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Posted By: Evelyn Baker
Witnessed By: _____

**MINUTES OF A WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
MAY 9, 2011**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session on May 9, 2011 at 1:00 p.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Jack Debnam, Chairman	Chuck Wooten, County Manager
Doug Cody, Vice Chair	Evelyn Baker, Clerk to Board
Mark Jones, Commissioner	Darlene Fox, Finance Director
Charles Elders, Commissioner	
Joe Cowan, Commissioner	

Chairman Debnam called the work session to order.

(A) SOCIAL SERVICES DEPT.: Bob Cochran, Director, introduced DSS Board Members Audrey Tritt, Ruth Shuler, Dennis Wilkey, and Robert Sutton. He presented an overview of the various services and statistical reports for the department.

1. Child & Family Services provides protective services for children, foster care, foster home licensing, independent adoption studies, placements and payments. In FY09-10, child welfare staff responded to 915 reports of child abuse, neglect and dependency. 217 abused and/or neglected children were able to remain safely in their homes and avoid foster care placement. Presently 16 children and their families are receiving foster care and permanency planning services and 3 foster children have been placed into permanent adoptive homes.

2. Adult Services provides adult protective and guardianship services, adult care homes (rest home monitoring and placement), enhanced care case, adult day care monitoring, long term care screening and placement, in-home services, and services for the blind. In FY09-10, 139 reports of suspected abuse, neglect and/or exploitation were investigated and assessed.

3. Economic Assistance Programs provides child support enforcement, emergency assistance, food stamps, fraud investigations, NC Health Choice for Children, low income energy assistance, Medicaid insurance, work first employment services and assistance, special assistance program, and children's day care. In FY09-10, child support staff collected \$2,473,080.51 for Jackson County children and earned \$82,325.29 in incentive payments for the county. 10 Work First participants went to work and 100% remained off Work First after one year. Further, 5,500 applications were taken for Medicaid, food & nutrition services and work first; 346 fraud cases were investigated and \$23,181.81 was repaid, and 15,888 re-determinations and changes were processed.

4. Other Services provides emergency shelter staffing, work permits for minors, voter registration, fishing licenses, and lifeline/linkup.

5. Agency Expenditures for FY09-10 total \$49,050,689 (75% federal, 19% state, 6% county).

(B) FY2011-12 PROPOSED BUDGET: Mr. Wooten stated the gross budget is \$66,419,048.93 less inter-fund transfers for a proposed net budget of \$58,114,421.93. The county budget is made up of funds from the Register of Deeds fees, ABC distribution, payment in lieu of taxes, miscellaneous, Medicaid hold harmless, sales tax, and ad valorem tax. The largest appropriation is to public schools, second is debt service, third is Sheriff/Jail, and fourth is Public Works (maintenance, garage, grounds, housekeeping). He recommended the number of employees be reduced from 393 to 375.9. No salary increases are budgeted.

He reviewed the following non-general fund budgets:

1. Capital Reserve Fund was established to allow transfer of dollars for various capital projects. The proposal is to transfer \$562,788.50 in undesignated funds from the general fund. The \$1,158,401 in this fund has been restricted for several years and can only be used for emergency management operations. At some future date, the county should consider using those funds to build a facility for the emergency management department.

2. School Capital Reserve Fund are funds set aside for capital needs of the school system. The \$587,857.00 from sales tax designated for school debt service is available for school capital projects.

3. Emergency Telephone Fund are funds allocated from the State 911 revenues generated from telephone bills. The funds can only be used for the direct support of emergency management.

4. Economic Development Fund represents funds remaining from the former Economic Development Commission in the amount of \$427,625 of which \$252,449 is undesignated. The EDC, which is currently inactive, was comprised of representatives from the county and four municipalities.

5. Travel and Tourism Fund represents funds generated by the Cashiers TTA and Jackson TTA from room occupancy taxes. Additional information is needed concerning the travel expense request.

6. Real Property Revaluation Fund is required by state statutes to pay for costs associated with revaluations.

7. Community Development Fund is Scattered Site Housing Projects. The Director announced her retirement effective June 1. Thus, this program will need to be re-evaluated. CDBG certification is required in order to administer the grants. No county contributions are included in the proposed budget.

8. Law Enforcement Fund represents federal forfeitures and can only be used for law enforcement purposes.

9. Conservation, Preservation and Recreation Fund has been used for improvements at the Judaculla Rock, Mark Watson Park, Andrews Park, and Greenway projects. The proposed budget reflects a transfer of \$362,788.50 in undesignated funds for future projects.

10. Debt Service Fund reflects a transfer of \$6,256,325.00 for debt payments on schools and various county projects which includes the new library and SCC capital projects.

11. *Clean Water Revolving Fund* is funds remaining from a grant that was used to address individual sewer issues in the Scotts Creek area. It is proposed that part of the balance in this fund be allocated to the Water Resource Board (\$4,000) and Watershed Association of the Tuckasegee River (\$8,338).

12. *Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund* reflects that QC Apparel, Clearwood and Smoky Mountain Bio-fuels loans are delinquent. A balloon payment is due from Metrostat at the end of December. Fraternal Composites' loan is current. Homtex has requested a month-to-month lease in the space currently leased to QC Apparel.

13. *Capital Projects Fund – Recreation Project* mainly pertains to the Cashiers Recreation Center. The site work should be completed within the next 60-90 days. A current cost estimate is needed for a Cashiers Rec Center. Architectural drawings were prepared by Dan Duckam a few years ago.

14. *Housing Fund* is the HUD \$1.6 million housing program of which the county contributes \$33,605. The director is concerned that the federal budget may reduce the appropriation for administrative fees.

15. *Economic Development Enterprise Fund* is the fund used to account for dollars generated from county property considered to be EDC assets, i.e. Clearwood and Tuckasegee Mills facilities. Clearwood is now vacant. Stanton & Stanton, by court order, should be out of the Tuckasegee Mills facility by the end of this week. It is anticipated that rents from Sunrise Sun-Ripened Tomatoes and QC Apparel/Homtex will continue. Insurance on both facilities, in addition to utilities, repairs and maintenance, is reflected in the proposed budget.

16. *Solid Waste Enterprise Fund* is supported through fees assessed to both homeowners and commercial businesses. It is a self-sustaining operation and the budget includes the monitoring costs for the Dillsboro Landfill. The director recommended elimination of the county employee positions at the SRC's and contract for those services. The proposed budget reflects elimination of those positions and contract for those services as has been done in the past.

17. *Green Energy Park Enterprise Fund* support from the general fund will be phased out over five years and the proposed budget reflects a 20% reduction in county funding. Support for the park will be phased out over five years and current The proposed budget reflects the replacing a full-time position with a part-time position. The Rural Center grant was not approved which was to be used for a pottery studio.

18. *Airport Authority Fund* reflects an appropriation of \$31,000, the same amount as the current year. The Airport Authority is a part of the county's audit and an amendment to remove the budgeted audit fee will need to be considered.

(C) Proposed General Fund - Expenditures

1. *Governing Board* reflects the Chairman's salary of \$16,189.76 and the other four Commissioners are paid \$11,519.20 each. Commissioners are reimbursed for county business travel and out-of-pocket expenses. The budget is 14.48% less than the current year.

2. *Administration* is the county manager, clerk to board and executive assistant to the county manager. The salary budgeted for a county manager is \$120,747.96. The budget is 9.72% less than the current year

3. Legal is the appropriation for the county attorney in the amount of \$95,000 which is \$4,000 less than the current budget. The tax appeal fee was reduced to \$19,000 for the services of an attorney in the Raleigh area which is more cost effective than the county attorney traveling to and from Raleigh. The budget is 5% less than the current year.

4. Public Schools appropriation is \$6,779,482 for operations, the same as the current year. Capital outlay was increased to \$632,500 which includes the cost for a new driver's education vehicle and technology.

5. Southwestern Community College appropriation is \$1,425,000, a 4.25% increase, for operations and \$304,500 for capital outlay.

6. Fontana Regional Library operates the Albert-Carlton Library in Cashiers and the Jackson Library. The county appropriates funds to Fontana to operate both libraries. The staff in both libraries are employees of Fontana. The county has no authority to set hours of operation. The proposed appropriation for operating costs is \$675,000 for the Jackson Library, \$185,000 for the Albert-Carlton Library and \$13,260 for Reading Rover. The county pays for utilities, repairs and maintenance, property and liability insurance for both libraries.

Fontana has assumed it will be in charge of the entire Jackson Library complex which includes the old courthouse. The courtroom on the second floor and the first floor conference room in the old courthouse are not designated and available for use. Mr. Wooten recommended a Facilities Use Agreement with Fontana. Fontana should provide the county with a liability insurance policy.

County housekeeping staff will only be providing general housekeeping, i.e., trash removal and clean bathrooms, but will not be required to set up, take down or clean after events in the courtroom and/or conference room. Those shall be the duties of the user or Fontana.

The Friends of the Library used the funds they raised for furniture and fixtures which are now assets of Fontana.

The Arts Council, Genealogical Society and Historical Society will have dedicated space in the old courthouse. They will enter into leases with the county and rents will be paid to the county to offset costs for utilities, maintenance, etc.

(D) Proposed Funding for External Agencies: Appropriations remain about the same as last year with a few changes:

1. Fire Depts. Funding for operating costs remain the same. The county is currently paying the debt for five fire department buildings.

2. Rescue Squads. Funding for the two Rescue Squads remains the same. The county also pays the debt for the new Rescue Squad facility in Sylva and their retirement, workers comp, Hepatitis B, and accident insurance.

3. Glenville-Cashiers Ambulance. The budget reflects an increase from \$450,000 to \$500,000. There has not been an increase during the past four years. Mr. Wooten suggested that an audit be required and any funds remaining at the end of the year be placed in a capital reserve fund for equipment replacement.

4. WestCare Ambulance. WestCare requested an increase from \$396,000 to \$650,000 with no annual settlements (currently the county is entitled to 50% of profits or pay 100% of the loss). There was a \$108,000 loss last year. WestCare pays for all equipment. The proposed budget recommends that funding remain the same as the current year.

5. Cooperative Forestry Program. The county receives forestry services that the state provides, forest management programs, control burns, etc. The proposed budget recommends an increase from \$75,645 to \$86,671.

6. Disabled American Veterans. The proposed budget recommends a \$1,000 appropriation, but be placed in the Veterans Service budget for management purposes.

7. Highlands Community Child Dev. Commissioner Jones will review the \$2,500 request.

8. Mountain Projects for Seniors Programs is a program to recruit volunteers for senior programs. Recommended appropriation of \$7,000.

9. Community Table. Recommended appropriation of \$5,000.

10. Webster Enterprises. Recommended appropriation of \$10,000.

11. Mountain Projects – Neighbors in Need is a program that provides support for utilities and home repairs to the needy. Recommended appropriation of \$10,000.

At 5:00 p.m., the Chairman recessed the work session until May 16 at 3:00 p.m.

Attested By:

Approved:

Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk to Board

W. J. Debnam, Chairman