

**CITY OF LAURINBURG  
JOINT MEETING  
JANUARY 18, 2007  
COMMISSIONERS CHAMBERS  
SCOTLAND COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL BUILDING  
6:00 P.M.**

**Minutes**

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg reconvened its recessed meeting of January 16, 2007 on January 18, 2007, in the commissioners' chambers of the Scotland County Governmental Complex with the Honorable Ann B. Slaughter, Mayor, presiding. The following Council Members were present: Rembert DeBerry, Lisa D. Griswold, Curtis B. Leak, and Thomas W. Parker, III. Councilmember Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. was absent. Also present were: Craig F. Honeycutt, City Manager, and Jennifer M. Tippet, Deputy City Clerk. This was a joint meeting with the Scotland County Commissioners.

Those present from Scotland County were: Chair J. D. Willis, Vice Chair, Betty B. Gholston, Commissioners John T. Alford, Leon Butler, Guy McCook and Joyce McDow. Also present were John Crumpton, County Manager, and Kevin Patterson, Finance Director and Assistant County Manager.

Councilmember DeBerry gave the invocation.

Mayor Slaughter reconvened the meeting of January 16, 2007 at 6:03 p.m.

**ECONOMIC SUMMIT FINDINGS**

Mr. Drew Williamson, Chair of the Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee, appeared before Council to present the findings of the Economic Summit that was held in October. He discussed the background of the committee and the summit. The primary goals of the committee are to bring jobs to the community and to increase the population of the community. During the Economic Summit, seven (7) short-term priorities were identified, and they are as follows:

1. Lobbying for completion of I-74. Mr. Williamson requested Council's and Commissioner's support for efforts to lobby for funding for completion of this project, particularly the Laurel Hill segment.
2. Construction of a spec building. The Committee recommends construction of a 44,000 square foot building on a 10-acre site. Mr. Williamson requested support to begin selecting a site for construction and begin process of applying for a Community Development Block Grant.

A discussion ensued concerning the previous spec building that was constructed in 1995 and the amount of time it took to sell it. Mr. Williamson stated that a spec building normally sells in 1-5 years and the previous spec building sold in 4 years.

3. Completion of Scotland County Recreation Complex. Mr. Williamson requested Council's commitment to work with the Scotland County Commissioners to consider methods to have lights installed at the softball/baseball portion of the complex.

4. Creation of a new Economic and Community Development position at the Chamber to coordinate non-industrial economic development, to facilitate cooperation, collaboration and common strategic planning, and to seek and facilitate opportunities for community improvement across Scotland County. Mr. Williamson requested that Council and the Commissioners support this recommendation so the committee could explore this position further.

5. Increase the viability of downtown Laurinburg by improving the appearance through completion of the Main Street Streetscape project. Mr.

Williamson also discussed pursuing public/private ventures for buildings located downtown, such as the

Market Furniture building.

6. Improve the appearance of Scotland County. Mr. Williamson discussed additional mowing and landscaping at the most heavily traveled areas such as along US 401 from Wal-Mart to Blues Farm Road and to improve appearances at all entranceways to the City by improving maintenance, landscaping and lighting. The Committee would also like to see coordination of mowing and trash pick-up with major community events such as St. Andrews's equestrian events and the John Blue Festival.

7. Improve marketing and promotion of Laurinburg and Scotland County. Mr. Williamson explained that the City and Chamber have contacted

Market Force and ElectriCities to look at options for different and unique ways to promote the community through marketing. He discussed a proposal from Market Force for suggested marketing projects and budget estimates.

Mr. Williamson stated that the committee was requesting the Council and the Board of Commissioners support and accept the Economic Summit Plan as presented. Mr. Williamson concluded his comments by stating that the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) is a golden opportunity for the community to grow, and the community has a lot of positives including St. Andrews Presbyterian College and the community's can-do attitude.

## **JOINT GREENWAYS MASTER PLAN**

Bob Bell, Chairman of the Greenways Committee, appeared before Council and briefly described the different forms of greenways and the benefits of developing greenways.

Shannon Newton, Director of Scotland County Parks and Recreation, introduced Mr. Mac McLeod a Scotland County native who is now Director of Hickory's Parks and Recreation.

Mr. McLeod explained the history of the greenway program in Hickory. He stated that in 1989 the Hickory City Council appointed a Task Force to begin discussion of greenways. The Task Force was composed of members from the Regional Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Department, City Council, and interested citizens. The Task Force recommended development of a pilot greenway project. The City completed the pilot greenway in 1991-1992 and the citizens loved it. The next step was to develop a Master Plan which was accepted by Council in 1997. Today there are approximately 48 miles of greenways throughout the City of Hickory. Mr. McLeod added that greenways impact the quality of life and have an impact on economic development. He further added that Scotland County is on the correct path to developing greenways.

Ms. Newton stated that the development of greenways was listed as the number two (2) priority in the Recreation Master Plan. She discussed the benefits of greenways. She added that the County had received a North Carolina Recreational Trails Grant and that work would begin in the summer on that project. She further added that the City had applied for a North Carolina Department of Transportation Pedestrian Planning Grant and money will be requested in the 2007-2008 budget for funds to complete the Greenway Plan in conjunction with the City of Laurinburg plan.

Upon question by Commissioner McCook, Mrs. Newton stated that there is not an inventory of existing greenways in Scotland County.

Upon questions by Mr. Sam Thompson, Mr. McLeod stated that there are several of Hickory's trails that are developed as mountain bike trails, and there are several private all-terrain vehicle (ATV) parks in the area. He added that in Catawba County, one of its two parks has an equestrian trail.

Mrs. Newton added that Camp McCall is used by many people for equestrian riding.

Mr. McLeod added that greenways bring many people into the community.

Upon question by Councilmember DeBerry, Mrs. Newton stated that Weymouth Woods in Moore County is owned by

the State and is a nature preserve with walkways.

A discussion ensued concerning the benefits to the City and to the County for developing a shell building at the Airport. Councilmember Leak expressed concern that the citizens of Laurinburg did not receive as much financial benefit as County residents since the County received tax revenue.

Chair Willis explained that the citizens of the City are also residents of the County and therefore did benefit from the shell building, and additionally, jobs were created.

Councilmember Leak stated that he wanted something in writing that when the spec building is sold, that whatever the City puts in for the citizens of Laurinburg, the City will receive some type of funding back.

Commissioner McCook pointed out that part of what keeps the Laurinburg/Maxton Airport operating are water and sewer revenues, and any industry that is located at that facility will be paying fees to Laurinburg/Maxton Airport for water and sewer, and the County does not receive any of those fees. He added that although the City does not receive direct revenue, if the Airport water and sewer system were to shut down, the City would have to take over maintaining and operating it. In addition, the community has access to an airport that it might not otherwise have. He further added that when shell buildings are sold, no profit is realized. Shell buildings are typically sold for the cost of construction or even less. Commissioner McCook added that part of the reason for the City and County to develop a spec building is so that control is maintained in determining the price and to ensure that the right kind of industry locates in the building.

Councilmember Parker stated that if the shell building were rented, the City and County would share in the rent.

Chair Willis stated that if the building were rented, there would have to be an agreement that the rent would be shared equally between the City and the County.

A discussion ensued concerning the process of considering sites for the spec building. Councilmember Griswold requested that sites in the City be considered along with sites in the County.

Commissioner McCook explained that because a lot of time and money has been invested in developing the airport into an industrial park and the infrastructure is already there, the airport should be considered.

A discussion ensued concerning the proceeds of sale of land at Laurinburg/Maxton Airport. Mr. Jim Frank Henderson, President of the Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce, explained that any proceeds had to be invested in airport improvements which does not include infrastructure such as water and sewer.

Councilmember Parker explained that it was in the City's best interests to support location of a shell building at the airport because in the event of a shortfall, the City would have to support the airport since the City owns 50% of the airport.

Following further discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Griswold, seconded by Councilmember Parker, and unanimously carried to accept the findings of the Economic Development Summit report as submitted.

Chair Willis explained that even though the County is not a partner in the airport, several years ago the County spent millions of dollars for infrastructure at the airport.

Motion was made by Councilmember Griswold, seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried to support the proposed joint shell building by allowing the Economic Development Committee to begin the process of identifying a site for the shell building.

The City Manager stated that there will probably be some preliminary costs involved, such as for an architect and a surveyor, which will be split evenly between the City and the County.

Upon question by Mayor Slaughter, Mr. Williamson stated that the Committee was requesting approval to begin

exploring the Community Development position and would come back before Council and the Commissioners with more details and a job description.

There was consensus among Council for the Economic Development Committee to begin exploring the Community Development position and to work on a job description. Mayor Slaughter suggested that this position also be discussed at Council's annual retreat.

The City Manager explained that the proposal from Marketing Force was received on Friday. There is some joint funding available from ElectriCities. The Committee would like to pursue this proposal because the Committee has deemed marketing to be important. If Council wants the Committee to move forward and bring back a stronger recommendation on marketing, a consensus is needed.

There was consensus among Council for the Committee to move forward with the proposal from Marketing Force and bring back a stronger recommendation on marketing.

Mr. Williamson thanked Council and the Board of Commissioners for their support and added that he will keep the groups informed.

Upon question by Councilmembers Leak and Griswold, Mrs. Newton explained that the Master Greenway Plan included some type of trail such as a pedestrian bridge crossing US 401 at Wal-Mart.

The County Manager explained that a request had been submitted to the Department of Transportation to look into pedestrian traffic at the Wal-Mart intersection.

The City Manager explained that at the public hearing on the Transportation Improvement Plan, this item was on the priority needs list presented to the Department of Transportation.

Upon question by Commissioner McCook, the City Manager stated that the request to the Department of Transportation included a pedestrian walk on the bridge on West Boulevard.

Upon question by Councilmember Griswold, the County Manager stated that the Board of Commissioners did pass the resolution to provide the match with regard to the Economic Development Agency grant for the Richmond Community College project.

The City Manager explained that the City Attorney had not submitted the revised Unified Development Ordinance amendment concerning churches in the Central Business District, so this item would be a part of the discussion at the January 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Councilmember DeBerry discussed problems at Lincoln Park, particularly involving the basketball goals.

Ms. Newton explained that a playground for 3-5 year olds at Lincoln Park and a new basketball court at Jaycee Park were included in the current County budget.

The County Manager added that repairs to Scotland Yard were also included in the current County budget.

## **RECESS**

Motion was made by Councilmember DeBerry, seconded by Councilmember Griswold, and unanimously carried to recess the meeting until January 30, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. in the council chambers of the Municipal Building.

The meeting was recessed at 7:48 p.m.

---

Ann B. Slaughter, Mayor

---

Jennifer M. Tippett, Deputy City Clerk