

**MINUTES OF A PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
APRIL 16, 2018**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing on April 16, 2018, at 5:30 p.m., Cashiers-Glenville Recreation Center Gymnasium, 355 Frank Allen Road, Cashiers, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman
Charles Elders, Vice Chair
Boyce Deitz, Commissioner
Mickey Luker, Commissioner
Ron Mau, Commissioner

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

Chairman McMahan called the public hearing to order and stated the purpose was to receive public input concerning a 2017 NC Senate Bill 155 known as the Brunch Bill. The bill would allow for the expansion of alcohol sales for a two hour period on Sunday morning from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The North Carolina General Assembly passed this as law, but gave the responsibility to local governments to enact a local provision for this to take place or not. The Town of Sylva already passed the bill and it had been requested that the county look at the bill for areas outside of municipal boundaries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

(a) John Sims, Chief Operations Officer of the Sapphire Mountain Brewing Company, stated that he spent 26 years in the military to provide freedom of choice. He thought everyone should have the freedom to choose and this should be about individual rights.

(b) Kevin Morgan of Sylva offered a prayer.

(c) Teryle Beye of Glenville stated that he lived on Lake Glenville for 25 years and was a faithful taxpayer. A lot of the community depended on tourism and they were currently at a disadvantage because people went to other places because of Sunday morning brunch. He was in favor of the Brunch Bill.

(d) Bennie Rice of Cashiers stated that he opposed the Brunch Bill and did not think two hours would make a difference. He thought the roads would be safer in the community without the Brunch Bill.

(e) Louis Langford of Sapphire stated he was a victim of a drunk driver and spent nine days on life support. He was thankful to be alive. He was opposed to the Brunch Bill.

(f) Tommy Madden of Cashiers stated he loved everyone in the valley and was available in town for anyone to talk with. He was opposed to the Brunch Bill.

(g) Kay Craig of Cashiers stated that the Brunch Bill would not be a burden on the community that it would help the community and the tourist industry. She was in favor of the Brunch Bill.

(h) Gayle Woody of Sylva stated they were blessed in the country to have the right to speak out about their convictions and beliefs on issues that concerned them. They also had the responsibility to respect others rights and their opinions, even if they believed it was wrong. She hoped each Commissioner would have wisdom in the decisions they made on behalf of the county.

(i) Carl Stepp of Sylva stated his disapproval of the Brunch Bill and urged the Commissioners to stand against it with their vote.

(j) Tom Garcia, Vice President and General Manager of High Hampton and had been in the hospitality industry for over 40 years. He was in favor of the Brunch Bill as he thought it gave them an opportunity to be competitive. He urged the Commissioners to pass the bill.

(k) Austin Frady of Whittier stated that allowing the Brunch Bill to pass would cause an increase in alcohol consumption, crime and auto accidents. He did not believe two more hours would be worth it. He was not in favor of the Brunch Bill.

(l) Stephanie Edwards, Executive Director of the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce, stated that on behalf of the Cashiers Area Chamber's 445 members, they supported the measure to allow alcohol service to begin two hours earlier on Sundays. In 2012, alcohol sales were approved in the county by a significant margin through a public referendum vote. She requested their support for 40 of the major Cashiers area businesses that would be impacted by the measure.

(m) Ann Self, Executive Director of the Village Green, stated that she believed it was important to uphold the value of personal freedom and she implored the Commissioners to consider this bill as an opportunity to benefit businesses that were respectful and responsible.

(n) Bernadette Peters, owner of City Lights Café in Sylva, where the Brunch Bill had been in effect for the last six months. She thought they were talking about two different groups of people with one being those that abuse alcohol. In the service industry, they were bound by the ABC Laws and could not serve anyone that was intoxicated, if they did, they could be fined, so there was responsible serving involved. She encouraged the Commissioners to vote in favor of the bill.

(o) Trish Chambers of Glenville stated she was in favor of the Brunch Bill. Christians had the Sabbath on Sunday, but different religious groups had different Sabbath days. She thought it was about personal accountability and being respectful.

(p) Justin Allman stated he thought it boiled down to not telling other people what to do. Everyone could make their own choices. People should take responsibility for their own actions. This was about personal freedom.

(q) Dwight Holden of Cashiers stated that it was said that the lottery would help with schools, but it did not. He felt the same about revenue from two more hours of alcohol sales that it would not be worth it. He urged the Commissioners to vote against the bill.

(r) Josh Holden of Cashiers stated he understood the decision that the Commissioners had to make, but he encouraged them to stand up and not be willing to bend for popularity. He was opposed to the bill.

(s) Mark Jones of Cashiers stated he had been in the hospitality industry for 31 years. He thought it was a shame that Raleigh had put this decision on the Commissioners. Countywide alcohol sales were passed 60/40 by the citizens of the county. He believed this would be the same if this issue were put out for a vote.

There being no further public comments, Commissioner Elders moved that the public hearing be adjourned. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman