

**MINUTES**  
**LENOIR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**October 1, 2007**

The Lenoir County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, October 1, 2007 in the Board of Commissioners Main Meeting Room in the Lenoir County Courthouse at 130 S. Queen St., Kinston, NC.

Members present: Chairman, George Graham, Jr., Vice-Chairman, Paul Taylor, Jr., and Commissioners, Jackie Brown, Claude Davis, Earl Harper, Chris Humphrey and Claude Stroud.

Members absent: None

Also present were: Michael Jarman, County Manager; Tommy Hollowell, Assistant County Manager; Robert Griffin, County Attorney; Lashanda Aytch, Clerk to the Board; and members of the general public and the news media.

Chairman Graham called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. Ms. Brown offered the invocation and Mr. Graham led the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Mrs. Laura L. Sylvester, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, addressed the Board regarding the activities of the Tourism Development Authority (TDA). At the beginning of Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Budgeted Tax Revenues were estimated at \$276,000, by the end of the year tax revenues totaled \$394,886 for an increase of \$118,886. The Year-End Actual with Fund Balance was \$473,262. The expenses were \$466,000, of that operating expenses were \$173,979. A total of 31 projects were funded in FY 06-07 totaling \$292,502, leaving a Fund Balance of \$25,918 for FY 07-08. The TDA has completed its FY 07-08 Budget: Revenues are estimated at \$377,000, plus a Fund Balance carryover of \$125,918 totaling \$502,918. Operating expenses have been estimated at \$147,474. The Lenoir County Visitors Center will receive \$73,375 for debt service over the next five years; this year's commitment for operations total \$14,675. Mrs. Sylvester ended her presentation by asking Board members to visit [www.kinstonchamber.com](http://www.kinstonchamber.com). The Board thanked Mrs. Sylvester for her presentation.

The Board welcomed retired Sheriff Robert "Leo" Harper to the podium to receive a plaque in his honor. Mr. Claude Stroud presented a plaque on behalf of the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners to Mr. Harper in honor of his upcoming bridge dedication ceremony. The Southwest Creek Bridge in Deep Run, North Carolina will be formally named Sheriff "Leo" Harper Bridge on October 16, 2007 at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Harper thanked every member of law enforcement; family and friends for allowing him serve the citizens of Lenoir County. The Board congratulated Mr. Harper and wished him well.

**ITEMS FROM THE CHAIRMAN/COMMISSIONERS**

Item No. 1 was Items from the Chairman and County Commissioners. No items were discussed.

## **ITEMS FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER**

Item No. 2 was Items from the County Manager. Mr. Jarman thanked the Committee of 100, Caswell Center, City of Kinston, Five Star Foods, Ivy's, Garden Center, Kinston High School, Minges Bottling Group, Photographic Expressions by Isaac, Lenoir Community College, United States Air Force, United States Coast Guard, Economic Development and county staff for the duties they performed at the Groundbreaking Ceremony held for the new Veterans Skilled Nursing Facility on September 26, 2007.

Mr. Jarman stated the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners wants each county to discuss the potential \$0.25 cent sales tax increase and how it will effect their community. Mr. Jarman recommended the Board notify the public now on how the monies will be spent. Mr. Jarman stated the construction of a new jail facility is a major concern. Since 2004 the jail population has been over capacity. This exposes the county to potential major liabilities. To date, the jail population stands at 151 inmates. The needs of Lenoir Community College (LCC) should be addressed as well. LCC's enrollment has increased by 14%, which creates a large need. Preliminary figures show 80-90% of tax revenues collected should be spent on debt service for the construction of a new jail. Several counties have already indicated how their revenues will be spent. If the revenues are not dedicated for debt service on the jail, a property tax increase would be the only option to build the needed infrastructure for the county. Mr. Graham wanted Mr. Jarman to explain what the General Assembly has done with Medicaid Relief and how it affects Lenoir County. Mr. Jarman stated a total of 48 counties increased their tax rates last year. The cause, the increasing Medicaid burdens and infrastructure needs. The General Assembly recognized the burden on Counties in regards to Medicaid and implemented a program to phase out Medicaid cost to counties. At the same time the General Assembly implemented the plan, they took away some sales tax revenues from the counties. Due to the sales tax decrease the General Assembly gave each county the option of a \$.025 sales tax increase or land transfer tax to put before the voters. North Carolina is the last state in the nation that stills pays a portion of Medicaid/Medicare funds. Mr. Graham stated the sales tax is the fairest tax to implement because everyone contributes to the growth of the county. Mr. Stroud stated EMS needs should be addressed as well due to the needs of citizens in Deep Run, Pink Hill and Sandy Bottom. Mr. Jarman stated EMS is a service the county provides, the county is responsible for the needs of the citizens regardless of a sales tax increase. Mr. Graham stated a needs assessment should be completed in the Pink Hill/Deep Run area in regards to EMS to find what the needs are. The estimated revenues are \$1.3-1.4 million gain if the referendum passes. Mr. Humphrey asked could any of the sales tax funds be saved. Mr. Jarman stated infrastructure needs have to be considered with the sales tax funds or the county could be looking at another property tax increase. Mr. Jarman stated the sales tax issue has to be pushed by elected officials in order for the referendum to pass. Ms. Brown stated the price per square foot of the jail has increased since it was first presented before the Board. Ms. Brown stated she agrees with the recommendation of Mr. Jarman. Mr. Davis stated he would like to see Board members push the sales tax increase. Mr. Graham asked how the Board wants to utilize the money if approved. Mr. Humphrey stated he would like the decreasing of property taxes be reviewed if the referendum passes. Mr. Jarman stated he does not believe the county can commit to a tax decrease at this time, but the possibility will be seriously reviewed during the FY 08-09 budget planning process. The Board unanimously agreed to appropriate the funds towards county infrastructure and community college needs.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Davis, the Board unanimously approved the following Consent agenda items.

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Board Meeting: September 17, 2007 Aytch/Jarman
  4. Resolution Approving the Releases and Refunds to the Individuals Listed Herein Parrish/Hollowell
  5. Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: Finance/CJPP-Day Reporting Center: \$2,000: Increase Hollowell/Jarman
  6. Budget Ordinance Amendment: Transportation: Administration: \$3,000: Increase Bryan/Hollowell
  7. Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: Health (Adult Health Program): Increase: \$20,375 Huff/Hollowell
  8. Budget Ordinance Amendment: Capital Improvements Fund: Economic Development: \$200,000: Increase Jarman/Hollowell
  9. Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: DSS: \$309,676: Increase Jones/Hollowell
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## **RESOLUTION**

Item No. 10 was a Resolution Approving Contract and Purchase Order with the Business Development Center: \$3,415. Mr. Jack Jones, Director of Social Services, addressed the Board. Mr. Jones stated on July 17, 2006, the Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the Lenoir County Work First Plan for FY 07-09. This plan requires that parenting classes, job training classes, and pre-employment training be provided for families receiving Work First Family Assistance, families receiving Children's Protective Services, and families with income below 200% of the federal poverty limits. DSS uses parenting classes and the Strive Program to address attitudes and behaviors of recipients. Both the Parenting Classes and the Strive Program require approximately 510 square feet of meeting space, preferably with a telephone and Internet access available. DSS needs this space Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at least three weeks of every month and two evenings per week. Adequate space for these program activities is not available at the DSS agency and the department has been unable to locate space in other County or community facilities that would be available on a regular daily basis. DSS is therefore proposing, as a short-term solution, to contract with the Business Development Center to lease space at \$375 per month beginning October 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008 for Parenting Classes and the Strive Program. The monthly rental fee includes telephone and Internet Access. Ms. Joyce Jones of Life Inc. and Director of Strive addressed the Board. STRIVE began in response to the chronic unemployment problem facing East Harlem and other American inner cities in the 1980s. Using an innovative model that combine short, intense training in attitude, self-presentation, and job search techniques with rapid placement and long-term follow-up, STRIVE has become recognized as a pioneering and effective program. The North Carolina branch of STRIVE opened its doors in 2000 and has been a fixture in the community ever since. STRIVE hopes to empower citizens by promoting lifestyle changes for citizens, families, and communities through innovative training and educational programs that encourage health and wellness, intellectual and spiritual development, and financial independence. Upon a motion by Mr. Harper and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 10 was unanimously approved.

Item No. 11 was a Resolution Approving Provider Agreement for Subsidized Day Care: \$3,079,265. Mr. Jones stated the Board is requested to authorize contracting with individual childcare providers and childcare centers to provide subsidized child day care in Lenoir County effective July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. Upon a motion by Mr. Davis and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 11 was unanimously approved.

Item No. 12 was a Resolution Authorizing Execution of Warranty Inspection and Maintenance Contract to Down East Protection Systems: \$5,929. Mr. Hollowell stated, as the Board is aware, courthouse security is a major concern. Over the two years, under the supervision of the Sheriff's Department, numerous security measures have been put into place. These include Door Access Control (card swipe system), name and I.D. cards for employees, CCTV cameras and intercom in the District Judges' offices, security camera additions within and around the courthouse, burglar alarm, trigger alarm on Access computer when doors go into alarm mode, panic button in finger printing office, access control to 2 Clerk of Court doors, and Access control to the District Attorney's office. The cost of this equipment and to put it in place was approximately \$130,000 (much of which was paid for by Federal Homeland Security Funds). This equipment is very sensitive and requires annual inspections, maintenance, adjustments, and periodic software updates. Upon a motion by Mr. Davis and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 12 was unanimously approved.

Item No. 13 was a Resolution Approving Purchase Order with Creech's Painting Inc.: \$9,300. Major Chris Hill of the Lenoir County Sheriff's Department addressed the Board. Major Hill stated two cellblocks within the Lenoir County Jail would be converted from a sliding door locking system to a swinging door locking system. The two cellblocks are in dire need of new paint. The Board approved the allocation of funds for the paint project in the Jail's 2007-2008 fiscal budget. Eight paint companies were contacted, with only two responding with an estimate. Creech's Painting Inc. provided an estimate of \$9,300. Pro Coat Custom Painting provided an estimate of \$19,800. The Sheriff respectfully recommends granting the request for the painting services of Creech's Painting Inc. Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Harper, Item No. 13 was unanimously approved.

Item No. 14 was a Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Agreement between Lenoir County, City of Kinston and the Kinston-Lenoir County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) Regarding Operation and Maintenance of the Kinston-Lenoir County Visitors Center. Mr. Jarman stated The County has agreed to continue the funding of a full-time position to operate, manage, and staff the Visitors Center. The County will pay future maintenance costs associated with the facility. If future expansion of the facility were warranted, the County would request assistance from the City. The City has agreed to pay operating costs associated with the facility, which includes printed materials, office supplies, Internet access, and janitorial supplies. This cost is estimated to be \$18,000 per year. Future funding will become part of the budget process. The City will also provide part-time staff up to 1,560 hours per year (or 30 per week) and invoice the Tourism Development Authority on a quarterly basis. The Tourism Development Authority (TDA) has agreed to pay part-time salaries based on actual time spent at the Visitors Center up to \$15,000 per year. Upon a motion by Mr. Harper and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 14 was unanimously approved.

**APPOINTMENTS**

Item No. 15 was a Resolution Appointing Citizens to Boards, Commissions, Etc. The following reflects existing vacancies and appointments.

<b><u>BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION</u></b>	<b><u>APPLICANT/ CURRENT MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>TERM EXPIRATION</u></b>
Lenoir County Board of Health <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Appearance</b>	Giles Stroud	September 2010 <b>M: Brown S: Davis</b>
Kinston Planning Board <b>1<sup>st</sup> Appearance</b>	Peggy Boone (Re-Appointment)	August 2010

**CURRENT VACANCIES:**

**Lenoir County Health Board – One (1) Vacancy; (1) Veterinarian**

**Grifton Planning Board – One (1) Vacancy; ETJ Position**

**JCPC – One (1) Vacancy; 1-Juvenile Attorney**

**Lenoir County Planning Board – District 1, 3, & 6**

**CJPP – Four (4) Vacancies**

**Kinston Board of Adjustment – Two (2) ETJ Members; (1) Primary – (1) Alternate**

**Lenoir County Transportation Committee – At Large Member – Business Community**

**CLOSED SESSION**

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Graham, and unanimous approval, closed session was entered at approximately 10:34 a.m. and the following cited: Number four (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by Lenoir County. The Board discussed an economic development project. The Board took no action. Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Harper, the Board moved out of closed session at 10:42 a.m.

**OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Graham Open Session re-convened at 10:42 a.m. Mr. Graham stated an economic development project was discussed, the Board took no action during closed session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown the meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed By

Lashanda Aytych  
Clerk to the Board

Michael W. Jarman  
County Manager