

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
SEPTEMBER 13, 2016**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on September 13, 2016, 11:00 a.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman
Mark Jones, Vice Chair
Charles Elders, Commissioner
Vicki Greene, Commissioner
Boyce Deitz, Commissioner

Don Adams, County Manager
Heather C. Baker, County Attorney
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) **ROK TECHNOLOGY**: Mike Murphy, ROK Technologies; Kelly Fuqua, IT Department; Tonya Howell, Environmental Health; and Tiffany Qualls, Permitting Software Coordinator, were all present during this discussion.

Tony Elders, Permitting and Code Enforcement Director; Jaime Dellinger, Environmental Health Supervisor; and Kevin Jamison, GIS Director, presented: Information on ROK Technologies Permitting Software:

(a) Background:

- In the early spring of 2012, the county assembled a group of employees, the Permitting Software Taskforce, to research possible options for new permitting software. The group included employees from Permitting and Code Enforcement, Environmental Health, Land Records, IT, Tax Administration and Planning.
- The Permitting Software Taskforce had several proposals from different software companies and even visited nearby counties to see what types of systems they were using for permitting. The county chose ROK Technologies and they started with departmental interviews in May, 2012.
- Offices involved in initial interviews with ROK Technologies:
 - Environmental Health
 - Erosion Control
 - Planning / Zoning
 - Tax Administration
 - GIS
 - Information Technologies (IT)
 - Sylva Permitting & Code Enforcement
 - Cashiers Permit Center
- After the interviews ROK Technologies submitted a list of goals for the new permitting system. The goals were used to establish priorities and milestones during creation of the new system.

(b) Permitting System Project Goals:

- Standardize building site information and centralize all associated data.
- Improve record keeping and reliable archiving of permitting activities.
- Enhance communication between departments and improve customer service to the public.
- Define workflow and project tracking that reviews plans and approves permits more quickly.
- Provide higher quality inspections and improved reporting.
- Make more efficient use of staff time and less duplication of effort.
- Develop internal management tools for gauging department efficiency and spotting problems.
- Improve financial tracking of permitting, plan review and inspection fees.
- Provide flexible reporting capabilities that document the volume of work completed and the revenue generated by departments.
- Configure safe, secure and affordable hosting of all data and application components that is easily maintained by county staff.

(c) When they started working with ROK, their permitting system (Fusion) was an old, DOS-based system that still printed triplicate copy forms on a dot matrix printer.

- Difficult to read at times
- Complicated software codes
- Prefilled inspections
- No room for extra permit data
- Fusion gave very little information on permits that had been issued between departments (and required a lot of research).

(d) They were able to build new software from scratch to fit their needs. This allowed them to rethink how they had always done things so they could streamline the process to save time.

- The new Building Permits in ROK were built specifically for the needs and allowed for unlimited permit notes, contractors, and inspections.
- The inspectors could now take a tablet out into the field to enter inspection results.
- Extra paperwork or photos related to a permit could be attached to any permit in ROK. This saves ink, paper and time. It also saved on network storage space since they had unlimited file storage within the system.

(e) Environmental Health had started to test the use of the new permits. Permits would now print on two pages so that they would have unlimited space to write any permit notes. Environmental Health created all of their permits under one portal so they could issue six different types of permits from one permit screen. They have also added in their Soil Sheet, Log Sheets and Well Inspection/Evaluation forms for easy access. Typically, they kept paper copies of these sheets in their files.

(f) ROK connected the software to the county GoMaps site so it would show a dot on the map if any permits were issued on a property. This also helped to be sure that new permits were issued on the correct parcel since some customers had more than one parcel in their name. The county GIS Department had been working to take this a step further. They were relying more on the GPS location of the permit dots so they would not have to rely so much on the ever-changing PIN to track old permits. This would save time for permit clerks and would help get information to customers more efficiently in the near future.

- (g) The future of GIS in permitting:
- ROK Technologies and the county GIS were exploring the idea of making the permitting system “GIS Centric.”
 - Using GIS as the backbone of the permitting system allows unprecedented tracking of information from many data sources, regardless of the software used in other offices.
 - Tying permits to locations on the face of the earth allowed the GIS system to track both permit information, current tax ownership information and any other data that may be deemed useful in the future.
 - As PIN numbers change in Land Records, the GIS could keep tax information up-to-date in permitting, which would allow Land Records to maintain long established business practices and use any software they choose.
- (h) GPS and permitting:
- Next generation GPS systems are now in use in Environmental Health. The systems consist of rugged Windows tablets specified by the GIS department to work with existing GIS products and new Trimble GPS receivers.
 - GPS is being used to map approximate locations of well and septic systems.
 - GPS would be used to correct permit point locations. The corrected locations would track permitting history, current PIN and current tax ownership.
 - GPS locations of well and septic systems would eventually be tied into the permitting system via GIS.

Chairman McMahan encouraged the group to continue to meet on a frequency that Mr. Adams felt necessary.

Mr. Adams stated that by having this topic at the monthly meeting, it would encourage the program to continue to evolve.

Informational item only.

(2) **FREEDOM PARK:** Mr. Adams stated that at the last work session, additional information was requested regarding the brick paver layout and adding five additional flags.

Michael Poston, Planning Director and John Jeleniewski, Land Use Administrator, presented a revised site layout plan. Mr. Jeleniewski stated this was an alternate design that included a balance of concrete and pavers, which would allow for a ribbon of brick along the border on the overall monument pad and also a placeholder for the additional purchased/donated accent pavers. This option would add approximately 1,500 bricks. Also, as they had originally planned, there were three flags (county, state, US) behind the monuments. Because of the size of the area they were working with, the additional five flags (five branches of service) would be displayed off to the side, which would still be attached to the existing sidewalk.

Chairman McMahan requested the ribbon border continue around the entire monument.

Commissioner Greene stated she spoke with a representative from the American Legion and they were interested in the potential of selling bricks to honor the service men and women. She inquired if the project was within budget.

Chairman McMahan stated the funds raised in conjunction with Foundation Forward were used towards the three concrete slabs, monuments, plaques and the brick around. The remainder would be the county’s responsibility and would come out of contingency or the CPR fund.

Consensus: *Move forward with the site layout plan as presented.*

(3) SAVANNAH COMMUNITY CENTER: Mr. Adams stated that the Savannah Community Center was a voting place in the county. The Board of Elections wanted to expand voting on this site to include early voting as well. It had been requested that the county make the building ADA compliant and accessible. Since the building was not county owned, some parts of the work would need to be done by licensed professionals, such as an electrician and plumber.

Chad Parker, Solid Waste Director, stated that some of the issues included raising the bathroom floor 3-4 inches and extending the bathroom walls out, changing fixtures and adding grab bars. A ramp would also need to be added to access the building. An estimate for the upgrades was \$12,500. Upon approval, work could begin immediately so that the building would be ready in time for early voting.

Chairman McMahan stated that it was not unprecedented to make these type of upgrades as they had done so in the past at other voting sites. Adding this site as an early voting place would equalize locations throughout the county. Also, Ms. Baker was working with the Trustees of the Savannah Community Building on a lease for the county to use the space for elections, etc. He would discuss this with the Board of Trustees that night at their meeting for them to give the county permission to move forward with the upgrades and approve the lease.

Informational item only.

(4) REAL WORLD EXPO: Si Simmons, Representative of the Real World Expo, stated that each spring, students from the eight western counties, including Jackson County, were invited to attend the Real World Expo on the campus of Western Carolina University. At the Expo, students heard from experts in the field of banking, real estate, insurance and financial planning. In the afternoon, students had the opportunity to experience what it is like to buy cars, shop for apartments and cell phones, etc., from actual vendors, while staying within a chosen budget.

Mr. Simmons shared a video from the 2016 Real World Expo. He stated that they use WIOA funds to support kids to help them stay in school or obtain their GED. Over 400 kids attended the 2016 Expo with many speakers, including Chairman McMahan.

Informational item only.

(5) RECYCLING PROGRAM TIMELINE: Ms. Baker presented the Recycling Committee Timeline:

(a) September, 2016:

- Committee met and developed a plan of action September 8, 2016.
- Before the end of September, Mr. Parker would send to all county department heads a memorandum explaining the benefit and need for all county employees to recycle and increase use of recycling in county buildings. The one page recycling brochure explaining what could be recycled would be sent with the memorandum.
- Ms. Fitzgerald contacted Pepsi and Coke regarding recycling bins at the recreation facilities and for school ball games.
- Committee realized that it would be most successful with assistance from Mr. Adams along with a commissioner liaison. Help from Safe Kids and the recreation department would also be important.

(b) October 2016: Full committee to meet and discuss plans for incentivizing all county employees to recycle. Goals for October include:

- Finalizing plan to encourage county employees to recycle, which may include a gift card for use at a local business that recycles.
- Flyers out to SRC's and available for public that include a list of items that could be recycled on one side and on the other side a list of local businesses that recycle - "Join us in recycling".

- Obtain list of recycling bin needs from department heads and work to fill the needs so that each county department has the information and the physical containers to make recycling easy.
- Continue efforts with Pepsi and Coke to help with recycling at county recreation facilities and within the school system.

(c) November – December, 2016: Implement the county employee incentive program and check on departments to see if their needs are being met and see what could be done to keep recycling easy for employees.

(d) January, 2017: Committee to meet with school system personnel to best address how they could help the school system recycle. This help could include visiting schools and talking about recycling to the younger children.

(e) February, 2017: Work with fire departments to help them recycle, especially for large events held at their facilities or are held with their assistance.

(f) Summer, 2017: Construct a plan for working with the large Cullowhee Apartment Complexes on recycling and how they can they make this worthwhile for them.

(g) September update: Ms. Fitzgerald has contacted both Pepsi and Coke. Pepsi is delivering four recycling bins to Mr. Parker on September 13th to be used at SMHS during football games and other activities at the stadium. Mr. Parker contacted Jake Buchanan, Principal at Smoky Mountain High School, who has approved their use. Coke agreed to place recycling bins wherever their products were sold, including county recreation facilities. Ms. Fitzgerald was working with Mr. Ellis to locate where they were needed.

(h) Committee Membership: Commissioner Vicki Greene; Michael Forbis, Fire Marshal; and Rusty Ellis, Parks and Recreation Director, have all agreed to serve on the committee, which would complete the membership.

Informational item only.

(6) **THE COMMUNITY TABLE**: Charles Easton, Chairman and Amy Grimes, Executive Director, presented year-to-date update January – August, 2016:

- 4,113 people served, of which 1,511 (36.7%) were children.
- Served 331 new households, averaging three people per home.
- 16,627 meals served and 9,085 boxes of groceries distributed.
- Income \$105,461, Expenses \$129,822.
- Effective in August, they reduced the number of visits clients could make to the food pantry each month from once every seven days to once every 14 days, affecting approximately a quarter of regular clients. They had to do this due to limited resources and overwhelming need.
- Wednesday, September 28th would be the Drive Away Hunger event at Andy Shaw Ford from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. They were raising money through a BBQ lunch from Harrah's, a large raffle, chair massages, photo booth and test drives. They invited everyone to attend and spread the word.

Informational item only.

(7) **BRIAN BRYSON MEMORIAL**: Rusty Ellis, Parks and Recreation Director, stated Mr. Parker's staff had installed the pad and they were in the process of creating a sign board. The newly installed picnic tables were already being utilized.

Commissioner Deitz stated he had talked with Henry and Jean Bryson and asked them make a list of Brian's accomplishments to be placed on the memorial. They were very appreciative of the recognition at the park.

Informational item only.

(8) SKYLAND SERVICES CENTER: Odell Thompson, Architect was present for this discussion.

(a) Kitchen Management and Operations: Rob Hawk, Cooperative Extension, presented Commercial Kitchen Use and Management:

- Who would actually be using the kitchen?
 - Estimated utilization: Seven individuals have been identified at present, but confidence is high others would use the facility in the future.
 - Several calls came into them annually of the need for such a facility. A couple other vendors at the Farmers Market also requested use of a commercial kitchen.
- Who would manage commercial kitchen? Jackson County Extension. Kerri Rayburn, Administrative Assistant and Sherrie Peeler, Family and Consumer Science Agent would be the primary contacts for the use of the commercial kitchen.
- What would the operating rules of the kitchen be?
 - The rules should include scheduling, maintenance and cleaning.
 - Look at the Stecoah Valley Kitchen and the Cowee School Commercial Kitchen rules checklist for an example. A simple contract would also be needed.
- What types of inspections would be necessary for the kitchen?
 - NCDA primarily and possibly Jackson County Environmental Health.
 - The kitchen as specified would accommodate the uses that fall under the NC Department of Agriculture. The specifics of environmental health inspections were largely dictated by the menu. The current plan just needs more air drying space and access to the mop wash area. If there were ever a need to expand use, it would fall under environmental health inspections and more refrigeration space would be needed. Renee Pierce of NCDA would be the Regional Inspector.

Mr. Hawk presented a letter from David P. Green, PhD, Professor and Department Extension Leader, Department of Food, Bioprocessing and Nutrition Sciences, NC State University. The letter was in support of the efforts to establish a shared-use commercial kitchen to support small food business owners and entrepreneurs who sell their products.

Commissioner Deitz stated he would like to see the use numbers from other commercial kitchens in surrounding areas. Since the commercial kitchen would add \$150,000-\$200,000 to the cost of the project, he wanted to be assured it would be used.

Commissioner Greene stated that both of the other commercial kitchens were at least partially funded by grants. With this commercial kitchen, they were talking about funding it all through the county. She requested to see the use numbers also.

(b) Schematic Design: Mr. Adams stated that he sat down with all of the agencies for further conversation, which changed the design. One area they looked at was the area of the building near the shop. Since there would be a sound issue, they would do some type of sound barrier. Also, when entering the building and how to deal with traffic flow, they did move the reception area more towards the front. There was no way to separate the DMV since they did use the restrooms. The proposal would have way finding signs to help get people where they were going. A decision would need to be made regarding the commercial kitchen before they could move forward.

He was scheduled to meet with the Board of Elections to make sure this concept would go with their line of thinking. He understood that their long term plan would require a larger open space. The new schematic did allow for a larger meeting room in the future.

(c) Storage: Chad Parker, Solid Waste Director, stated that currently they had approximately 6,500 sq. ft. of storage. Looking at using the space in the back, it was approximately 4,500 sq. ft. Putting in storage in the upper level would be at a cost of \$90 per foot with a total estimated cost of \$405,000 for storage space in that area. It would have to have its own structure, basically building a whole new area.

Mr. Adams stated they could look at other alternatives such as a stand-alone metal building, which would have more flexible use.

Consensus: Obtain more numbers regarding the commercial kitchen use to be presented at the next work session for a decision on whether to move forward with the commercial kitchen portion of the project.

(9) NEIGHBORS IN NEED: Mr. Adams stated that during the visits he made over the past few weeks, Eddie Wells, Department on Aging Director, informed him of issues with Neighbors In Need. He then met with several of the Neighbors In Need Board Members to discuss serious financial issues and their ability to deal with homeless individuals in the county. Mr. Adams recommended that a special meeting be held between the Commissioners and Neighbors In Need Board, due to the weather changes in coming months.

Chairman McMahan stated that normally, Neighbors In Need operated a cold weather shelter only using the motel model. Historically, Neighbors In Need applied for and received a grant that funded a caseworker. The caseworker would help transition people from a motel room to housing. Neighbors In Need feels they may not receive the grant this year; therefore, they would not have a case manager and would not be able to handle homeless cases when they occurred. Neighbors In Need had met to discuss their options. They did have some residual funds from fund raising.

Consensus: Recess the work session until Thursday, September 22, 2016, to meet with the Neighbors In Need Board Members to discuss the situation further.

(10) CULLOWHEE FIRE DEPARTMENT: Commissioner Greene stated she had been contacted by Terry Ashe of the Cullowhee Fire Department. The fire department had submitted a loan application to USDA. On a national level, USDA had pulled half a billion dollars from projects. In this fiscal year budget, funds were no longer available for the Cullowhee Fire Department project. Once USDA adopted a continuing resolution, they would then extend a loan to the department. In the meantime, they did not want the project to be held up by the weather. Commissioner Greene requested that the county provide \$113,000 to the Fire Department in order to have their plans completed instead of waiting. This would be a reimbursable expense to the county when the loan was complete.

Consensus: Follow-up to make sure all was in order with USDA, then move forward with action at a future meeting.

(11) OLD DREXEL BUILDING: Commissioner Deitz stated Joe Ward had contacted him to inquire if the classification of a property could be changed from industrial to agricultural.

Ms. Baker stated she and Mr. Adams had discussions with Mr. Ward and were currently researching the matter.

Informational item only.

There being no further business, Chairman McMahan recessed the meeting at 2:56 p.m. to be reconvened on Thursday, September 22, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman