

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**JUNE 14, 2016**  
**MINUTES**

Chairman Corbin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. All Board Members, the County Manager, Deputy Clerk, Finance Director, County Attorney, members of the news media and interested citizens were present.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Those in attendance watched a video from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) that provided an update on recent NCACC activities.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Chairman Corbin asked those in attendance to observe a moment of silence.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Led by Commissioner Tate, the pledge to the flag was recited.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2016-17 BUDGET:** Chairman Corbin opened the public hearing on the recommended Fiscal Year 2016-17 budget at 6:06 p.m., noting that the purpose of the hearing was to allow speakers to address the board regarding the proposed budget. No one signed up to speak, and Chairman Corbin closed the public hearing at 6:07 p.m.

**BUDGET DISCUSSION/ADOPTION:** Chairman Corbin then recognized the County Manager, who first addressed efforts to restore the allocation for operating expenses for Macon County Schools to the previous year's level of \$7.3 million. In order to do so, he explained that funding for renovations for Wesley's Park and for the Robert C. Carpenter Community Building would instead come from fund balance. Also, he said that following discussion with Commissioner Tate, Emergency Services Director Warren Cabe and representatives of the Otto Volunteer Fire Department, the recommendation

was to raise the department's tax rate from .0614 cents to .065 cents for the coming year, which would bring in an additional \$17,170 in revenue. As to the third item the board requested that he study, the County Manager recommended waiting until the state budget is approved before allocating funds for the county's portion of a new truck for the North Carolina Forest Service. Chairman Corbin then asked the board members to address each item individually. Commissioner Beale said he concurred with the County Manager's remarks regarding the school system, calling it a good compromise that "leaves the schools in a very good position going forward." Moving on, Commissioner Beale stated that the original budget for renovating the community building was "not appropriate," and Chairman Corbin asked that the County Manager do an assessment of all county buildings and "come up with a plan," adding that he was not looking for a formal vote by the board but merely a consensus, and the board agreed. Commissioner Beale noted at this point that county officials were in discussions with other parties to provide meals for the inmates at the county's detention center and possibly the senior center as well, adding that those conversations are continuing. Commissioner Tate said he concurred with the increase in the tax rate for Otto Volunteer Fire Department, and Chairman Corbin said he agreed with the County Manager's idea to wait on state action prior to committing funds for the forest service vehicle. The board turned its attention to consideration of adopting the budget, and the Finance Director went over the latest changes and gave the board members the "final" budget figure of \$47,696,749. She also noted that the volunteer fire department budgets total \$3,193,199. Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the budget as amended, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Shields, which led to further discussion. Commissioner Higdon congratulated the County Manager, Finance Director and those who worked on the pay plan. Commissioner Beale also expressed his thanks to those who worked on the pay plan and the budget, saying it was "refreshing" to see the school system have a \$2-million fund balance. Chairman Corbin noted that neighboring Jackson County was the "closest comparison we have," and that the tax rate there went up three cents and the budget in Jackson exceeds \$66 million, which includes the fire tax. He pointed out that if you add the fire department budgets to Macon's overall budget, the number goes to approximately \$51 million, and Macon's contains no increase in the rate of 34.9 cents per \$100 valuation. All five members raised their hands to vote unanimously to approve the budget ordinance for Fiscal Year 2016-2017, a copy of which is attached **Attachment 1** and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** **Richard Shope**, the new president of Macon County Youth Football, told the board that although the county had purchased new helmets and shoulder pads to replace those damaged by flood waters, the league needed as much as \$10,000 more to buy new "practice" equipment. Mr.

Shope handed out a list of the items needed, which prompted replies from some of the members and the County Manager saying this was the first time they had heard of this need. In addition, Mr. Shope told the board that the equipment would be needed by the time practice starts on July 11<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Beale questioned why the board was only hearing about this now, and a lengthy discussion ensued. Commissioner Beale then made a motion to authorize \$6,200 to come from contingency to help purchase the equipment, but the Finance Director reminded the board members that they had already appropriated \$40,960 earlier in the year to replace football and soccer equipment damaged by the flooding. Commissioner Beale withdrew his motion, and the consensus of the board was to have the football league representatives work with the County Manager and Parks and Recreation Director Seth Adams to obtain the necessary items, while the county would continue to pursue an insurance claim on this matter.

**ADDITIONS, ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to make additions to and approve the agenda as adjusted, as follows:

- To remove Item 11G under New Business, “Consideration of Macon County Wellness policy,” per the County Manager.
- To correct the amount of Budget Amendment #270 to \$4,560 rather than \$4,260 as shown in the Consent Agenda (Item 12B), per the Finance Director.
- To table approval of the May board minutes until the June 28<sup>th</sup> continuation meeting, per the Deputy Clerk.
- To add consideration of an additional grant opportunity under Item 10G, “Follow up on proposed economic development Project Tech,” per the County Attorney.

**RESOLUTION REGARDING INCREASING PER PUPIL FUNDING AND FULLY FUNDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS:** John deVille, a teacher at Franklin High School, asked the board to consider a proposed resolution regarding per pupil funding and fully funding public schools. A copy of the language of the proposed resolution is attached **(Attachment 2)** and is hereby made a part of these minutes. Mr. deVille cited a number of statistics during his request for the board to adopt the resolution, which is similar to one approved by the Macon County Board of Education on May 23, 2016. Following his presentation and some discussion, Commissioner Shields made a motion to approve the language of the resolution as presented, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Beale. Commissioner Higdon questioned why Mr. deVille was seeking funding levels restored to those last seen in 2008, and he explained. Chairman Corbin then questioned some of the statistics and “language” used in the resolution, as did Commissioner Tate, and a lengthy

discussion followed. Ultimately, Commissioner Beale rescinded his second to the motion, and Commissioner Shields then withdrew his motion, and Mr. deVille was asked to come back in the future with a clarified and updated version of the resolution. No action was taken.

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT - PARKER MEADOWS RECREATIONAL COMPLEX:** Following an explanation by the Finance Director, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve a Capital Project Ordinance Amendment for the Parker Meadows Recreation Complex, with the overall total at \$3,790,840. A copy of the ordinance amendment is attached (Attachment 3) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE - AIRPORT TAXIWAY PAVEMENT & LIGHTING REHABILITATION:** Following an explanation by the Finance Director, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve a Capital Project Ordinance for Airport Taxiway Pavement & Lighting Rehabilitation, with the overall total at \$2,500,000. A copy of the ordinance is attached (Attachment 4) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE - AIRPORT 2015 NON-PRIMARY ENTITLEMENT:** Following an explanation by the Finance Director, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve a Capital Project Ordinance for Airport 2015 Non-Primary Entitlement 36237.1.NPE.15 with the overall total at \$166,667. A copy of the ordinance is attached (Attachment 5) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE - AIRPORT 2014 NON-PRIMARY ENTITLEMENT:** Following an explanation by the Finance Director, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Beale, the board voted unanimously to approve a Capital Project Ordinance for Airport 2014 Non-Primary Entitlement 36237.1.NPE.14 with the overall total at \$166,667. A copy of the ordinance is attached (Attachment 6) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT - DUKE ENERGY INCOME QUALIFIED WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM:** Following an explanation by the Finance Director, and upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve a Grant Project Ordinance Amendment for the Duke Energy Income Qualified Weatherization Program in the amount of \$65,499. A copy of the ordinance

amendment is attached (Attachment 7) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – DUKE ENERGY’S HELPING HOME FUND:** Following an explanation by the Finance Director, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve a Grant Project Ordinance Amendment for Duke Energy’s Helping Home fund in the amount of \$262,087. A copy of the ordinance amendment is attached (Attachment 8) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**“PROJECT TECH” UPDATE:** The County Attorney began by explaining that a public hearing would need to be held to receive comment on the proposed economic development incentives being considered by the board, and that the hearing would be held June 28<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. Economic Development Director Tommy Jenkins told the board that there was now a second grant opportunity associated with Project Tech – this one a building reuse grant. Mr. Jenkins said that a \$187,500 grant was available for the project, with a county match of \$9,375, if the company in question would create 15 jobs within 24 months of the grant award and then employ those new workers for six consecutive months. Chairman Corbin mentioned the possibility of bringing Region A in as the grant administrator, which would increase the grant by 10 percent and result in the county’s share to increase by \$920. The County Attorney told the board members that they would need to authorize the pre-application, with the full application due July 8<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Higdon made a motion to do so, seconded by Commissioner Shields, and after some discussion regarding when the matching funds would need to be allocated, the motion was unanimously approved.

**CONTRACT WITH DRAPER ADEN ASSOCIATES:** The County Attorney handed out copies of a letter from Draper Aden Associates dated May 20, 2016 regarding the firm’s proposal for engineering services for the new landfill cell. He explained that the board had approved this arrangement some time ago but noted that the specifications had been updated, new schedules were attached and how the money was to be spent had been changed. The County Attorney reviewed the changes and recommended that the board approve the document in an amount not to exceed \$225,700. Upon a motion by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Higdon, the board voted unanimously to approve the contract as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 9) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

Chairman Corbin declared a recess at 8:02 p.m.

Chairman Corbin called the meeting back to order at 8:15 p.m.

**APPOINTMENT OF ANIMAL CRUELTY INVESTIGATOR:** Jimmy Villiard with Macon County Public Health explained that with the upcoming retirement of John Hook at the end of the June, the commissioners would need to appoint a new animal cruelty investigator for the county, as outlined in state statute. Mr. Villiard recommended Brent Hyatt, one of the county's current animal control officers, to fill the role, and upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve the recommendation as presented, effective July 1, 2016.

**PUBLIC HEALTH FEE CHANGES:** Tammy Keezer with Macon County Public Health explained that the Board of Health had given its approval to changes in water sampling/testing fees as well as clinic fee changes, and now those fee changes were before the commission for its approval. Following some questions from Commissioner Beale, and upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to approve the fee changes as presented. Copies of the changes are attached (**Attachment 10**) and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

**EVERGREEN FOUNDATION GRANT REQUEST:** Emergency Services Director Warren Cabe discussed his agency's community paramedic program and how it provides care to individuals after they return home from a hospital stay. He told the board that it has been very successful, as there are anywhere from 20 to 30 patients at a time in the program. He went on to explain that he had been approached by the Evergreen Foundation to supply a similar service for mental patients in terms of helping them understand the medications they have been prescribed and how to take them. He said there are very few of these programs in the state, with the closest one being in McDowell County. He asked to submit a grant application to the Evergreen Foundation for \$34,499.28 to cover additional staff time, training and vehicle expense associated with the program. Commissioner Beale said this could be "a real game changer" for those who might otherwise face an involuntary commitment, and praised the program as "very innovative," voicing his support for it. Mr. Cabe noted that no match was required. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve the request to seek the grant funds and expand the program.

**TELEPHONY PROJECT:** Information Technology Director Andy Muncy presented the board with an overview of the county's planned implementation of a new telephone system. Mr. Muncy told the board that this would be a "voice over IP" offering, and that by going with a "hosted solution," there would be limited on-site hardware involved. He discussed in detail the process that the IT department used to prepare a request for proposals, with the goal of reducing the county's monthly phone cost and to have a "next generation



solution.” The proposals from various vendors are not public until the contract is awarded, and the County Attorney explained how a state statute guides the process. A committee was formed to review the proposals, and on-site demonstrations were given. Based on a number of factors, Frontier was chosen as the preferred provider, and Mr. Muncey asked the board to ratify the procedure that was used and to find that Frontier was the best choice and to further ask that the County Manager be authorized to proceed with negotiations. This led to a lengthy discussion, with some of the board members requesting to see the list of potential vendors and pricing. The County Manager pointed out that this could save the county \$140,000 a year. No action was taken, and the board agreed to discuss the matter further at the next meeting.

**DUKE ENERGY’S HELPING HOME FUND:** The Finance Director presented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Duke Energy’s Helping Home Fund, noting that it would add an additional \$47,000 in funding for a total of \$132,714 for the 2016 calendar year. Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to approve the MOU as presented, a copy of which is attached (Attachment 11) and is hereby made a part of these minutes.

**FIREWORKS DISPLAYS:** The board agreed to table action on requests to conduct fireworks displays in Nantahala and Franklin until the June 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the following items on the consent agenda were approved unanimously: **Minutes** – Tabled approval of the minutes from the May 10, 2016 regular meeting and the May 31, 2016 continued session. **Budget amendments** – Approved the following budget amendments: #266 for the Sheriff’s Department to appropriate \$3,527 in insurance settlement funds for vehicle repairs; #267 for the Sheriff’s Department to appropriate \$1,340 in insurance settlement funds for vehicle repairs; #268 for Economic Development to appropriate a \$1,000 donation from Duke Energy; #269 for Senior Services to appropriate \$502 from an additional allocation from Duke Energy Assistance for Project Fans; #270 for Health to appropriate \$4,560 in additional Tobacco Grant revenue that will be budgeted to pay for June 2016 expenses; #271 for Transfers to appropriate \$70,445 from fund balance as a loan to Fund 42 – the Clean Water Management Trust Fund – as work on a project will be completed prior to June 30 but reimbursement won’t occur until after June 30, placing Fund 42 in a negative cash position; #272 for Senior Services to allocate \$5,800 in additional funding to cover increased demands for meals; #273 for Housing to allocate a \$47,000 budget increase from a Duke Energy Helping Hands Program grant. (Revisions with corresponding numbers attached).

**Closure of inmate account** – Approved a request from the Finance Director to close the Macon County Inmate Account at First Citizens Bank and to transfer the \$4,440.40 balance to the county’s account at Wells Fargo.

**APPOINTMENTS:** **(1) Board of Health:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Higdon, seconded by Commissioner Tate, the board voted unanimously to appoint Billi Black and Gena Futral to the Macon County Board of Health for terms of three years, both as “general public” appointments. **(2) Region A Aging Advisory Council:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to reappoint Dorothy Crawford, Commissioner Beale and Jim Bruckner as the county’s members of the Region A Aging Advisory Council, and to reappoint Melissa Leatherman and Sue Waldroop as alternates and to appoint Patrick Betancourt to replace Jane Kimsey as an alternate on the council. Terms of appointment are for three years.

**RECESS:** With no other business, and at 9:02 p.m., upon a motion by Commissioner Beale, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to recess the meeting until Tuesday, June 28, 2016 at 6 p.m. in the commission boardroom on the third floor of the Macon County Courthouse, 5 West Main Street, Franklin, NC.

---

Derek Roland  
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

---

Kevin Corbin  
Board Chairman