

**RICHMOND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MID-MONTH NOON MEETING
DERBY COMMUNITY BUILDING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2007, 12:00 NOON**

The Richmond County Board of Commissioners met for the Regular Mid-Month Meeting on Tuesday, October 16, 2007 at 12:00 Noon at the Derby Community Building on Jones Springs Church Road in the Derby Community. The following were present: Chairman Kenneth R. Robinette; Vice-Chairman John B. Garner; Commissioners Pamela N. Dillman, Jimmy L. Maske, Thad Ussery, J. C. Watkins, and Paul Wilson, Jr.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robinette at 12:00 Noon.

ITEM NO. 1 – INVOCATION

The invocation was delivered by Rev. Frank McQuage, who was in attendance of the meeting.

ITEM NO. 2 – APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was unanimously approved as presented by a motion of Commissioner Maske, seconded by Commissioner Garner and unanimously carried.

ITEM NO. 3 – COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Chairman Robinette expressed appreciation for the Derby Community hosting the Board's October 16 Mid-Month Meeting, and he opened the floor for comments from the public.

Mr. Ricky Hurst asked about zoning of the property where his shop is location, advised that he would like to have this property rezoned from Rural Residential since there are businesses in this area.

County Manager Haynes advised that all of this area was initially zoned as Rural Residential, but an application could be filed to request the rezoning.

There was a question about water in the Derby area, and Chairman Robinette advised that this could be discussed to more extent at the end of the meeting.

Commissioner Watkins asked about the zoning for the Travel Resort property, and County Manager Haynes advised that some of this area had been rezoned for a sand mine. Mr. Jim Lambeth confirmed that this property is still zoned as Agricultural/Residential with a Conditional Use issued for the sand mine.

ITEM NO. 4 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT RICK SAGO

Director of Development Rick Sago reminded the Board of the dragway finals scheduled for the coming weekend and that track owner Mr. Steve Earwood had extended an invitation for the Board of Commissioners to join him for dinner.

Mr. Sago then introduced the new owner of North Carolina Speedway, Mr. Andy Hillenberg. Mr. Sago advised that Mr. Hillenberg had just recently purchased the speedway and that his plans are to relocate his family to Richmond County.

Mr. Hillenberg thanked Mr. Sago and the Board for asking him to join the meeting, and he advised that the closing on the speedway is scheduled for November 1. Mr. Hillenberg advised that he plans to bring two events to the track right away.

Chairman Robinette welcomed Mr. Hillenberg to the community and thanked him for making this investment in Richmond County and for bringing racing back to the track.

Commissioner Dillman asked Mr. Hillenberg about the two races, and Mr. Hillenberg advised that an ARCA Race is scheduled in May, and a Hooters Race is scheduled in November, and that he should be able to formally announce these races within the next two weeks.

ITEM NO. 5 – APPEARANCE BY TAX ADMINISTRATOR BUTCH GREENE TO PRESENT APPLICATIONS FOR TAX EXEMPTION FOR JOY FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH AND FREEDOM BAPTIST CHURCH

Tax Administrator Butch Greene appeared before the Board to request consideration of a request by Joy Free Will Baptist Church and by Freedom Baptist Church for tax exempt status for the current tax year. Mr. Greene referenced correspondence from both churches advising that the late filing for tax exempt status was simply an oversight, and that G.S. 105-282.1 (a1) authorizes the Board of Commissioners to approve late-filed church exemption applications if just cause is shown.

Mr. Bill McQuage represented Joy Free Will Baptist Church, and he thanked the Board for the opportunity to appear in behalf of the church. Mr. McQuage apologized for the late filing and requested that the Board consider tax exempt status for the church.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Ussery, seconded by Commissioner Maske and unanimously carried to authorize tax exempt status for Joy Free Will Baptist Church.

Dr. Tommy Jarrell represented Freedom Baptist Church and he apologized for failure by his church to file for tax exempt status. Dr. Jarrell advised that the church had been under the assumption that tax exempt status for churches was automatic.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Garner, seconded by Commissioner Ussery and unanimously carried to authorize tax exempt status for Freedom Baptist Church.

ITEM NO. 6 – PRESENTATION BY MR. LEE MCCLURE OF CONSTRUCTION CONTROL CORPORATION TO OFFER COST MANAGEMENT SERVICES ON JUDICIAL CENTER PROJECT

Mr. Lee McClure of Construction Control Corporation provided a Power Point Presentation To offer cost management services for the Richmond County Judicial Center Project. Mr. McClure advised that his firm assists public owners with building programs, and 95% of the work of his firm is related to education or judicial projects. Mr. McClure explained that his firm

serves as an advocate for the owner so as to insure that no excessive or additional cost is incurred in a project.

During the presentation, Mr. McClure advised that 10% to 12% of the total project cost is for the building, and the remaining project cost is generally operating expense. Mr. McClure committed to keep change order expense below 1%, and he noted that multi-prime bidding should save 5% on construction costs.

In discussion following the Power Point Presentation, Mr. McClure advised that his firm does not provide design services, but they work with the architect to save cost.

Chairman Robinette thanked Mr. McClure for his informative presentation.

ITEM NO. 7 – APPEARANCE BY MR. PETE CAYADO OF WARE BONSTALL ARCHITECTS FOR UPDATE ON JUDICIAL CENTER PROJECT AND DISCUSSION OF INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR MATERIALS

Mr. Pete Cayado, architectural consultant with Ware Bonsall Architects, appeared before the Board to discuss various sample materials and options for carpet, furniture, etc. for the Judicial Center project. Mr. Cayado discussed in detail tile, wallcovering and other interior materials For the building.

Commissioner Maske confirmed that hallways would be tile, and Commissioner Watkins inquired about carpet quality. Mr. Cayado advised that the carpet would be high to mid-grade commercial carpet for durability.

There was further discussion of interior materials, Corian tile for countertops, and of exterior brick colors and textures. Consensus of the Board was to use a red brick.

Commissioner Ussery suggested that windows be arched to enhance the exterior appearance of the building.

Commissioner Dillman expressed concern about the flat roof design and agreed that windows should be arched for more appeal. Commissioner Dillman asked if the roof design could be changed, and she also recommended that a metal roof be used because of the extended life of a metal roof compared to the rubber roof. Commissioner Dillman felt that more long-term savings would be realized with a metal roof.

Chairman Robinette noted that a sprinkler system would be required if a pitched roof is used, and Commissioner Maske noted that a pitched roof would add additional height to the building and may be impacted by city ordinances.

Commissioner Garner confirmed that changing the roof design would result in a delay in construction.

There was further discussion of the roof design and material to be used, and Commissioner Watkins asked Mr. Cayado if the roof could be redesigned and a cost study performed without causing delay in the project. Mr. Cayado advised that there would be some delay if design changes are made.

Commissioner Garner emphasized the importance of the Board's commitment to stay on schedule with the project.

Commissioner Watkins felt that the study of the roof design would be worthwhile. Mr. Cayado estimated a week to ten days for the cost analysis.

Mr. Cayado completed his presentation at approximately 1:25 P.M.

ITEM NO. 8 – CONSIDERATION OF BID AWARD FOR ASPHALT PAVING AT LANDFILL

Director of Community Services B. K. Jones presented a recap of the following two bids received on September 21 for paving at landfill transfer station area:

Barnhill Construction - \$177,200.00
Hudson Paving - \$185,953.00

Mr. Jones recommended award of the bid to Barnhill Construction as low bidder at \$177,200.00.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Dillman and unanimously carried to award the bid to Barnhill Construction as recommended.

ITEM NO. 9 – CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR AERIAL ORTHO PROJECT

County Manager Haynes advised that the aerial ortho project is in the final stages of completion, and he requested that the Board authorize a transfer of \$68,126.29 from Fund Balance to appropriate the funds as needed for this project. Mr. Haynes added that originally \$88,000.00 had been designated for this project, but the project came in \$20,000.00 less than budgeted.

By a motion of Commissioner Maske, seconded by Commissioner Ussery and unanimously carried, the Board approved the following Budget Amendment for the Aerial Ortho Project:

<u>Expenditures:</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
119800-8170 Transfer to Aerial Ortho Project	\$68,126.29	

<u>Revenues:</u>	
119800-399204 Approp. Designated Fund Bal.-Aerial Ortho	\$68,126.29

ITEM NO. 10 – CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET AMENDMENT TO APPROPRIATE RURAL OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ROAP) FUNDS FOR FY 2007-2008

County Manager Haynes advised that ROAP Funds provide for services of Richmond Interagency Transportation, and he requested Board approval of the following Budget Amendment to reconcile the budget to the actual amount allocated and to be transferred from Undesignated Fund Balance:

<u>Expenditures:</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
114280-6118 Workfirst Transportation	\$10,738.00	
114280-6119 Workfirst Transportation 2	\$10,738.00	
114280-6171 Transportation Assistance Prog.-DOT	\$68,887.00	\$ 5,000.00
114280-6172 Rural Public Transport.-EDTAP	\$80,405.00	\$35,000.00

<u>Revenues:</u>		
114280-333024 Transportation Assist.-Elderly/Handicap	\$80,405.00	
114280-333034 Rural General Transport. Program	\$68,887.00	
114280-333040 Workfirst Employment Transportation	\$21,476.00	
119900-399001 Undesignated Fund Balance Approp.		\$40,000.00

ITEM NO. 11 – REQUEST FOR BOARD APPROVAL TO ACCEPT COLE FOUNDATION GRANT OF \$500.00 FOR AGING SERVICES PROGRAM

By a motion of Commissioner Watkins, seconded by Commissioner Wilson and unanimously carried, the Board approved the following Budget Amendment to budget Cole Foundation Grant Funds donated to purchase fans for senior citizens:

<u>Expenditures:</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
114270-6155 Cole Grant Expense	\$500.00	

<u>Revenues:</u>	
114270-336045 Cole Foundation Grant	\$500.00

ITEM NO. 12 – REQUEST FOR BOARD TO RATIFY RESOLUTION DESIGNATING OCTOBER 5, 2007 AS “MACIE MCQUEEN DAY”

By motion of Commissioner Maske, seconded by Commissioner Watkins and unanimously carried, the Board ratified the following Resolution to join with the Richmond County NAACP Youth Council in honoring Mrs. Macie McQueen on October 5, 2007, which was declared “Macie McQueen Day:”

R E S O L U T I O N

Whereas, Macie McQueen is known as a community activist and a civil rights proponent; and

Whereas, Mrs. McQueen is a lifetime member of the Richmond County NAACP; and

Whereas, she is a lifetime member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., which has performed numerous service projects in Richmond County; and

Whereas, she was a founding advisor of the Richmond County NAACP Youth Council; and

Whereas, she is noted as a member of the National Association of University Women; and

Whereas, as an active member of the Richmond County Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Foundation, Mrs. McQueen has helped to host a variety of educational and celebratory events in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day; and

Whereas, she is a member of the Essence Women Travel Club, and;

Whereas, she is an active member of Sandy Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Maxton; and

Whereas, Mrs. McQueen represented the citizens of Richmond County while serving as a member of the Richmond County Board of Education; and

Whereas, former Governor James B. Hunt appointed Mrs. McQueen as a member of the North Carolina Human Relations Commission; and

Whereas, although she is a native of Washington, D. C. and a graduate of Howard University, Mrs. Macie McQueen has chosen to make her home in Richmond County with her husband Dr. Fred McQueen.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Richmond County Board of Commissioners joins with the Richmond County NAACP Youth Council in the designation of October 5, 2007 as "Macie McQueen Day" to recognize the many contributions made to Richmond County by Mrs. Macie McQueen in her role as a mother, a grandmother and as the wife of Dr. Fred McQueen, who also serves the citizens of Richmond County in his daily operation of McQueen Medical Center in Hamlet.

ITEM NO. 13 – OTHER BUSINESS

A) CONSIDERATION OF NOVEMBER MEETING DATES

By a motion of Commissioner Ussery, seconded by Commissioner Maske and unanimously carried, the Board agreed to cancel the November 20 Mid-Month Noon Meeting and only meet on November 5 at 6:30 P.M.

B) DISCUSSION OF COUNTY WATER

Director of Community Services B. K. Jones discussed the County Water Extension Policy based on a 10-year payback, and he advised that he has received very few requests for county water in this area. Mr. Jones noted that the County's Water Committee is chaired by Commissioner Watkins, and Commissioners Garner and Wilson serve on the Committee with the County Manager and himself.

Chairman Robinette noted that the County had applied for Golden Leaf Funds for water projects in this area, but funding was not approved.

Mr. Pratt Gallimore inquired about the possibility of water from Montgomery County through grant funds. County Manager Haynes advised that Montgomery County had obtained funding through the Rural Center and Richmond County had received Rural Center funding when the water system was first built. Mr. Haynes explained that the County could not qualify for funding of a project in the Derby area due to the lack of density and inability to make the rates pay for the project. Mr. Haynes noted that Rural Center funding is designed to address high-density areas, and he acknowledged that Montgomery County was able to serve 8 to 10 homes around the Mangum area through its project.

Commissioner Watkins recapped water expansion projects over the past several years, and he advised that an expansion project is now underway south of Hamlet.

Commissioner Ussery confirmed that the closest water line to this area in mileage is approximately six miles and that this line would not be adequate to supply the demand for the Derby area..

Mr. Jim Lambeth noted that chicken houses in the Derby area are big water uses – approximately 4,000 gallons per day. Mr. Lambeth went on to say that there are approximately 60 houses in the Derby area, and he suggested that farmers could be asked to commit to a minimum usage of 2,000 gallons per day to insure payback for extension of the water lines.

Chairman Robinette agreed to meet with interested farmers.

Commissioner Dillman asked about sewer for McIntyre Road, and Chairman Robinette advised that Ellerbe might be the closest sewer system to serve this area since the County does not provide sewer service.

Mrs. Hurst asked about rezoning of property where her husband has a garage, and County Manager Haynes advised that this issue had been addressed earlier in the meeting with her husband.

Dobbins Heights Councilwoman Gracie Jackson asked if demolition of dilapidated houses would take place in the towns. County Manager Haynes advised Mrs. Jackson that the County would not have any jurisdiction within the Town Limits of Dobbins Heights.

Mrs. Hurst commented on presence of Sheriff's Department personnel in the Derby area, and Chairman Robinette advised that he had not heard any complaints regarding law enforcement presence in this area. Commissioner Wilson remarked that Deputy Stoner patrolled the area on a daily basis.

Mr. Jim Lambeth commented on bonuses granted at budget time by the Board of Commissioners to County Manager Haynes, Director of Development Rick Sago, and Director of Community Services B. K. Jones. Mr. Lambeth stated that he meant nothing personal by his remarks, but he felt that the bonuses were not well received by the citizens.

Chairman Robinette emphasized to Mr. Lambeth the importance of the County retaining professional and qualified staff, and these people should be rewarded for the job that they are doing for the County. Chairman Robinette went on to say that Richmond County had lost

several good Economic Developers because of inadequate compensation, and he firmly believed that a good business decision had been made by the Board in granting the bonuses. Chairman Robinette compared where the County had been a few years ago to where we are now and attributed the County's progress to qualified staff. Chairman Robinette added that a bonus is less costly to the County than a salary increase since it is a one-time expense.

Commissioner Wilson noted that the City of Rockingham had granted increases to its staff, but the newspaper had not printed city salaries and amounts of increases and bonuses.

Commissioner Ussery defended the Board's decision to grant bonuses and he cited the \$200,000.00 savings that the County had realized in the cost of employee health insurance through the efforts of County Manager Haynes in seeking alternative coverage at a reduced Cost to the County. Commissioner Ussery went on to state that County Manager Haynes had been successful in rebuilding the County's Fund Balance and making the County solvent during his tenure, and he expressed the hope that the public would have faith in the Board of Commissioners to make the best decisions to benefit the County.

Mrs. Betty Wilson stated that County Manager Jim Haynes was well deserving of the bonus.

Chairman Robinette noted that Planning Director Jamie Armstrong performs numerous duties as Planner, Zoning Administrator, and Administrator of GIS services. Chairman Robinette stated that this is just one example of department heads serving in several different capacities and that many departments are under-staffed. Chairman Robinette commented that Richmond County has done exceptionally well compared to other rural counties our size, and he assured that the Board of Commissioners has the best interest of the public at heart. Chairman Robinette concluded his remarks by thanking the citizens of the Derby Community for allowing the Board the opportunity to meet in the community.

A question was then asked about how aggressive Richmond County's Economic Development efforts are. Chairman Robinette assured that Richmond County is very aggressive in its efforts, and N. C. Southeast commends our efforts and our success in developing the County Industrial Park on the 74 by-pass; and a very aggressive construction program of three shell buildings, and a fourth building in the planning stage.

Mr. Jim Lambeth commended farmers and their input into the economy and as taxpayers.

Chairman Robinette agreed with Mr. Lambeth and stated that unfortunately the State does not seem to appreciate the importance and the contributions to the local economy made by agriculture.

Commissioner Watkins stated that the Board of Commissioners represents all of the citizens of the County, and while he thanked Mr. Lambeth for his questions and concerns, he stated that the Board can defend the bonuses to county employees. Mr. Watkins further commented on the Lumber River Council of Governments in which Richmond County is a member, and he stated that Richmond County stands above the other counties in the Lumber River region in economic development success.

Chairman Robinette commented on the asset that new highways through Richmond County have been in economic development efforts, and he stated that the County has done a good job in

selling the community. Chairman Robinette went on to emphasize the valuable asset that Rick Sago has been to the County with his expertise and ability to respond to client requests for information.

Mr. Jim Lambeth asked who would set the tax value on the racetrack. County Manager Haynes advised that the Department of Revenue would establish the value.

Mrs. Betty Wilson commended Chairman Robinette on his contributions to economic development efforts in Richmond County.

Commissioner Dillman noted that Hoffman Fire Department had recently received a \$25,000.00 grant from the Department of Insurance.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 12:20 P.M. by a motion of Commissioner Maske, seconded by Commissioner Ussery and unanimously carried.

*Marian S. Savage, CMC
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners*