

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JULY 11, 2017**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on July 11, 2017, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman	Don Adams, County Manager
Charles Elders, Vice Chair	Heather C. Baker, County Attorney
Boyce Deitz, Commissioner	Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board
Mickey Luker, Commissioner (via speakerphone)	
Ron Mau, Commissioner	

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) JOHN PARRIS CABIN RENOVATIONS: Mr. Adams stated that this item had been placed in the budget to make repairs, as listed below, in the sum of \$95,560. At the last meeting, there was an interest from Board Members to look at possible amphitheater seating and other provisions at the cabin. He requested that Victor Lofquist, Engineer/President, Lofquist and Associates, put together an estimated cost for those additions.

Mr. Lofquist presented:

(a) Preliminary Engineer’s Cost Opinion for John Parris Cabin Proposed Retaining Wall Replacement:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Estimated Construction Costs:	
Clearing, grubbing, demolition	\$3,800
Grading and earthwork	\$8,200
Storm drain piping	\$9,200
Storm drain inlet structures	\$7,000
Connection to existing storm drainage structure	\$2,300
Segmental, geogrid reinforced retaining wall	\$28,500
Fabricated steel fencing framework - top of wall w/ attached stained board fence both sides	\$8,400
Erosion control	\$4,800
Estimated Construction Subtotal	\$72,200
Other Estimated Project Costs:	
Allowance for temporary construction easement (legal/survey, if needed)	\$4,000
Allowance for geotechnical consultant	\$5,000
Design survey	\$240
Engineering	\$4,000
Engineering: Informal bidding and contract administration services	\$1,700
Engineering: Periodic construction observation	\$1,200
Project contingency	\$7,220
Estimated Other Project Costs Subtotal	\$23,360
Total Estimated Project Cost	\$95,560

(b) Preliminary Engineer's Cost Opinion for John Parris Cabin Proposed Amphitheater (180 seats) and Retaining Wall Repair:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Estimated Construction Costs:	
Clearing, grubbing, demolition	\$7,800
Grading and earthwork	\$26,250
Concrete sidewalk	\$9,750
Concrete ramps & landings w/associated concrete walls & fabricated steel painted handrails	\$234,500
Concrete stairs & landings w/associated concrete walls & fabricated steel painted handrails	\$21,500
Amphitheater concrete or aluminum seating, w/ gravel aisle & integral concrete seal support	\$96,000
24'X16' wood amphitheater stage & wood backdrop	\$18,500
Allowance for minimal security lighting & power to stage area	\$6,500
Assumed allowance for converting 2 parking spaces to ADA compliant	\$12,000
Landscape allowance	\$20,000
Storm drain piping	\$18,000
Storm drain inlet structures	\$28,800
Connection to existing storm drainage structure	\$2,300
Segmental, geogrid reinforced retaining wall	\$28,500
Fabricated steel fencing framework - top of wall w/ attached stained board fence both sides	\$8,400
Erosion control	\$16,500
Estimated Construction Subtotal	\$555,300
Other Estimated Project Costs:	
Allowance for temporary construction easement (legal/survey, if needed)	\$4,000
Allowance for geotechnical consultant	\$9,000
Design survey & property survey allowance	\$3,000
Engineering (civil, structural, electrical)	\$34,000
Engineering: Informal bidding and contract administration services	\$8,000
Engineering: Periodic construction observation	\$12,000
Project contingency	\$55,530
Estimated Other Project Costs Subtotal	\$125,530
Total Estimated Project Cost	\$680,830

Mr. Adams stated he talked with the Planning Department and in the initial review, they felt that an amphitheater would require a conditional use permit for zoning from the Town of Sylva. Also, he did meet with the neighbor, Mr. Sylvester and he and other neighbors expressed concerns regarding an amphitheater and noise.

Chairman McMahan stated that he thought this would be a great idea, but he could not support doing the project with the cost. They could go forward with the wall and keep the amphitheater in mind for a future project, if the community wanted to get involved or they could look at ways to get grant funding.

Mr. Lofquist stated they could also look at moving the cabin to another location as the current location was not economical.

Consensus: *Move forward with the retaining wall replacement and table the amphitheater project for a future time.*

(2) FACILITY NAMING POLICY: Mr. Adams stated the purpose of the policy was to establish a consistent approach for the naming of county facilities. He presented the revised version based on comments made at a previous meeting, which included adding the following language:

External Request Procedures:

5. Evidence of written support from next of kin if proposed name relates to an individual.
6. Evidence of written support from official group / organization leaders if proposed name relates to a group or organization.

Once received, the request will be evaluated to ensure compliance with this policy. If the request is in compliance with this policy then the County Manager will forward recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

Renaming of Facilities:

3. Evidence of community support for the proposed facility name.
4. Evidence of written support from next of kin if proposed name relates to an individual.
5. Evidence of written support from official group / organization leaders if proposed name relates to a group or organization.

Chairman McMahan suggested to add a word to the language "...kin if proposed name relates to a deceased individual...". Also, adopting the policy would not mean they would start naming facilities throughout the county, it would give them criteria and guidelines to go by if there was a need in the future.

Consensus: Place this item on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.

(3) CITIZENS ACADEMY: Mr. Adams stated that as part of the goals and objectives of administration, with the Board's approval, he wanted to establish a Citizens Academy, also known as County Government 101 or Citizens/Neighborhood College. He worked with his Executive Assistant, Jan Fitzgerald to research and put together the following information:

(a) Overview: The Citizens Academy offered a unique opportunity for county residents to get an in-depth look at the functions of county government. The participants would get a behind-the-scenes look at various departments within county government. The Citizens Academy would provide interaction with department heads and elected officials allowing the participants to learn more about their roles throughout the county. The main goals were knowledge (learn how county government operates), involvement (let citizens know how they can be involved) and public relations (the chance to meet and make connections with county employees and other civic-minded residents).

The program was an eight week course that focused on services provided by the county, such as Administration/Governing Body, Register of Deeds, Emergency Management, Public Works (Solid Waste management/recycling, Green Energy Park, etc.), Sheriff's Office, Court System, Health Department (Public/Environmental Health, Animal Shelter), Social Services, Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, and Aging to name a few. The program consists of interactive sessions facilitated by various local government officials. A program agenda will provide individual session information and location of each session, sessions will take place at various county offices. Sessions will be held once a week for 8 weeks, and will last 2 to 3 hours.

An application would be submitted to County Manager's office during the recruitment period. Applicants must be 18 years old, be a resident of Jackson County and commit to attend all sessions. Applicants would be selected to create a diverse participant population that would represent a cross-section by the Commissioners' districts. Space would be limited to 25 participants.

(b) The benefits to the organization, participants and community:

- Familiarize citizens with the function and purpose of Jackson County government
- Increase citizens awareness of services offered by local government
- Meet county government leaders
- Learn how citizens can take a more active role in local government

- Better informed citizens through first-hand knowledge of the structure of County government
 - Gain knowledge and personal contacts to become more effective leaders in their communities by sharing new information with friends and neighbors
 - An understanding of opportunities to serve the county through advisory boards
 - Get to know the men and women who oversee the day-to-day operation of departments that provide services
- (c) Ms. Fitzgerald presented a timeline of events:
- Commissioners and Community organizations will submit names to attend the first Citizens Academy.
 - Place on work session Agenda-July 11th
 - Place on BOC agenda – July 17th
 - Application deadline-August 16th
 - Finalize participants-week of August 21st, if more than class maximum received
 - Notify Participants-August 28th
 - Academy dates:
 - Session begin week of September 11th
 - Session end week of November 13th
 - For a total of eight weeks

The session end date would be the week of November 13th and had two extra weeks built in for flexibility in the schedule, if needed. If the eight week course ran with no schedule changes, the session would end the week of October 30th. The above had sessions beginning the week after Labor Day and ending prior to Thanksgiving week. Columbus Day was on Monday, October 9th (not a county holiday) and Veterans Day holiday will be observed on Friday, November 10th.

Consensus: *Place this item on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(4) POLICY ON FORECLOSED REAL PROPERTY DISPOSITION: Mr. Adams stated that he had requested that Ms. Baker review a policy for foreclosed property. The county had a list of foreclosed properties, which was not being advertised for sale. Occasionally, they would receive an offer for less than what the county had in the property that would be presented to the Board for consideration. A policy would allow them to list an amount for the properties so that when an offer was made for lower than the listed amount, staff would already have an answer without bringing it before the Board. If the county still owned a property for a year or more, they could consider taking lower offers.

Ms. Baker stated that currently she had conveyed to potential buyers that any offer could be presented before the Board for consideration, but for the most part, offers that were less than what the county had in the property were not accepted. This policy would give staff guidelines on how to proceed forward when offers were brought to the county.

Consensus: *Place this item on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

Mr. Adams requested that the Board consider potentially developing a relationship with a realtor to help create a list of the properties and also to help locate properties the county may have a need for on future projects.

(5) NCACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Mr. Adams stated that on August 10-12, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners would hold their annual conference in Durham County. The Board would need to designate a voting delegate to the conference.

Informational item.

(6) AUGUST/SEPTEMBER MEETING SCHEDULE: Commissioners amended the August and September meeting schedule as follows:

- August 7th Regular Meeting at 3:00 pm
- August 8th Special Meeting – Health Department at 1:00 pm
- August 15th Work Session at 1:00 pm
- August 28th Regular Meeting at 3:00 pm
- September 4th Regular Meeting – CANCELLED
- September 12th Work Session at 1:00 pm
- September 18th Regular Meeting at 6:00 pm

Informational item.

(7) BOARD OF ELECTIONS: Board of Election Members and Staff present for this item: Doug Cody, Chairperson; Kirk Stephens, Secretary; Stephen Foster, Board Member; and Lisa Lovedahl, Director.

Mr. Cody stated that the Board of Elections created a new job title for a current employee, which would have an expenditure of \$1,600. When he spoke with Mr. Adams, the recommended budget had funding in it for all of their requests. The budget that was adopted that evening and did not have the funding that was requested for a permanent part-time position and overtime funds had been pulled. He requested to know why the funding was pulled as they felt it was a legitimate request.

Also, they had concerns about entering into a memorandum of understanding with the county as the majority of the counties in North Carolina had refused to go along with memorandums because it took away power from the Board of Election, which was granted to them by state statute.

Chairman McMahan stated that he felt the issue was that with the budget process, there were certain dates that requests were to be made by and he did not receive this request until the week the budget was to be adopted. He would prefer a request be made the same as any other county department when they had their budget meeting with the county manager and to be placed in the recommended budget and not wait until the week of adoption when they were that far along in the process. Other departments that made the same request were told no.

Mr. Cody stated that they were not a typical department and were granted special privileges, according to state statute, to appoint and dismiss people. The Commissioners were obligated to fund reasonable requests. The request made was the same as the previous year, which they had used all of the overtime funds except \$0.13.

Mr. Stephens stated that his concern was mostly about the memorandum of understanding. There was a lot of experienced Board Members on the Board of Elections and regardless of politics, they had always done a good job rising above politics and being focused on the mechanics and fairness of elections. He felt that was always the understanding between the Board of Elections and the Board of Commissioners, but he was now concerned that now the Commissioners were not happy with the Board of Elections or the way they were functioning that would call for a memorandum of understanding.

Chairman McMahan stated he had no problems with the Board of Elections, he thought they did a great job and staff did a great job. He only asked that next year they make a request for a payroll change during the budget process like everyone else, so that the Commissioners had enough time to discuss the matter.

Mr. Adams stated that it was correct that the Board of Elections had statutory authority regarding raises. On June 13th, he received a personnel action form that cited the statute for the authority to provide the raise. This was the first time this authority had been asserted in the county, which allowed the Board of Elections to give a raise without going through the process with the Commissioners approval.

The memorandum did not have to be used, but the point of the memorandum of understanding would be to avoid confusion in the future. Since the Commissioners did control the budget, they could decide if they wished to proceed forward to be involved in the process of whether or not to give raises.

The permanent part-time position had been vacant since March 2nd. If the Board of Elections wished for the funds to be to be budgeted to fill the vacant position, then the request would be approved by the Board of Commissioners. The approval to refill the position would be effective for the start date. The funds were currently in contingency and would be transferred back into their budget.

Ms. Lovedahl stated that she understood that the request was late and she took responsibility. She was concerned about keeping an experienced staff member as the employee was contacted by another county to apply for a position, which would leave them without an experienced worker.

Chairman McMahan stated that he understood and supported the title change and restoring the funding for the position that would come on board in September and overtime. However, this was the second year that they had this same situation occur.

Mr. Stephens apologized for the tardiness of the request. Next year, they would do a better job. He requested that the memorandum of understanding be taken off the table. The Board of Elections made appointments and he did not want interference with the process.

Commissioner Deitz stated a lot of this came down to statute, but the first time he heard about the request was ten minutes before the meeting. The decision was not political it just came down to logistics and timing. He felt they could work it out.

Chairman McMahan stated he was in support of reinstating the funding for the position, if they were ready to hire. The Board of Elections could submit a request when they had an individual for the position and they would transfer the funds from contingency effective the day of hire.

Informational item.

(8) COMMISSIONER GOAL PRIORITIZATION:

(a) Chairman McMahan stated his goals:

- The administration and departmental goals and accomplishments, he felt, were also part of the Board's goals.
- The Land Use Plan was full of important, well thought-out topics. As a part of that public process, they identified goals and objectives and created an action plan that discussed how to accomplish the goals and which departments should work on the tasks. He thought following up with the plan and supporting the departments should be part of the Commissioners' goals.
- He wanted to add a performance evaluation for the county manager as a goal.
- Also, he wanted to add a goal to start having meetings off-site in different communities from time to time.

(b) Commissioner Luker stated his goals:

- He also wanted to start having meetings off-site in different communities again.
- He wanted to add a goal to refocus on "one-stop" issue they had discussed creating and develop a plan to cross-train and also where they would house them, if they moved forward.
- They had gotten a lot of requests for an indoor pool at the Cullowhee Recreation Center and wanted to bring that to a bond referendum for the public to decide on.

(c) Commissioner Deitz stated he had none.

(d) Commissioner Elders agreed with the three goals that Commissioner Luker stated.

(e) Commissioner Mau stated his goals:

- He thought a goal was the capital projects and where they were going to put them.
- Also, the idea of the referendum or resolution on when to put sales tax issues on a ballot.
- Also, they started the conversation about combining social services and the health department. The School of Government had stated that they did not have any funds to answer questions about the issue.

- What were the needs of the public and how did they address it regarding one-stop.
- He did hear about the indoor pool a lot and he thought they should put that on the ballot in 2018.
- Also mentioned in the comprehensive plan was affordable housing.

Informational item.

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mau seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman