

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
PUBLIC HEARING and SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

**Thursday, July 16, 2015  
9:00 A.M. and 9:30 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 conducting a Public Hearing and a Special Called Regular Session.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Trent Burroughs, **Chairman**  
Ricky Bullard, **Vice Chairman**  
James E. Prevatte  
Giles E. Byrd  
P. Edwin Russ  
Charles T. McDowell

**APPOINTEES PRESENT:**

William S. Clark, **County Manager**  
Mike Stephens, **County Attorney**  
June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**  
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

**COMMISSIONER ABSENT:**

Amon E. McKenzie (**Public Hearing**)

**9:00 AM  
PUBLIC HEARING**

**PUBLIC HEARING CALLED to ORDER:**

At 9:00 A.M., Chairman Burroughs opened the Public Hearing on Contracting to Make an Economic Development Incentive Grant to Assist in the Purchase of the Assets of Carolina Southern Railroad Company. The purpose of this Public Hearing is to consider the payment of the incentive grant of \$1,800,000.00 in one (1) lump sum payment, and the sum will be funded from the County General Fund.

**READING of POLICY on COMMENTS at PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

Chairman Burroughs requested that Michael H. Stephens, Columbus County Attorney, orally read the Policy on Comments At Public Hearings. Mr. Stephens orally read the policy in its entirety.

**COMMENTS:**

Chairman Burroughs opened the floor for comments. The following comments were delivered.

1. **Dennis Worley, Attorney:** stated the following:
  - I am here on behalf of Interstate Railroad Commission, and Commissioner Byrd and William Clark have served on this committee;
  - I am not here on behalf of R.J. Corman, I am here on behalf of the Interstate Railroad Commission who is recommending and endorsing R.J. Corman for the short line operation from Mullins to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina;
  - R.J. Corman is an operation from Lexington, Kentucky, and the lines from Mississippi and Pennsylvania;
  - R.J. Cornam is spending approximately \$10 million and they are stating that it will take another \$2 to \$5 million more too get the lines up and running;
  - Boone Adkin, a mediator out of Florence, South Carolina, was able to get with the parties involved and work out the deals of the funds;
  - Each party involved need to protect itself, and a Memorandum of Understanding between R.J. Corman and each county need to agree;
  - As part of that agreement, they will have to give you a first lien on the track system; **and**
  - They have Bill Henderson on the ground talking to the parties involved, and I would like for you to hear from these gentlemen that are here.
  
2. **Lex Johnson, Atlantic Corporation:** stated the following:

- I am here on behalf of Atlantic Corporation;
- It is our goal to get the rail back into operation and it is cheaper to ship by rail in lieu of by truck;
- When we had rail service, we ran approximately 50-80 rail cars per month; **and**
- I thank you for hearing what I had to say.

3. **Lattie McCoy, Ply-Gem Building Products:** stated the following:

- Our company is headquartered in Cary, North Carolina;
- I am with the fence and rail division in Fair Bluff;
- Our raw materials are transported to us by rail into Fayetteville, North Carolina, and they in turn ship them to us by truck;
- Having rail service is a sign of growth; **and**
- I encourage you to get the rail system going which will be very beneficial.

4. **Commissioner James E. Prevatte:** stated the following:

- I have two (2) questions that need to be answered and they are - have all the companies been contacted and are they interested, and is there call back clauses in the Memorandum of Understanding?
- Dennis Worley stated the all the companies have been contacted and are interested and there are call back clauses included in the Memorandum of Understanding.

**PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED:**

At 9:27 P.M., Commissioner Prevatte made a motion to closed the Public Hearing, seconded by Vice Chairman Bullard. The motion unanimously passed.

**9:30 A.M.  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Trent Burroughs, **Chairman**  
Ricky Bullard, **Vice Chairman**  
Amon E. McKenzie  
James E. Prevatte  
Giles E. Byrd  
P. Edwin Russ  
Charles T. McDowell

**APPOINTEES PRESENT:**

William S. Clark, **County Manager**  
Mike Stephens, **County Attorney**  
June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**  
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

**CALLED to ORDER:**

At 9:30 A.M., Chairman Burroughs called the Special Meeting to order and stated the purpose of the Special Meeting was to consider the funds for the Economic Development Incentive Grant for the Carolina Southern Railroad Company.

**CAROLINA SOUTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY INCENTIVE GRANT:**

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Russ made a motion for the \$1.8 million for Carolina Southern Railroad Company be made into one (1) lump sum and the funds would be taken out of the General Fund Balance, seconded by Commissioner Prevatte.

**STATEMENT for RECORD by COMMISSIONER GILES E. BYRD:**

Commissioner Byrd made the following statement for the record: I will sustain from voting on this matter due to the fact that I have served on the committee and I own a spur over at Bird Cage, it would be in my best interest to sustain from voting on this matter.

The following roll-call vote was taken with the following results:

**AYES:** Chairman Burroughs, Vice Chairman Bullard, Commissioners McKenzie, Prevatte,

Russ and McDowell; **and**

**SUSTAIN:** Commissioner Byrd

The motion passes on a six (6) to one (1) vote.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 9:15 A.M., Commissioner Prevatte made a motion to adjourn the Special Called Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

**APPROVED:**

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**JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board**

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**TRENT BURROUGHS, Chairman**