

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JUNE 17, 2013**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on June 17, 2013, 6:00 pm, Justice & Administration Bldg., 401 Grindstaff Cove Rd., Room A201, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman	Chuck Wooten, County Manager
Doug Cody, Vice Chair	J. K. Coward, Jr., County Attorney
Mark Jones, Commissioner	Pat Parris, Clerk to Board
Charles Elders, Commissioner	
Vicki Greene, Commissioner (arrived late/dental emergency)	

Chairman Debnam called the meeting to order.

AGENDA: Chairman Debnam amended the Agenda by adding Schedule a Public Hearing for Subdivision Ordinance Amendments, Schedule a Public Hearing for a Water Recharge Ordinance and delete Social Services Board appointment. Commissioner Elders moved to approve the amended Agenda. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Jones moved to approve the Minutes of two Public Hearings and Regular Meeting of June 3, 2013. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

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

(a) Appalachian Regional Commission Grant Application: Ryan Sherby will submit a grant application on behalf of Jackson County and Swain County for funds to support the construction of two turntables. This application follows the submission of a pre-application. If approved, a local match and local ownership will be required. The County is not obligated to accept the grant. If approved, the Commissioners will have an opportunity to review the terms and conditions and determine if the grant is appropriate for the County.

(b) COPS Grant Application: The Sheriff's Dept. has submitted a grant application for three additional school resource officers. It is highly unlikely that the Sheriff's Dept. will be successful in receiving funding for all three officers based on the level of funding available for the entire nation. Congressman Meadows has agreed to provide a letter of support for the application. If approved, the grant would provide funding for three years and the County would be obligated to continue funding at the end of the grant. The application does not obligate the County. If approved, the Commissioners will have an opportunity to review the terms and conditions and determine if the grant is appropriate for the County.

(c) Construction Update: All the school projects including the Cullowhee Valley roof project are moving forward and are currently on schedule. The two renovation projects at Dillsboro and Cashiers continue to make progress. A major electrical outage was experienced at the permitting and code enforcement office in Cashiers over the past week. Evidently, during all the construction activities in that area over the past couple of years the underground service line was damaged and a total failure occurred. Emergency Management provided a generator to power the electrical system including the air conditioning systems and a temporary power line was constructed between the recreation center and permitting office to power the phone systems and internet for all the county buildings in the area. This new service line was constructed by maintenance staff and all systems are now up and running. This is a good example of how County offices work together to resolve a problem.

(d) Social Services Commission: He received an inquiry about state level appointments to the Social Services Board. By statute it is five member board, the Commissioners appoint two members, the Social Services Commission appoints two members, and the four board members select a fifth member. The Social Services Commission is a statewide policy committee appointed by the Governor; consequently, those appointments have been referred to as governor's appointments.

(e) NC State Treasurer/Local Government Commission: During public comments at the last meeting there was a statement concerning the fact that the County had not submitted an application to the Local Government Commission (LGC) in support of an economic development incentive package. He contacted Vance Holloman of LGC who confirmed that LGC is the entity that must approve any debt issuance; however, unless debt is issued the LGC is not involved with local economic development incentive packages.

(f) Economic Development Trip: AdvantageWest has organized a trip for representatives from Jackson, Macon, and Cherokee counties to Atlanta and visit a group of developers who search for buildings and/or property that they can market to their commercial clients. This meeting will take place during the first week of August and if the County does not have an Economic Development Director on board by that date, he will represent the County at the meeting. Like most business transactions, relationships are important and this will offer the opportunity to begin developing relationships with these developers and to introduce them to Jackson County. Finally, the job announcement for an economic development director is ready to go and will be released as soon as the budget is approved.

(g) Internet Survey: The survey document has been developed and a press release is ready. There will be an on-line link and copies of the survey will be available at the libraries, recreation centers, and fire departments. Local media will be utilized to announce the survey. He also plans to ask the chambers of commerce to notify their members about the survey.

(h) Employee Health Insurance: The open enrollment portion of the health insurance program was a success. The County partnered with WestCare for the lab work related to the wellness check-ups. Hopefully, the overall health profile of employees will continue to show improvements and based on 11 months of activity it appears the total FY 12-13 health expenditures will be less than the previous year. Emphasis will continue on disease management and to encourage employees to talk with Crescent case workers when dealing with difficult medical decisions. These are valuable services provided as part of the contract with Crescent. Good news was received about the fixed portion of the health insurance program as it will be less in FY 13-14 than the current year because of favorable quotes from the reinsurance agencies.

(i) Fire Tax: Michael Forbis is scheduling a meeting during the month of July with the fire departments to discuss the possibility of a fire tax.

(2) CONSENT AGENDA:

(a) Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented Finance, Tax Collector and Refund Reports for

May 2013, 5 budget amendments, and a Capital Project Ordinance for Cullowhee Valley

School Roof in the amount of \$1,000,543.

(b) Mr. Wooten presented 10 permit applications for firework displays:

July 4: Camp MerrieWood
Chattooga Club
Friends of Lake Glenville
Jackson County – Dillsboro
Mountaintop

July 5: Bear Lake Reserve
Jackson County Cashiers
Sundrop at Caney Fork

July 6: County Club of Sapphire Valley
Wade Hampton

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by a vote of 4-0 (Commissioner Greene absent).*

(3) RETIRED EMPLOYEES INSURANCE PLAN: Mr. Wooten presented an amended policy that applies to all Jackson County employees hired on or after July 1, 2013 in order to be eligible for insurance at retirement as follows:

I. Regular Employees enrolled in Local Government Retirement System:

1. Attainment of 60 years of age and accumulation of **20 cumulative vesting credit years with Jackson County.**
2. Accumulation of **15 cumulative vesting credit years with Jackson County** for any employee eligible for disability retirement insurance coverage.
3. Any age and accumulation of 30 cumulative vesting credit years with **20 of 30 vesting credit years with Jackson County.**

II. Law Enforcement employees enrolled in the Local Law Enforcement Officers Retirement System:

1. Attainment of 55 years of age and accumulation of **20 cumulative vesting credit years with Jackson County.**
2. Accumulation of **15 cumulative vesting credit years with Jackson County** for any employee eligible for disability retirement insurance coverage.
3. Any age and accumulation of 30 cumulative vesting credit years with **20 of 30 vesting credit years with Jackson County.**

III. Additional provisions for all employees:

1. The employee must be an active employee at the time of retirement to be eligible for the benefit.
2. The retired employee remains on the regular plan until eligible for Medicare when coverage is changed to a Medicare supplement.
3. Coverage for eligible dependents of retired employees may also be continued, but dependents may not be added after the retirement of the Jackson County employee. The retired employee must pay the **full current** cost of dependent premium.
4. Coverage for a surviving spouse and eligible children of a deceased retired employee may remain on the policy. The surviving spouse must pay the **full current** cost of dependent premium.

Motion: *Commissioner Cody moved to approve the amended retired employees' insurance plan. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by a vote of 4-0 (Commissioner Greene absent).*

(4) **SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS**: A Public Hearing was scheduled on July 1st at 1:40 p.m. for public input on proposed amendments to the Subdivision Ordinance.

(5) **WATER RECHARGE ORDINANCE**: A Public Hearing was scheduled on July 1st at 1:50 p.m. for public input on a proposed Water Recharge Ordinance,

(6) **FY2013-14 BUDGET ORDINANCE**: Darlene Fox presented the FY2013-14 Budget Ordinance. The budget is \$60,180,547 and the tax rate remains at \$0.28. A public hearing was held on June 3rd. The following changes were made to the proposed budget:

- (a) Tourism Development Authority – removed (TDA did not submit a budget)
- (b) Public Works Dept. - a reduction of \$1,000 in salaries (an oversight)
- (c) Fire Depts. – appropriated an additional 2% for each dept. for a total of \$15,593
- (d) Cashiers Senior Center Operations – added \$9,000 (error in request)
- (e) Library – changed line item designation to “Fontana Regional Library” with no restrictions (removed line item designations of Jackson County Library, Albert Carlton Library, Reading Rover)
- (f) Contingency – reduction of \$23,593

Motion: *Commissioner Jones moved to adopt the FY2013-14 Budget Ordinance. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by a vote of 4-0 (Commissioner Greene absent).*

(Commissioner Greene joined the meeting)

(7) **COWARD HIGHWAY DEDICATION - AMENDED RESOLUTION (R12-14)**: Mr. Wooten stated that approximately a year ago a Resolution was adopted to name a section of Highway 107 in Tuckaseegee in recognition of Mr. Orville Coward and in memory of Mr. Kent Coward. DOT has approved the request; however, the Board was requested to reconsider the length of the dedicated area and provide a more detailed description of the Coward family. The amended Resolution modifies the dedicated area and Exhibit A describes the Coward family. A dedication ceremony is scheduled for the last Saturday in June.

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

(8) **CULLOWHEE BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS RESOLUTION (R13-16)**: Gerald Green, Planning Director, stated the bridge over the Tuckaseegee River in Cullowhee is scheduled for replacement by DOT in 2015. The bridge replacement offers the County the opportunity to provide for pedestrian access under the bridge which will enable future development of greenway connections along the Tuckaseegee River. The design and construction costs to accommodate pedestrian passages under the bridge will be approximately \$200,000 and the County may be required to contribute as much as 20% (approximately \$40,000). The required funds will be provided to NCDOT at the time of construction of the bridge. He presented a Resolution which states a funding commitment by the County for the project.

Motion: *Commissioner Greene moved to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Cody seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(9) TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD:

Motion: *Commissioner Greene moved to reappoint Eddie Maney to a 3 year term on the Transit Advisory Board. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(10) COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR LONG TERM CARE:

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to reappoint Mary Moody and Peggy Revis to 3 year terms on the Community Advisory Committee for Long Term Care. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

Informal Comments by Public:

(a) Carl Iobst of Cullowhee stated the new advertising campaign developed for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians expands the Tribe’s reach as one of North Carolina’s top tourist locations. Plans are to build a smaller casino in Murphy and, within two years, build an indoor recreation center with another 300 room hotel. Alan Harper owns three excursion railroads and it is important that he come forth with more information. A white water park or something similar in Dillsboro appears to be a very good idea. Dillsboro needs to diversify and not just depend on one concept such as the train, even though it is a good thing.

(b) Ralph Slaughter of Cashiers stated the 2014 Republican Convention will be held at the Cherokee Convention Center and it is anticipated that 2,000 - 2,400 people will attend. He suggested the Board contact the GOP Chairs and extend a formal invitation welcoming them to western North Carolina, encourage them to spend an extra day and see what Jackson County has to offer and perhaps visit Sylva, Dillsboro, and Cashiers.

(c) Marie Leatherwood of Sylva stated it appears the \$700,000 GSMR loan agreement has not had a proper collateral financial investigation.

(d) Bill Gross of Cullowhee stated that over 765 people who responded to a survey want an indoor swimming pool. Only Cherokee, Waynesville and Franklin have indoor pools. Pools are very helpful for rehabilitation purposes, for veterans and swim teams. There appears to be sufficient space available at the recreation center in Cullowhee. He suggested having a preliminary feasibility study done to see what constructing a pool would entail.

Press Conference

CLOSED SESSION:

Motion: *Chairman Debnam moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Legal. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried.*

Chairman Debnam called the regular meeting back to order and stated no action was taken in closed session except approval of closed session minutes.

There being no further business, Commissioner Cody moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Patsy C. Parris, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman