

**GATES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 15, 2014**

The Gates County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at 7:00 p.m. Monday, September 15, 2014 in the Main Courtroom, 202 Court Street, Gatesville. Commissioners Jordan, Owens, Jernigan, Hofler, and Felton were present. Also present was County Manager, Natalie Rountree.

Chairman Jordan led in prayer and the pledge of allegiance.

Chairman Jordan called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes are approved during the 1st monthly meeting; none are available at this time.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Jordan stated that the agenda needs to be amended to add discussion on the Historic Courthouse Structural Repairs under old business a request for tax refund under administrative reports.

Commissioner Owens made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Hofler seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

Delegations – Unannounced

Earle Rountree, Sunbury, stated that he had comments to make but since the citizens that wanted him to speak did not show up he is going to hold his comments. He stated a lady in Pasquotank has asked his opinion of Thomas Hill because Mr. Hill doesn't care much for him.

Delegations – Announced

None

Administrative Reports

Chairman Jordan stated that there is a request for a tax refund for Benjamin Whitehurst in the amount of \$132.91.

Commissioner Jernigan made a motion to approve the tax refund for Benjamin Whitehurst in the amount of \$132.91. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion, motion passed without opposition.

Public Hearings

None

Old Business

Chairman Jordan stated that the Board has before them the Personnel Board Recommendations from the September 3, 2014 meeting. The recommendations were as follows:

The Personnel Board met on September 3, 2014 and has the following recommendations for the Board of Commissioners:

1. Approval of the Senior Building Inspector Job Description
2. Approval of grade and step change & revised job descriptions for the Customer Service Department to be effective October 1, 2014.

	Current	Recommended
Customer Service Supervisor	Grade 19 Step N/A	Grade 21 Step 10
Customer Service Representative 1	Grade 13 Step 3	Grade 14 Step 7
Customer Service Representative 2	Grade 13 Step 1	Grade 14 Step 2

Chairman Jordan discussed the changes that were made in the Senior Building Inspector Job description. Commissioner Hofler stated that Mr. Mitchell the current Building Inspector has been involved in the discussions and has helped to make changes in the job description.

Commissioner Hofler made a motion to approve the Senior Building Inspector job description. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion; motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Jordan stated that the next item for review is the changes for the Customer Service Department to be effective October 1. Chairman Jordan stated that the duties in the Customer Service Department have changed quite a bit and they have taken on many more task and duties. The Personnel Board felt that there was enough merit to recommend approving the pay changes. The Personnel Board unanimously approved these changes. The Customer Service Supervisor did not have their pay evaluated when they were placed in that position.

Commissioner Owens made a motion to approve the recommended grade and step change & revised job classifications for Customer Service Representatives and the Customer Service Supervisor. Commissioner Jernigan seconded the motion, motion passed without opposition.

County Manager, Natalie Rountree, stated that the Board had some additional items at their seat tonight in regards to the Historic Courthouse. Chairman Jordan stated that we had a budget of about \$600,000 for renovations. It was set up that the County would contribute \$350,000 and \$250,000 would come from donations. We never really got advertisements for the donations. Currently we are very close to Counties budgeted amount. We need to step up our work on the donation portion or look where we are on the County portion.

Commissioner Owens stated that when we met with Clearscapes someone stated that they had expertise in grants. Commissioner Hofler stated that the comment was made but it has not materialized. Chairman Jordan stated that we never really contracted with Clearscapes to do the project, we only contracted the design and work on the west wing. Commissioner Hofler stated that the Historic Courthouse Committee developed a fundraising letter but at that time they did not have a clear grasp on what the space was going to be used for. Chairman Jordan asked Commissioner Hofler about any contributions the Historical Society may be willing to make. Commissioner Hofler stated that she can consult the Committee on funding additional projects. We currently have enough funds to cover the projects that are in place and would have some funds left. Reid Thomas feels strongly that we would be able to secure the Covington Grant but wasn't sure about the amount. Commissioner Owens stated that the dollars that we have spent on the project can be represented in the Grants to show our contributions and belief in the project. Commissioner Hofler stated that having Reid Thomas backing us is also helpful. Chairman Jordan stated that there are three Southern Bank visa charges and he would like more information on these as well as checking to make sure that we haven't paid any contractors in excess of their contract. Ms. Rountree stated that Clearscapes has presented three options to complete the west wing and due to the changes in weather, time is of the essence. Also painting of the west wing cannot occur until all work on the west wing is completed. Chairman Jordan discussed the three options presented by Clearscapes:

Option 1: reconstructs the outer wythe similarly to the West Wall. It is the optimal scenario which will give you the same new wall construction on all three sides of the wing. It will limit the amount of bracing hidden within the wall and give you the best final appearance.

Option 2 offers most of what Option 1 will offer with about 1/3 the cost. The existing steel will be reversed and placed INSIDE, therefore hiding it within the stud cavity on the interior of the building.

Option 3 leaves the steel bracing exposed in place and saves the County further expenditure at this time.

Chairman Jordan stated that if we only have \$21,000 left in the budget then we would have to approve the additional amount that is needed. Commissioner Hofler stated that we would need an additional \$15,000 to \$24,000. Ms. Rountree stated that our finance director has stated that there are funds available in the Fund Balance if the Board decides to move forward. Commissioner Hofler stated that we can work with Reid Thomas to see if some funds are available to help recoup the money.

Chairman Jordan stated that we may want to check and see if there are any grant administrators that would like to work on a fee only once grant is received instead of contract.

Ms. Rountree stated that this addition should cover all of the costs needed to stabilize the building and finish the outside. There may be some additional small costs to be associated with painter lift costs, landscaping, and furniture.

Commissioner Owens made a motion to authorize the Finance Officer to prepare a budget amendment for the Old Courthouse Budget by an additional \$25,000 to come from the Fund Balance. Commissioner Jernigan seconded the motion, motion passed without opposition.

New Business

Chairman Jordan stated that we need to appoint someone to sit on the EIC Board. Mr. Robert Williams currently sits on the Board and has agreed to continue serving.

Commissioner Hofler made a motion to appoint Mr. Robert Williams for a 5 year term. Commissioner Felton seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

Natalie Rountree, County Manager, stated that Teresa Cole, Albemarle Regional Library, stated that they are trying to Restore funding to State Aid to Public Libraries Fund to the pre-2011 level of \$15.7 million; and eliminate special provisions that distribute State Aid outside of the equitable formula developed by the State Library Commission. We can either submit a resolution or add it to the legislative goals that are submitted from Gates County. Chairman Jordan stated that he feels that sending a resolution and making it part of our legislative goals would be a good idea.

Commissioner Hofler made a motion to approve trying to restore funding to State Aid to Public Libraries Fund to the pre-2011 level of \$15.7 million and eliminate special provisions that distribute State Aid outside of the equitable formula developed by the State Library Commission a goal for legislation and that the Board submit a resolution. Commissioner Jernigan seconded the motion, motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Jordan stated that Surry County has passed a Resolution on Resettling of Illegal Immigrants Including Unaccompanied Minors from El Salvador. Chairman Jordan stated that he is not sure how many counties have moved forward. Commissioner Owens stated that he see's a few things in the resolution that he would have an issue with. Commissioner Owens doesn't feel comfortable signing off on a resolution that has eleven parts when he may not agree with all eleven. Commissioner Hofler stated that foreign policy falls under federal government and if the Board as a local government would like to get involved we should develop our own resolution.

Chairman Jordan stated that the potential resolution was discussed and there will be no action taken.

Chairman Jordan stated that we also have a resolution Calling for the Release of Sgt. Andrew Tahmooressi by the Government of Mexico.

Commissioner Hofler stated that this item has been on the news quite a bit. Commissioner Owens stated that there has been numerous people that have made a wrong turn and once you arrive there is no way of turning around. This situation seems to be legitimates and Commissioner Owens would be in support of this resolution.

Commissioner Felton made a motion to approve the Resolution Calling for the Release of Sgt. Andrew Tahmooressi by the Government of Mexico. Commissioner Hofler seconded the motion, motion passed without opposition.

Citizen Comments

Bud Eure, Magistrate, thanked the Board for the additional security that has been added to the Courthouse. Commissioner Jernigan stated that if he knows of any additional security items that need to be taken care of, please let the County Manager know.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Owens thanked everyone for attending and stated that we are leaving at a good time tonight and we appreciate your comments.

Commissioner Jernigan thanked the four people that are here for attending, for those that watch it on the video we would like to see you here in person.

Commissioner Hofler thanked everyone for attending and invited citizens to bring things to the attention of the Board that needs to be corrected.

Commissioner Felton thanked everyone for attending and participating.

Commissioner Jordan thanked everyone for attending and stated that it is good to have citizens observing what is going on and bringing items to our attention.

The Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge is having it's ___ on October 12th from ___ at ___. Open House on October 16th

Commissioner Hofler stated that there will be a speaker speaking about the history of Merchants Millpond at 6:45 next Thursday at the Visitors Center.

The Historical Society would like to have a program on Veterans Day and would like to use the Courtroom at 11 a.m. Ms. Rountree stated that we can double

Chairman Jordan stated that there will be a Fair Housing Workshop on Thursday September 18th at 6:00 p.m. in the Gates County Courthouse.

Closed Session

Commissioner Jernigan made a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 a (4) Economic Development, (5) Real Estate, (6) Personnel. Commissioner Hofler seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jernigan made a motion to exit closed session. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

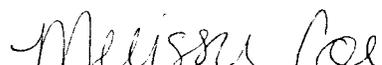
Commissioner Hofler made a motion to approve sending letter to Mr. Lee as discussed in closed session. Commissioner Felton seconded the motion; motion passed without opposition.

Commissioner Owens made a motion to move forward with submitting the test reports from the Soil Scientist via MESCO to NCDENR and have the county manger contact MESCO to obtain a more descriptive location of the useable soils. Commissioner Jernigan seconded the motion. Commissioners Jordan, Owens, Jernigan and Felton (by lack of vote) voted in favor. Commissioner Hofler Voted against. Motion passed four to one.

Commissioner Jernigan made a motion to authorize the County Attorney to contact property owner and make a proposal as discussed in closed session. Commissioner Hofler seconded the motion; motion passed without opposition.

Commissioner Felton made a motion adjourn. Commissioner Jernigan seconded the motion, motion passed without opposition.


Henry L. Jordan, Chairman


Melissa A. Coe, Clerk

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