

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
NOVEMBER 03, 2014**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on November 03, 2014, 2:00 pm, Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman
Doug Cody, Vice Chair
Charles Elders, Commissioner
Mark Jones, Commissioner
Vicki Greene, Commissioner

Chuck Wooten, County Manager
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board
J. K. Coward, Jr., County Attorney

Chairman Debnam called the meeting to order.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: Mr. Wooten recognized James “Jimmy” Ashe who will be retiring effective December 1st with 33 years of service with the Sheriff’s Department.

AGENDA: Chairman Debnam amended the Agenda by adding Closed Session G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Legal and G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5) Real Property. Commissioner Elders moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Jones moved to approve the minutes of a Work Session and Regular Meeting of October 20, 2014. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

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

(a) SCC Capital Funding Request: A letter was submitted by Dr. Tomas on July 7, 2014 advising that the FY 13-14 capital funds were used to balance their operations budget. He also indicated that he would monitor the expenditure activity for the first six months of the fiscal year and provide an update to the Board sometime after the start of the new calendar year. He did suggest that they may have to ask to use capital funds for operating purposes as the result of Macon County discontinuing their support for the Jackson campus operations.

(b) Allocating Expenditures for SCC between Jackson, Macon and Swain: Dr. Tomas hosted a meeting with the county managers to discuss options for allocation those budget items that are common to all three counties but are budgeted in the Jackson campus budget. SCC is evaluating their current budget to identify the positions that provide support services to all three campuses. At this point, SCC has not tracked the amount of time spent by campus; however, it is obvious that all positions SCC Jackson campus budget are not exclusively used on the Jackson campus. A future follow-up meeting will be scheduled to continue the discussions with the goal of having a proposal for the FY 15-16 budget.

(c) Building Permit Trend Report as of September 30, 2014: The County has realized a 3.2% increase in residential building permits as compared to the same period in 2013. Through September, 128 permits were issued and 34 of those permits were considered as high-end homes, which is defined as being homes over 4,000 square feet or with a permit value over \$400,000. Of the 10 western counties included in this report, only Buncombe and Henderson County have issued more residential building permits. Excepting Rutherford County, all counties had a positive growth in permits for the first 9 months of the year. Commercial permits are down for the first 9 months by 10 permits (33 vs. 43). If the large student housing project in Cullowhee is permitted during the fourth quarter then that will make a substantial impact on the commercial building permits.

(d) Visit by Commerce Secretary Decker: Secretary Decker will be visiting the county on the morning of November 13th. He and Rich Price were working on the schedule for her visit and tentatively plan to start the visit with a breakfast of elected officials and WCU officials at the HHS building at 9:00 am. This will give an opportunity to officially welcome her to the county, allow WCU to provide a campus update, and provide an open forum for local leaders to hear about the re-organization of the economic development section in Commerce and to allow the local leaders to ask questions of Secretary Decker. She will be taken to several businesses to allow her to hear first-hand of the challenges they are experiencing.

(e) NCACC Executive Director: Kevin Leonard has been appointed as the new executive director of the NCAAC replacing David Thompson who is leaving to take a job with the National Association of Counties.

(f) Capital Projects: The EOC/911 Call Center is almost complete and should have a certificate of occupancy by mid-November. The actual move to the new facility will be delayed as the result of the grant received to replace all the radio equipment. At this point, the facility should be fully functional by the end of January 2015. The river access areas of Barker's Creek, Webster Baptist Church, and East LaPorte Park are all making good progress. The vaulted toilet is in place at Barkers Creek and the pads and picnic tables should be completed by the middle of November. Most of the work at the Webster Baptist Church access point has been completed and that project should also be finished by mid-November and good progress is also moving forward at East LaPorte Park. The majority of county improvements at these locations are being completed with funds from Duke Energy. The electrical upgrades and new tennis court lights at Mark Watson Park are completed and final inspections have been requested. Finally, pre-construction meeting for the electrical upgrades at Andrews Park was held and the contractor is mobilizing to begin that project. Equipment is on site at the transit facility and that project should begin soon. Odell Thompson is continuing to work on the renovations to the Community Service Building and he will be providing an update at the November 17th work session.

(g) ABC Board: The Board made their first distribution of profits to the county and the Town of Sylva for the first quarter of the fiscal year. At this point, they provided the minimum distribution of \$60,000 to the county and \$40,000 to the Town of Sylva. In addition to these funds, they also provided funds for law enforcement and alcohol education. In the future, the Commissioners will need to decide how the alcohol education funds should be used either in support of existing county programs or support other agency programs offered in the county. He plans to include this topic on the next work session for discussion. The North Carolina ABC Commission has released a report of profits for all stores in North Carolina. The Sylva store generated a 12% profit for 10 months before the merger with the county and the county stores were able to generate an 8.08% profit for the two months they were in operation during FY 13-14. This confirms that the ABC Board and staff members at the stores are doing an outstanding job.

(h) Neighbors In Need (Homeless Shelter): He attended a recent planning meeting hosted by Neighbors in Need to discuss the possibility of establishing a homeless shelter in the county. Presently, NIN and other non-profits have provided temporary shelter by renting motel rooms in the area. The pricing of these rooms has now reached a point where other options are being considered. This will be a big undertaking since it involves a lease or purchase of property and the employment of an employee. The county is supporting NIN with an annual allocation of \$10,000.

(i) Veteran's Service Officer Search Committee: The committee has been formed consisting of 3 veterans from the community, Joe Hamilton, Danielle Wittekind and himself. The job listing closes on November 3rd at which time review of the applications will begin.

(j) September 2014 Unemployment Rates: The county continues to have a very favorable unemployment rate with the September 2014 rate of 4.8%, which is a full 1.0% less than August 2014 (5.8%) and 1.3% less than September 2013 (6.1%). Overall, Jackson County's rate is the fourth lowest in the State behind only Buncombe, Henderson, Orange, Chatham, and Currituck Counties. The lowest employment rate in the State is found in Currituck County at 4.2% and the highest rate is in Graham County at 12.2%.

(k) Special Dinner to Honor Veterans: The Veteran's Office and Aging Department are hosting a veteran's appreciation dinner at 5:00 pm on Monday, November 10th in the Heritage Dining Room at the Aging Center.

(1) Emergency Training: Todd Dillard, Emergency Management Director asked that he announce that the State Emergency Management will be conducting training activities near Glenville dam tomorrow. There will be a number of helicopters in the area.

(2) WEBSTER ENTERPRISES UPDATE: Gene Robinson, Executive Director Webster Enterprises thanked the Board for the county’s continued support of the efforts of Webster Enterprises. He stated that the support is crucial to the growth and core mission to serve the disabled and disadvantaged in Jackson, Macon and Swain Counties. He presented an update on the growth plan. Webster is exploring a construction project that would add 13,000 square feet of warehouse and sewing production space to the existing facility at Webster. Architects will draw up preliminary plans to include a new building, a connector to the existing building, grading, other site prep, improved access and parking. It is anticipated the project will take 18-24 months and roughly \$900,000 to complete. This would be a wiser use of resources rather than purchasing the Ashley Building. Keeping all operations at the same facility would eliminate some expenses that are presently duplicated between the main facility and the sewing facility, which would save the costs of maintaining workflow between two buildings that are miles apart.

Many funding sources are being considered, including traditional bank financing, revolving loan funds, grant funding, public and private consideration. Webster is working with Marketing Association for Rehabilitation Centers of Asheville to craft a business plan and marketing materials that will help these efforts.

Webster’s interest in the Ashley Building remains strong. Even though the expansion plan is ambitious, it may not be able to keep up with demand for Webster’s products. The Ashley Building would help with continued growth of the customer base while facility growth catches up. The Ashley Building will continue to be considered until reasonable business practices dictates otherwise.

(3) PERSONNEL POLICY: Danielle Wittekind, Human Resources Director presented the edited version of the Personnel Policy for review by Commissioners. She stated that feedback had been sought throughout the process from employees, supervisors and department heads by surveys, emails and meetings. Throughout the process feedback was solicited as to clarifications, amendments and deletions. A cross section of staff formed a work group that met monthly to pull together the red-lined version that the Commissioners have reviewed through the multiple work sessions over the past several months. The policy is at a point where it is ready to move forward for adoption in the upcoming weeks.

(4) STAFFED RECYCLING CENTER CONTRACT BIDS: Chad Parker, Public Works Director reported bid opening results for the SRC hauling services, equipment lease and site staffing:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Hauling Bid</u>	<u>Equipment Lease Bid</u>	<u>Site Staffing Bid(Summer)</u>	<u>Site Staffing Bid (Winter)</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>CWS</u>					
Monthly	\$32,999.98	\$9,980.00	\$32,573.60	\$31,989.99	
Annually	\$395,999.76	\$119,760.00	\$228,015.20	\$159,949.95	\$903,724.91
<u>Republic</u>					
Monthly	\$33,270.00	\$8,038.00	\$32,924.00	\$31,101.00	
Annually	\$399,240.00	\$96,456.00	\$230,468.00	\$155,505.00	\$881,669.00
<u>Waste Industries</u>					
Monthly	\$43,119.60	\$8,674.49	\$36,876.72	\$33,803.68	
Annually	\$517,435.20	\$104,093.88	\$258,137.04	\$169,018.40	\$1,048,684.52

Motion: Commissioner Jones moved to award the bid to Republic. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(5) **PROPERTY SALE OF 2.49+/- ACRES, SYLVA CITY TOWNSHIP:** Mr. Wooten gave an update on the Offer to Purchase and Contract between Jackson County, Seller and Jimmy L. Moore, Buyer for property located off Wilkes Crescent Drive, Sylva for a purchase price of \$40,000. He stated that the upset bid process would conclude at 5:00 p.m. today, November 3rd. No upset bids have been received thus far.

(6) **ELDERLY AND DISABLED OPERATING AND CAPITAL 5310 PROGRAM GRANT RESOLUTION (R14-20):** Chuck Norris, Transit Director requested the Board to adopt a resolution authorizing submission of Section 5310 Program Grant application to NCDOT. A public hearing was held on November 03, 2014 at 1:50 p.m. and no public comments or objections were made.

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

(7) **COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM GRANT RESOLUTION (R14-21):** Chuck Norris, Transit Director requested the Board adopt a resolution authorizing submission of Section 5311 Program Grant application to NCDOT. A public hearing was held on November 03, 2014 at 1:55 p.m. and no public comments or objections were made.

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

Informal Comments by Public: None

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 and G.S.143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel. Commissioner Elders 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 October 20, 2014.

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman