

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, January 8, 2009, at 6:00 p.m. in the courtroom. Those present were Chairman H. Wade Johnson; Commissioner Darrell Henderson, District One; Commissioner Larry Collins, District Two; Commissioner Cooper Cliatt, District Three; Commissioner Rob Robinson, District Four; Mr. Barry Fleming, County Attorney; and Mrs. Roxanne B. Ashmore, County Clerk.

1.

### **Call Meeting to Order**

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order.

2.

### **Invocation**

Chairman Johnson opened the meeting with prayer.

3.

### **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

Commissioner Collins led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

4.

### **Approval of Minutes**

On motion by Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Henderson, the board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the previous meetings.

5.

### **Approval of Agenda**

On motion by Commissioner Cliatt, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

6.

### **Remarks**

Chairman Johnson introduced the board of commissioners. In his remarks, Chairman Johnson said that Georgia is in a \$2.5 billion shortfall and that budget cuts are going from six percent to eight percent.

Chairman Johnson went on to say, "Senator Bill Jackson and Representative Lee Anderson were here and they said that there will be counties that will more than likely go in default – bankruptcy. The people of Lincoln County are resilient people. The people of Lincoln County have had hard times before. I really think that the people of Lincoln County will endure this, but it's going to be tough."

Chairman Johnson reported that the county currently has \$30,000 in the emergency fund and LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) is \$43,000 short of what it was last year and that Director Bussey has projected that this will reach \$75,000 before the fiscal year ends in June. He also reported that SPLOST (Special Local Option Sales Tax) revenues are \$81,000 short.

Chairman Johnson also went on to say that after looking at various options for dealing with the shortfalls, the board of commissioners decided to eliminate the Director of Planning and Zoning position and combine the department with the Public Works Department.

Chairman Johnson said, "It was a sad choice, but we had to do something. It's a gloomy picture we face. We are planning to wait a little while and see what happens, but we may eventually have to make more cuts. An economist has predicted that the financial crises will last two years."

Chairman Johnson said the board of commissioners is presently looking at additional ways to save money and that he had sent out a letter to departments heads asking for recommendations on cutting back, and that the board is open to suggestions from the public.

Chairman Norman said that the county can also save money by not renewing two contracts totaling \$36,000, indicating that the county can use people from the road department to maintain the grass at the courthouse and other county facilities and that the county may also be able to get some trustees from the law enforcement center to help clean up around county buildings.

In conclusion, Chairman Johnson said, "I appreciate everybody's patience and concern and I pray for understanding. I hope the residents of Lincoln County will pray for our decisions, our country, and the men and women who defend our right to be here today."

## 7.

### **Departmental Reports**

#### **Public Safety Department**

Mr. Ernie Doss, Public Safety Director, reported a total of 95 calls for emergency assistance during the month of December. The E-911 center operators monitored 5,110 radio transmissions and dispatched a total of 497 public safety, law enforcement, and fire calls.

#### **Public Works Department**

Mr. Roby Seymour, Public Works/Planning and Zoning Director, reported a total of 1,350 water customers and 491 water availability customers for a total billing of \$44,264.11.

#### **Recreation Department**

Mrs. Kathie Davis, Recreation Director, indicated that due to moisture levels, it may be awhile longer before the floor can be installed at the new gym.

Director Davis also informed the board that a representative from the State Fire Marshall's Office inspected the gym and noted that all exits need to be handicapped accessible to the public and that non-combustible ceiling tiles need to be placed above the stove in the concession area.

### **Finance Department**

Mrs. Traci Bussey, Finance Director, submitted her written report to the board.

### **Planning and Zoning**

Mr. Roby Seymour, Public Works/Planning and Zoning Director, reported a total of 84 business licenses issued during December for revenues of \$5,650. There were 29 building permits issued for revenues of \$1,609 and 77 building inspections conducted.

8.

### **Discuss Lakeshore Estates Drive**

Chairman Johnson informed the board that this issue had been resolved.

9.

### **Cash Bond Reduction Request for Serenity Pointe Subdivision**

On motion by Commissioner Henderson, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the board voted unanimously to approve a cash bond reduction for Serenity Pointe Subdivision in the amount of \$131,589.70. The balance in the account is \$505,976.25. Commissioner Cliatt abstained from the motion due to a conflict of interest.

10.

### **Rezoning Application Fee Refund Request**

On motion by Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the board voted unanimously to deny Ms. Billie Black's request for a rezoning application fee refund.

11.

### **Increase Ambulance Service Base Rates**

On motion by Commissioner Henderson, seconded by Commissioner Cliatt, the board voted unanimously to increase the base rates for the ambulance service as follows: Basic Life Support (BLS) from \$380 to \$410; Advanced Life Support (ALS) from \$425 to \$460; and ALS2 from \$525 to \$620.

On motion by Commissioner Robinson, seconded by Commissioner Henderson, the board voted unanimously to adopt a policy that allows for annual base and mileage adjustments for the ambulance service on January 1 of each year.

The rate adjustment will be the same as the published Medicare Ambulance Inflation Factor (AIF), which is used by the federal government to adjust Medicare rates every January 1.

The board reserved the right to deny the AIF increase when deemed necessary.

12.

**Mutual Aid Agreement with Wilkes County EMS**

On motion by Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Cliatt, the board voted unanimously to approve the mutual aid agreement with Wilkes County EMS.

13.

**Resolution Authorizing the Filing of an Application with the Georgia Department of Transportation for the Section 5311 Transit Program**

On motion by Commissioner Cliatt, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the board voted unanimously to approve the resolution authorizing Chairman Johnson to file a new application with the Georgia Department of Transportation for assistance in funding the Section 5311 Transit Program.

14.

**Interim Audit**

Chairman Johnson expressed his desire to have a more extensive audit conducted by a party other than one already affiliated with the county.

On motion by Commissioner Robinson, seconded by Commissioner Henderson, the board voted not to hire Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC to conduct an interim audit of all cash accounts. Commissioner Collins and Commissioner Cliatt voted against the motion. The motion passed with a 3 to 2 vote, with Chairman Johnson voting in favor of the motion.

15.

**Interim Financing Blackjack Sewer Project**

On motion by Commissioner Cliatt, seconded by Commissioner Henderson, the board voted unanimously to approve the rollover of interim financing for the Blackjack Sewer Project, authorizing the Chairman and the County Clerk to sign a new note at Farmers State Bank for up to \$784,000 at an interest rate of 3.5%.

The term of the loan is for a maximum of one year.

16.

**Addition of Vice Chairman as an Alternate Signature for Check Signing**

On motion by Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the board voted unanimously to add Commissioner Henderson as an alternate signature for check signing.

All checks required two signatures. This action was taken in case the Chairman or County Clerk is out of office.

17.

**Department Head Appointments**

On motion by Commissioner Henderson, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the board voted unanimously to approve the following for department head appointments: Ernie Doss, Public Safety Director; Roby Seymour, Public Works/Planning and Zoning Director; Kathie Davis, Recreation Director; Traci Bussey, Finance Director; Crawford Asbell, IT/Media Services Director; Pam Parton, Senior Citizens/Transit Director; Roxanne Ashmore, County Clerk; and Barry Fleming, County Attorney. Mr. Fleming's appointment as county attorney will be until June 30, 2009.

18.

**Vice Chairman Appointments**

On motion by Commissioner Collins, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, the board voted unanimously to appoint Commissioner Henderson as Vice Chairman.

19.

**Committee Appointments for 2009-2010**

The board agreed on the appointments for the following committees:

Finance Committee

Commissioner Cliatt, Chairman  
Commissioner Robinson, Vice Chairman

Recreation Committee

Commissioner Collins, Chairman  
Commissioner Cliatt, Vice Chairman

Public Works Committee

Commissioner Henderson, Chairman  
Commissioner Collins, Vice Chairman

General Government Committee

Commissioner Robinson, Chairman  
Commissioner Henderson, Vice Chairman.

20.

**Board Appointments**

On motion by Commissioner Cliatt, seconded by Commissioner Collins, the board voted unanimously to approve the following board appointments for four year terms expiring December 31, 2012:

Recreation Authority

Dr. Michelle Mason-Woodard, District One

Mr. Butch Mattison, District Two

Development Authority

Mr. Robert Hearst, District One

Mr. Michael Garnett, District Three

Mr. Joe Racy Wells, District Four

Planning Commission

Mr. Johnny Burns, District One

Recreation Advisory Board

Mr. Godfrey Zellars, At Large by Chairman

Mr. Hal Howard, District One

Mr. Fred "Hootie" Ingram III, District Two

Mr. Ronald Aycock, District Three

Ms. Lisa Ketchum, District Four

21.

**Adjourn**

On motion by Commissioner Robinson, seconded by Commissioner Henderson, the board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:04 p.m.

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H. Wade Johnson, Chairman

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Roxanne B. Ashmore, County Clerk