

The Honorable Board of County Commissioners met in their said office at 10:00 a.m., February 21, 1977, it being third Monday.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT:

C. Waldo Marlowe, Chairman

Junior W. Dew, Vice-Chairman

Edward W. Williamson

L. A. Hinson

David L. McPherson

James E. Hill, Jr., Attorney

Emogene W. Suggs, Clerk

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman and the invocation was given by The Reverend Clayton Price, Bethel Lebanon Methodist Church.

The following business was transacted:

The minutes of the February 7th and 8th were approved as recorded upon motion by Commissioner McPherson and seconded by Commissioner Dew.

A motion was made by Commissioner Williamson, seconded by Commissioner Hinson and approved to transfer an additional \$1,000. from Hospitalization to Family Planning in the Social Services Budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Williamson, seconded by Commissioner McPherson to appoint Commissioner Dew as Chairman of the OSHA Committee and appointed Shelton Babson, Jr. to replace Brooks Stanley who wishes not be reappointed.

A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson, seconded by Commissioner Dew and passed to authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES to be entitled to receive Revenue Sharing Funds for the Eighth Entitlement Period.

A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson, seconded by Commissioner Williamson and approved to release the following taxes:

Ordered: that the 1976 taxes listed in the name of Ruth Brown, South Williams Township, be released on the valuation of \$5,000 for the Senior Citizens Exemption.

Ordered: that a refund be given to Mr. Paul Raymond Motz, Rt. 1, Box 27, Winston-Salem, N. C., Bogue Township in the amount of \$7.20 due to vehicle listed in error.

A motion was made by Commissioner Williamson, seconded by Commissioner Hinson and approved that the Chairman be authorized to sign an application for a Planning & Management Grant for Recreation for a total of \$12,000 with the County appropriating 40% and the federal 60%.

A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson, seconded by Commissioner Dew and approved to appoint William M. Cartrette, Rt. 1, Chadbourn, to serve on the County Planning Board. He replaces Mrs. Dianne Ward who was unable to serve.

A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson, seconded by Commissioner Williamson and passed approving Southeastern Community College applying for a grant to operate a Motel & Restaurant Management course using the Heart of Whiteville Motel.

A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson and seconded by Commissioner Williamson for the adoption of the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted:

THAT WHEREAS, the County of Columbus (Sponsor) has made a formal application to the Department of Transportation (Department) for State financial aid for airport development and improvement; and

WHEREAS, a grant in the maximum amount of \$4,072 or in an amount equal to fifty per cent (50%) of the non federal share of the total cost of the project, whichever is less, has been approved;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chairman of the Board of the Sponsor be and hereby is authorized and empowered to enter into a contract with the Department as may be necessary to effectuate the aforesaid expressed purpose, thereby binding the Sponsor to the fulfillment of its obligation incurred under this resolution and to its agreement under the said contract with the Department.

L. R. Bowers, Chairman of the Airport Authority stated that the local funds would be supplied by donations and the County would not be responsible for furnishing any funds.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinson, seconded by Commissioner McPherson and approved to give immediate relief in the amount of \$40.00 to Mrs. Fannie Stephens.

A letter of resignation was read to the Board by Amanda Bible stating that her resignation as Library Director would be effective March 14th as she plans to be married and move from the County. A motion was made by Commissioner Williamson, seconded by Commissioner Dew and passed to accept the resignation with regrets. Mrs. Bible expressed concern about the continuation of the BAFFLE Program for children, establishing a branch library at Riegelwood, and resolving the dual library system into one system.

She requested an estimated \$2,000 in additional funds from the County to finish a microfilming project that has been processed through 1950 by the Department of Archives & History but this is the extent of their work. She stated that the News Reporter Co. in Whiteville would pay one-third the cost and the Library would use \$2,000 from their present budget. The NEWS REPORTER would be the publication microfilmed as it is considered the county-wide paper and the microfilm would be preserved by the Library as a source of history reference. The Board was favorable to the request but asked Mrs. Bible to secure a written contract with The News Reporter Co. and ask if they would be willing to continue having future papers microfilmed for preservation. She was further instructed to contact other papers in the County to find out if this project would be an agreeable arrangement with them, otherwise the Board would have to reconsider the request.

Mrs. Bible further requested that the Library be allowed to purchase a coin operated copying machine to be used by patrons of the Library. She feels this would be a self-paying machine as the staff now spends much time making copies for patrons and are responsible for good copies which is a cost to the Library. A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson, seconded by Commissioner Hinson and approved that the Library be allowed to purchase a coin-operated copying machine with payments to be made quarterly over the period of a year. Mrs. Bible stated that there would be no increase in the Library Budget request within the next year because of the machine.

A letter was read to the Board from the Hospital Board of Trustees stating that the new hospital was not designed for mental health patients, therefore they did not feel it would a wise course to take to redesign the hospital for a psychiatric unit as it would require at least twelve or possibly eighteen rooms because of specially designed areas that are required in addition to patient rooms. Their opinion is that two or three sections of the hospital would require redesigning or rebuilding. The Trustees felt that if the Board elected to set up a one county system for mental health services that they should consider rebuilding a section of the old hospital when it is available.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dew, seconded by Commissioner Hinson and approved that the Board declare an executive session of the Board. Attorney Hill stated that he had a matter to discuss with the Board which come within a lawyer-client privilege.

The Board reconvened in regular session and the Chairman announced that Dr. Paschal, School Supt., reported that he felt encouraged after going to Washington and making application for grants for both the replacement of Guideway School Building and the contents of the building. He reported that an official from Washington would make an on-site visit to the Guideway location in the upcoming week.

Other reports presented to the Board were the Tax Collector's Monthly Report on tax collections and the progress report from the hospital construction which is 90% complete at this time.

Frances Wheeler and Francis McLean, PSC Members, met with the Board and requested that the replacement for Matron/Secretary at the Law Enforcement Center be paid at the rate of step II, Grade 7 of the County Pay Plan. The Board explained that a lot of time and effort had been spent compiling the Plan and the salaries of the law enforcement officers were in line with or above salaries of equivalent nature in the surrounding areas. Due to the short length of time for the preparation of budgets at which time salaries are generally reviewed all persons concerned agreed to postpone any salary adjustments which vary from the adopted Plan. A motion was made by Commissioner Williamson, seconded by Commissioner Hinson that the new employee start on step I, grade 7 of the salary scale which is in accordance with the Pay Plan. The motion was passed.

A further request was made by the Public Safety Commission Members that they be assigned two or three rooms in the space now used by the Department of Social Services if the Department is moved to the old hospital building later in the year.

Hobson Ivey, Landfill Supervisor, was present to make a report on the performance of Graham Williamson, who has been employed by the County for thirty days. Mr. Ivey stated that Mr. Williamson is basically a good worker but that he has had an accident involving another vehicle which cost \$421.00 to repair and that negligence in changing oil in the White Truck, which is used to pick-up trash, had cost the County \$5,000 for repairs to the motor. The Board requested Mr. Ivey to contact Mr. Williamson and have him meet with the Board in the evening session.

A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson, seconded by Commissioner Dew and passed to declare an executive session to discuss a personnel matter related to the report from the Landfill Supervisor.

After the executive session the matter of mental health services was again discussed. Commissioner Hinson asked approval from the Board for the Clerk to write the following letters:

1. Write Southeastern Regional Mental Health Center and request a break-down on the alcoholic expenditures for Columbus County and a break-down on the out-patient services.
2. Write Columbus County Medical Society and inquire the number of persons present at the meeting at the time the Resolution was adopted in favor of Columbus County continuing mental health services with Southeastern Regional Mental Health Center.
3. Write Dr. Sarah Moore, Secretary, Department of Human Resources, and ask her to reply in writing to the following questions:
 - A. Will you approve Dr. Anthony Sianz as Director for Columbus County for a one county mental health center; if for any reason you will not, would you approve the employment of a person with a business administration degree with a minor in psychology or a person with a master's degree in guidance and personnel service?
 - B. Will you send in writing the amount of dollars Columbus County can expect to receive under the present State matching allotment?
 - C. Will you review the 1976-77 Budget of Southeastern Regional Mental Health Center and determine the amount of \$740,000 in Reserve Fund that belongs to Columbus County?
 - D. Will you agree to establish in Columbus County an area mental health board of 15 or 25 members, preferably 25?
 - E. What are the five categories of service required by the State or federal guidelines that must be offered to receive Medicaid Funds?

Approval was given to write the letters.

Commissioner McPherson stated he felt that it was time to make a decision concerning mental health services. A motion was made by Commissioner McPherson and seconded by Commissioner Dew not to withdraw from Southeastern Regional Mental Health Center for the year 1977-78. Commissioner McPherson stated he based his decision on the fact that on July 1, 1977, when our present contract with SERMHC expires no facilities will be available at the hospital as the new building will not be complete at that time; further according to the people who disburse State and federal funds, there will be a loss of funds available to the County and I (McPherson) will not vote for a tax increase unless we have another emergency. Commissioner Hinson felt that we should get further information before making a decision as he felt the information from Dr. Moore had biased in favor of Southeastern Center.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinson and seconded by Commissioner Williamson to table the motion until we could get a reply from the Dept. of Human Resources to the questions stated earlier.

A vote was taken to table the motion by Commissioner McPherson and the vote is recorded as follows: Voting to table the Motion were Commissioners Hinson and Williamson.

Voting not to table the Motion were Commissioners Dew, McPherson and Marlowe.

The motion was not tabled and a vote was taken on the original Motion to continue services for mental health with Southeastern Regional Mental Center for the year 1977-78. The vote was taken as follows: Voting to continue services with SERMHC were Commissioners McPherson, Dew and Marlowe

Voting against continuing services with SERMHC were Commissioners Hinson and Williamson

The motion was carried to continue services with Southeastern Regional Mental Health Center for the FY 1977-78.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dew to request a performance evaluation be made by the State Personnel Office, Raleigh, on each employee that is related to the mental health services in Columbus County and if the employees are failing to perform their job properly that further action be taken. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Williamson and passed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinson, seconded by Commissioner Williamson that the Board go on record as being in favor of reserving adequate space in the old hospital for both in-and-out-patient care for mental patients for 1978. The Board agreed.

A further motion was made by Commissioner Dew, seconded by Commissioner Williamson and approved that a committee make a study of the old hospital space as to the best possible use but no commitments be made to any agency until approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Upon motion the meeting adjourned until March 7, 1977, at 10:00 a.m. which is regular meeting time.

APPROVED:

Emogene N. Sogge
Clerk

Waldo Marlowe
Chairman