

**MINUTES OF A  
REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
MAY 21, 2018**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on May 21, 2018, 6:00 p.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 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

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) **LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WEEK AND PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY PROCLAMATION:** Commissioner Deitz read a Proclamation declaring May 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> as Law Enforcement Officers Week and May 15<sup>th</sup> as Peace Officers Memorial Day. Commissioner Elders moved to approve the Proclamation. Commissioner Mau seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(2) **AGENDA:** Chairman McMahan requested to remove one item: Smoky Mountain High School Robotics Team; and to add one item: Sheriff's Department Service Sidearm. Commissioner Mau moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(3) **MINUTES:** Commissioner Elders moved to approve the minutes of a Regular Meeting of May 07, 2018. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(4) **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Chairman McMahan reported that he served on a couple of the subcommittees of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and he had the opportunity to go to a day-long presentation on several topics. Some of the topics included school safety, stress on children and the upcoming changes with the Medicaid transformation. It was a very good informative day. He would be sharing further information with staff.

(5) **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

(a) Commissioner Mau gave a TWSA update. HB436 was the bill that allowed them to review System Development Fees. The TWSA Board approved the report that was presented to them by the consultant they retained. The next step would be for the Finance Committee to decide what they wanted to do related to System Development Fees, System Improvement Charges and Rates and also to develop their budget for next year.

(b) Commissioner Deitz congratulated the Smoky Mountain Baseball team as they had a great season and everyone was proud of them.

**(6) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT:** Mr. Adams reminded the Board of upcoming meetings:

- Monday, May 28, 2018 – The American Legion Post 104 would have their Memorial Day event at the fountain in Sylva at noon. Also, Public Works would be installing approximately 200 flags on the courthouse lawn Thursday for the Heroes for Flags Program.
- Thursday, May 31, 2018 – Budget Presentations at 8:30 am in Commissioner Meeting Room.
- Thursday, May 31, 2018 – Open House at Skyland Services Center at 3:30 pm.
- Friday, June 1, 2018 – Budget Presentations at 8:30 am in Commissioner Meeting Room.

**(7) INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC:**

(a) Craig Forrest of Cullowhee requested that the Board of Commissioners join with the Town of Sylva to commit \$250,000 to help fund the purchase of more than 448 acres to provide for the expansion of Sylva's Pinnacle Park. The purchase would offer protection of the ridgeline and view shed, as well as provide possible construction of additional hiking trails to complement those already located within the existing Pinnacle Park. Time was of the essence for action to be taken. The conservation fund depended on monetary support from the town and county to complement their application for \$1mil in grant funding from The North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Sylva Board members already agreed to pay their \$250,000 with a formal vote to take place on May 24<sup>th</sup>. County Administration made assurances that to spend the \$250,000 would not jeopardize other projects currently being planned for.

(b) Tom Massie of Sylva stated that having been a County Commissioner, he knew how difficult it was to make decisions to balance competing interests. He also wanted to speak about the 448 acres. He could not understand why the Board had chosen not to take action on the application at that time. The process had been going on for several months. The Clean Water Trust Fund was one of the few state grants that was still available to local governments. The county would not be obligated if it did not get the grant. In this case they were talking about \$250,000 to leverage \$1mil in state funds. This was the time they had the opportunity and they had the money. He urged them to reconsider their decision and commit the \$250,000 for the application.

**(8) CONSENT AGENDA:**

(a) Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented the Finance Report for April, 2018; two Budget Ordinance Amendments; and one Project Ordinance Amendment for fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, for approval.

(b) Ms. Fox presented, Tax Collector and Refund Reports for April, 2018, for approval.

***Motion:*** Commissioner Mau moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(9) SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT SERVICE SIDEARM:** Sheriff Chip Hall requested authorization, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 20-187.2, to present Scott Edward Buttery, who retired on May 1, 2018, his service sidearm. The Sheriff recommended that the price for the sidearm be set at \$1.00. It was recommended that the firearm be declared surplus and the Sheriff be authorized to present the sidearm to Mr. Buttery. In addition, the Sheriff should be directed to provide the serial number and description of the weapon to the Finance Director for removal from the fixed asset inventory and replace with a new sidearm at no cost to the county.

***Motion:*** Commissioner Elders moved to declare Scott Edward Buttery's sidearm surplus for \$5.00 and authorize the Sheriff to present it to Mr. Buttery. The Sheriff was directed to provide the serial number and description of the sidearm to the Finance Director and replace the sidearm at no cost to the county. Commissioner Luker seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(10) BOARD OF ELECTIONS TRAINING EXPENSE:** Chairman McMahan stated that Lisa Lovedahl, Board of Elections Director, had a conflict during the budget work session dates so she would be making requests that evening for items that would be considered in next year's budget.

Ms. Lovedahl requested two possible training sessions:

(a) Florida in July

- Certificate
- Course driven

(b) Louisiana in August:

- Conference
- Training

(c) \$3,500 per person, two staff members attending one of two events:

- Five classes: \$1,795
- Travel: \$1,080
- Food: \$300

(d) Western Carolina counties with personnel that gain certification as Certified Elections Registration Administrator in 2017/2018: Buncombe, Henderson, Transylvania, Madison.

(e) Agenda items:

- Ethics in elections and voter registration administration
- Communications in elections and voter registration administration
- Homeland security: voter registration and election update
- Election assistance commission update
- Legislative updates
- Electronic registration information commission and voter file maintenance
- Use of social media for voter registration NS elections
- Implementation of new programs in election administration
- Construction, courts and cases
- Enfranchisement, enhancement and enforcement

Kirk Stephens, Board of Elections Chairman, stated that elections had now been classified as Infrastructure, which took them to a new level of disaster recovery. The Board of Elections encouraged staff to get training on these issues.

*Informational item.*

**(11) BOARD OF ELECTIONS POSITION:** Ms. Lovedahl requested that the Absentee One Stop Coordinator be moved from a 70% position to a 100% position.

*Informational item.*

**(12) JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL (JCPC):** Heather Baker, JCPC Chair, stated that the Department of Juvenile Justice allocated funds to counties on an annual basis. She presented selected programs, certification, membership list and proposed funding for FY18-19 in the total amount of \$138,896. The selected programs were Project Challenge, Hawthorn Heights and COMPASS Inside Out. The required local match was \$20,423. She noted that Jackson County was the only county that did not have admin help.

***Motion:*** Commissioner Deitz moved to approve the programs, certification, membership list and funding plan. Commissioner Mau seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(13) COLD WEATHER FUNDING REQUEST (FY17-18):** Chairman McMahan stated that this was an item on a previous work session agenda and they were made aware of the request.

Mr. Adams stated he received a letter formally requesting an additional \$30,183.00 to support the work for July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018. As they discussed with the Board at the work session, the current allocation did not meet the need for services.

***Motion:** Commissioner Luker moved to approve the request for an additional \$30,183.00 for the Cold Weather Shelter, from contingency. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(14) PROPOSED BUDGET FY18-19:** Mr. Adams presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2018-19 Annual Budget for the county and stated it was in the amount of \$64,506,059. The proposal constituted an approximate increase of 0.2% (\$124,744) over the FY17-18 amended budget. The budget was balanced and prepared in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, presenting appropriations by categories of expense and revenues by source. All proposals within the general fund were based upon a budget with a tax rate of \$0.38 per \$100 of value. This constituted a tax increase of \$0.01 per \$100 of value over the current rate of \$0.37.

**(a) Expenditures Highlights:** Total Expenditures by Function for the General Fund - \$64,506,059:

- Human Services – 25%
- Education - 23%
- Public Safety – 22%
- General Government - 17%
- Cultural/Recreation – 8%
- Transportation - 2%
- Other - 2%
- Ec & Phy Dev – 1%

**(b) Personnel/Insurance:** The proposed FY18-19 budget contained personnel recommendations. The recommendations include:

- Career Path Reinstatements (Year 2 of 2 Year Plan)
- One step (2%) increase for all employees
- Position adjustments and additions
- Career Path Hiring Policy
- Hospital/Dental Insurance Adjustments, Retiree Insurance Adjustments, Worker's Compensation, Liability Insurance

It was recommended that the county continue the reinstatement of the career path program as recommended by a previously conducted salary study. The county implemented the first year of the plan in current FY17-18. \$546,591 was budgeted to implement the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the reinstatement plan.

It was also recommended that all employees move up one step in the current grade and step plan. This action was necessary to maintain the career path system. \$322,453 was budgeted to implement a one-step increase for all employees.

The following position adjustments and additions were recommended to be funded:

- Reclassify Computer System Administrator II to Assistant IT Director.
- Reclassify Computer Support Technician I to Computer Support Technician II.
- Reclassify General Utility Worker III to Maintenance Mechanic II.
- Reclassify Maintenance Mechanic II to newly created HVAC Maintenance Mechanic position.
- Reclassify Office Processing Assistant III to Patient Relations Representative IV.
- Add one permanent part-time Community Social Services Assistant.
- Add one Human Service Director Position.
- Reclassify Processing Assistant III to Processing Assistant IV.

- Reclassify Human Resources Aide to Community Services Assistant.
- Reclassify Processing Unit Supervisor to Information Processing Technician.
- Increase FTE of Project Care and Fire Coordinator from 62.5% to 72.5%.
- Reclassify Senior Center Coordinator up one grade.
- Add one full time recreation Programming Coordinator.
- Reclassify Three Road Deputies to School Resource Officers (associated with the proposed additional \$0.01).
- Add one additional School Resource Officer (associated with the proposed additional \$0.01).
- Add one additional Juvenile Detective position (associated with proposed additional \$0.01).

A new career path hiring policy was being requested and proposed. It was being requested that the County Manager be empowered to hire new employees with direct career path experience at a starting salary that matched their years of experience. It was proposed that restrictions be imposed onto this new policy and would include a management team to review requests. Details of the proposed policy would be discussed further during the budget process.

Increased hospitalization/dental insurance premium would cost an additional \$386,793. Retiree insurance costs would decrease by \$35,338. Worker's compensation insurance would increase by \$33,152. Liability insurance would increase by \$2,000.

(c) Capital and Capital Improvements: There were capital and capital improvement needs in the amount of \$1,988,998 that should be addressed in FY18-19. The recommendations were as follows:

- Equipment: \$708,112. Highlights under this category include computers, servers, printers, software, phone systems, garage equipment, grounds maintenance equipment, security system for the Department on Aging facility, recreation equipment, law enforcement rifle and Taser replacements and emergency communication equipment. Note: Voting machines were not included in the proposed budget. It was recommended that the Board of Elections go through their selections process and present a request with an implementation timeline when they were ready.
- Vehicles: \$578,186. Highlights under this category include \$246,000 to replace vehicles at the Sheriff's Office, \$41,401 for an Emergency Management vehicle, \$25,000 for a Code Enforcement vehicle, \$27,500 for a Social Services vehicle, \$27,000 for a Recreation vehicle and \$211,285 for two Transportation lift equipped vehicles and one Light Transit vehicle/bus (90% grant funded).
- Improvements: \$702,700. Highlights under this category include remodeling exercise room and adding a handicap access button at the Department on Aging; phased floor repair for DSS; roof replacement, water heater and fence enhancements for the Jail; American Legion remodel, paving and various repairs at Andrews Park Campground; resurface the tennis courts, lights on the walking trail and renovate bathrooms/concessions at Mark Watson Park; roof replacement and general site work at Cullowhee Recreation Center; create Masterplan and perform general upgrades at Cashiers complex; general playground, fencing and scoreboard upgrades at multiple recreation sites and update Masterplan and construct additional parking area for the Greenway. Note: It was proposed that these projects be funded from three different sources: \$294,000 from General Fund; \$283,700 from CPR Fund; and \$125,000 from Greenway Project Fund.

(d) FY2018-2022 Facility Capital Improvement Plan: The adopted FY2018-2022 Facility Capital Improvement Plan set aside \$12,000,000 for three major facility projects:

- Health Department
- Animal Rescue Center
- Justice Center Renovations

It was anticipated that the Health Department would go out to bid in the first quarter of 2019. Design work would begin on the Animal Rescue Center in FY18-19. Design work for the Justice Center Renovations would begin six months prior to the completion of the Health Department.

**(e) Board of Education:**

- **Current Expense:** It was proposed to allocate \$7,478,979 to the public schools for FY18-19. This included \$6,471,781 (2% increase \$126,898) for current operations, \$141,928 for PILT (2% increase \$2,783), \$439,665 (2% increase \$8,621) in teacher supplements and \$425,605 for six additional school counselors (associated with proposed additional \$0.01).
- **Capital:** 40% of the Article 40 (1/2 cent) sales tax and 60% of the Article 42 (1/2 cent) sales tax go to public schools for capital. In FY18-19 the following items were proposed to be funded:
  - Capital Outlay: \$235,000
  - Capital Outlay-Technology: \$400,000
  - Capital Outlay – One to One: \$320,700
  - Capital Outlay – Maintenance: \$375,500 – Preventative maintenance on roofs
  - Total \$1,331,200

There was also an additional \$857,056 unassigned as of May 21, 2018 and \$296,369 would be added next fiscal year for a combined total of \$1,153,425 that would be available for other needs as approved by both the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education.

**(f) Southwestern Community College (SCC):** It was proposed to allocate \$2,003,898 to SCC in current operations for FY18-19. The proposal constituted a \$25,069 or 1.27% increase. The proposed general maintenance capital outlay appropriation was \$234,975, which was a 3% increase.

The approved FY2018-2022 Facility Capital Improvement Plan authorized the construction of a 55,000 square foot Health Sciences Building at a total cost of \$19,844,294. Funding for the project comes from Article 46 Sales Tax proceeds. The Plan also anticipates borrowing \$10,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2018-2019. Debt service payments would also be funded from Article 46 Sales Tax Proceeds.

**(g) County Libraries:** Fontana Regional Library System to operate both the Jackson County Library and the Albert Carlton Library. The proposal represented a \$21,963 or 2% increase.

**(h) Other Appropriations:** There were many agencies that requested funds from the county. He divided the discussions into three categories: Safety-Fire, Forestry, Rescue, EMS; Community Development Centers (CDC), non-profits; and Contingencies.

- **Safety – Fire, Forestry, Rescue, EMS:** It was proposed that Cullowhee, Sylva, Canada, Savannah, Balsam and Qualla Volunteer Fire Departments and the Glenville-Cashiers and Jackson County Rescue Squads receive a 2% increase in allocation. It was proposed that the Forestry Service receive \$80,552 as requested in FY18-19. This amount funds 100% for a smoke chaser's salary for an additional three months. An additional \$147,687 had been budgeted for the new Glenville-Cashiers Rescue Squad Building payment (associated with proposed additional \$0.01). An additional \$190,949 had been budgeted to enable Harris EMS to provide 24 hour EMS service to the Qualla area (associated with the proposed additional \$0.01).
- **CDC and Non-profits:** It was proposed that Community Development Center funding to all 14 centers remain at current FY17-18 levels. It was proposed that funding to all non-profits remain at current FY17-18 levels. No new nonprofit programs were recommended for funding in FY18-19, with one exception. It was proposed that \$25,000 be allocated to the Nurse Family Partnership Program administered by Southwestern Child Development.
- **Contingencies:** A contingency of \$183,446 was established as well and a reserve for salary adjustments and internships in the amount of \$25,000.

(i) Summary of Expenditures associated with proposed additional \$0.01: All expenses to be funded with the proposed additional \$0.01 were associated with public school safety needs and other community safety needs. \$0.01 on the tax rate generates approximately \$918,361 in additional property tax revenues. The following summarized the additional safety needs that could be met with additional revenues:

- Six new School Counselors \$425,605
- Four School Resource Officers \$190,044
- One Juvenile Detective \$51,267
- Glenville-Cashiers Rescue Squad Debt Service \$147,687
- Harris EMS 24 Hour Qualla Coverage \$190,949
- Total \$1,005,552

One additional cent on the tax rate did not cover these expenses. The additional \$87,191 needed would come from the General Fund.

(j) Special Fund Highlights: These funds were separate operating entities from the general fund budget. The general fund budget included transfers to some of these other funds in the amount of \$7,799,847 to support capital projects, recreation and conservation, debt service, the green energy park, economic development, revaluation and school capital reserve. There were additional personnel and capital recommendations in the following summaries:

- Solid Waste Enterprise Fund: The Solid Waste FY18-19 proposed operating budget was \$3,850,846. The proposal constituted an approximate decrease of 0.02% (\$898) under the current FY17-18 amended budget. The enterprise fund was funded completely from fees collected for services. Employees within this Fund would have their career path reinstated, if applicable and would receive a one-step (2%) pay increase. It was recommended to add one full time position – Solid Waste Reduction/Education Coordinator. \$109,000 was budgeted to purchase a new dump truck, slope mower and litter vacuum system. There were no other major operational changes proposed for FY18-19.
- Emergency Telephone (E911) Fund: The E911 FY18-19 proposed operating budget was \$477,471. The proposal constituted an approximate increase of 7.37% (\$32,777) over the current FY17-18 amended budget. These operations were funded completely through E911 fees. Employees within this Fund would have their career path reinstated, if applicable and would receive a one-step (2%) pay increase. There were no major operational changes proposed for FY18-19.
- Real Property Revaluation Fund: The proposed FY18-19 revaluation operating budget was \$350,500. The proposal constituted no increase over current year operations. Employees within this Fund would have their career path reinstated, if applicable and receive a one-step (2%) pay increase. There were no major operational changes proposed for FY18-19.
- Green Energy Fund: They FY18-19 proposed budget was \$203,419. The proposal constituted almost level funding from current FY17-18. Employees within this Fund would have their career path reinstated, if applicable and receive a one-step (2%) pay increase. A Masterplan for the campus would be developed in FY18-19. There were no major operational changes proposed for FY18-19.
- Economic Development fund: The FY18-19 proposed budget was \$152,731. The proposal constituted an approximate increase of 1.21% (\$1,822) over the current FY17-18 amended budget. The employee within this Fund would have their career path reinstated, if applicable and receive a one-step (2%) pay increase. There were no major operational changes proposed for FY18-19.

- Fire Tax Fund: This Fund included both the Highlands Fire and Rescue Operations and the Cashiers-Glenville Volunteer Fire Department. The Highlands Fire and Rescue proposed FY18-19 budget was \$50,000. The proposal constituted level funding from current FY17-18. The current fire tax rate of \$0.0254 per \$100 value would provide the revenues necessary to cover expenses. The Cashiers-Glenville Volunteer Fire Department proposed FY18-19 budget was \$1,204,561. The proposal constituted a 0.39% (\$45,000) increase over current FY17-18 amended budget. Although the proposal increase was minimal, the current tax rate of \$0.0233 per \$100 did not cover current FY17-18 expenses. The fund lost approximately \$44,515 and did not have a fund balance. A small tax increase to \$0.0243 per \$100 value would be needed to fund the requested FY18-19 budget. This constituted a tenth of a penny tax increase.
- Other Funds: This category included other funds such as the Capital Reserve Fund, School Capital Reserve Fund, Economic Development Fund (23, 42 and 64), Community Development Fund, Law Enforcement Fund, Conservation Preservation Recreation Fund, Debt Service Fund, Clean Water Revolving Fund, Airport Authority Fund and all active building funds.

(k) Fee Schedules: The county operated many services that rely on fees to offset the cost of operations. These fee schedules apply to both the general fund and other fund operations. The fee and rate schedule included the following: Mileage reimbursement rate; Hospital/Dental Insurance Rates; Recreation Center Fees and Charges; Pool Fees and Charges; Department on Aging-Heritage Room; Permitting and Code Enforcement Fees; Planning Fees; Health Department Fees; and Solid Waste Fund Fees. It was recommended that adjustments be made to the following fee schedules:

- Hospital/Dental Rates –County’s contribution for employees would be increased by 7.5%.
- Mileage rate increase to IRS rate of \$0.545 per mile.
- Recreation increase to fitness center operations and Andrews Park Campground.
- HD Comprehensive Fee Schedule.
- Department on Aging increase in housekeeping cost for Heritage Room.

(l) Closing: The public hearing was scheduled for June 4, 2018 in regards to the proposed budget. The public would be able to examine the proposed budget on the county’s website and hard copies would be available for inspections at the Administration and Finance Departments. The budget was tentatively scheduled to be approved at the regular scheduled June 18, 2018 Commissioners’ meeting after the Board had the opportunity to make any final adjustments.

He extended his appreciation to all county employees who worked extremely hard to provide the necessary services that made Jackson County a great place to live. He also extended his thanks to the department heads, elected officials and other representatives for their cooperation in fashioning their budget requests to the required specifications and timelines. Last, but by no means least, he thanked Finance Director Darlene Fox and her staff for their tireless effort and attention to detail over the budget development process.

*Informational item.*

**(15) AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD:**

***Motion:*** *Commissioner Luker moved to reappoint John Brown, Kent Cochran and Chet Stephens to serve additional three year terms on the Agricultural Advisory Board, terms to expire June 1, 2021. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(16) BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** *Carry over.*



**(17) CASHIERS PLANNING COUNCIL:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Luker moved to appoint Mark Letson to a three year term on the Cashiers Planning Council, term to expire May 7, 2021. Commissioner Mau seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(18) COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR LONG TERM CARE:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Luker moved to appoint Charles Edward Beane to serve an initial one year term on the Community Advisory Committee for Long Term Care, term to expire May 4, 2019. Commissioner Mau seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(19) CULLOWHEE PLANNING COUNCIL:** Carry over.

**(20) PLANNING BOARD:** Carry over.

**(21) US 441 GATEWAY DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL:** Carry over.

**(22) PRESS CONFERENCE:** None.

**(23) CLOSED SESSION:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Mau moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) Legal for one item and G.S.143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel for one item. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

Chairman McMahan called the regular meeting back to order and stated that no action was taken in closed session except the approval of the minutes.

There being no further business, Commissioner Deitz moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mau seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman