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Time Posted: _____
Posted By: Pat Parris
Witnessed By: _____

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
AUGUST 6, 2012**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on August 6, 2012, 2:00 pm, Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Rd., Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman
Doug Cody, Vice Chair
Mark Jones, Commissioner
Charles Elders, Commissioner
Joe Cowan, Commissioner

Chuck Wooten, County Manager
J. K. Coward, Jr., Co. Attorney
Pat Parris, Clerk to Board

Chairman Debnam called the meeting to order.

AGENDA: Commissioner Elders moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Cowan moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 16, 2012. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(1) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Chairman Debnam reported the Board had a very good meeting with the members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians this past week.

(2) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT: Mr. Wooten reported:

(a) June Unemployment Rates: Overall, the unemployment rates in the state increased during June; however, the local unemployment rate was unchanged at 9.6%. Graham County was the only county to experience a decline during June and their rate declined from 15.7% in May to 15.2% in June. The June 2012 rate of 9.6% for Jackson County is slightly down from June 2011 rate of 9.8%. Overall, Haywood had the lowest unemployment rate of 8.5% followed by Jackson and Transylvania counties at 9.6%.

(b) Smoky Mountain Center (SMC) Budget Reductions: SMC incurred a total of \$4,013,698 in state appropriation reductions. Most of these funds (\$3.5 million) will result in reduced funding and services to contracted agencies. Jackson County residents will realize some specific reductions most notably the closure of the walk-in recovery education center located in Dillsboro Court. None of the reductions are associated with the Medicaid waiver program. SMH will hold town hall meetings over the next few weeks for providers and patients to allow them to better understand the impact of the funding reductions.

(c) 2012 Gertrude S. Carraway Award of Merit: The Carraway Awards are presented each year to people and organizations demonstrating genuine commitment through extraordinary leadership, research, philanthropy, promotion and /or personal participation in historic preservation. The Jackson County Library project has been selected to receive this award at the annual conference on Friday, September 21st. Commissioners Jones and Cowan will attend and accept the award on behalf of Jackson County. Dottie Brunette will also attend representing the Fontana Library.

(d) Contract for Consultation and Slope Observations: In accordance with the agreement with East Carolina University, the County must engage a geotechnical engineer to make semi annual inspections of the slopes at the Jackson County Services Park in Webster. Bunnell-Lammons Engineering, Inc. (BLE) has submitted a proposal to perform these services at an annual fee of \$2,000 through 2014. This firm has done previous work as part of this site development project and is very familiar with the property. He plans to accept their offer and enter into a contract for these services during the next two years.

(e) Mutual Aid Agreements: Following the meeting with the Tribal Council on July 30th, he has confirmed that mutual aid agreements are in place between the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and the Cherokee Police Department as well as a statewide mutual aid agreement for emergency management operations in Jackson County and Cherokee. MedWest EMS and Cherokee EMS are finalizing a mutual aid agreement for ambulance service between those two entities. Qualla Volunteer Fire Department and Cherokee Fire Department have a mutual aid agreement between the two departments.

(f) Tax Administration Update: Tax bills are scheduled to be mailed on Friday, August 10th. The 2016 revaluation is underway.

(g) East Carolina Dental Clinic: Chairman Debnam, Gerald Green and he appeared before the Webster Town Council on August 2nd to request a variance for the proposed dental clinic building. The building and parking lot as designed was in conflict with the Town's newly adopted zoning ordinance. Specifically, the distance between the property line and the edge of the curbs did not meet the set back requirement of 20 ft. In addition, one corner of the building was 38.5' from the centerline of the street and the zoning ordinance required 40'. This building was designed long before the zoning ordinance was adopted. The Town Council gave unanimous support in granting a variance; however, in keeping with the time and public hearing requirements, the variance cannot be officially considered until their September meeting. The Council of State will take action on August 7th to accept the property from the County.

(3) EMERGENCY FUEL PLAN: Todd Dillard, Emergency Management Director, presented a Fuel Assurance Plan. He stated that with the realization that disasters, both natural and unnatural are always a potential threat, it is vital for local governments to set forth plans for emergency fuel acquisition and allocation. Jackson County is susceptible to extreme fuel shortages because of the mountainous region and transportation challenges. He requested approval of the Plan.

Motion: *Commissioner Jones moved to approve the Fuel Assurance Plan. Commissioner Cowan seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(4) ORDER OF COLLECTION (R12-20): Mr. Wooten stated that an Order of Collection authorizes, empowers and commands collection of taxes set forth in the tax records filed with the Tax Administration and deliver receipts to county. An Order of Collection must be considered by the Board annually so the Tax Collector can take whatever steps are necessary to collect taxes. An Order of Collection has the same effect as a court judgment against the jurisdiction's taxpayers, meaning tax collectors may use collection remedies against personal property such as attachment and garnishment and levy without additional involvement by the courts.

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to approve the Order of Collection. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(5) FINANCING AGREEMENT APPLICATION RESOLUTION (R12-21): The Resolution is for authorization to file an application for approval of a financing agreement with the Local Government Commission for the Gymnasium & Performing Arts project at Smoky Mountain High School in the amount of \$10 million. A separate Resolution will be presented in December for an additional \$1.3 million for the Blue Ridge School project.

Motion: *Commissioner Jones moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Cowan seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

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

(7) **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:**

Motion: *Commissioner Jones moved to reappoint Jane Nardy, to 3-year term on the Historic Preservation Commission. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(8) **PLANNING BOARD CHAIR:** Gerald Green, Planning Director, recommended that Zachary Koenig be reappointed as Chair of the Planning Board.

Motion: *Commissioner Cody moved to reappoint Zachary Koenig to a one year term as Chairman of the Planning Board. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(9) **PLANNING BOARD VICE CHAIR:** Carry over.

Informal Comments by Public

(a) Marie Leatherwood of Sylva stated her concerns of actions by the previous and current board.

Press Conference

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Patsy C. Parris, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman