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Time Posted: \_\_\_\_\_

Posted By: Pat Parris

Witnessed By: \_\_\_\_\_

**MINUTES OF A  
WORK SESSION  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2012**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on September 17, 2012, 1:30 p.m., Justice & Administration Building, 401 Grindstaff Cove Rd., Room A227, Sylva, North Carolina.

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

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

Chairman Debnam called the Work Session to Order.

**(1) ROOM OCCUPANCY TAX:** Clifford Meads, Committee Chairman, presented a draft resolution confirming the levy of an existing 3% occupancy tax, increasing the levy of occupancy tax by 1% and creating the Jackson County Tourism Authority (TDA). The draft resolution abolishes the current Jackson County Travel & Tourism Authority and the Cashiers Travel & Tourism Authority and sets forth regulations for appointments, compensation (reimbursement of expenses only), meeting schedule, officers, county government involvement, powers/duties of the TDA, and fiscal year/expenditures.

**(2) SOCIAL SERVICES DEPT.:** Bob Cochran, Director, stated that NCFAST, a mandated automation of county social services programs, has been in development for more than 20 years and will eventually encompass all programs. Food and Nutrition services will be the first automated program starting in November. All old cases must be converted and new cases must be “built”. The Director of the NC Division of Social Services has informed the department that NCFAST will not be easy. He presented some findings experienced from three pilot counties (Carteret, Catawba and Buncombe):

- Productivity was greatly reduced or went to zero.
- Requires a lot of overtime work. Standard conversions of old cases can take from 1-3 hours (31 steps). Cases must be up-to-date before staff can begin.
- Lost several staff in the process.
- NCFAST is designed for FNS, MA, WF, CPS, APS and more.
- Changes take much longer. What used to take 5 minutes in FSIS, now takes an hour. Even the simplest application (e.g. a homeless man with no income) takes 30 minutes to complete.
- Staff will struggle with losing mastery of what they now do and their client’s needs going unmet.
- No more state HELP line which creates more frustration for clients.
- In the not-too-distant future, Income Maintenance workers will be generic FNS, MA, DC, WF, etc.
- Converted cases and re-certifications will be much harder.

- Clients will wait longer than usual.
- Complaints will be made to county officials.

**(3) ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT:** Mr. Wooten stated the majority of the ordinances are self-enforced unless some type of permit is required. Any time an ordinance is adopted, how it will be enforced must be considered or it loses creditability. Work is underway to develop a more central permitting process that is more easily understood relative to permitting and zoning. Having all information consolidated in a data base which includes a business name, individual name, permit number, and pin number will make it easier.

Tony Elders, Permit and Enforcement Director, stated he will be reviewing the permit process in various departments in order to tie everything to pin numbers and the mapping system. Over the past few months he and Gerald Green have been working on which office will enforce which ordinance. Currently, some of the enforcement is being done through the new code enforcement office and some by planning. A physical inventory of billboards is underway.

Gerald Green Planning Director, stated land development and building construction require permits in addition to zoning standards for the Cashiers business area and the U. S. 441 Corridor. Subdivisions must be approved by the planning department as well as the division of an existing lot. Difficulties arise when someone goes into an existing building, has the power turned on, put up a sign and open for business. He was requested to meet with Duke Energy and ascertain if there is some way Duke could reference pin numbers in some form when power is being turned on/off so if there is a change in service it would key a request to the county.

Mr. Wooten suggested the Board may want to consider requiring some type of “no fee” business license so the county will be aware of the type of businesses that are opening in the county. If mandatory, a determination would need to be made as to what the consequences would be if someone fails to obtain a license. Mr. Coward stated it may require some type of ordinance.

Mr. Coward stated the statutes allow counties to enforce ordinances and allow that a violation could be prosecuted as a misdemeanor under the criminal code; however, the county must maintain a code of ordinances and have criminalized enforcement, thus forcing compliance through a civil penalty. The problem is the general section of the code was amended and the misdemeanor aspect removed. He advised adopting one amendment in the general provisions section for all ordinances so they are in line with the other separate parts. Ordinance amendments require a public hearing. He was requested to draft a recommendation.

**(4) COUNTY FLAG PROJECT:** All students in county schools, WCU and SCC are invited to participate. The guidelines are:

- The design should be in landscape orientation;
- The design should illustrate defining symbols, buildings, or features of Jackson County;
- The design must be original and may not contain copied images, design or photographs;
- The design must be submitted technologically ready for implementation from software such as *Illustrator*\*\*;
- All designs must be submitted to Gayle Woody at SMH by December 1\*\*;
- All designs should have the name, grade and school of student on the back.

\*\*Students may not have access to *Illustrator*, a software program that a flag company can print from directly. All submissions must be taken to SMH one week before the deadline and an upper level art student will convert the design to *Illustrator*.

(5) **PUBLIC ASSEMBLY ORDINANCE**: An ordinance adopted by Catawba County was presented which could be used as a guideline for drafting an ordinance for Jackson County. Mr. Coward was directed to draft a proposed ordinance.

(6) **CAPITAL EQUIPMENT ALLOCATIONS**: Mr. Wooten stated that funding for all capital projects has been combined and placed in a separate fund. He has received requests for vehicles and will prepare a list which can be discussed during the next work session. The vehicle requests in the budget were from the Sheriff, Health Dept., Animal Control and DSS; however, since the budget was adopted, a couple of additional vehicles in Code Enforcement and Tax Administration were identified due to high mileage. He will also draft a proposed capital plan for this fiscal year.

(7) **COUNTY ABC BOARD**: Discussion was held concerning the appointment of a committee to do a study and make recommendations to the Board. Mr. Wooten will draft, for approval, a charge for the committee. Mr. Coward stated that after the recommendations are presented, the county would then adopt a resolution creating a County ABC Board who could choose to remain a separate board or merge with the Sylva ABC Board.

**CLOSED SESSION;**

***Motion:** Chairman Debnam moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S.143-318.11(a)(5) Real Property and G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) Legal. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.*

Chairman Debnam called the work session back to order and stated no action was taken in closed session other than the approval of closed session minutes.

There being no further comments, Commissioner Cody moved to adjourn the work session. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the work session adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Patsy C. Parris, Clerk to Board

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W. J. Debnam, Chairman