

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
OCTOBER 18, 2022**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on October 18, 2022, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman
Boyce Deitz, Vice Chair
Mark Jones, Commissioner
Tom Stribling, Commissioner (via Zoom)
Gayle Woody, Commissioner

Don Adams, County Manager
Heather C. Baker, County Attorney
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to the Board

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

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

(2) **MINUTES**: Commissioner Jones moved to approve the minutes of a Public Hearing (UDO Amendments) of October 4, 2022 and a Regular Meeting of October 04, 2022, as presented. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(3) **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**: Chairman McMahan recognized the passing of a great Tribal Council Member, Tommye Saunooke. Ms. Saunooke had been on the council for decades and left a lasting impression on Cherokee and tribal politics. She was always willing and interested in meeting with the county and being a partner in the region. He offered condolences to her family.

(4) **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**:

(a) Commissioner Woody stated that she had the privilege of attending the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Board of Directors meeting. She was asked to represent the far west on the task force for that year’s initiative, which was for broadband: “100 Counties Connected”.

At a task force meeting, Nate Denny, Deputy Secretary of Broadband and Digital Equity, presented information. One item he covered was about holding the providers accountable. Unlike past initiatives, where money was given to providers upfront, with this initiative providers would not be able to access any money until the addresses they served were revealed.

Also, the state was using \$90 million of their ARP funds for the upcoming CAB Grants. One large issue was the mapping. If one person in a census area had high speed internet, then that area was considered served. They knew that was not accurate, especially in the mountains.

Mr. Denny encouraged each county to do their own mapping so they could access those CAB Grants. The data they were getting for the county was not accurate, as it was for many counties. There were several suggestions on how to do this. If they were able to have address level data, then they would be upfront to access part of the \$90 million with the CAB Grants, but they had to be proactive.

Mr. Adams stated that on the county website homepage, at jacksonnc.org, there was a link to the broadband survey for everyone in the county to complete. The more citizens that completed the survey, the more empowered the county would be.

Commissioner Woody stated that was very important, but Mr. Denny stressed they could not count on that alone. They would have to take it to the next level of looking at every address on the tax rolls to get the most accurate data.

(b) Commissioner Deitz stated that he was glad to represent the county at the University of Tennessee on Saturday when Tennessee beat Alabama.

(5) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT: Mr. Adams reported:

(a) Construction Projects:

- Animal Rescue Center/Green Energy Park: The project was 93% complete. The site was paved and the landscaping was done. They were working on the flooring, built-in cabinets and painting. Next month there should be a punch-out list, which would provide the contractor 30 days to complete. They were looking at completion at the beginning of the new calendar year, subject to the delivery of the pens and equipment.
- Aquatics Center: The project was moving forward. They had done all they could to make sure the project would not interfere with the election. Once the new parking lot was complete, it would allow them to transfer all of the parking to the rear of the facility. This would allow them to close the main parking lot to proceed forward with the main construction.
- Domestic Violence Shelter: Last Friday, the Center for Domestic Peace Facility Planning Committee visited a shelter in Hendersonville. They would visit another shelter in the near future. This would allow them to start the planning process and move forward with the shelter.
- Cashiers Splash Pad/Courts: A schedule had been received from the architect and they were beginning the surveying and planning, which should be completed in March. They would look to go out to bid in August.

(b) **Opioid Regional Planning:** Russ Harris, Executive Director, Southwestern Commission, called a meeting of the County Managers to be held on October 19th. The purpose of the meeting would be to start strategizing on how to proceed forward with the next steps of regional planning.

(c) **Citizens Academy:** Graduation would be held on Tuesday, October 25th at the Department on Aging. The meal would begin at 5:00 p.m. and all Commissioners were welcome to attend.

(6) INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC: None.

(7) CONSENT AGENDA:

(a) Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented the Finance Report for September, 2022 and one Budget Ordinance Amendment for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, for approval.

(b) Brandi Henson, Tax Collector, presented the Tax Collector and Refund Reports for September, 2022, for approval.

Motion: Commissioner Woody moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(8) OFFER TO PURCHASE AND CONTRACT FROM KENNETH DINGLER AND/OR ASSIGNS AND RESOLUTION R22-22: Ms. Baker presented an offer she received from Kenneth Dingler and/or assigns, for Lot 44, Trout Creek, containing 1.39 acres, (PIN #7575-38-7703) and Lot 2, Trout Creek, containing 0.52 acres, (PIN #7566-90-6352) in Hamburg Township for \$1,000.00 each (\$2,000.00 total). If approved, they would send letters to all of the adjoining property owners. This would also be published in the newspaper for the upset bid process.

Commissioner Deitz inquired if the lots would be put back on the tax rolls at a value of \$1,000 or the current assessed value of \$25,000?

Ms. Baker stated that a foreclosure sale was not valid. The lots would be placed back on the roll at the current assessed value of \$25,000.

Motion: *Commissioner Jones moved to approve Resolution R22-22, as presented. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(9) FINAL OFFER FOR LOT 48, BEAR PEN: Ms. Baker stated that on July 19, 2022, the Board approved the initial bid from Mitchell L. Humphries and Denise C. Humphries for Lot 48 Bear Pen in the amount of \$4,500.00. The offer was upset and the final bid was for \$6,600.00 from Versa Strategy, LLC. This had been advertised for ten days with no further upset bids. She requested approval of the final bid, which was \$6,600.00.

Motion: *Commissioner Woody moved to approve the offer for the final bid of \$6,600.00 for Lot 48, Bear Pen, as presented. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

Commissioner Jones requested that at a later date, Ms. Baker provide a report to the Board of foreclosed properties that had been sold and put back on the tax rolls. As they were getting down to a few lots on the list, it would be interesting to see the total with the millage rate.

Ms. Baker stated that when the two Trout Creek lots went through the upset bid process, she would present the information to the Board.

(10) ELECTRONIC TAX LISTING OF PERSONAL PROPERTY RESOLUTION R22-23: Tabitha Ashe, Tax Administrator, stated this item was presented to the Board at the last work session. The goal would be to have this available in January for the listing period. This would allow individuals to list property through a website electronically.

Motion: *Commissioner Woody moved to approve Resolution R22-23, as presented. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(11) BUILDING REUSE PROGRAM RESOLUTION R22-24: Mr. Adams stated this item was reviewed at the last work session. American Sewing Company was looking to add an additional 12,000 SF and planned to invest over \$2.2 million to create 12 new full-time jobs, paying an average wage of \$18 per hour. This was good news for the county and community. American Sewing Company was applying for a \$60,000 grant to help with the construction, which required a \$3,000 match from the county.

Motion: *Commissioner Stribling moved to approve Resolution R22-24, which authorized the County Manager or Chairman to sign grant documents for the application, as presented. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(12) COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR LONG TERM CARE:

Motion: *Commissioner Woody moved to reappoint Sara Lee Hinnant to an additional three-year term on the Community Advisory Committee for Long Term Care. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(13) RECREATION AND PARKS ADVISORY BOARD:

Motion: *Commissioner Woody moved to reappoint Jay Spiro and Adam Holt to additional three-year terms on the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(14) PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

Commissioner Jones inquired about issuing a notification or press release regarding the broadband survey and the importance of citizens completing it.

Chairman McMahan stated the Board would still need to approve the matching funds for the GREAT Grants and there were other discussions they would need to have about broadband as a whole. He requested to put the issue on a future work session to recap where they were and where Charter was in their process.

Also, they could get an update on the GREAT Grant process and Tiffany Henry, Economic Development Director, could provide an update on the grant Commissioner Woody highlighted earlier in the meeting. He thought it would be worth the effort to have an in depth discussion and update on where they were at. From that, they could generate press releases and requests going forward.

There being no further business, Commissioner Woody moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman