progress (MPP) board that oversees apartments be added to the agenda, and the board agreed without objection to add this as Item #8, moving the Closed Session to Item #9.

FISCAL YEAR 2012-13 AUDIT REPORT: The Finance Director introduced Ko Tang Cha-Moses of Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, who presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the county’s annual financial report for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2013. She said the firm gave an “unmodified opinion,” which is the best it can give. There were no findings or questioned costs, and no material internal control weaknesses were identified. Ms. Cha-Moses then addressed a number of items, including the county’s total fund balance in the general fund and how it is calculated and classified. She also explained “available fund balance,” noting that the figure for 2013 was \$15,274,085, down \$2,676,924 from the previous year. She went on to identify the county’s top three revenue sources, with ad valorem taxes the biggest at 58

percent. Meanwhile, the top three expenditures – public safety (28 percent), human services (26 percent) and education (20 percent) together accounted for more than \$30 million in costs. She closed her presentation with a quick review of the county’s solid waste enterprise fund. There were no questions from the board, and no action was necessary.

CONTRACT WITH CENTURY LINK: Emergency Services Director David Key asked the board to give final approval to a contract with Century Link to provide new phone switches for the county’s 911 system. The County Attorney explained that work on the contract was finally complete and that he recommended moving forward. The completion date for the work is June 15, 2014. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted to approve the contract with Century Link as submitted and authorized the County Manager to sign it. A copy of the contract is attached (Attachment 1) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Mr. Key offered “kudos” to the citizens of Macon County for heeding warnings and staying off of the roadways during the recent winter snowstorm that prompted a state of emergency in the county.

SOUTHWESTERN NC ONE-CALL ONE-CLICK CENTER FOR VETERANS TRANSPORTATION PROJECT: Transit Director Kim Angel provided the board members with a list of the potential benefits of the project, which will involve Macon, Clay and Cherokee counties as well as the State of Franklin, with Macon serving as lead agency. A federal grant of \$459,873 will make up 80 percent of the project’s funding, with the remaining 20 percent to come from the four local entities. Mrs. Angel said the focus is on the veterans and how better coordination of transportation resources in the region can result in more options for those veterans. The grant dollars will fund the technology portion of the project, allowing for that coordination between the participating parties. Commissioner Higdon asked questions about ongoing costs and when the other participants would act. Following additional discussion, Mrs. Angel made the following recommendations for the board’s consideration, as follows: (1) that the board ratify the use of the Request for Proposals (RFP) procedure under N.C.G.S. 143-129.8 for this project; (2) that the board determine that the proposal from HB Software Solutions (HBSS) is the best overall proposal for the project; (3) that the board award the contract on such RFP unto HBSS, subject to the express condition that the proposed interlocal agreement and contract for the SoNCVet: Southwestern NC One-Call, One-Click Center for Veterans Transportation project in Macon County, Clay County, Cherokee County and Swain County is duly approved and executed by all parties thereto; (4) that the board authorize Kim Angel to negotiate with HBSS in order to obtain a final contract that meets the best interests of the county subject to the approval of the County Manager and the County Attorney; and (5) that the board authorize the County Manager to execute such final contract with HBSS that is negotiated by Kim Angel in order to meet the best interests of the county.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commission Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the recommendations as outlined above. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted to approve a “Resolution Concerning Approval of the Entry and Execution of the Interlocal Agreement and Contract Concerning the SoNCVet: Southwestern NC One-Call One-Click Center for Veterans Transportation project” as presented. A copy of the resolution is attached (Attachment 2) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. In conclusion, upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve a letter from the County Attorney waiving any possible conflict of interest on his part in this matter, as he does legal work for both Macon and Clay counties. A copy of that letter is attached (Attachment 3) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

SCHOOL FIELD IMPROVEMENTS: Justin Moffitt, the county’s athletic program coordinator, presented a list of needed improvements for the South Macon Upper Field, the South Macon Lower Field, Union School and the Cullasaja School Field, resulting in a total need of \$7,500. A copy of the list is attached (Attachment 4) and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Mr. Moffitt and Seth Adams, the county’s recreation director, said the improvements would benefit the students, the schools and the communities, with Mr. Adams saying that he could handle the expenses within his existing departmental budget. The County Attorney told the board that agreements with the individual schools would be needed, and upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Higdon, the board voted unanimously to authorize the County Attorney to contact the school system relative to these agreements.

DEVELOPMENT OF PARKER MEADOWS RECREATIONAL PARK: Mr. Adams initiated the discussion by stating that the county has “been going round and round for two years” on this matter, and asked, “What says the board?” Chairman Corbin began by asking questions about the exact status of the county’s fund balance, and suggested that the board could pay for the project in cash from the fund balance, although the Finance Director said she would not recommend doing so. Chairman Corbin then suggested some ratio of fund balance and loan proceeds to pay for it, which the Finance Director agreed was more reasonable. Commissioner Haven said the new park would be really nice for our county to have, adding that he wanted to get the best deal for the people. Chairman Corbin told the board, “I’m for moving ahead with the entire project,” and suggested taking \$1 million from fund balance and financing the remainder, stating that the county can save at least \$400,000 if it does all of the project at once. Commissioner Tate made a motion to move forward with the Parker Meadows Recreational Park project, and to finance the estimated \$2.8 million needed, take \$1 million from fund balance and finance the remaining \$1.8 million, with the \$500,000 Parks and Recreation Trust

Fund (PARTF) grant making up the difference in the total estimated cost of \$3.3 million. Commissioner Beale seconded the motion, and Chairman Corbin opened the floor for further discussion. During the discussion, Commissioner Beale noted that the county will have to go to the Local Government Commission (LGC) for financing approval, and Commissioner Tate amended his motion to add authorization for the Finance Director to proceed with that step, and Commissioner Beale seconded the amendment. Commissioner Higdon told Mr. Adams that while he appreciated the effort, he could not support the project and would have to vote “no.” Commissioner Beale said that 40 years ago, the commissioners chose to step out and build the current recreation park, adding that the new one will benefit county residents as well. Prior to the vote, the Finance Director discussed the timetable for the letter to the LGC in relation to the start of construction on the project, and asked that the board consider taking half of the \$1 million from fund balance in the current fiscal year and the other half in Fiscal Year 2014-15. With Commissioner Beale having called the question, Chairman Corbin called for a vote on the motion, which was approved by a 3-2 vote, with Commissioners Beale, Corbin and Tate voting in favor and Commissioners Haven and Higdon opposing.

AGREEMENT FOR TAX COLLECTION WORK: The County Manager explained that minor changes had been made to the agreement with the law firm of Ridenour & Goss for assistance with tax collections, following discussion at the board’s February 11th regular meeting. He also noted that Richard Lighter has \$5,000 in a tax department line item that can be used to cover these expenses. He recommended that the county move forward with the agreement and to monitor the line item, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve the agreement as presented, with the County Attorney pointing out that the motion would need to include authorization for the County Manager to sign the agreement. A copy of the agreement is attached **(Attachment 5)** and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

AGREEMENT WITH APPALACHIAN TREE: The County Manager explained that the trees in question near the Macon County Heritage Center (the old Cowee School) were not in the road right-of-way but were on county property. The board agreed to get an agreement in writing with the tree company, and the County Attorney said the commission would need to approve it at its March regular meeting. No action was taken.

SWING SET AT OLD COWEE SCHOOL: Commissioner Beale brought up the issue of donating the swing set at the old Cowee School to Macon Middle School, and the County Attorney said it would require a resolution of the board, which he would prepare for the regular meeting in March. The consensus of the board was to allow the middle school to “try it out,” but no formal action was taken.

APPOINTMENT TO MPP BOARD: Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to appoint Bobby Sanders to the Macon Program for Progress (MPP) board that oversees apartments such as Orchard View. No specific term for the appointment was designated.

CLOSED SESSION: At 7:55 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6). At 8:21 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to come out of closed session and return to open session. No action was taken.

ADJOURN: With no other business, at 8:22 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Derek Roland
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman