

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
NOVEMBER 19, 2012**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on November 19, 2012, 6:00 pm, Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Rd., Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman
Doug Cody, Vice Chair
Mark Jones, Commissioner
Charles Elders, Commissioner
Joe Cowan, Commissioner

Chuck Wooten, County Manager
J. K. Coward, Jr., Co. Attorney
Pat Parris, Clerk to Board

Chairman Debnam called the meeting to order.

AGENDA: Chairman Debnam amended the Agenda by adding Audit Report for FY2011-12 and a Resolution Designating an Ordinance Enforcement Official. Commissioner Elders moved to approve the amended Agenda. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Cowan moved to approve the Minutes of two Public Hearings and Regular Meeting of November 5, 2012. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Debnam, Commissioners Jones, Elders and Cody thanked Commissioner Cowan for his service as a Commissioner and stated it has been an honor to have served with him.

(1) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT: Mr. Wooten reported:

(a) East Carolina University School of Dental Medicine: The groundbreaking ceremony scheduled on Monday, December 3rd at 11:00 am.

(b) Blue Ridge Dressing Rooms and Weight Room: The general contractor has begun mobilization on the site. Similar activity should occur at Smoky Mountain High School in the next week or so. The pre-construction meeting was held on November 7th and the general contractor and primary subs were present to receive final directions and instructions from the designer, John Cort.

(c) Cashiers Sidewalk Project: The recommended contractor for this project is Site Development Corporation. Unfortunately, the low bidder did not provide all the mandatory information related to minority business participation and was disqualified by the engineer. The bid of \$221,186.00 is \$22,345.43 greater than the funds remaining in the NCDOT grant. There are other uncommitted funds for this capital project and he would like to move forward with awarding the contract. The construction period is 45 days.

(d) Cashiers Recreation Center: The final installation of flooring is to take place next week and the general contractor has begun final clean up of the project. The equipment delivery is scheduled for the first week of December so it is anticipated the facility will be open to the public in January 2013. The Recreation Department has advertised one position and will be advertising another in the next couple of weeks. A formal dedication and ribbon cutting event will be scheduled when all work is completed.

(e) Human Resources Director: Danielle Wittekind has accepted the Director of Human Resources position and will start work on December 3rd. She and her husband currently reside in Macon County and will be relocating to Jackson County. Her starting salary is \$57,221.91.

(f) Employee Recognition and Holiday Luncheon: December 7th at the Heritage Dining Room in the Senior Center.

(g) AdvantageWest Economic Development Meeting: He attended the regional meeting on November 14th. The reports indicate that 2012 has been a better year for business development with more inquiries about available buildings and building sites. The current desire profile for an existing building is 100-150k sq feet, 20' ceiling, 20' eaves, and 10-30 acres. Based on conversations with other counties, Jackson County is on the right track with what has been done so far with development of a comprehensive economic development strategy and it will be important to continue this work in 2013 to get a formal structure in place.

(h) BalsamWest Acquisition of Metrostat Assets: A tentative closing date of November 28th has been established. This process has taken far longer than anyone anticipated; however, there were a number of legal issues that took time to resolve. He continues to hear from folks across the County about their needs for high speed internet and in some cases their need for phone service that was previously provided by Metrostat. He remains optimistic that BalsamWest and DNet will work to address these deficiencies if sufficient demand exists for the services.

(i) Essentials of County Government: The UNC School of Government has scheduled a two day training opportunity for newly elected and continuing commissioners in Asheville on January 9th and 10th. This is a great opportunity for networking with your fellow commissioners across western North Carolina and will satisfy any requirement related to ethics training.

(2) CONSENT AGENDA: Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented the October finance/tax collector/refund reports and 3 budget amendments for approval.

Motion: *Commissioner Cody moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(3) AUDIT REPORT for FISCAL YEAR ENDING 6/30/12: Mitch Crisp of Dixon Hughes PLLC presented a summary of the audit report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2012. The audit reflects general fund revenues exceeded expenditures before transfer out to other funds. After transfers, the general fund balance increased \$211,000. The unreserved fund balance available for appropriations of approximately \$18 million represents approximately 33% of general fund expenditures which compares favorably with similar size counties reporting an average of approximately 26% in recent years. The report contains an unqualified opinion and the county is in compliance with all federal and state program requirements. The property tax collection was 95.79% which is slightly below the statewide average (95.81%) for comparable counties.

Motion: *Commissioner Cowan moved to accept the audit report. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(4) ORDINANCE DESIGNATING WEBSTER METHODIST CHURCH AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK: Gerald Green, Planning Director, stated the Historic Preservation Commission recommends that the Webster Methodist Church be designated as a local historic landmark. The designation report has been reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office. A public hearing was held on November 19th and no public comments were made.

Motion: *Commissioner Cowan moved to adopt the Ordinance. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(5) TRANSIT – ELDERLY and DISABLED OPERATING & CAPITAL 5310 PROGRAM GRANT (R12-32): A public hearing was held on November 19th and no public comments were made.

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(6) TRANSIT – COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM GRANT (R12-33): A public hearing was held on November 19th and no public comments were made.

Motion: *Commissioner Cody moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(7) TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY RESOLUTION (R12-34): The Resolution is for the purpose of creating a Tourism Development Authority (TDA). A draft Resolution was discussed and revised during a Work Session held earlier today. Revisions include:

Section 2: Appointment of Membership

A. The Jackson County Tourism Development Authority shall consist of fifteen (15) members who shall be appointed and approved by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. *They shall also be voting residents and/or taxpayers of the County or employees of a Jackson County business that collects Jackson County Occupancy Tax or pays Jackson County Property Tax.*

Section 11: County Government and the TDA

B. *Funds shall not be used to create and pay positions from TDA funds unless approved in advance by the TDA Board and the Jackson County Board of Commissioners.*

Motion: *Commissioner Cody moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by a vote of 4-1 with Commissioner Jones voting “nay”.*

(8) ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL RESOLUTION (R12-35): The Resolution designates the County Manager or his designee as the official person responsible for enforcing ordinances.

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(9) RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD:

Motion: *Commissioner Cowan moved to appoint:*
Arnold Nicholson Cashiers/Glenville Park District 2 year term
Jack Debnam Board of Commissioners Term of Office
Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Informal Comments by Public: Henry Hoche stated the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce supports the creation of a Tourism Development Authority. The Cashiers Chamber will participate and do everything possible to make the Authority work for the benefit of the entire County. Tourism is needed and the possibility for the development of capital improvements will be added benefit. He commended the Commissioners for pursuing the issue.

Press Conference

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Patsy C. Parris, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman