

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
MARCH 13, 2018**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on March 13, 2018, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman
Charles Elders, Vice Chair
Boyce Deitz, Commissioner
Mickey Luker, Commissioner
Ron Mau, Commissioner

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

Vice Chair Elders called the meeting to order and requested an item be added to the agenda: Flags for Heroes.

(1) EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY: Danielle Wittekind, Human Resources Director, presented:

(a) Background: This summary report provides an overview of the Employee Engagement Survey results. The Human Resources Department was committed to increasing employee engagement and completed Engagement Survey creates a baseline for measuring employee engagement from which improvements in engagement measurements may be calculated. Engagement was a critical measure in any organization and research had proven that an engaged workforce had many business benefits including decreased turnover, increased productivity and better performance outcomes.

The county collaborated with UNC School of Government's Local Government Workplace Project to administer an employee engagement survey. The survey asked researched questions in different areas that influence an individual's level of engagement in their work and with their organization. Employees received invitations to participate directly from the UNC School of Government (UNC SOG). Qualtrics Survey Software was utilized by UNC SOG to collect survey data and provide confidentiality of participating employees and their individual responses.

The survey instrument collected information in the following areas that have direct impact on employee engagement:

- Job Satisfaction
- Teamwork
- Communications
- Structure (hierarchy, centralization, rules)
- Workplace Civility
- Supervisory Practices
- Trust
- Satisfaction with Benefits (pay, benefits, recognition, rewards, technology, etc.)

(b) Survey Response & Highlights: The county had an excellent response rate of 64%. The survey produced a significant amount of data affirming strengths of the county as an employer and identifying areas that may need attention or improvement. Overall, the survey results demonstrated that the county had great engagement highlighting teamwork, positive group dynamics and trust in the management. While the results were comparable to other local governments who participated in the survey, supervisory practices and performance feedback were areas that were scored less favorably by comparison.

(c) Key Findings – Strengths: The county responded positively to 90% of the engagement related questions asking employees their feelings and attitudes towards job satisfaction, workplace climate and values. Such questions included:

- The organization values me as an employee
- I am enthusiastic about my job
- I am proud of the work that I do

Where employees indicated their level of agreement on a scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree with variations of agreement, disagreement and a feeling of neutrality in between the two points.

The results showed a majority of employees reported:

- Feeling enthusiastic about their work
- Feeling proud of their work
- Feeling happy and immersed in their work
- Satisfaction with their job
- Job providing an opportunity to do meaningful work
- Professional development and training opportunities available
- Satisfaction with traditional and non-traditional benefits
- Job security
- Commitment to a career with Jackson County
- Feeling valued as an employee
- Having access to technology and resources needed
- Work-life balance
- A workplace that embraces new ideas
- Appropriate guidance from supervisor
- Excellent teamwork within department and with other departments
- Trust in immediate supervisor, Department Head and County Manager

(d) Key Findings – Areas of Improvement: The results identified numerous positive measures but also identified some areas that were viewed as less than favorable by many employees. In addition to engagement related questions, the survey asked employees about their feelings and attitudes towards their supervisor, Department Head, County Manager, effectiveness of organizational communications, resource availability and their perception on centralization. Such questions included “I have the time needed to do my job effectively,” “I trust my supervisor to tell me what I need to know,” “I have time to complete my job effectively,” and “I must check with my supervisor before I do most anything,” where employees indicated their level of agreement on a scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree with variations of agreement, disagreement and a feeling of neutrality in between the two points.

The results showed a significant number of employees reported:

- Not receiving recognition for a job well done
- Lack of advancement opportunities
- Expectations of supervisor unclear
- Dissatisfaction with monetary compensation received for work
- Rules/policies not being followed and consistently applied
- Not enough time to do their job effectively
- Lack of advancement opportunities
- Need for better communications at supervisory, Department Head and County Manager levels
- High level of centralization
- Lack of helpful performance feedback

It was important to note that the county was not alone in many of these employee responses. In government and public sector employers, it was common for employees to report a high level of centralization, dissatisfaction with compensation, lack of advancement opportunities and limitations on time to complete work.

After analyzing the data, it was identified that improvements could be made in communications with employees (from all levels i.e. supervisor, Department Head, and County Manager), supervisory practices and performance feedback.

(e) Next Steps: Survey data would be shared with employees after presentation of survey data to Board of County Commissioners and Department Heads. The Human Resources Department would solicit feedback on how employees feel the county could improve on specific measures. Department Heads would be encouraged to identify areas of improvement for their department and address at least one area in the upcoming fiscal year.

Overall, the areas that were in need of improvement organization-wide include:

- Communications
- Supervisory Practices
- Performance Feedback

The Human Resources Department would develop action plans to address these three areas in the upcoming year and incorporate received feedback and suggestions. Other potential remedies and actions were included below that may be incorporated at the Department level should a particular area be identified as needing improvement.

Areas of Improvement	Possible Remedy or Action
Job satisfaction	Employee training, professional development
	Regular performance feedback, formal/informal
	Flexible schedules/telework
Teamwork	Encourage collaboration within and across departments
	Recognition program
	Team activities and events
Communications	Regular staff meetings: unit, departmental, department heads
	Published meeting minutes
	Department/employee newsletter
	Published information: policies, documents
Structure (hierarchy, centralization, rules)	Published information: policies
	Employee training
	Supervisor training
	Quality improvements initiatives
Supervisory practices	Supervisor training
	Quality improvements initiatives
Trust	Encourage open communications
	Published meeting minutes
Satisfaction w/ pay, benefits, rewards, recognition, etc.	Published information: pay policies, benefit programs
	Total compensation statements
	Pay plan review
	Recognition program

Informational item.

(2) COUNTY HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPAA) POLICY REVISION: Ms. Wittekind presented a draft, countywide Security Policies and Procedures for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). HIPAA provided data privacy and security provisions to safeguard medical information. It set the standards for protecting sensitive patient data as well as for their protective health information.

She worked on the policy with Clarissa Ashe, the County's Administrative and Privacy Officer for HIPAA; Jennifer Abshire, DSS Director; and Ms. Baker. They discussed a countywide policy because not only was the Health Department subject to HIPAA, but there were also other departments that would be covered entities:

- Emergency Management
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Public Health
- Public Health – Environmental Health

Ms. Ashe stated that DSS was not covered. While they did deal with patient information, they did not bill an insurance and HIPAA protected insurance information. Since they were non-covered, she wanted to have a business associate agreement with DSS because they did discuss patient information that needed to be protected.

Mr. Adams stated that DSS did have confidentiality rules, but they did not fall under HIPAA.

Ms. Wittekind stated that the DSS Board approved the policy that day and the Health Board would consider the policy on April 9th. A countywide policy would also be needed to identify covered and non-covered departments since the county was moving towards a consolidated human services. There was a requirement for an annual review of the policy and any material modifications would come back to the Board for approval.

Ms. Baker stated that as long as the Health Department and DSS were not co-located, DSS could remain non-covered, while the Health Department would be covered. If at any point that changed, they would continue to look at the policy for changes.

Consensus: *Add this item to a future regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(3) RESOLUTION DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN (CDBG): Michael Poston, Planning Director, stated that the county participated in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Scattered Site Housing Program administered by the North Carolina Division of Community Assistance to improve housing for low income individuals in the county. The CDBG Scattered Site Housing Program provides funding to enhance the vitality of communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments for individuals. After the rehabilitation of a home, a loan was secured by a deed of trust and a promissory note establishing a lien on the property for a period of ten years after the recordation date. Ten years after the recordation date, the loan was forgiven and the county must record a satisfaction of security instrument to release the property from the lien.

The Planning Department received multiple request from property owners requesting a satisfaction of the lien. The process would run more efficiently for the CDBG participants if the Chairman of the Jackson County Commissioners was authorized to sign the satisfactions upon presentation of information from the Planning staff and County Attorney that the lien had been satisfied. He requested that the Board of Commissioners approve a resolution authorizing the Chairman to sign satisfaction of security instruments when appropriate.

Consensus: *Add this item to the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(4) WIRELESS COMMUNICATION CO-LOCATION FEES: Mr. Poston stated that Planning Staff was recommending amending the fee schedule to change the fee required for wireless communications colocations. The proposed amendment would change the fee for wireless colocation from \$2,500 to \$1,000. The reason for the change was to be consistent with the state statute that limited the fee to \$1,000.

Consensus: *Add this item to the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(5) HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS MATERIAL COLLECTION PROGRAM: Chad Parker, Public Works Director, stated that previously the Board discussed having a Household Hazardous Materials Day, where there would be a collection point for citizens in the county to bring hazardous materials “as is”, such as paint, etc. It was recommended that a first time event should start small, limiting acceptable items to oil based or latex paints and aerosols, etc., which would reduce the cost for the program.

Since it was unknown how much material would be collected, the company they received quotes from could not give pricing for a total event. Generally, they used cubit boxes for paints at a cost of \$500 each and 55 gallon drums for aerosol cans at a cost \$250 each. There would be a fee for a trained hazard materials person to be on site from the company and it was requested that there be two county employees be at the event to help with logistics. There would also be transportation fees of \$1,300 per trailer of material. He thought they could have an event, not at the transfer station, but at a county-owned location.

Mr. Adams stated they could not give an absolute price because they did not know the quantity, but \$30,000 plus, was not out of the question for one of these type events. Should they move forward with this service, they would need to be consistent so that the long-term value would be in doing this type event every year.

Consensus: *Proceed forward to set up a Household Hazardous Materials Day in the county.*

(6) ROADSIDE LITTER: Mr. Adams stated it was requested that this issue be placed on the agenda to start a discussion about the potential role the county would have and how they would proceed forward with the litter problem in the county. The county did have an ordinance regarding garbage outside of homes, so they did have some mechanism to proceed forward and enforce rules in that circumstance.

Chairman McMahan stated that he requested the item be placed on the agenda because he was constantly asked about litter along the roadways. He did not know what the answer would be and thought it would be a combination of a lot of different things. When the state started contracting for pick-up, it had made a huge difference. There were a lot of nonprofit groups that organized pick-ups and they also had the Adopt a Highway Program that may need to be re-energized. Another suggestion had also been made that they should put money in the budget as a line item where the county would pay for trash pick-up.

Mr. Parker stated that the state did a pick-up three times per year on all the major highways in the county. They also picked-up every road in the county once per year. He also noted that he and Ms. Baker had been working on recycling items with WCU and putting together a video regarding recycling that would have an anti-littering component as well. They were hopeful to get the video in the school system every year. The Solid Waste Department would do what they could as far as litter pick-up. Generally, when they mowed, they would pick-up around the SRC’s and all county facilities.

Mr. Adams stated that this would be a resource issue for Mr. Parker if the county became involved. Other concepts that had been mentioned included a workforce group. If the county became financially involved, it would be to partner and enhance other groups such as NCDOT and nonprofit groups.

Commissioner Luker recommended a countywide pick-up day where the county would commit resources and encourage county employees to participate with trash pick-up.

Mr. Adams stated they would work on organizing a countywide pick-up day sometime in May. Also, was there a way to invest monetarily into the conversation, such as with education and working with nonprofit groups. Many of these concepts would require management or some type of oversight would be necessary, which may mean Mr. Parker or someone would need to be involved in doing that.

Informational item.

(7) FLAGS FOR HEROES: John Patterson, Sylva Rotary Club Representative, presented Flags for Heroes/Sylva Rotary Club Information:

- Flags for Heroes was being used as a fundraiser and a top of mind awareness tool in towns all over the country by Rotary Clubs.
- 250 to 500 flags would be flown on Memorial Day weekend in honor of or in memory of someone.
- These flags would each be sold to individuals and/or corporate sponsors.
- The idea was to fly the flags the week of Memorial Day.
- A possible ceremony on Saturday morning would be included.
- The Chamber of Commerce had agreed to help with marketing and promotion.
- For an annual sponsorship of \$50, the Rotary Club of Sylva would purchase a flag in dedication of a Military Veteran or Active Service Member. The flags would be displayed on the hillside leading up to the historic courthouse.

Mr. Adams stated that if the county proceeded forward, they would want the Rotary Club to coordinate with the veterans' groups putting on the Memorial Day ceremony. Also, he wanted the County Maintenance Department to be involved with the installation of the flag poles and lighting. He also proposed that the County GIS Department would assist with creating a pattern for the flag installation.

Mr. Patterson stated that the goal of fundraising for Rotary was to give the money back to organizations in the community.

Consensus: *Support the project and proceed forward.*

(8) COMMISSIONER GOALS: Mr. Adams provided an update on the Commissioner Goals:

(a) Complete:

- Performance evaluation for the County Manager.
- Referendum or resolution on when to put sales tax issues on a ballot.

(b) Ongoing:

- Administration and departmental goals. Departments were instructed to document their accomplishments on FY 17-18 goals. They were also instructed to establish some measurable goals for the FY 18-19 year.
- Land Use Plan. Follow up with the plan and support departments. The action items listed in this plan were distributed to County Departments that have direct responsibility for the particular action item. They were instructed to include at least some of these items in their FY 18-19 goals.

(c) In Progress:

- Off-site meetings in different communities from time to time.
 - Tuckasegee VFW Post Meeting September 18, 2017.
 - "Brunch Bill" Public Hearing in Cashiers Monday, April 16, 2018 at 5:30 pm. Location – Albert Carlton Library. (Note – Public Hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, March 19, 2018 at 5:30 pm in Sylva. Location – Commissioner Meeting Room, Justice / Admin. Center).
- Refocus on the "one-stop" issue - create and develop a plan to cross-train and where to house everyone.
 - Contract was signed with McMillan/Pazdan/Smith Architecture for updating the Health Department programming to include Code Enforcement and Planning.
 - Rough schematic drawings were discussed with staff on February 27, 2018. Staff gave substantial feedback and a general consensus was reached.
 - Revised schematics, revised cost estimates and a proposed architectural agreement would be presented to the Board on April 10, 2018.
- Indoor pool at the Cullowhee Recreation Center - bond referendum for the public to decide.
 - Architect recommendation on December 12, 2017.

- Board tabled architect decision on December 18, 2017 and January 29, 2018
- Capital projects and where they would be located.
 - Joint meeting held with the Town of Dillsboro and with WCU representatives at 5:30 pm on March 5, 2018 to discuss the closed landfill, Staffed Recycling Center & Green Energy Park Campus.
- Combining social services and the health department.
 - Board of Commissioners' Meeting on November 16, 2017.
 - Public Hearing held on Monday, January 29, 2018.
 - Board passed Resolution forming a Consolidated Human Services Agency on January 29, 2018.
 - The nomination list for the new Human Services Agency Board was being created. They were seeking only five additional required members. One of these being a County Commissioner.
 - This issue would be on the April 10, 2018 work session to discuss next steps.
- Affordable housing.
 - Initial planning meeting held December 11, 2017.
 - Planning Department creating an executive summary of existing programs.
 - Committee to meet in March/April 2018 to discuss next steps.

Chairman McMahan requested to add an item for discussion, by the Board, at the April work session for Landslide Mapping. He wanted to discuss options and how they wanted to proceed forward.

Commissioner Mau requested a discussion regarding the potential of recording or streaming some of the special meetings to make it easier for some people to see what they were doing.

Mr. Adams stated this would be an item for a work session agenda and would need to be a Board discussion and policy.

Informational item.

(9) GREEN ENERGY PARK: Commissioner Luker stated that all of the comments he had received had been 100% positive.

Commissioner Elders stated that all the comments he had heard all seemed to be positive and the citizens thought they were doing the right thing.

Commissioner Deitz stated that he had heard from folks that thought a dog sanctuary would be a good use of the property.

Mr. Adams stated that in order to proceed forward, he would need direction to start the rezoning process with the Town of Dillsboro and also, to put together cost estimates and potential contracts for engineering/architectural services.

Consensus: *Add this item to the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(10) OTHER BUSINESS: Chairman McMahan stated that he had a request from the Science Olympiad Team at Fairview Elementary School for sponsorship from the county. The team won the regional competition and were going to the state competition in April. The team was looking to find sponsors for \$2,500.

Consensus: *Add this item to the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

There being no further business, Commissioner Luker moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman