

Posted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time Posted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Posted By: Evelyn Baker  
Witnessed By: \_\_\_\_\_

**MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
JUNE 12, 2008**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing on June 12, 2008, at 5:00 p.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road Sylva, North Carolina.

Present:	Brian T. McMahan, Chairman	Kenneth L. Westmoreland, Co. Mgr.
	Joe Cowan, Vice Chair	Darlene Fox, Finance Director
	Tom Massie, Commissioner	Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk to Board
	William Shelton, Commissioner	
	Mark Jones, Commissioner	

Chairman McMahan called the public hearing to order and stated the purpose is to receive public input on the proposed FY2008-2009 Budget and opened the floor for public comment.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

(1) Ethan Staats, Library Board, stated that due to the increase in usage, circulation and internet users at the Cashiers Library, more staff hours are needed in order to operate in an adequate manner. Three fulltime staff are needed; two must be on duty at all times. It is difficult to operate a quality library with such a low appropriation. The library budget is \$187,000 of which the county appropriated \$144,000 (salaries are \$139,000). The difference is made up from fines and donations from the Friends of the Library. He requested that the Cashiers Library budget be increased.

(2) Carl Iobst of the Village of Forest Hills posed several questions concerning the Economic Development Commission, i.e., Why does the county need an EDC? Where is the audit that was promised two years ago? What is the status of the \$568,000 loan the EDC made six years ago to Jackson Development Corp. (JDC) since it should have been repaid within one year? If the EDC has not forgiven the loan and the JDC is now defunct, are taxpayers now responsible for repayment of the loan, plus interest, to the EDC? Does the county need a fulltime EDC Director since there is not enough interest or need? He suggested that an ad hoc committee, activated from time to time, could work more effectively.

(3) Jim McCarthy stated the proposed budget is well prepared, thin on pork and agrees with the 2.9% COLA for county employees. He stated he is also concerned about the \$568,000 loan from the EDC to JDC since it has not been paid or forgiven. He suggested that an EDC representative address this issue in a public forum. He stated that rents, approximately \$80,000, are not being paid on the property the county acquired from JDC in addition to the approximate \$32,000 in maintenance costs.

(4) Veronica Nichols requested that the county appropriate the sum of \$1,000 for the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program. This is a mentoring program for at risk students in Scotts Creek and Fairview Elementary Schools. The United Fund no longer allocates funds in the county.

There being no further public comments, Commissioner Cowan moved that the public hearing be adjourned. Commissioner Shelton seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Attested By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk

Approved:

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