

COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, December 14, 2004

6:15 P.M.

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, for the purpose of resuming the regular scheduled meeting which was recessed on December 06, 2004.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Sammie Jacobs, **Chairman**
 Kipling Godwin, **Vice Chairman**
 Amon E. McKenzie
 James E. Prevatte
 Bill Memory
 Lynwood Norris

COMMISSIONER ABSENT:

David L. Dutton, Jr.

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Billy Joe Farmer, **County Manager**
 Darren L. Currie, **Assistant County Manager**
 June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**

APPOINTEES ABSENT:

James E. Hill, Jr., **County Attorney**
 Roxanne Coleman, **Finance Officer**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 6:15 P.M., Chairman Jacobs called the meeting to order.

RE-ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS for the CONSTRUCTION of a NEW 0.125 MGD WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY at NCSR 1820 in ACME, NORTH CAROLINA:

Billy Joe Farmer, Columbus County Manager, stated three (3) bids for the construction of a new 0.125 MGD Wastewater Treatment Facility at NCSR 1820 in Acme, North Carolina had been received today, December 14, 2004, at 2:00 P.M., on the second floor of the Columbus County Administration Building. The re-bid tabulation is as follows:

CONTRACTOR	LICENSE NO.	BASE BID	ALT. BID
J.W. Cook and Sons	2411	\$497,700	\$8,500
B & K Cape Fear Paving	48010	\$504,350	\$8,120
All Span	8637	\$578,625	\$11,670

Mr. Farmer stated the following:

1. If the Board decides to approve the low bid, I am requesting that it be approved on the contingency that funds are to be made available and that funding will remain the same;
2. I would like permission from the Board to negotiate with J.W Cook and Sons to get the bid under four hundred thousand and 00/100 (\$400,000.00) dollars;
3. Wright Corporation has already spent in excess of two hundred eighty thousand and 00/100 (\$280,000.00) dollars on this project;
4. Between the CDBG grant monies and Wright Corporation, one-half (½) million dollars has already been spent;
5. This project is a \$2.4 Million project;
6. This is the Phase I construction; **and**
7. There is no County money involved.

After discussion was conducted relative to this project, Commissioner McKenzie made a motion to accept the low bid submitted by J.W. Cook and Sons at the above listed amount, contingent on the following:

1. The funds be made available;
2. The funding will remain the same; **and**
3. Billy Joe Farmer, County Manager will negotiate with J.W. Cook and Sons to get the bid under four hundred thousand and 00/100 (\$400,000.00) dollars.

This motion was seconded by Commissioner Memory. The motion so carried.

PROCLAMATION - PROCLAMATION of RECOGNITION and APPRECIATION to SOLDIERS SERVING in the MILITARY FORCES for the UNITED STATES of AMERICA:

Robert Adams, private citizen, requested Board approval and adoption of the following Proclamation.

**PROCLAMATION of RECOGNITION and APPRECIATION to
SOLDIERS SERVING in the MILITARY FORCES
for the UNITED STATES of AMERICA**

WHEREAS, Columbus County was chartered in 1808 and since that time, has been blessed with honorable representation in the United States of America's Military Service from multitudes of our citizenry; **and**

WHEREAS, the fine men and women who elect to defend our country, through the avenue of military service, possess a distinguished quality of discipline, dedication and determination to defend the very belief on which our great country was originally founded on by our forefathers; **and**

WHEREAS, when citizenry are requested to serve in military service, or reach a decision to serve in military service, it should be regarded as a distinguished honor, by everyone, to be placed in a position to defend the core belief on which this country was founded on, and to promote the continuous of such; **and**

WHEREAS, when our patriotic men and women serve in our military forces from Columbus County, the State of North Carolina, and all the states that comprise the United States of America, they are laying the greatest asset, and the ultimate sacrifice they possess, on the line for their belief, and, that, in itself, being their life; **and**

WHEREAS, during their term of military service, these citizens, who serve so proudly, face the need to be in locations far away from their homeland and their loved ones for various periods of time, some periods being of great length ; **and**

WHEREAS, many of the military soldiers depart from their loved ones for the purpose of fulfilling the honorary duty of defending their country to be located wherever the need might arise, and during their term of duty, their lives are brought to an abrupt end by certain unforeseen circumstances, leaving their loved ones behind; **and**

WHEREAS, every Columbus Countian, every North Carolinian, and every citizen of all the remaining states that comprise the United States of America, should be made aware of the knowledge that our military forces are putting their ultimate sacrifice on the line for the citizenry of this country, to enjoy the luxury of freedom; **and**

WHEREAS, to be a part of the United States of America is a blessing, in itself, that few regions of the world have been exposed to, or will never experience the enjoyment of; **and**

WHEREAS, the blessing of freedom should never be taken for granted by anyone, due to the fact and proven knowledge that freedom does not come without a price, and that price is being paid by our notorious men and women who serve so proudly and patriotically in our military forces.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED we, the Columbus County Board of Commissioners, wish to extend this Proclamation of Appreciation and Recognition to the brave citizenry of Columbus County, the State of North Carolina and all the remaining states that comprise the United States of America, for their loyalty, dedication, bravery and willingness to put their lives on the line to defend our freedom and country.

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED we would like to recognize these brave men and women who serve in our military forces for their bravery, loyalty and dedication, and to let them know, they will be an honorable and historical part of the County of Columbus, the State of North Carolina and all the remaining States that comprise the great United States of America.

ADOPTED this the 14th day of December, 2004.

COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

/s/ SAMMIE JACOBS, Chairman, District III
/s/ AMON E. McKENZIE, District I
/s/ BILL MEMORY, District IV
/s/ DAVID L. DUTTON, JR., District VII

/s/ KIPLING GODWIN, JR., Vice-Chairman, District VI
/s/ JAMES E. PREVATTE, District II
/s/ LYNWOOD NORRIS, District V

ATTESTED BY:
JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

Commissioner McKenzie made a motion to approve and adopt the Proclamation of Recognition and Appreciation to Soldiers Serving in the Military Forces for the United States of America, seconded by Commissioner Norris. The motion so carried.

ADMINISTRATION - ALLOWANCE of TWENTY (20) MINUTES COMMUTE TIME for FIT FOR LIFE PROGRAM:

Billy Joe Farmer, County Manager, requested the Board approve the allowance of twenty (20) additional minutes, at lunch, to the County employees who are participating in the Fit For Life (Drop a Ton) Program being conducted at the Cooperative Extension Building. This would need the employee's supervisor's designation and approval.

Commissioner Norris made a motion to approve the allowance of twenty (20) additional minutes, at lunch, to the County employees who are participating in the Fit For Life (Drop a Ton) Program, with the employee's supervisor's designation and approval. This motion was seconded by Commissioner McKenzie. The motion so carried.

TWO (2) UTILITY ISSUES - PRESENTATION by ANGIE METTLEN:

Al Leonard, Tabor City Town Manager, introduced Angie Mettlen, Director of Administration and Special Projects with Hobbs, Upchurch and Associates, P.A., as the person who would present (2) utility issues to the Board.

Angie Mettlen stated she would present two (2) utility issues for the Board's consideration and approval.

First Utility Issue: Running water to Guideway Elementary School -

The following information was presented to the Board by Ms. Mettlan:

1. I have been informed there is a water crisis at Guideway Elementary School involving high levels of fluoride being in the water supply to the point where the water cannot be used and they are having to use bottled water;
2. We have previously created a set of plans for the full Columbus County Water and Sewer District V and a downsized set;
3. This district has been deemed to not be a viable project;
4. I have contacted Billy Ray Hall, President of the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center, relative to this emergency situation;
5. This will be Columbus County Water and Sewer District V;
6. The total project cost will be four hundred twenty-nine thousand two hundred fourteen and 00/100 (\$429,214.00) dollars;
7. The USDA Grant, if approved will be for four hundred thousand and 00/100 (\$400,000.00) dollars;
8. This project will consists of three and two-tenths (3.2) miles of water line from the interconnections with Columbus County Water and Sewer District I.
9. I have included twenty (20) service connections along the way;
10. This price includes everything that it will take to accomplish this task;
11. If approved, we can have plans to you in two (2) weeks;
12. I have prepared a letter to Billy Ray Hall that will be hand delivered tomorrow, if this is approved by the Board; **and**
13. This is a one hundred (100%) percent grant, which will require no County funds, if approved by USDA.

The following letter and Resolution were distributed by Ms. Mettlen to the Board members for review and approval:

December 14,2004

Mr. Billy Ray Hall, President

North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center
4021 Carya Drive
Raleigh, North Carolina 27610

RE: Columbus County: Water Service to the Guideway Elementary School Request for Consideration of Emergency Supplemental Funds

Dear Mr. Hall:

On behalf of Columbus County, I am writing to request your consideration of an emergency request to provide supplemental grant funds to be used to extend water service to the Guideway Elementary School in Columbus County. Recent water samples have shown elevated levels of fluoride in the groundwater supply well that provides potable water for the school. The levels shown in these tests are such that NCDENR has required that the water not be used for potable uses (copies of recent articles are enclosed for your review). At this time, the school is using bottled water for drinking and cooking.

This school is located within a formed water district, Columbus County Water District V. Plans to construct a water system in this district were complete in 2002; however, due to concerns regarding the number of sign-ups and struggles seen in other water districts resulting in the County's inability to cover debt service for the construction of those systems, the construction of this Water District V was put on hold. These plans were to run a water line along NC Highway 904 past the Guideway Elementary School giving them access to public water.

Due to these new emergency circumstances, Columbus County is seeking the assistance of the NC Rural Center in order to construct the portion of this proposed water system that would run from the nearest interconnection point with Columbus County Water District I along NC Highway 904 to Guideway Elementary, which is a distance of approximately 3.2 miles. The previous plans were reviewed in order to determine a preliminary cost estimate for this emergency project. Based on recent bids and the previous plans, the estimated cost for the construction of this water line is \$429,214.00. Please note that Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates has only included minimal engineering costs in this estimate to cover reproduction of plans to include only this portion of the project and to seek permitting approval for just said portion. The majority of the engineering design work has been done under a previous contract. A copy of the cost estimate is included for your review and use.

A copy of a resolution issued by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners supporting this emergency request is also included for your review. We thank you for your careful consideration of this request. It is the feeling of local health officials and leaders that public water is the best resolution to this problem and will be the best use of public funds rather than on-site treatment or drilling of another well. If approved, modifications to the existing plans can be made quickly so as to allow for construction to proceed as soon as is possible.

Thank you again for you entertaining this request Columbus County is grateful for all that the NC Rural Center has done to aid in infrastructure improvements over the past several years. Please don't hesitate to contact me at (888) 678-3150 or Mr. Fanner at (910) 640-6600 if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,
HOBBS, UPCHURCH & ASSOCIATES, P.A.
/s/ Angela Mettlen
Director of Administration & Special Projects

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Billy Joe Farmer, Administrator, Columbus County

UTILITY SERVICES CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE

PROJECT: Water Main Extension to Guideway School	
OWNER: Columbus County Water District V	HUA No: CC0204

LOCATION Columbus County , NC			DATE: I 12/14/2004	
DESCRIPTION	QTY.	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
New 8-Inch Water Line along NC 904 (on southeast side) from				
End of Water District I Line on 904 to Guideway School -				
Connection to existing 8-inch water line at NC 904	1	EA	\$500	\$500
8 x 8 Meter Vault	1	EA	\$25,000	\$25,000
8-inch PVC Water Line	16,900	LF	\$10.50	\$177,450
16-inch Jack and Bore	160	LF	\$115	\$18,400
8-inch Gate Valves and Boxes	9	EA	\$800	\$7,200
6-inch Gate Valves and Boxes	7	EA	\$540	\$3,780
8x8 DIMJ Tee	2	EA	\$375	\$750
8x6 DIMJ Tee	8	EA	\$355	\$2,840
8x6 Reducer	1	EA	\$220	\$220
8-inch DIMJ 90 Degree Bend	5	EA	\$250	\$1,250
8-inch DIMJ 45 Degree Bend	5	EA	\$240	\$1,200
8-inch DIMJ 22.5 Degree Bend	3	EA	\$240	\$720
9.05 HDPE Directional Bore	750	LF	\$100	\$75,000
Fire Hydrant Assemblies	10	E	\$1,600	\$16,000
Repair Driveway Cuts	1	LS	\$5,000	\$5,000
Erosion Control Measures	1	LS	\$5,000	\$5,000
Fertilize, Seed and Mulch	4	AC	\$2,000	\$8,000
Service Connections	25	EA	\$450	\$11,250
Subtotal				\$359,560
Contingency (10%)				\$35,956
Engineering Design/Survey	1	LS		\$15,821
Construction Admin/Inspection (USDA Inspection Plan)	1	LS	\$5,183	\$17,877
Total Project Cost Estimate				\$429,214

**AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION BY
THE BOARD OF COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5**

SUPPLEMENTAL GRANT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, The 1998 Critical Needs Bond Act has authorized the making of loans and grants to aid eligible units of government in financing the cost of construction of wastewater treatment works, wastewater collection and water distribution supply, and improvements; and,

WHEREAS, The COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5 has need for and intends to construct extensions to publicly-owned water distribution systems, through a project described as emergency water improvements to serve the Guideway Elementary School on NC Highway 904 in Columbus County necessitated by a contaminated well at said school; and,

WHEREAS, The COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5 intends to request grant assistance from the Supplemental Grants Program for the project,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5:

That the COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5 will arrange for the funding of the required match to the grant funds in accordance with requirements of the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center cost thresholds, if approved for an emergency supplemental grant award.

That the COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5 will provide for efficient operation and maintenance of the project on completion of construction thereof.

That Sammy Jacobs, Chairman, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized to execute and file an application on behalf of the COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5 with any potential funding agencies for a grant to aid in the construction of the project described above.

That Billy Joe Farmer, County Administrator, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate agency may request in connection with such application or the project; to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the application.

That the COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT #5 has substantially complied, or will substantially comply with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances applicable to the project and to Federal and State grants and loans pertaining thereto. Adopted this the 6th day of December, 2004, at Whiteville, North Carolina.

(Seal)

/s/ Sammy Jacobs, Chairman
/s/ June B. Hall, Clerk to the Board

After discussion was conducted among the Board members, Commissioner Memory made a motion to approve the letter to Billy Ray Hall, President of North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center, and Resolution so entitled "Authorizing Resolution By The Board of Columbus County Water and Sewer District #5, Supplemental Grant Program", seconded by Commissioner Norris.

Additional discussion was conducted among the Board members and a poll vote was taken with the following results:

AYES: Chairman Jacobs, Vice Chairman Godwin, Commissioners McKenzie, Memory, and Norris
NAYS: Commissioner Prevatte

ABSENT: Commissioner Dutton.

The motion carried on a five (5) to one (1) vote.

WHITEVILLE COMMERCE CENTER - DISCUSSION of IMPACT of DEPARTMENT of TRANSPORTATION'S ACTIONS:

Commissioner Memory, along with Lacy Wilson, local Realtor, distributed the following information relative to the Whiteville Commerce Center.

**WHITEVILLE COMMERCE CENTER
(Smith Warehouse Property)**

Estimated Taxes for Smith Warehouse Property	Current Tax Value \$932,200	Estimated Tax Value \$20,000,000	Estimated Tax Value \$30,000,000
County of Columbus	\$7,271	\$156,000	\$234,000
City of Whiteville	\$3,119	\$98,000	\$147,000

Commissioner Memory, along with Lacy Wilson, stated the following:

1. There is a large tract of commercial property in the North Whiteville area in which a prospective client is very interested in;
2. The North Carolina Department of Transportation is planning to install a median in the middle of the highway located in front of this commercial property which will allow for a right turn only;

3. If the median is indeed installed, this will place a negative impact on the prospective client's decision to locate in this vicinity;
4. This will also hinder out-of-town traffic and the possibility of future clients locating in this area;
5. I have sent one (1) letter previously, and apparently, the letter did not have the impact it was intended for; **and**
6. We are requesting the Board send another letter requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation to reconsider this action because of its negative impact on this viable location.

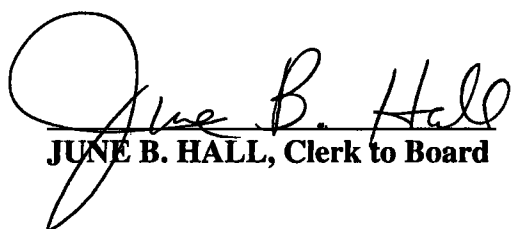
Vice Chairman Godwin made a motion to approve a letter to be created by Mr. Lacy Wilson, local Realtor, and June B. Hall, Clerk to the Board, to be forwarded to the appropriate person at the North Carolina Department of Transportation, requesting this action to be reconsidered due to its negative impact. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Prevatte. The motion so carried.

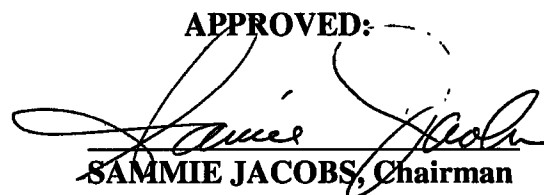
GOVERNING BODY - COURSE of ACTION for FAILURE to pay PROPERTY TAXES:

Commissioner Memory stated he has requested staff to obtain information relative to the course of action taken by other counties when county employees failed to pay their property taxes. It was discovered that Moore, Gaston, Brunswick and Pender Counties have recently included in their Personnel Policies that this would be considered unacceptable personnel conduct by employees that could lead to dismissal. I am requesting the Board members to consider such action to be adopted and inserted into our Personnel Policy.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:01 P.M., there being no further business, Commissioner Norris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Memory. The motion so carried.


JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

APPROVED:

SAMMIE JACOBS, Chairman

INTENTIONALLY

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