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Posted By: Evelyn Baker
Witness: _____

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
MAY 15, 2006**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on May 15, 2006, at 6:00 p.m., 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Room A201, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian T. McMahan, Chairman
Roberta Crawford, Vice Chair
Joe Cowan, Commissioner
Eddie Madden, Commissioner
Conrad Burrell, Commissioner
Kenneth L. Westmoreland, County Manager
W. Paul Holt, Jr., County Attorney
Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk to the Board

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

AGENDA: Chairman McMahan added Senior Center, Rescue Squad Unit One and Health Dept. Position Reclassification. Commissioner Crawford moved to approve the amended Agenda. Commissioner Madden seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Burrell moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 1, 2006. Commissioner Cowan seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC: T. J. Walker of Dillsboro stated that if the Dillsboro Dam is removed it would devastate trout fishing in the river and Jackson County has the potential of being a world-class trout fishery. He stated that Duke Power's latest environmental assessment is an example of disrespect and abandons the county environmentally and economically. He urged the Board to continue with its objection to Duke's proposal to remove the Dillsboro Dam.

(1) FINANCE & TAX COLLECTOR REPORTS FOR APRIL 2006 and BUDGET AMENDMENT: Commissioner Burrell moved to approve the Finance & Tax Collector Reports and Budget Amendment. Commissioner Cowan seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

- (2) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Chairman McMahan stated:
- (a) On May 6th he attended the North Carolina Fallen Fire Fighters memorial and dedication ceremony in Raleigh at which time the late Jake Parris, Jr. of Jackson County was inducted into the North Carolina Fallen Fire Fighters Foundation.
 - (b) Commissioners are invited to the May 17th County Assembly Day in Raleigh. One of the NCACC's legislative goals is for the state to cap Medicaid costs or permanently phase out counties in Medicaid participation since the state has a \$2 billion surplus.
 - (c) May 20th is the Savannah Fire Dept.'s annual fund raiser dinner from 12 noon to 7:00 pm.

- (d) The Region A meeting is scheduled on May 22nd, 7:00 pm at Cherokee.
- (e) The Board of Education has requested that a Special Joint Meeting be scheduled on May 30, 2006, 6:00 pm, at SMH concerning budget requests. Further, bids for the sitework will be ready to reject or approve by that date. Prior to the meeting, Superintendent Nations will host a bus tour of the campus.
- (f) Budget reconsiderations will be discussed at the June 5th Regular Meeting.
- (g) He congratulated the winners in the recent primary.

(3) COMMISSIONERS REPORT: Commissioner Crawford requested that only one regular meeting be scheduled in July. It was the consensus of the Board that July 17th will be the only regular meeting in July.

(4) COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Westmoreland reported that a bid opening was held last Friday for the SMH campus project; however, only two bids were received. The bid is for all of the sitework on the north side of the campus, preparation of the athletic fields in conjunction with the relocation of Jones St., relocation and placing all utilities underground, temporary parking for students, preparation for a future performing arts facility and a new gym. The project has been re-advertised and bids will be opened on May 19th. State statute requires three bids; however, at the re-bid if only two bids are received, a recommendation can be made to the Board.

(5) SENIOR CENTER: Commissioner Cowan moved that Mr. Westmoreland be authorized to negotiate with two or three architectural firms, from which the Board will select one, to prepare construction drawings and all other planning documents, that work on a new Senior Services Building to begin soon after January 1, 2007, and no billing to the county for A/E services until after July 1, 2006. Mr. Westmoreland stated that architectural and engineering fees have been included in the FY2006-07 budget and construction funds programmed for calendar year 2007. Commissioner Madden seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(6) WADE HAMPTON GOLF CLUB, INC.: Commissioner Madden moved to approve the request by Wade Hampton Golf Club to exhibit a fireworks display at the Wade Hampton Golf Club on July 4, 2006. Commissioner Crawford seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(7) JACKSON COUNTY RECREATION/PARKS DEPT.: Commissioner Burrell moved to approve the requests by the Jackson County Recreation/Parks Dept. to exhibit fireworks displays on a fireworks display on the Historic Courthouse lawn and Cashiers Community Park on July 4, 2006. Commissioner Madden seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(8) LANDFILL ROAD – NAME CHANGE: The 9-1-1 Addressing Office has raised no objection to the change. Commissioner Crawford moved to change the name of Landfill Road to “Green Energy Park Road”. Commissioner Madden seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(9) KUDZU PLAYERS LEASE: Carry over.

(10) COUNTRY COLLECTIONS – REVOLVING LOAN & SOLID WASTE

BILL: Commissioner Crawford moved to write off as uncollectible Country Collections revolving loan in the amount of \$15,677.78 and solid waste bill in the amount of \$174.60. Mr. Westmoreland stated there have been many attempts to collect these debts. County Collections is a defunct company and since there was no collateral involved with the original revolving loan, there is no way the county can recover any of assets. The debt has been on the books for five years. Further, the outside auditors recommended this action during last year’s audit. Chairman McMahan seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(11) GREEN ENERGY PARK QUARTERLY REPORT: Timm Muth,

Project Manager presented a progress report for the park since January 2006. He anticipates that the project will create approximately 20 jobs during the first year: six potters, four glass artisans, three blacksmiths, three people for the biodiesel operation, and he. In addition, more than three people will be working in the greenhouses. The craft shops should be completed by the end of the summer.

He stated the interior construction of walls for biodiesel refinery/blacksmithing building are approximately 80% complete; installation of exterior siding on the refinery building begun on May 5; six gutter-connect greenhouses are on site; and gas pipe installed to the refinery building and greenhouse areas.

He stated the Phase I schedule is as follows:

- (a) form steering committee to better identify both community and user needs and direct project growth;
- (b) complete site clean-up and begin grading and landscaping;
- (c) reassemble greenhouses and equip for operations and construct boiler facilities;
- (d) begin demolition and reconstruction of warehouse/craft building;
- (e) post competitive requirements for studio and greenhouse spaces;
- (f) award studio and greenhouse spaces;
- (g) target date for Phase I opening is October 1, 2006.

The biodiesel firm will start using waste oil as its stock which will be turned into diesel fuel, but since it has been receiving so many requests from governmental entities, businesses and individuals in the area, it needs a source for the virgin oil (canola). The firm prefers that local farms grow “energy crops” particularly rape seed. The studies under review reflect that one acre of rape seed yields 100 gallons of canola oil. The residue after harvest can be used as high quality animal feed. The farmers would have a two-fold incentive, i.e. sell the oil to biodiesel firms and the residue for animal feed. Rape seed is primarily grown as a winter cover crop, but can be grown year round. Negotiations are underway with the owners of a 200 acre farm who are interested in planting the entire farm in rape seed next winter. A grant application has been submitted for the purchase of a seed press. Mr. Westmoreland stated that grant funds may be available to purchase a combine or some other type of farm equipment that would be kept by the county extension office and loaned or leased at a nominal cost to farmers who are interested in growing energy crops.

(12) GREEN ENERGY PARK STEERING COMMITTEE: Carry over.

(13) RESCUE SQUAD UNIT ONE: Chairman McMahan stated that last year there were two lengthy rescue operations. Many rescue resources came to the county to offer assistance which placed a financial hardship on the Rescue Squad's budget. The Rescue Squad Unit One has submitted receipts for the actual expenses incurred for those two rescue operations in the amount of \$9,210.01. Mr. Westmoreland stated he was given a detailed accounting of expenditures, all are legitimate and both of the rescue operations came at the request of the Sheriff's Office. He stated, if approved, the appropriation would be from the contingency account and be considered a one-time allocation. He stated that he has recommended allocating \$5,000 in the FY2006-07 emergency management budget for such expenses in the future. Commissioner Burrell moved to approve the request. Commissioner Crawford seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(14) HEALTH DEPT. POSITION RECLASSIFICATION/DENTAL HYGIENIST: Mr. Westmoreland stated that for some time the Health Dept. has used contract employees to provide dental hygienist services. Contract service has been used primarily because of the inability to attract a full time dental hygienist. Recent personnel changes offer the opportunity for a better and cheaper solution for providing this service. He recommended that the Board authorize a new dental hygienist position in place of the contract employee now authorized. This change would be effective immediately and potentially could result in an annual savings of approximately \$9,700. If approved, the replacement dental assistant position would not be filled until after July 1, 2006 and would be funded entirely through the Kate B. Reynolds grant funds. Commissioner Madden moved to approve the request. Commissioner Crawford seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

There being no further business, Commissioner Burrell moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Crawford seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Attested By:

Approved:

Evelyn B. Baker
Clerk to the Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman

