

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED/EMERGENCY MEETING**

Monday, August 29, 2005

8:00 A.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 holding a Special Called/Emergency Meeting which was duly established and advertised.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Darren L. Currie, **Assistant County Manager**
June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**
Steven W. Fowler, **County Attorney**
Roxanne Coleman, **Finance Officer**

Agenda Items #1 and #2: MEETING CALLED to ORDER:

At 8:00 A.M., Chairman Sammie Jacobs called the meeting to order. The invocation was delivered by Vice Chairman Kipling Godwin.

INTRODUCTION and WELCOME of STEVEN W. FOWLER, the NEW COLUMBUS COUNTY ATTORNEY:

Chairman Jacobs extended a warm welcome to Steven W. Fowler, the new Columbus County Attorney, and stated today was Mr. Fowler's first official day as such. Mr. Fowler stated he was looking forward to the challenge.

Agenda Item #3: CONSIDERATION of the MANAGEMENT FORM of GOVERNMENT:

Chairman Jacobs stated the purpose of this Special Called/Emergency Meeting was for the consideration of the Management Form of Government and the appointment of an Interim Columbus County Administrator and/or Columbus County Manager.

Commissioner Memory made a motion to retain the Management Form of Government, as had been established, by Ordinance, in 1983. This motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Godwin, Commissioner Dutton and Commissioner Prevatte, and unanimously carried.

COMMENT from PRIVATE CITIZEN:

Mr. George Baysden, private citizen, stated he was glad the Columbus County Commissioners had the insight to keep the Manager Form of Government, and suggested that the Commissioners allow the Manager to conduct the appropriate business without interference.

RECESS REGULAR SESSION and enter into CLOSED SESSION in ACCORDANCE with N.C.G.S. §143-318.11 (6):

At 8:09 A.M. Commissioner Memory made a motion to recess Regular Session and enter into Closed Session in accordance with N.C.G.S. §143-318.11 (6), seconded by Commissioner McKenzie. The motion so carried.

No official action was taken.

ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION and resume REGULAR SESSION:

At 8:31 A.M., Commissioner Dutton made a motion to adjourn Closed Session and resume Regular Session, seconded by Commissioner Norris. The motion so carried.

Agenda Item #4: APPOINTMENT - APPOINTMENT of INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR -or- COUNTY MANAGER:

Vice Chairman made a motion to appoint Jim Varner as the Interim Columbus County Manager, on a day-by-day basis with terms to be negotiated by Chairman Sammie Jacobs and Steven W. Fowler, Columbus County Attorney, with the consent of the Board of Commissioners, seconded by Commissioner McKenzie. The motion so carried.

Vice Chairman Godwin stated the following information relative to the credentials and appointment of the Interim Columbus County Manager:

- Former Manager of Brunswick County;
- Served some time in Davidson County;
- Has over thirty (30) years of experience;
- Chairman Jacobs, Commissioner McKenzie and myself had a lengthy discussion with Mr. Varner at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners 98th Annual Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina this past weekend;
- He comes highly recommended by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Executive Director, Ron Aycok, and also Robert Hester, who is our Regional Consultant out of Bladen County;
- We feel Mr. Varner will do us an excellent job moving us forward until we can find a full-time permanent Manager replacement for our County Manager position; **and**
- We will be bringing Mr. Varner on board as soon as possible.

Commissioner Prevatte stated the following relative to Mr. Varner:

- Mr. Varner is not someone who will be seeking the job as the Columbus County Manager;
- This is a retired person who is going to be here temporarily to help bridge the gap between the old County Manager and the new County Manager.
- We could not leave the seat vacant; **and**
- We needed a leader.

Commissioner McKenzie stated it helped the County Commissioners to have an experienced person in place, it gives us time because he is not pushed and the Board is not pushed, so we can take the time necessary to find a Manager who is suitable to do the day-by-day operations Columbus County needs, and the Board can be satisfied with.

Commissioner Memory stated this action did not reflect on any of the present staff we have on board now, and they will continue to do their jobs as they have done them in the past several months, very efficiently, and this County will continue to run as smoothly as it ever has. The Board thought the influx of new ideas for a short period of time and a leader at the helm would be the best possible scenario for Columbus County.

Agenda Item #5: ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:35 A.M., Commissioner Dutton made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman Godwin. The motion so carried.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

SAMMIE JACOBS, Chairman