

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
NOVEMBER 17, 2014**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on November 17, 2014, 6:00 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.

AGENDA: Chairman Debnam amended the Agenda by deleting the Audit Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2014 item, deleting the Personnel Policy item and adding a Closed Session for Personnel G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) and Legal G.S.143-318.11(a)(3). Commissioner Jones moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Greene moved to approve the minutes of two Public Hearings and a Regular Meeting of November 03, 2014. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(1) COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

(a) Commissioner Jones stated that it had been a pleasure working with Commissioner Cody and Chairman Debnam over the last four years. He thanked them for what they had done for the county.

(b) Commissioner Elders stated it had been his pleasure working with both Chairman Debnam and Commissioner Cody and he looked forward to beginning his next four years.

(c) Commissioner Cody stated that it had been an honor and privilege to serve the citizens of the county. He felt that a lot had been accomplished for the citizens and he was very proud of their record. He stated that it had been a pleasure working with this board and he looked forward to continued progress in the county.

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

(a) **Webster Enterprises:** Webster Enterprises is hosting a luncheon at noon on Friday, November 21st to allow people to tour their facilities, meet employees, and hear about possible improvements to their campus. Gene Robinson has extended a special invitation to the Commissioners to attend this event.

(b) **Involuntary Commitments:** The Southwestern Planning Commission is hosting a meeting on Thursday, November 19th for all counties in Region A to meet with a potential contractor that would provide these services on a contractual basis. He and Shannon Queen will be attending this meeting.

(c) **Secretary of Commerce Meeting:** Secretary Decker spent last Thursday morning in the county meeting with Commissioners and other elected officials as well as representatives from WCU and SCC. She also met with leadership at Jackson Paper and BalsamWest. Hopefully, this will be the beginning of a partnership between the county and the NC Department of Commerce to strengthen economic development activities in the county.

(d) **Economic Development Partnership of NC:** Julie Spiro, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, was recently appointed to the Partnership Board of Directors by Speaker Tillis. Julie will represent Western North Carolina on this Board and will be the advocate for business and industry recruitment in the west. This newly created organization is a spin-off from the NC Department of Commerce and will assume all the responsibilities for business recruitment activities for the State of North Carolina.

(e) **Emergency Operations Center and 911 Call Center:** It is expected that the certificate of occupancy will be received this week. An official ribbon cutting ceremony and open house will be on Monday, November 24th at 3:00 pm. The equipment and furnishings for the building will be installed over the next couple of months. It is anticipated that the center will be fully functional and activities shifted from the Justice Center in February 2015.

(f) **Smoky Mountain LME/MCO Advisory Council:** He and Commissioner Greene attended the quarterly meeting of this council on November 6, 2014. Brian Ingraham updated the group on expenditure activity in their 23 county service area. They distributed expenditures in the western region by provider. He has asked Smoky Mountain how Webster Enterprises could become a provider like other similar agencies in our region. At this point, he is still awaiting a response.

(g) **Capital Projects:** The Webster Baptist Church river access project is basically complete. Picnic tables and trash receptacles will be placed in the next two weeks. The vaulted toilet is installed at the Barker's Creek river access site and pads, tables, and trash receptacles are ready for installation. The East LaPorte river access project is moving forward and should be completed in early 2015. The bridge abutment plans for the Locust Creek projects are nearing completion and will be presented to NCDOT for review and approval. Hopefully, the project will be bid in early 2015. Plans and discussions are continuing for the Mark Watson trail project. A boundary survey will be completed and a trail system will be designed and constructed over the winter months.

(h) **Justice Center Security Report:** The security report from the NC Sheriff's Association has not yet been delivered. Sheriff elect Chip Hall will attempt to get a current status of this report during his new sheriff training that he is participating in this week.

(i) **Upcoming Meeting:** The Region A meeting will be on Monday, November 24 at 6:30 pm at Franklin.

(j) **Homeless Shelter:** Patsy Dowling has shared information regarding several entities, including Mountain Projects and Neighbors in Need, that have been working to establish a homeless shelter in the county. It appears that a site has been identified and that the operation will be moving forward. Habitat for Humanity will be the lead organization and will assume responsibility for oversight of the facility.

(3) CONSENT AGENDA:

(a) Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented Finance, Tax Collector and Refund Reports for October, 2014 for approval.

(b) 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) DREXEL STRATEGIC SITE ASSESSMENT PLAN: Robert Hawk, Executive Director and Lynn Sprague presented the Smoky Mountain Ag Development Station. Two Community Outreach meetings regarding the Old Drexel Plant were held, the first on March 19th, the second on April 29th at Smokey Mountain Elementary School. Over 60 citizens attended the first and over 50 citizens attended the second from Jackson and Swain Counties and the EBCI. Doug Clement, NC Cooperative Extension Service, facilitated the meetings.

There were three main categories of recommended use for the facility:

- (a) Agriculture
 - Fairgrounds and Livestock
 - Teaching Education
 - Processing and Distribution
- (b) Recreation
 - Indoor Multi-Recreation Facility
 - Indoor and Outdoor
 - Outdoor Recreation
- (c) Other Community Services and Businesses
 - Event Center – Multi-Purpose
 - Regional Green Manufacturing Center
 - Community Services

(5) SOLID WASTE TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT BIDS: Chad Parker, Public Works/Solid Waste Director reported that the County Public Works Department received bids for the hauling of solid waste and recyclables on November 13, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. The overall apparent low bidder for hauling solid waste and recyclables is Kinsland Trucking, Inc. at \$440 per load for solid waste and \$350 for recyclables.

Motion: Commissioner Cody moved to award the bid to Kinsland Trucking, Inc. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(6) JACKSON NEIGHBORS IN NEED (JNIN) ANNUAL REPORT: Robert Cochran, DSS Director, stated that JNIN makes sure that no one freezes, by bringing together community partners and friends to provide an emergency shelter, heating assistance, and weatherization program. JNIN was formed in 2009 to ensure that all local residents would have access to adequate warmth. JNIN is a voluntary organization bringing together community organizations and citizens to promote effective collaboration to assist residents in need of adequate warm shelter during the cold weather months. JNIN supports three programs: weatherization of homes, an emergency cold weather shelter and a heating assistance program.

In the 2013-2014 fiscal year, JNIN served 96 households throughout the county. The total amount spent on weatherization, heating assistance and direct costs of the shelter was \$33,588.12 for an average cost of \$292.07 per household. The group spent an additional \$22,000 (grant-funded) for case management for our shelter clients. The group received grants and donations totaling \$70,856.87.

(a) 60 households received assistance with electricity, oil and natural gas bills. JNIN spent a total of \$15,133.72, for an average of \$252.23 per household.

(b) 6 households received assistance with weatherization projects. JNIN spent a total of \$449.40, for an average of \$74.90 per household.

(c) 49 people stayed in the emergency shelter, for a total of 1,085 nights. JNIN spent a total of \$18,005.00, for an average of \$367.45 per person.

(7) FISHES AND LOAVES FOOD PANTRY, INC. APPROPRIATION: Mr. Wooten presented a non-profit grant application from Fishes and Loaves Food Pantry, Inc. requesting \$2,000 for fiscal year 2014. This would be given as a credit with Manna Food Bank.

Motion: Commissioner Jones moved to appropriate funds in the sum of \$2,000 for the period of fiscal year 2014. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(8) WEBSTER ENTERPRISES ADVANCE REQUEST: Mr. Wooten stated that based upon Webster Enterprises representation to the Board, that it intends to expand its manufacturing operations through the construction of a new building. It is requested that the county advance up to five years' of appropriations based on the FY 14-15 appropriation of \$30,500 plus another \$12,500, for a total of \$165,000.

Motion: Commissioner Cody moved to advance the annual allocation for five future years totaling \$165,000. Commissioner Elders seconded the motion. Motion carried by a 4-1 vote with Commissioner Greene voting "nay".

(9) WEBSTER BAPTIST CHURCH AGREEMENT: Mr. Wooten presented an Agreement between the county and Webster Baptist Church that provides access to the Tuckasegee River by the general public for recreational purposes, provides license to the public for use of the church gravel parking lot and provides river access for church related activities.

Motion: Commissioner Greene moved to approve the agreement. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(10) TASK FORCE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOLUTION (R14-22): Robert Cochran, DSS Director and Dr. Marilyn Chamberlin, Associate Professor at WCU, presented a Resolution that the Task Force on Domestic Violence be recognized and encouraged in its work to re-establish a domestic violence agency in Jackson County and work with REACH of Macon County in providing support of the services they are currently providing.

Motion: Commissioner Elders moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(11) RECREATION AND PARKS ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENT:

Motion: Commissioner Cody moved to reappoint Dave McCoy to a three-year term as Chairman on the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Informal Comments by Public:

(a) Ralph Slaughter of Cashiers thanked Chairman Debnam, Vice-Chair Cody, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Jones and Commissioner Greene for their help, support and working together to help the county grow into what it is today, one of the finest and most recognized counties in WNC.

(b) Jim Mueller of Glenville stated his approval of what the current Commissioners have done for the county.

(c) Carl Iobst thanked Chairman Debnam and Commissioner Cody for their service.

Press Conference:

CLOSED SESSION:

Motion: Chairman Debnam moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5) Real Property. 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 the approval of the Closed Session Minutes of November 03, 2014.

There being no further business, Commissioner Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman