

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
SEPTEMBER 02, 2014**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on September 02, 2014, 2:00 pm, Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman	Chuck Wooten, County Manager
Doug Cody, Vice Chair	Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board
Charles Elders, Commissioner	J. K. Coward, Jr., County Attorney
Mark Jones, Commissioner (via speaker phone)	
Vicki Greene, Commissioner	

Chairman Debnam called the meeting to order.

PROCLAMATION HONORING FIREFIGHTERS: Chairman Debnam read a Proclamation honoring firefighters. He thanked all firefighters for their service to the County.

Motion: *Commissioner Cody moved to proclaim September 7-13 as Firefighters Week in Jackson County. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried.*

AGENDA: Chairman Debnam amended the Agenda by adding Tax Collector Appointment. Commissioner Elders moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Jones moved to approve the minutes of a Work Session, Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of August 18, 2014. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(1) **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Chairman Debnam stated he participated in Western Carolina University's 125th Anniversary celebration which will continue through December. Dedication of Phase 1 of the Greenway is scheduled on September 15th at 4:00.

(2) **COUNTY MANAGER REPORT:** Mr. Wooten reported:

(a) **2015 Legislative Goals:** He is gathering information about concerns that the Board may choose to submit to NCACC as legislative requests for the 2015 NC General Assembly. The Fontana Regional Library has asked the County to submit a request that funding from the State for libraries be restored to the pre-2011 level of \$15.7 million. They incurred another reduction in the current budget which reduced the state support to approximately \$12 million. The School Board has at least two issues that need support. First, funding for drivers education was eliminated and school districts are limited in the amount they may charge for the service. This service is mandated; consequently, the local system must utilize local funds to offset the deficit in this program. It would seem the local schools should at least be able to charge an amount that covers the cost or they should receive state funding to support the service. This has the appearance of an unfunded mandate. The school systems are not receiving adequate funds to support their yellow bus transportation system which is a service provided by the State. Unfortunately, the only option is to use local funds to supplement the state funds. Current funding only covers about 80% of the cost. He understands part of the issue relates to how reimbursements are calculated and there is not any supplement provided for costs associated with mountainous terrain and low density of students. The NCACC Legislative Goals Conference is scheduled for January 15-16, 2015 and the Board must submit its requests on or before September 19th.

(b) **TDA Executive Director**: Rich Price and he met with Robert Jumper and Clifford Meads to discuss the possibility of establishing an executive director position for the TDA. He reminded them that the establishing resolution of the TDA required approval from both the TDA Board and the Commissioners before any funds were expended for personnel. They are at the very early stages of this discussion. He also reminded them that the Commissioners need their recommendations for TDA Board appointments in November since terms begin in January. The Commissioners will also need to appoint a chairman.

(c) **NCACC Executive Director**: David Thompson, current executive director of the NCACC, has announced his resignation to accept a new position with the National Association of Counties (NACO). Ronnie Beale was sworn in as president of NCACC and will serve in that capacity for the new-year and will play a very important role in selecting the next executive director.

(d) **Mountain Projects**: They have provided a summary of how County funds are utilized in their programs and have expressed their appreciation to the Commissioners for their continued support. Commissioner Elders represents Jackson County on their Board of Directors.

(e) **Justice and Administrative Building Security**: Judge Letts has provided a letter setting forth his expectations for enhancements to the security for the Justice Center as of January 2015. As he points out, these discussions have been going on since 2006 when a task force was established and some modifications were implemented. Those modifications did not fully address all the security needs of the building and he is now asking that action be taken to provide the following: a single point of entrance by the public into the building passing through a staffed check point which would include a metal detection system; improved exterior cameras; regular daily building inspections by the Sheriff's department; and installation of electronic locks for staff to access the building. In addition, he has suggested that the County request the NC Sheriff's Association to perform a security assessment of the building and Chief Deputy Chip Hall has advised that this has tentatively been scheduled to take place in early October. Justice Center security will be on the September 15th work session for further discussion and recommendations

(f) **Upcoming Events**: "Cash Mob" in support of Sylva merchants on September 5th from 5:30 to 6:30pm, Dillsboro 125th Year Celebration on September 6th, and ribbon cutting for Phase 1 of the Jackson County Greenway on September 15th at 4:00 pm. The joint meeting of the Jackson County governmental units is scheduled tonight, September 2nd at 6:00 pm in the Heritage Dining Room at the Aging Center.

(g) **Cashiers Fire Department MOU**: The MOU has been signed by the Cashiers Fire Department to receive an annual allocation of funds rather than a county employee. The annual allocation of \$43,158.05 is based on step one of the pay plan and all related fringe benefits.

(h) **Main Street**: Recently, an engineer for the Hooper's Restaurant building's insurance company evaluated the properties and determined that the exterior walls are structurally sound. Consequently, the exterior walls will not have to come down but will be demolished from the inside and rebuilt. The owner plans to rebuild in the near future. Motion Makers had damage as well and has relocated to the former Hooper's Building Supply. Black Rock sustained damage and hopes to reopen soon. Two businesses on backstreet in the lower level of the Hooper's building have moved. It is fortunate that the building does not have to be torn down so as to preserve the character of the town.

(3) **CONSENT AGENDA**: Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented a Budget Ordinance Amendment for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 for approval.

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

(4) **SMART START GRANT**: Paula Carden, Health Director, stated that Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC) are health professionals who know about child health, development, health and safety in child care settings. CCHC's partner with child care providers to:

- Assess the health and safety needs and practices in the child care facility.
- Develop strategies for inclusion of children with special care needs.
- Establish and review health policies and procedures
- Manage and prevent injuries and infectious diseases.
- Connect families with community health resources.
- Provide health education for staff, families and children.

The local Health Dept. has been asked by the Region A Partnership for Children (the local Smart Start Agency) to lead the CCHC program for this area. It will begin in Jackson and Haywood with possible expansion to additional counties west of Jackson. It is a newer model of utilizing health educators vs. nurses. The health department has been selected because it has always been a very good steward of finances and program requirements. Health departments are good locations because of the collaborations needed with the other professionals in public health such as nursing (care plans, immunizations and communicable diseases), environmental health (inspections of facilities, communicable disease) and clinical care for children or families. By expanding the agency and leading the program in the west, Jackson will have the ability to ensure its centers have CCHC's help. Jackson will have the ability to train staff to increase the "STAR" rating of the child care centers, thus increasing better child care and funding for these centers. This will also allow the county to have a connection to childcare centers not only within the borders of Jackson County but also in surrounding areas. This is important for communicable disease outbreaks. When a disease outbreak occurs in one county, it most likely will cross county borders because parents and staff work in other communities. The county will be able to maintain resources in Jackson by being the regional hub for this program. Childcare Centers are important to everyone because without proper childcare families cannot provide for themselves nor would communities have a dependable workforce.

Smart Start Budget		In-Kind Funds
Public Health Educator I	\$ 48,160.11 (salary + benefits)	
Public Health Educator I	48,160.11 (salary + benefits)	
Public Health Nurse 20%	13,274.59 (salary + benefits)	
Supervisor		\$12,362.96
Office Space		5,116.00
Postage		600.00
Supplies	1,000.00	
Meeting Expense	1,000.00	
Travel	2,000.00	2,000.00
TOTAL	\$113,044.80	\$ 20,078.96

Motion: Commissioner Greene moved to accept the Smart Start Grant. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(5) **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE:** Rich Price, Economic Development Director, presented the following "2014 Focus" using a relationship driven approach to ensure that the local Economic Development foundational building blocks are identified and in place:

(a) **Business Development:**

- New Business Development – Leads and Proposals
 - 22 Leads CYTD – Direct Inquiry, Adv. West, Commerce, Site Consultant
 - 13 viable leads for active follow-up/proposal.
 - ConMet Agreement
 - 3 current "active" leads
- New Business Development - Initiatives
 - Mountain West Alliance – Regional Marketing & Recruitment / Experian
 - TWSA Project Committee (physical infrastructure)
 - Business and Industry will consider Incentive Program at next meeting.
 - Entrepreneurial Leadership Team (WCU, SCC, Jackson Public Schools, etc.) will meet in late September to develop strategy.

(b) **Leadership – Civil Social Infrastructure:** Identifying and developing relationships with key community, organizational, and educational leaders that will form an economic development coalition.

(c) **Workforce Development:** Developing partnerships with SCC’s workforce innovations team, NC Division of Workforce Solutions, & local employers to understand the challenges with available and well-trained labor force.

- Currently participating in the Governor’s 1000 in 100 listening and learning initiative.
- Identified & prioritized 21 Jackson County businesses that will be visited and surveyed.
- Each business will be visited by a cross-sectional team of identified participants, led by Economic Development.
- Data will be compiled from all 100 counties at the end of this year, and then used to develop a strategy.

(d) **Professional Development:**

- Completed 3 weeks of study at the NC Rural Center’s Economic Development Institute
- Completed Economic Development course at the NC School of Government in Chapel Hill
- Will be participating in the Development Finance Toolbox course in September at NC School of Government.
- Member of, and have attended NC Economic Development Association mid-winter and annual meetings.
- Meetings with various business owners, county and municipal officials, educational leaders, consultants, and regional and state Economic Development professionals.

(e) **Continuing Projects:**

- Drexel site re-purpose
- Cullowhee River Park
- Downtown Sylva Economic advisory committee
- Dillsboro re-branding advisory committee
- WCU Integrated Marketing advisory committee
- Mountain West Alliance
- Economic Development communications plan
- Website development and re-launch

(6) **GLENVILLE PLANNING INITIATIVE UPDATE:** Gerald Green, Planning Director, stated that a group of residents of the Glenville community has initiated an effort to strengthen their community using the community planning guidelines that have been used by the Village of Cashiers and the 441 Corridor, and that currently are being used by the Cullowhee community. The initiative is in its formative stages, with a core group of 12 – 15 residents compiling information and building support for the effort. This group has been meeting since June. Carolyn Franz is serving as the lead facilitator for the Glenville initiative group. She has requested assistance from the Planning Department and the Cashiers-Glenville-Sapphire Chamber of Commerce; limited assistance is being provided as resources permit. The planning area for the initiative has been identified as the section of NC 107 from Pine Creek Road on the north to Laurel Knob Road (continental divide) on the south. Properties within 200 to 300 feet of NC 107, sometimes more in order to follow property lines, are included in the planning area. Approximately 500 parcels are included in the planning area. He provided a copy of a Lake Glenville Corridor map.

The core Glenville initiative group has formed four subcommittees to address issues identified as important by the community. The subcommittees and a brief statement of their charge:

- Business development – improve the opportunities for existing and new businesses
- Community appearance – work with property owners to improve the appearance of the community
- Transportation – improve the transportation options available in the community, provide sidewalks/opportunities for walking, and work to reduce the speed limit on NC 107 through the community
- Synergy with other communities and governmental entities – develop and/or improve relationships with other communities and entities in Jackson County

Members of the core group are contacting property owners and other members of the community to inform them of the community planning initiative and to solicit their support. This is being done through personal contact and through letters. Petitions are also being circulated to demonstrate support for the initiative, with one petition developed for owners of property located within the identified planning area and another developed for Glenville residents and property owners who live outside the corridor. A community meeting has been scheduled for September 30 at Blue Ridge School to inform community members and other interested persons of the community planning initiative and of the efforts of the core community group. The meeting will start with informal questions and discussion at 5:30 pm and a presentation at 6:00 pm. After informing the community of the planning initiative and soliciting their initial input, the winter will be spent developing additional community support and gathering information about the community. The members of the core group hope that a community vision report for Glenville, similar to the one developed for the Cullowhee community, can be developed in the winter and spring. The realization of this hope is dependent upon the resources available to the community and to the Planning Department.

(7) **MANNA FOOD BANK LINE OF CREDIT:** Mr. Wooten stated that during the budget process, the County received requests from the Community Table and the Gathering Table for support of the meal program and food boxes that both of these entities were currently providing to County residents. He contacted Manna Food Bank about the idea of providing funds to purchase a line of credit for the Community Table, the Gathering Table and United Christian Ministries. The Manna Food Bank advised him that the county could provide a line of credit to entities in Jackson County that were members of their organization. All three entities are current members or have been a member; however, the Gathering Table is an inactive member at this point and would need to go back through the application process with Manna. Based on information from Manna, these entities can obtain significant amounts of food through the County contribution. He recommended that the County allocate \$10,000 of the \$15,000 that was appropriated to the Community Table for a line of credit with Manna Food Bank. This amount is consistent with the funds they expended in 2013 with Manna Food Bank. In addition, he recommended an allocation of \$2,000 to United Christian Ministries for a line of credit with Manna Food Bank. This amount would be funded from the \$25,000 set aside in the current budget for community special needs donations.

Motion: *Commissioner Greene moved to approve a \$2,000 Line of Credit for United Christian Ministries through Manna Food Bank. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(8) **TAX COLLECTOR APPOINTMENT:** Mr. Wooten stated that with the retirement of Beverly Buchanan, Tax Collector, an appointment of someone is necessary to assume the duties until a permanent replacement is approved by the Board. The initial interviews have been conducted and finalists are returning this week to meet with staff, tour the facilities, and to receive information about the County's fringe benefit programs. The interview process is expected to be complete in time to make a recommendation to the Board on September 15th. In accordance with NCGS 105-349, the governing board of each county shall appoint a tax collector to serve until a successor has been appointed and qualified. Acknowledging that a recommendation is planned for a permanent appointment on September 15th, it was recommended that the Board appoint Bobby McMahan, Tax Administrator, as Interim Tax Collector to serve until such time as a permanent appointment is made.

Motion: *Commissioner Cody moved to approve the Interim Tax Collector appointment. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.*

(9) FRANK ALLEN ROAD RESOLUTION (R14-15): Gerald Green, Planning Director, reported that construction activity on and in the area of Frank Allen Road in Cashiers has been completed and NCDOT has been petitioned to accept the addition of the road to the state road system. In order for NCDOT to proceed with the acceptance of the road, a Resolution dedicating the road right-of-way must be approved by the Board of Commissioners. Upon dedication of the right-of-way and addition of the road to the state system, NCDOT will assume responsibility for maintenance of the road. The portion of road to be added to the NCDOT system is approximately 0.09 mile long and extends from approximately the Cashiers Fire Department to approximately the Cashiers-Glenville Recreation Center. The other section of the road is already part of the state road system and maintained by NCDOT. As part of the petition for acceptance of the road as part of the state system, a right-of-way must be dedicated by the County. The width of the right-of-way being dedicated is fifty (50) feet. This right-of-way width can be dedicated without impacting buildings located adjacent to the road. Upon acceptance of this portion of the road into the state road system, all of Frank Allen Road will be a part of the NCDOT state road system.

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

Informal Comments by Public:

Marie Leatherwood of Sylva stated her disapproval of the County Manager, County Attorney and Board of Commissioners decisions.

Press Conference

CLOSED SESSION:

Motion: Chairman Debnam Cody moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Legal and G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5)Real Property. Commissioner Jones 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 the Closed Session Minutes of July 7, 2014.

There being no further business, Commissioner Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman