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GASTON COUNTY

COMMISSIONER'S COURT

NORTH CAROLINA

MARCH 9, 2006

The Gaston County Board of Commissioners (BOC) met in Regular Session on March 9, 2006 at 6:00 pm in the Commissioners Room, Gaston County Courthouse.

Chairman Tom Keigher presided with Commissioners Mickey Price, Vice Chairman; Jack B. Brown, Joe D. Carpenter, Pearl Burris Floyd, Allen R. Fraley and John A. Torbett in attendance.

Others present included Jan Winters, County Manager; Charles L. Moore, County Attorney; and Marcella D. McCaskill, Deputy Clerk to the Board.

Upon request of Chairman Keigher, Commissioner Carpenter led those assembled in the Invocation and Commissioner Floyd led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing

Chairman Keigher announced the Public Hearing as advertised; explained procedures to be used; called for the motion to enter into Public Hearing.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Carpenter, the BOC unanimously entered into Public Hearing.

Public Hearing - Re: Close-Out of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Recovery Planning Grant from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Commerce Finance Center

Miss Yvonne Gibbs, Grants Analyst, advised that the federal CDBG program was administered by the NC Department of Commerce; designed to improve living conditions for low to moderate income persons; received \$200k CDBG in 2003 to promote reuse of empty industrial buildings; County had 60 vacant buildings at time of application; mostly former textile mills; project grew out of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; project was 100% federally funded; no County match; explained three project components, Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy available at www.centralina.org; Best Practices in Mill Reuse with Preservation North Carolina; available on line at www.presnc.org; Gaston Mills Study available at www.gastonmills.com; successfully completed all project activities; public hearing required prior to closing out; distributed copies of the Gaston County Mills Economic Recovery Project and introduced Mr. Buck Lawrimore, Lawrimore Communications, for comments.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Torbett and seconded by Commissioner Floyd, the BOC unanimously accepted the Gaston Mills Study as information to be placed on file with the Clerk.

Mr. Lawrimore reported that the consulting team visited eighteen old textile mills; evaluated each using score cards with twenty point criteria related to marketability and resale or redevelopment; identified highest ranking mills; contacted the owners; asked each not to sell or market mill during project scope for case study purposes throughout the year; agreements were reached with owners of the Imperial Mill, Trenton Mill, Mount Holly Cotton Mill which is listed on the National Register of

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Historic Places; National designation qualifies buildings for substantial federal and State tax reductions to offset redevelopment costs; mills surveyed were 100+ years old; contained high ceilings, tall windows, exposed brick walls, and hardwood floors; renovation for new uses and meeting Code cost about the same as new construction; the NC Legislature will address increasing State tax credits by an additional 50-60% as spearheaded by NC Preservation's Mr. Myrick Howard and partner in this project; NC Preservation held its annual conference in Gastonia in late October; attracted many developers, preservationists, etc.; toured three mills advising of potential adaptive reuses during conference; received about twenty-four inquiries; the Loray Mill, owned by Preservation NC, is still under serious consideration by Atlanta based Camden Management; the project highlighted reuse potential including blueprints and color renderings of what buildings could look like after renovation with offices, retail and residential; all projects have a good chance of adaptive reuse especially if the new State tax credits are passed in the spring.

Chairman Keigher called for citizen comment and hearing none, called for questions from the BOC.

Commissioner Price asked for money amounts going to each of the three project components.

Ms. Gibbs responded that the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Study received about \$20k of the grant allocation; Best Practices in Mill Reuse/Preservation NC received \$40k; Gaston Mills Study received about \$120k which included the annual conference; County received \$20k for administration; also worked with COG on pieces of the administration.

2006-085 Commissioner Carpenter - Budget/Purchasing - To Close-out the 2003 Community Development Block Grant Economic Recovery Planning Project

On motion introduced by Commissioner Torbett and seconded by Commissioner Floyd, the BOC unanimously approved 2006-085 authorizing the Chairman to execute close-out documents for the 2003 Community Development Block Grant Economic Recovery Planning Project.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Torbett and seconded by Commissioner Price, the BOC unanimously closed the Public Hearing.

Agenda Revision/Approval

Chairman Keigher proposed tabling Consent Agenda, Item D, in order to obtain more information.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Fraley and seconded by Commissioner Brown, the BOC unanimously tabled item IV., D., GEMS - To Approve Bid Award for Purchase of Two (2) Type I Ambulances to Lowest Responsible Bidder, Wheeled Coach of North Carolina (\$273,456.00).

On motion introduced by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Brown, the BOC

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unanimously approved the Agenda of March 9, 2006 with changes as noted above.

Approval of Minutes

On motion introduced by Commissioner Torbett and seconded by Commissioner Price, the BOC unanimously approved the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 23, 2006.

Citizen Recognition

No requests.

Consent Agenda

On motion introduced by Commissioner Torbett and seconded by Commissioner Floyd, the BOC unanimously approved the Consent Agenda as follows:

2006-086 Commissioner Floyd - Finance - Awarded Bid for Financing for Rolling Stock Equipment to Bank of America, authorized execution of the contract, and authorized staff to make payment directly to appropriate vendor and to obtain subsequent reimbursement from the financial institution providing the financing if any of the equipment or other items on the list are received before financing documents are fully executed per the following bids and Budget Change Request:

	<u>Bidder</u>	<u>59 months Rate</u>	
	Bank of America	3.723510%	
	National City Municipal Finance	4.070000%	
	RBC Centura	4.210000%	
	Koch Financial Corporation	4.470000%	
	Wachovia	4.780000%	
Proceeds of Installment Purchase Agreement	20-8300-912-500		(34,482)
Proceeds of Installment Purchase Agreement	40-8300-912-500		(821,121)
Proceeds of Installment Purchase Agreement	60-8300-912-500		(22,426)
Sixteen (16) marked cars for Police	40-4310-510-000	06253-0001	338,272
Three (3) marked cars for Sheriff	40-4315-4315-510-000	06254-0001	63,426
One (1) 15 passenger van with inmate security for Sheriff	40-4315-4315-510-000	06255-0001	22,256
One (1) ¾ ton 4X4 crew cab truck with camper top for Emergency Management	40-4330-4330-510-000	06256-0001	24,161
Three (3) mid-size passenger vehicles for Facilities Social Services	20-5300-5310-510-000	06257-0001	34,482
Three (3) hybrid mid-size passenger vehicles for Environmental Health	40-5100-5114-5125-510-000	06258-0001	65,445
One(1) ¾ ton 4X4 standard cab truck for Solid Waste	60-4720-510-000	06259-0001	22,426
One (1) ¾ ton regular cab truck for Parks and Recreation	40-6120-510-000	062600001	15,561
Two(2) ambulances (estimated cost)	40-4370-510-000	06261-0001	292,000

2006-087 Commissioner Floyd - Finance - Appropriated Investment Earnings (\$17) on Law Enforcement Block Grants through December 31, 2005, grants 2003-LB-BX-0438 and 2004-LB-BX-0237, per Budget Change Request:

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Fund Balance Appropriated	10-9900-991-500		(4)
Interest on Investments	10-8300-491-500		(13)
Special Grants	10-4310-620-000	04238-0001	13
Special Grants	10-4310-620-000	05234-0001	4

2006-088 Commissioner Fraley - Tax Collections - Uncollected Real Estate Taxes and Lien Advertisement authorized as follows:

Gaston County	\$9,236,746.35	Chestnut Ridge Fire District	\$6,283.81
Belmont	\$143,751.18	Community Fire District	\$23,099.53
Bessemer City	\$119,012.10	Crouse Fire District	\$8,626.65
Cherryville	\$169,914.36	East Gaston Fire District	\$14,331.12
Cramerton	\$141,413.57	High Shoals Fire District	\$12,904.38
Dallas	\$58,708.20	Hughs Pond Fire District	\$6,838.83
Gastonia	\$1,747,464.42	Long Shoals Fire District	\$6,048.23
Gastonia Downtown Service District	\$10,484.12	Lowell Fire District	\$448.75
High Shoals	\$16,770.76	Lucia-Riverbend Fire District	\$16,676.04
Kings Mountain	\$21,105.96	New Hope Fire District	\$17,629.87
Lowell	\$95,537.63	Ranlo Fire District	\$12,091.21
McAdenville	\$7,558.40	South Gastonia Fire District	\$37,267.12
Ranlo	\$45,658.12	South Point Fire District	\$12,046.17
Stanley	\$95,177.99	Spencer Mountain Fire District	\$15,918.10
Agriculture Center Fire District	\$27,651.00	Tryonota Fire District	\$22,540.85
Alexis Fire District	\$19,066.69	Union Road Fire District	\$21,893.86
Chapel Grove Fire District	\$25,094.50	Waco Fire District	\$4,006.22
TOTAL			\$12,219,766.09

2006-089 Commissioner Keigher - Commended Gaston County Board of Health members: James Russell Beam, Robert D. Crouch, Bill Duffy, Pearl Burris Floyd, Fred M. Moss, Jr., Martin Murphy, Robert Neunzig, Mike Scott, Donald D. Smith, Shirley Stowe and Michelle Wilkinson upon being named the North Carolina Health Board of the Year.

2006-090 Commissioner Torbett - Emergency Management - Approved Financing Arrangement for Ranlo Volunteer Fire Department for Lease-Purchase of Fire Apparatus to combat fires and authorized the Chairman to sign the letter to United Financial attached thereto.

2006-091 Commissioner Torbett - Emergency Management - Approved the Financing Arrangement for Community Volunteer Fire Department for Lease-Purchase of a Pumper and Quick Response Fire Apparatus to enhance ability to combat fires and authorized the Chairman to sign the letter to United Financial attached thereto.

2006-092 Commissioner Torbett - Public Works - Declared the Old Gaston County Administration Building (212 West Main Avenue, Gastonia) and the Old Gaston Hospital Facilities (401 Highland Street) as Surplus and Authorized Staff to Market Both Properties for Sale.

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2006-093 Commissioner Fraley - BOC - To Amend the Gaston County 2006 Fee Schedule Rates for In-County Youth Non-Profit 501-3C Organizations Using County Parks for Youth Sports

In order to avoid the time consuming proposal recommended by staff at the March 2, 2006 Rescheduled Work Session and to avoid the need for youth non-profit organizations to retain and provide receipts to the County for reimbursement, Chairman Keigher asked Commissioner Fraley to consider an amendment to charge Gaston County youth 501-3C non-profit organizations a fee of \$250 for its first sports event of the year; another \$250 fee for its second sports event of the year; total fees would not exceed \$500 for a single year.

Commissioner Fraley agreed to the amendment indicating that his main concern had been not to impose a fee that would keep any child from playing a sport.

Commissioner Brown provided the second and asked the Parks & Recreation (P&R) Director for comment on the proposal.

Mrs. Cathy Hart, P&R Director, indicated that the P&R Commission would likely approve the concept since it would be much easier to manage than previously proposed.

Chairman Keigher emphasized that the action addressed Gaston County 501-3C non-profit youth organizations only.

Chairman Keigher called for the vote on the motion as amended, and the BOC unanimously approved 2006-093 authorizing In-County Youth Non-Profit 501-3C Organizations to pay \$250 for each of their first two seasonal sports events. The fees shall not exceed \$500 per season.

2006-094 Commissioner Torbett - Human Resources - To Reauthorize Vacant Positions: Environmental Health Specialist III (HL0170) and Health Education Coordinator (HL0191)

On motion introduced by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Floyd, the BOC unanimously approved 2006-094 reauthorizing vacant positions HL0170/ Environmental Health Specialist III and HL0191/Health Educator Coordinator.

Appointments

On motion introduced by Commissioner Carpenter and seconded by Commissioner Keigher, the BOC unanimously appointed Mr. Scott Coffman to the *Parks & Recreation Commission* to an unexpired term ending June 2008.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Floyd and seconded by Commissioner Keigher, the BOC

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unanimously reappointed Mr. Mike Cox to the **Animal Control Task Force Advisory Board** to a term ending March 2010.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Floyd, the BOC unanimously appointed Mr. Frank Ellington to the **Planning Board** to an unexpired term ending February 2008.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Floyd, the BOC unanimously appointed Ms. Barbara Oates to the **Workforce Development Board** to a term ending June 2008.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Keigher and seconded by Commissioner Price, the BOC unanimously appointed Mr. Tony Luckadoo to the **SARA Local Planning Committee** to a term ending January 2009.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Keigher and seconded by Commissioner Price, the BOC unanimously reappointed Mr. Doc Thompson to the **SARA Local Planning Committee** to a term ending January 2009.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Keigher and seconded by Commissioner Price, the BOC unanimously reappointed Mr. Hoyle Withers to the **SARA Local Planning Committee** to a term ending January 2009.

Commissioners Committee Reports

Commissioner Torbett reported attendance to the NACO Legislative Conference; topics included methamphetamines, its effect on citizens and the need to curtail its use in young people. Re: Medicaid - Requested amount the tax rate would be effected if Medicaid was removed; BOC could identify an exact number, relay that number to citizens, and promise citizens that the exact amount would be removed from property tax rates if successful in Raleigh; this method may leverage citizen participation in campaigning Raleigh legislators to remove Medicaid from County responsibility; also requested how that number would impact school construction.

Commissioner Floyd reported attendance to the 3/9 Mayors Breakfast where mayors from the eastern part of the County expressed concern about rapid growth, school overcrowding and land use planning; discussed the possibility of hiring someone to work with County Economic Development to market the eastern portion; suggested a partnership between the County, EDC, and the municipalities for a more even approach to marketing; noted preference for a whole County marketing approach rather than spot marketing to engage citizens as to what kind of County they would prefer; asked that the County Manager and Economic Development Director work with the Mayors on this endeavor.

Chairman Keigher advised that the unemployment rate was down to 5.4% and would likely be reduced again; may be seeing benefits of local business retention.

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County Manager's Report

No report.

County Attorney's Report

No report.

Other Matters

Re: Budget Update - Commissioner Torbett asked when the update would be presented.

The County Manager advised of working with the Budget/Purchasing Director on an April Work Session update.

The Budget/Purchasing Director related that estimates based on projections should be ready within the next week; currently meeting with department directors; will be another 4 to 5 weeks before departmental requests are set forth in the budget format.

Chairman Keigher advised that staff had been directed to bring forth a budget reflecting a "0" tax increase or less; BOC could then decide whether to seek further cuts after hearing staff rationale for the "0" base; management will handle the budget with the staff this year; will not have all the department directors to attend meetings with BOC.

Re: Getting Cemeteries Back onto Plat Maps - Commissioner Price advised of speaking with Mr. Bill Hoffman who had advised of success in his court case and now has a cemetery recorded; he had previously alleged improprieties about a property tax parcel number; asked if the BOC wanted to check into the allegation; preferred to clear the matter up with proper action being taken.

The County Attorney advised of not being aware of any change in the status of the court disposition; a new owner could reach agreement with Mr. Hoffman to allow him free access to that site or deed the cemetery to him; Mr. Hoffman had often indicated that part of the cemetery deed was under a cloud dating back 100+ years; court situation may not have changed; property ownership may have; new owner may have given Mr. Hoffman unrestricted access to the site to allow him to do the maintenance he prefers.

Commissioner Price indicated that the opposing party withdrew at the Court of Appeals.

Chairman Keigher asked the County Attorney to find out the final court decision and advise the BOC.

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Adjournment

Chairman Keigher adjourned the Regular Meeting of March 9, 2006 at 6:50 pm.

(All aforementioned documents are on file with the Clerk to the Board.)

Tom Keigher, Chairman
Gaston County Board of Commissioners

Marcella D. McCaskill
Deputy Clerk to the Board

Martha M. Jordan
Clerk to the Board

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