

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
SPECIAL SESSION
TUESDAY JULY 24, 2012

At 3:05 p.m., the Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County met in special session with Commissioner President Rex Simpkins, Commissioner Vice President Charles F. Fisher, Commissioner Craig N. Mathies, Sr., Commissioner Jerry S. Boston and Commissioner Randy Laird.

County Administrator-Clerk Ralph D. Taylor, Executive Secretary Lory E. Ebron, Mayor of Crisfield P.J. Purnell were also present.

Mr. Taylor began by introducing Mayor Purnell to the Board, noting that he was present at today's meeting to discuss a matter regarding Sherwin-Williams.

Mayor Purnell began by explaining that back in the 1960's a 40-year lease agreement was signed between the City of Crisfield and Sherwin-Williams for use of the facility. As part of the agreement, any improvements or maintenance were to be performed by Sherwin-Williams. Mayor Purnell advised that all original agreements made within the lease have been met. Mayor Purnell continued, noting that the company had chosen to use an \$850,000 grant for a new production line here at the Crisfield location rather than Columbus Ohio. Mayor Purnell stated that for the last 10-15 years, personal property tax had not been collected, however the county has always collected personal property tax, totaling approximately \$76,000 per year. Mayor Purnell stated that there are currently 176 employees at the facility now, with approximately 50-60% of those employees living in the county. Mayor Purnell continued, noted that previously Sherwin-Williams had requested a 10 year abatement, to which he said they settled for a 2 year abatement, with an additional 2 years abatement if the plant remains open. Mayor Purnell then requested the Boards consideration to be agreeable to allow Sherwin-Williams a 50% abatement to share in the cost to keep the 176 jobs, with the potential of the business to grow if it stays. Commissioner Fisher questioned if Mayor Purnell is asking for a tax abatement on personal property or real estate tax. Mayor Purnell replied both. Mr. Taylor briefly explained county code regarding tax abatement, noting that the County may not have the authority to abate real estate taxes. Commissioner Laird noted that there may be more potential to grant an abatement to Sherwin-Williams than there was for the other two companies who have received abatements in the past (Greenlight Biofuels and Tom Johnson). Commissioner President Simpkins asked

why Sherwin-Williams did not want to renew the lease. Mayor Purnell replied that he has asked them why and all they have said is that they want to acquire the property. County Administrator Taylor asked Mayor Purnell if Sherwin-Williams is in the "Enterprise Zone". Mayor Purnell acknowledged receiving the information regarding Enterprise Zones from Mr. Taylor, saying he read the description, but questioned if it is a state law, and whether it applies to the County or City. Mayor Purnell said that he understands the situation with the economy, and that he has to run the City of Crisfield on nothing. He is looking for the Board's cooperation to share, and to help Sherwin-Williams to stay in Crisfield. Mayor Purnell noted that he needs to understand the County's position on the matter and if they are willing to deal before he goes back to Sherwin-Williams. Commissioner Laird advised Mayor Purnell that a representative from Sherwin-Williams should come before the Board to make the request. Commissioner Boston asked Mayor Purnell how City Council feels about the matter. Mayor Purnell stated that they are concerned about revenue, but concerned about jobs as well, noting that it will be a devastating blow to Crisfield if Sherwin-Williams were to leave. Mayor Purnell closed by saying the City is getting a Real Estate analyst to look at the trends in the industry. Commissioner Fisher advised Mayor Purnell that the Board would like time to research the matter further.

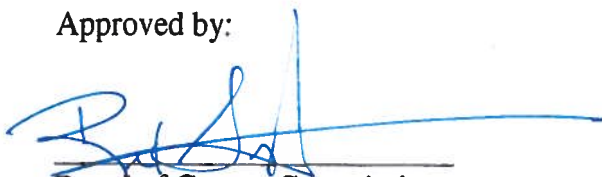
With no further business, on a motion by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Boston, the meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Lory E. Ebron,
Executive Secretary

Approved by:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County