

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
OCTOBER 20, 2014**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on October 20, 2014, 2:00 p.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Rd., Sylva, North Carolina.

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

Chairman Debnam called the work session to order.

(1) **AGENDA**: Commissioner Elders moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried

(2) **ALBERT CARLTON LIBRARY EXPANSIONS**: Dr. Barbara Carlton and Serenity Richards, Librarian stated that the Albert Carlton Library was started 22 years ago and has been so successful it is now in need of expansion. This could be accomplished with an addition off the back of the building. The additional space is need for the book sale operation and book storage. Dick Zacher stated that the Library had \$13,600 in book sales last fiscal year and he believes with additional space it could increase to \$20,000 per year. The addition would add 525 square feet and would not be extensive.

(3) **EMPOWERING EMPLOYEE HEALTH**: Danielle Wittekind, Human Resources Director presented:

- (a) Empowering Health
 - Well at Work
 - Employee Clinic
 - Discount Recreation Memberships
 - Employee Assistance Program
 - Disease Management
 - Organizational Policies and Plan Design
- (b) Well at Work: History
 - Started in 2011 after grassroots wellness initiative
 - “An employee wellness program designed for the employees of the County, by the employees of the County
 - Employee volunteer committee chartered by the Board of Commissioners to create a wellness program for the County employees to promote healthy lifestyles
 - Participatory wellness program
- (c) Well at Work: Original Program
 - Incentive: \$50 Visa Gift Card if 5 wellness points earned
 - How Points Earned:
 - Attending educational classes
 - Completing monthly challenges
 - Activities completion (fitness classes, golf, walking club, yoga classes, organized races)
 - Communication: Weekly Wellness Wednesday email tips and ongoing reminder emails
 - In the first year there were only 22 people that earned 5 wellness points or more, less than 6% of the workforce

(d) Well at Work: Surveys and Feedback

- Survey Conducted
- What we learned:
 - Specified times for educational and fitness classes didn't work
 - Employees loved monthly challenges
 - Goodies and incentives are motivators, recognition important
 - Lack of supervisor support
 - Employees want options in what activities they complete rather than specified list
 - More ways to meet the goal of 5 wellness points
- What we did:
 - Revamped the program to be employee driven/employee centric
 - Empowered employee to pick activities to meet personal wellness goals and increase participation in program
 - Focused point structure on employee problem areas
 - Reworked how we communicated program information with employees

(e) Employee Clinic started in 2011

- Clinic Objectives/Goals
 - Improve access to care and convenience for employees
 - Save money – reduction in payments to more expensive providers i.e. urgent care and emergency room visits, services rendered at lower cost to plan
 - Reduce lost time and employee absence, increased productivity
 - Improve health outcomes – individual and aggregate
 - Promote wellness
 - Boost employee retention, recruitment and morale
- Staffing: One full-time PA-C and one full-time Medical Office Assistant
- Location: Designated office space within Health Department
- General Information
 - Serves employees, retirees and dependents over the age of 12 years who are covered under the plan
 - Walk-in clinic open during normal business hours and extended hours throughout the month
 - Services provided at no cost to employee
 - Employees do not have to take time off to visit clinic
- Data Collection / Utilization Review
 - Collect employee feedback through the use of annual surveys
 - Review utilization of clinic by services provided (office visit, lab services, immunizations, etc.
 - Monitor and analyze the continued cost-benefit ratio
 - Most clinics take anywhere between 1-3 years to experience a return on investment or a breakeven point
 - We will continue to try to capture the operational costs and the direct and indirect savings achieved by operating the clinic

(f) Discounted Recreation Memberships

- 50% discount to employees, retirees and their families on membership
- Membership can be deducted from payroll for employee convenience
- Two recreation centers: Cullowhee & Cashiers
- Membership includes free group fitness classes, access to fitness room (cardiovascular and weight training equipment, free weights), yoga/spinning room, aerobics room, childcare at additional cost
- Free for retirees on Medicare supplement through Silver Sneakers program
- Programming of classes at varying times to accommodate before work, during lunches and after work
- Mapped walking trails around County buildings

(g) Employee Assistance Program

- Provided to employees and family members at no cost
- Services are confidential, professional, caring and respectful
- A pivotal piece in providing overall wellness and health for employees and family members who may experience behavioral, psychological or other personal struggles

(h) Disease Management

- Through partnership with Crescent Health Solutions to provide disease management services as part of health insurance benefit
- Targeted program to assist employees and their dependents with diabetes, hypertension and/or high cholesterol in order to live healthier lives
- Facilitated by Health Management Team

(i) Organizational Policies

- 2009: Commissioners adopted requirement for HRAs to be completed for enhanced level of coverage for employees and retirees
- 2011: Commissioners approved implementation of Employee Clinic and wellness program, Well at Work
- 2012: Commissioners approved effective January 2013, employees must certify use/non-use of tobacco status, subject to tobacco substance testing in addition to the completion of HRA for enhanced level of coverage for employees (retirees were not required to certify tobacco status)
- 2013: Commissioners further approved that employees and retirees (under 65 of age) regardless of hire date, must certify use/non-use of tobacco status, subject to tobacco substance testing in addition to the completion of HRA for enhanced level of coverage

(j) Plan Design Eligibility

- All eligible employees are provided coverage on the Standard Plan with the County paying 100% of the premium
- Employees are eligible to be placed on the Enhanced Plan with the County paying 100% of the premium, if the employee:
 - Completes a health risk assessment
 - Certifies non-use of tobacco products and has a negative tobacco substance test result
 - New employees complete within two weeks of hire prior to enrollment effective date and existing employees and retirees complete annually

(4) AGING PROGRAM IMPACTS: Eddie Wells, Aging Director presented the Department of Aging 2013-14 Impact.

(a) Services:

- Adult Day Care
- Caring Hands Respite
- Cashiers Senior Center
- Community Resource Connections
- Health & Wellness Programs
- Jackson County Senior Center
- Liquid Supplement
- Meals on Wheels
- Options Counseling
- Project Care
- Project Firewood
- Project Lifesaver
- Respite Lending Closet
- Senior Christmas Boxes
- Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program
- Senior Day at the Fair
- Senior Fan Program
- Sylva Senior Café

(b) Project Care

- Ramps and home modifications to help seniors maintain independence in their homes
- 47 ramps built
- 25 minor home repairs
- 80 volunteers (mostly church groups)
- 2,000 volunteer hours

- (c) Project Fire
 - First Saturday of each month October-March
 - 217 firewood deliveries to over 100 families
 - Wood is 100% donated to Department on Aging
 - 120 volunteers cut, split and helped deliver firewood
 - 600 volunteer hours
- (d) Cashiers Senior Center
 - Opened the new senior center location in Fall 2013
 - 492 participated in activities
 - 4,098 meals served to 62 participants
 - 24 volunteers
- (e) Jackson County Senior Center
 - Activities, trips, clubs, classes, health & wellness and more
 - 6,920 participated in daily activities
 - 2,900 participated in special events
 - 6,956 participated in fitness events
 - 2,268 participated in drop in activities
 - 243 volunteered with Senior Center
 - 2,268 hours volunteered
 - Certified Senior Center of Excellence (only one in the seven western counties)
- (f) Support Services
 - Caring Hands Respite served 1,699 hours to 16 families
 - Community Resource Connections had 379 inquiries resulting in 1,083 referrals
 - Options Counseling had 39 inquiries resulting in 404 referrals
 - Operated the Lifesaver Project for families with dementia
 - Lending Closet for lift chairs, shower chairs, etc.
- (g) Congregate Nutrition
 - Provided lunch and socialization to 308 seniors
 - Served a total of 10,789 meals to seniors
 - Distributed 255 cases of ensure to those with compromised nutrition
- (h) Meals on Wheels
 - Provided 17,265 meals to homebound seniors
 - Served a total 149 homebound seniors
 - 124 volunteers served 4,100 hours
 - Volunteers drove a total of 76,250 miles
- (i) SHIIP
 - Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program
 - Free, unbiased counseling
 - Served 392 Medicare Beneficiaries
 - 4 volunteers served 108 hours
- (j) Adult Day Care
 - Provided respite for the families of 138 participants for 244 days
 - Help with cognitive state participants while providing much needed relief for the caregiver
 - 23 volunteers helped clients participate in activities
 - 452 hours volunteered
- (k) Senior Christmas Boxes
 - Delivered 500 Christmas boxes to seniors in need during the month of December
 - Boxes included canned food, toiletry items and household products
- (l) Volunteers
 - Services could not be provided without volunteers
 - Total of 636 volunteers (duplicated) served approximately 9,778 hours of service

(5) REVOLVING LOAN PROCEDURES UPDATE: Rich Price, Economic Development Director, presented items of review / revision for Revolving Loan Fund:

(a) Changes to Scope and Purpose. These changes are proposed based on comparisons with the Southwest Commission council of Government RLF policy, and allow more flexibility in lending for a variety of purposes, including retention, expansion, recruitment, revitalization and reuse, etc.

(b) Changes to Eligibility of Loans and Applicants. These changes reflect a need to more clearly identify eligible applicants and eligible loan purposes, with updated information from current financial regulations.

(c) Changes for Fiscal Best Practices / Alignment with Updated Laws and Regulations. These changes (throughout the document) would bring the policy into alignment with fiscal best practices and updated regulations, including on such issues as loan security/collateral; terms; max/min amounts; alternative use of funds; and fees. Changes are also proposed to provide more rigorous program evaluation and client review methods.

(d) Changes to Review Process and Review Board. The loan criteria section is outdated and reflects decades-old factors and their relative weights. This section should be revised to reflect current priorities. The loan process and review board should be updated to reflect a relevant review board with the necessary expertise as well as the County's preference for banking review.

(e) Current RLF Verbiage: Section 1 – Purpose - The purpose of the revolving loan is as follows:

- The creation of new job opportunities and the retention of existing jobs within the County's planning jurisdiction principally for person of low and moderate income (LMI).
- To further new business development and/or existing business expansion within the planning jurisdiction of the County; and
- To enable private business development to occur within the County's planning jurisdiction that would not occur without loan assistance from the revolving loan fund.

(f) Proposed Additions to Section 1:

- Include more options for purpose, basing from SWC policy:
- Small business development
- Retention of existing jobs
- Revitalization of downtown districts?
- Modernization/rehab of existing facilities;
- Support for use of new tech/growth industries
- They use "development of businesses owned and operated by minorities, women, disadvantaged, etc." – but maybe we should use something about place-based here.
- Also, we should include something about RLF loans made in accordance with strategies from the CEDS plan and where it can be found.

(g) Section 2 – Revenues: Add a separate funding stream for incentives? Funded by a portion of income and state and federal grants?

(h) Section 3 – Eligibility – make two sub-sections, one for applicants and one for loans (see SWC)

- #2 – minimum of 3 jobs all FTE
- #3 – 51% LMI as established by HUD
- #5 - Demonstration of need – are there other methods we want to include?
- #7 – add permitting and current on taxes
- #9: no working capital; should we include tech upgrades/equipment here?
- Add defined loan purposes like SWC
- Include non-eligible borrowers and loans like SWC (review first)

(i) Section 4 – Loan Criteria:

- We should review the criteria and points system – it's not relevant to current needs (i.e., use of County utilities, which really is only TWSA, ranks double that of retaining existing jobs).

(j) Section 5 – Loan Fees:

- Make separate section from review board – push that to section 6 and process to section 7
- Maybe include something about WHEN the fee can be waived, and at whose discretion? Where are the fees going? This may or may not be included. Refund information should be moved here.
- Also, consider SWC model of including origination and closing fees in program administration costs paid to County rather than individual clients paying fees.

(k) Section 6 – Loan Review Board

- We should include something as in SWC that establishes when/how often the review board will meet (and provide dates, maybe quarterly, for applications to be received per cycle – i.e., by Feb. 1 for March review, May 1 for June review, etc.)

- SWC does not use a bank review process because their staff provides analysis, financing, packaging/processing/servicing of loans
- Members should include:
 - ED Director
 - Finance Director
 - SWC representative (maybe make it the RLF administrator there?)
 - Two “investment professionals” instead of “local bankers” – gives the ability to have other expertise involved
 - One-two local business owners - SWC calls these community leaders, but preferred business owners
 - Maybe have a requirement that investment professionals and business owners live and/or have businesses based in the County?
- Include criteria for:
 - Designees (i.e., for department heads unable to attend meetings – SWC has an example)
 - Appointments (how long are they on the review board? Is this permanent or rotating? Appointed when and by whom? Which members are permanent (staff, SWC)?)

(l) Section 7 – Review Process:

- ED Director verifies application is complete and all documents and fees submitted
- Application goes to BOARD – give them a checklist to ensure that the project meets the stated ED priorities and the application process requirements; if application requires additional information or does not meet criteria, give applicant opportunity to amend application and re-submit
- Application goes to BANK – local bank currently being used by County; bank reviews for: financial analysis; ability to repay debt; amortization, rates and terms; credit check; written report to County (Wilmington uses a joint review committee made up of more than one bank locally)
- Application goes back to BOARD – review bank report and approve for recommendation to commissioners/notify applicant of negative recommendation
- **SWC requires preliminary interview/determination of eligibility from staff – but he thought we should avoid this as it places a lot of responsibility on a single staff member.

(m) Section 9 – Security:

- Delete “may” and replace with the County will require annual audits until the loan is repaid, or change the language to reflect that it may be audits or other requested information provided in a timely manner
- Look at SWC p. 7-8 “Operating Parameters” section – Sections H, I, and J should be considered for inclusion in ours as additional protections.

(n) Section 10 – Max Amounts: Leave a minimum amount with no limit on the max, especially with a discretionary policy in place.

(o) Section 11 – Terms: Ask bank for review of this section, and look at SWC model too

(p) Section 13 – Tech Assistance: Add SBTDC, SCC as resources?

(q) Section 15 – Source and Amount of Funds: Source and amount. Verify this is correct still? Do other sources need to be listed?

(r) Section 16 – Use of Funds: Closing costs?

(s) Section 17 – Alternative Use of Funds: We may want to expand the language in this section (site preparation, etc.) to reflect case by case policy and what tools we want to have for that.

(t) Section 18 – Monitoring of Development Projects: We should check with Commerce to see if monitoring/reporting requirements have changed for this and the following three sections, and maybe include something about overall program evaluation methods. SWC requires quarterly reports in an “agreed-upon format” and that might also be good to include.

(6) BUSINESS INITIATIVES: Rich Price, Economic Development Director stated that the Business & Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) has been reviewing options for economic incentives for the past three months and plans to discuss draft policies an upcoming work session. Topics reviewed thus far include the legality of incentive programs in North Carolina; an analysis of programs administered by other County and municipal governments in the state; incentive programs administered by the state; and best practices for evaluation and management of incentive programs. Our research has emphasized lessons learned from other Western North Carolina counties of similar population and industry representation. The draft mission statement of the incentive program, which will be considered at the work session, is: Jackson County encourages the expansion of economic development options that promote the well-being and growth of the business community; diversify the tax base; and offer improved opportunities for its citizens.

There are two types of incentive programs allowed in North Carolina: statutory programs, which are open to all businesses and offer a fixed incentive based on specific criteria, and discretionary programs, which allow local governments to offer a variety of incentives on a case-by-case basis for larger expansion or recruitment projects. The BIAC and the Economic Development Office are currently exploring a strategy that combines discretionary authority with a statutory program that encourages place-based development and the retention and expansion of existing local businesses. Three draft policies are being considered at the work session:

(a) An Economic Development Incentive Policy, which would establish the authority of the County to create and administer economic development incentive programs according to the mission statement;

(b) A discretionary policy, which would establish the County's authority to offer incentive packages that are tailored to a specific company's proposal; and

(c) A statutory policy, which would establish an Economic Development Incentive Program and define eligibility, criteria for awards (typically number of jobs created, total amount of investment, and other measures), and methods of program evaluation.

In all cases, draft policies include language that retains the right of discretion for the County and establishes Economic Development Agreements (EDAs) for every incentive granted. These EDAs, which contain what are often called "clawback provisions," establish means for regaining incentives should a company fail to meet its contractual obligations and allow the County to audit or otherwise examine those companies for the satisfaction of performance standards.

(7) CELLULAR TELECOMMUNICATIONS ORDINANCE REVISION UPDATE: Gerald Green, Planning Director stated the Planning Board has been working on revisions to the County's cellular telecommunications ordinance for the past few months and is nearing the completion of the revision. Goals of the revision of the ordinance include:

(a) Facilitate improved telecommunications/broadband service in the County while affording reasonable protection to the County's communities and resources.

(b) Organize the ordinance and format it in a manner that will make it easier for service providers and County staff charged with administering it to understand.

(c) Bring the ordinance into compliance with the recently revised NC General Statutes that provide local governments with authority to regulate cellular telecommunications and establish standards for this regulation.

(d) Provide incentives for constructing facilities that will provide improved service to the residents, businesses, and visitors in the County.

Among the issues discussed by the Planning Board are type of tower, tower height, review process, and towers on ridges. Board members have discussed and reached majority opinions on the issue of type of towers permitted, allowing both monopole and lattice towers. A base height of 100' is identified for new towers, with a 20' increase in tower height permitted for each of the following, up to a maximum height of 180':

(a) Camouflaging the tower;

(b) Each provision for colocation in addition to the initial carrier located on the tower;

(c) A showing that the additional height would increase the service area; and

(d) A showing that the increased height would result in an improved level of service.

Although a couple members requested a thorough explanation of the proposed review process, the majority of the Planning Board members have voiced the opinion that a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process is the appropriate review process for new cell towers. While this process requires a more defined meeting format, it provides for more flexibility on the part of the review board, and the applicant, in addressing concerns and issues related to the matter being considered. The Planning Board feels that each application for a new cell tower will be unique and it would be both unfair and difficult to treat all applicants with the same approach. The CUP will permit some tailoring of approvals to meet needs identified on a case by case basis. The issue of towers on ridges has not been completely resolved, as the Board directed staff to draft standards regarding this matter following its discussion at their meeting October 9. This issue will be resolved at the November Planning Board meeting and the revised ordinance should be in its final draft format, with the next step the scheduling of a public hearing to receive input and comments.

An issue on which the Planning Board has requested the input of the Board of Commissioners is whether the Planning Board or the Board of Commissioners should be delegated the authority to hear requests for new cell towers and to make decisions regarding the approval of such requests. Upon receipt of direction from the Commissioners, the ordinance wording will be drafted identifying the Board charged with the authority to review and approve requests for new cell towers.

Consensus: *Mr. Coward will make a presentation to the Planning Board regarding the legalities of the issue.*

(8) AIRPORT UPDATE: Mark Jones, Chairman of the Airport Commission and Jim Rowell, volunteer stated that the airport is a general aviation airport at an elevation of approximately 2,800 and was constructed in 1976. It contains 140 acres of land and has a runway length is 3,200 feet. For comparison, the Asheville Airport's runway is 8,000 feet and Macon's runway is 5,000 feet. There are 85 operations per week with 56% of those being itinerate, 36% local, 3% air-taxi and 4.5% military and law enforcement.

(a) Improvements in place:

- County maintenance staff has made significant improvements and has provided wonderful upkeep
- Storm water management project
- Runway widening and strengthening
- New ramp configuration and paving
- The Highway Patrol has located a viper tower with a new beacon
- Application has been made to the FAA for a GPS Instrument Approach and will be published in December or January

(b) Future improvements for consideration:

- Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) which is 90% Federal and 10% County match
- Enhanced public areas
- Improved parking
- Extended security fencing
- Better access
- Play/park area for children
- Construction of T hangars
- Rebuild a terminal

(9) COUNTY SERVICES FOR PROPERTIES LOCATED IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO JACKSON/MACON LINE: Mr. Wooten stated the County has recently been approached by the Town of Highlands regarding fire protection issues as it relates to the County line. Bobby McMahan, Tax Assessor stated that the Commissioners voted recently to have the County lines resurveyed. Due to staffing turn overs at the state level and in Macon County, the project has not moved forward quickly. To date, Leanne Pate of the Tax Office, has done a massive amount of work and research on the project. With this research, the tax office is reasonable comfortable with where the County line is actually located. There does not appear to be a large area between where the two counties believe the line is located. One house has been found that has not been picked up by either County. However, the owner does pay taxes on the acreage in both counties because the property is split.

Mr. Wooten and Todd Dillard, Emergency Management Director stated that the issue being presented at this time pertains to a section of Bowery Road. This property is currently in Jackson County, but fire protection is being provided by the Town of Highlands. The property is also in the Highlands City Limits. The County is currently compensating the Town of Highlands \$7,700 for fire protection. Also, recently the County has been asked about properties in the Cullasaja Club, Whiteside Mountain, Wildcat Country Club and Highlands Falls Country Club areas. These properties are currently in the 10 mile district of Cashiers and are considered "unprotected" causing high insurance rates for homeowners. The Town of Highlands has decided to construct a substation, at its expense, in Macon County in close proximity to these properties which will allow the insurance rating to drop to 5 miles, which would obviously be a great benefit to these residents. Jackson County has been asked to help compensate the Town of Highlands. Randy Dillard, Cashiers-Glenville Fire Chief is in favor of the Town of Highlands providing first responder service to this area with Cashiers-Glenville providing mutual aid and back up.

Mr. Wooten and Commissioner Jones had a meeting with the Jackson County homeowners of the Cullasaja Club. They would like to see the County provide additional funding to the Town of Highlands to offset some of the costs of fire protection. Also, the current prefix on all of the phone numbers are 526. All of the 911 calls go to Macon County. Ambulance service is dispatched from Macon and law enforcement is transferred to Jackson. Most of these areas are in a gated communities with their own security. Derek Roland, Macon County Town Manager and Macon County Commissioner Tate have been present at these meetings. They would also like Jackson County to contribute to those services as well. There is also the issue of solid waste for these homeowners. General Statutes allow that if there is certification, all trash and solid waste that is being disposed of in these areas would go somewhere other than Jackson County.

There being no further comments, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the Work Session. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the Work Session adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman