

**MINUTES OF A  
REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**HELD ON**

**MARCH 17, 2014**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on March 17, 2014, 6:00 pm, Justice & Administration Bldg., Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Rd., Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman                      Chuck Wooten, County Manager                      Doug Cody, Vice Chair                      J. K. Coward, Jr.,  
County Attorney  
Vicki Greene, Commissioner                      Pat Parris, Clerk to Board  
Charles Elders, Commissioner  
Absent: Mark Jones, Commissioner

Chairman Debnam called the meeting to order.

**AGENDA:** Chairman Debnam amended the Agenda by adding Proclamation Honoring Surveyors, deleting TWSA appointment and adding Closed Session G.S.143-318.11(3) Legal and G.S.143-318311(a)5 Real Property. Commissioner Elders moved to approve the amended Agenda. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

**MINUTES:** Commissioner Greene moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 3, 2014. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

**PROCLAMATION:** Chairman Debnam read a Proclamation honoring Surveyors.

**Motion:** Commissioner Cody moved to proclaim the week of March 16-22 as Jackson County Surveyors Week. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

**(1) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT:** Mr. Wooten reported:

**(a) Health Department Dental Clinic:** The local clinic will close to the public as of March 27th. The remaining staff members will work 4 additional days to prepare the clinic for closure and to make a few follow up calls. Both of the remaining staff has interviewed with ECU for positions in the clinic and hopefully they will be considered for employment. The ECU clinic anticipates opening on April 14th or 15th.

**(b) MEDIC:** Medic is a Buncombe County independent for profit EMS provider that has asked about expanding its services into Jackson County as a back-up or supplement to the WestCare EMS service. The contract with WestCare designates them as the exclusive provider of ambulance service from Thorpe Power dam north to the Swain and Haywood County lines. MEDIC does have a contract with the Veteran's Administration to provide convalescent transport to/from the veteran's clinic in Franklin and the veteran's hospital in Asheville and would like to locate an ambulance in Jackson to be available as a back-up to the traditional EMS service or to respond to convalescent transport calls for veterans. He has confirmed with the Emergency Management Director that WestCare is providing the appropriate level of service as called for in the contract. Unless WestCare requests additional support, contract does not allow for another ambulance provider in the County.

**(c) Capital Projects Update:** Final inspections have begun at Smoky Mountain High School. It appears the fine arts center is basically complete and ready for the final punch list by the designer and the contractor. Training has been provided on the stage rigging systems and lighting systems. Sound system training will take place during the week of March 17th. The bleachers are

completed in the gymnasium and the floor finishing for the main and lower levels is under way. It does appear these buildings will be substantially complete by the end of March. The County Grounds staff is preparing a landscaping plan and will finish their work following the acceptance of the buildings in April. The renovations at the Skyland Services Center are winding up, and the meeting room and accessible restrooms should be finished by the end of the month. The pre-qualification of bidders for the 911 Call Center/EOC has generated substantial interest. As of March 10th, 12 bidders had contacted Odell Thompson and requested the pre-qualification materials.

**(d) Upcoming Meetings:** Region A will hold their bi-monthly meeting on March 24th at the Boiler Room in Franklin with dinner beginning at 6:30 pm. The NCACC will hold their district meeting at the Waynesville Country Club on April 2, 2014 beginning at 5:30 pm. Jackson County is sponsoring the upcoming meeting of the Economic Development personnel from the western 23 counties on March 18th at Western Carolina University. Carolina West Sports Medicine Physical Therapy Clinic Open House is on March 27th 4 pm – 6pm at WCU Health and Human Sciences building, Suite 113.

**(2) CONSENT AGENDA:** Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented Finance, Tax Collector and Refund Reports for February 2014 and two budget amendments.

**Motion:** *Commissioner Cody moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(3) JUDACULLA ROCK UPDATE:** Mr. Wooten stated that in 2012, the County completed renovations at the Judaculla Rock site. This included landscaping, clearing underbrush, and constructing an observation deck for viewing the rock. With the designation as a historical site, this location receives a significant amount of traffic and continues to be of significant historical significance. Over the past several years, an unofficial group of people has provided assistance to the County by assisting with construction design, public access, and monitoring use of the site. Recently, the County was approached about filming at the site by Committee Films for an upcoming episode of the America Unearthed on the History Two Channel. The production company had been talking with various people in the area over the last couple of months. Scott Ashcraft, Archaeologist with the National Forest Service who was instrumental in getting the historical site designation originally, contacted Rusty Ellis, Recreation Director, and provided him with a copy of a release that would allow the production company to film at the Judaculla Rock scheduled for Wednesday, March 19th. The release was sent to Jay Coward for his review and approval. Starting on Saturday, he began to receive emails from various people about the upcoming filming indicating that they were withdrawing their support of the project as they felt the show might sensationalize the myth of Judaculla and question the validity of the sketching on the rock or other signs. Mr. Coward, Bonnie Claxton and he had a conference with Nina Boughdsbsnh, Associate Producer, about the upcoming project. They also attempted to call Russ Townsend and Tyler Howe with the Tribal Council Historic Office; however, they have not heard back from them. In addition, he had a call from the NC Film Commission in support of the project. Mr. Coward, Ms. Claxton and he could not find anything out of line with the request; consequently, he signed the release to allow them to film at Judaculla Rock next week. They plan to ask permission to film other locations throughout the County. They advised the show has approximately 1 million viewers and this should provide some good publicity for the area. They have made a real attempt to involve local people with knowledge of the historical significance of Judaculla Rock; however, it appears most have decided not to affiliate with the show which is their prerogative.

Going forward, the Board may want to establish a review committee to evaluate all requests related to this historical site as well as others in the County. Recreation has oversight for the site; however, they do not possess experts on their staff who could evaluate requests in view of the historical significance nor are there history experts in the County Manager's office.

**(4) RECREATION/PARKS – ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE MODIFICATIONS:** Mr. Wooten proposed the following modifications:

- Deletion of a second Assistant Director and creation of an Outdoor Recreation Manager
- Assistant Director would be responsible for supervising Facility Site Managers, Outdoor Recreation Manager and pool facilities.
- Programming Supervisor would be responsible for supervising all Programmers and Special Olympics.
- Facility Site Managers would have the added responsibility for the recreation center facility in addition to the park that surrounds the center.
- Title change for Youth Athletics Coordinator & Adult Athletics Coordinator to Program Coordinator to have consistent job titles throughout the department
- A \$27,000 salary savings was realized upon the retirement of the prior Director.
- Salary adjustments for position modifications are to be made effective immediately.

***Motion:*** Commissioner Greene moved to approve the modifications. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(5) PLANNING BOARD:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Greene moved to reappoint Kent Moore and Dickie Woodard, and appoint Ron Story and Burt Kornegay to the Planning Board, all for 2-year terms expiring on December 31, 2015. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(6) PLANNING BOARD CHAIRMAN:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Elders moved to appoint Clark Lipkin to a one year term as Chairman of the Planning Board. Commissioner Cody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(7) PLANNING BOARD VICE CHAIR:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Greene moved to appoint Sarah Graham to a one year term as Vice Chair of the Planning Board. Commissioner Elder seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(8) ABC BOARD:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Elders moved to appoint Jack Debnam as an Interim member on the ABC Board. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**(9) ABC BOARD CHAIR:**

***Motion:*** Commissioner Cody moved to reappoint David Noland to a one year term as Chair of the ABC Board. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**Informal Comments by Public:**

(a) Marie Leatherwood of Sylva stated her disapproval of board actions.

(b) Bob Stafford stated his disapproval of the Sylva ABC Board requesting renegotiations. He requested letters be sent to DOT regarding reducing the speed limit in Glenville.

(c) Kermit Tolley with MEDIC requested permission to file a franchise in the county. MEDIC has provided a 25 year contract with the V.A. Medical Center,, provides emergency medical services for VA Hospital, critical care transports. MEDIC is capable of increasing the number of daily units, level of service, jobs in the county (currently 5 employees live in the county) and will be competitive with the contract price. He inquired about the next steps he needs to take.

(d) Dick Darnell thanked Mr. Wooten for moving forward with the release of the Judaculla Rock for filming which will be a positive occasion for the county; however, he suggested placing a security camera near the rock in the near future.

**Press Conference**

**CLOSED SESSION:**

***Motion:** Chairman Debnam moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318. 11 (a) (3) Legal and G.S. 143-318.11(a) (5) Real Property. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.*

Chairman Debnam called the regular meeting back to order and stated no action was taken in closed session except approval of the Closed Session Minutes of December 2, 2013.

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Patsy C. Parris, Clerk to Board

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W. J. Debnam, Chairman