

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CALLED MEETING
FEBRUARY 28, 2013 – 6 P.M.
MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, County Attorney, interested citizens and members of the news media were present.

Chairman Corbin explained that the purpose of the special meeting was to discuss and consider approval of a matter involving economic development incentives for job creation and retention, and he noted that the board would need to go into closed session. At 6:06 p.m., and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session as outlined under N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by a public body in negotiations. At 6:37 p.m., and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to come out of closed session and return to open session.

Chairman Corbin then provided some background information regarding a possible deal to help keep the former Whitley Products plant in operation, stating that the county would be offering incentives to make the deal go through. The County Attorney explained that the board had already offered \$28,000 in incentives to be paid out over a four-year period, and was now ready to offer a “forgivable loan” in the amount of \$33,500 that was tied directly to the creation of additional jobs over a five-year period. He pointed out that the cumulative wages from that five-year period, assuming the benchmarks are reached, would total more than \$16-million. Tommy Jenkins, the county’s director of

economic development, expressed his thanks to the board for its effort, saying the deal will supply jobs for 110 families, and called it “a wise investment for a big return.” The County Manager thanked Mr. Jenkins for his efforts in putting the deal together. The County Attorney pointed out the projected Return on Investment (ROI) to the county.

Chairman Corbin then offered a proposed motion as follows: “To move that the board makes a finding that the incentives will, in the discretion of the Macon County Commissioners, increase the population, taxable property and business prospects of the county as attached.” Commissioner Haven made that motion, seconded by Commissioner Beale, and it was unanimously approved, and a copy of the document outlining the “Findings and Implications of Incentivizing the Project” is attached (Attachment 1) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

Chairman Corbin then offered another proposed motion, as follows: “It is moved that the proposed incentive grants for the company which will purchase the former Whitley Products Building be approved, with such approval being conditional upon the final approval and announcement of One NC Grant Funds for this project, and the closing of the transaction to purchase this facility by the company in question.” Commissioner Higdon made that motion, seconded by Commissioner Tate, and it was unanimously approved.

At the request of the Finance Director, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve a budget amendment that moves \$33,500 from the county’s economic development reserve to fund the “forgivable loan” to the proposed unnamed buyer of the former Whitley Products plant.

Chairman Corbin reviewed portions of a resolution opposing the most recent proposed rate increase requested by Duke Energy. The utility is asking the state for a 9.7 percent rate increase on the heels of a 7.2 percent rate hike that was granted in 2012. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, and following further discussion, the board voted unanimously to approve the resolution as presented (Attachment 2), a copy of which is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

Commissioner Beale read a resolution into the record regarding the Lyndon B. Johnson Job Corps Center, which has been targeted for reductions in its programs and possible closure of the entire center due to federal funding cuts. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Haven, the board voted unanimously to

approve the resolution as read (Attachment 3), a copy of which is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Chairman Corbin said that he planned to hand-deliver the resolution, a letter and some background information on the center and the many community projects its students had completed to Congressman Mark Meadows.

Following a discussion regarding maintenance of ball fields used for Little League games, and upon a motion by Commissioner Haven, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Jack Horton, County Manager
Clerk to the Board

Kevin Corbin
Board Chairman