

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JULY 10, 2018**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on July 10, 2018, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

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

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

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) SAVANNAH PARK: Michael Hopkins, Assistant Recreation and Parks Director and Darlene Fox, Finance Director were present for this item.

Mr. Adams presented a bid received from Buchanan and Sons, Inc. in the amount of \$303,100 for the construction of Savannah Park.

(a) Included:

- Site prep
- Bathrooms paved walking trail
- Parking lot

(b) Not included:

- Well \$10,000 (installed)
- Picnic shelter/pad \$27,000
- Playground \$25,000

(c) Total project cost \$365,100

(d) Additional \$150,533 need to complete the project.

Consensus: *Add this item to the next regular agenda for consideration.*

(2) CASHIERS POOL: Mr. Hopkins stated at the last work session they discussed Genco Pools looking at the Cashiers pool to identify the issues related to the sinkhole. Genco came out on site, pulled back a portion of the deck and realized that the root of the issue was a failed galvanized drainage pipe. The pipe was located along the pool area and had rusted and redirected water in all directions. Genco indicated that the drainage issue would need to be taken care of before they could move forward with the pool repairs.

At that point, some local folks volunteered manpower and equipment to fix the drainage issue. Genco was in the process of finalizing a price package to get the pool ready to at least open by the end of summer. The Community Council offered to provide funds if the repairs to the pool went over \$10,000. Genco stated that there could be an overage if there were plumbing issues.

Mr. Adams stated that although the pool may only be open a couple of weeks, they needed to run the pool and the system to ensure it was correctly fixed.

Consensus: *Add this item to the next regular agenda for consideration.*

(3) NCDOT / RPO REPRIORITIZATION: Michael Poston, Planning Director; Stephen Williams, Division Planning Engineer, NCDOT; and Rose Bauguess, Senior Planner, Southwestern Commission, were present for this item.

Mr. Poston presented:

(a) A Road Project – from identification to construction:

- Long range planning: Identify needs Comprehensive Transportation Plan.
- Prioritization: Select highest priority projects to be ranked for potential funding.
- Funding: The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) applies funds and a schedule to the highest ranking projects.
- Project Development: Develop alternatives to achieve the project purpose; select preferred alternative.
- Project Design: Complete detailed design on the preferred alternative; avoid and minimize impacts.
- ROW and Construction: Acquire right-of-way, relocate utilities and construct facility.

(b) Southwestern RPO Local Priority Ranking Jackson County Projects:

- Ranked #1: US 23 BUS (Asheville Highway) SR 1432 (Skyland Drive) US 74 Ramp: Widen to four lane boulevard with access management.
- Ranked #2: US 64 NC 107: Improve intersection and add auxiliary lane to Pebble Creek Drive to US 64/107 intersection.
- Ranked #3. US 74 (Great Smokey Mountains Expressway) US 441 Gateway Interchange SR 1391 (W. Piney Mountain Road): Upgrade existing median with guardrail or walls, improve crossovers, rehab pavement.
- Ranked #4: NC 107 1,000 feet north of the Lake Tuckasegee Dam approximately one mile north of SR 1157 (Pine Creek Road) widen pavement to 24' with 5' paved shoulders.

(c) Monteith Gap Road:

Mr. Poston stated that last January, he requested that the Board consider a resolution, which they approved, supporting the modernization of Monteith Gap Road. At the time, they did not know what that would look like as the concept was still in design. This would normally have to go through a prioritization, but the state legislature passed funding called “high impact low cost”, which provided funding to divisions to do these type of projects. When NCDOT went through their methodology to score projects in their division, this was one of the higher scoring projects. They were already looking to replace the bridge, which came out of a different pot of DOT money, so they were able to combine the two projects and come up with a new road design. There were two alternatives being considered.

Mr. Williams stated both alternatives tried to accomplish the same goals. They both had pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as that was identified as a need along the entire corridor. The big difference was that one had a roundabout and the other did not, which would have the bridge wider to accommodate a left-turn lane. They were currently accepting public comments in regards to a preferred alternative.

Mr. Poston stated that because of the shift and the need for the bridge to be moved to the west up Cullowhee Creek, there was an opportunity for them to re-imagine what that area would look like. Normally, DOT would take the existing roadbed up and re-seed the area. They requested that DOT consider keeping the bridge for pedestrian and bike facilities to allow them to re-imagine how that space could be used. DOT agreed to take a look at this. If the bridge did stay, the county would have to feel comfortable to maintain the bridge for perpetuity. There were a lot of items to be discussed and determined in the future.

Mr. Williams stated that after the public comment period was closed, they would compile all of the comments and see if there was a clear favorite. They would then meet with RPO and PAC and move forward once a design had been selected. Construction could begin as early as June, 2019.

Mr. Adams stated that in asking DOT to look at the hydrology of keeping the bridge, he wanted to make sure that the Board was comfortable that they were exploring additional uses of the open space. Obviously, the first thing being if they could keep the bridge, if they could not, there were still a lot of options and opportunities.

Informational item.

(4) FY17-18 DILLSBORO VEHICLE TAXES: Mr. Adams stated that it was discovered approximately one month ago that the tax rate being applied through the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles onto vehicles for Dillsboro residents was overstated by three cents per one hundred dollars of value. It was determined that a total of 173 Dillsboro residents may have overpaid their vehicle taxes by \$425.72 in FY17-18. The overpayments ranged from less than \$1.00 to \$19.00. North Carolina law must be followed when refunding taxes. Part of this required the taxpayer to submit a refund request in writing to the tax office to qualify for a refund. The tax office devised a method that would ensure those that qualified for a refund would be contacted and would simplify the refund process.

All Dillsboro citizens that overpaid would receive a letter from Bobby McMahan stating the circumstances and that they may be due a refund. The letter was mailed on Friday, June 29, 2018 along with a prefilled refund letter that stated the citizen's information including refund amount. If the citizen was due a refund, they only had to sign and date the letter and return it to the tax office and a refund check would be issued.

Chairman McMahan stated that this was really the Town of Dillsboro's issue in the sense that it was their tax, even though the county administered the program for them. If the Board agreed, he would be willing for the county to provide \$425.72 to Dillsboro, even though they were not losing any money, to say the county apologized for them having to go through this and the \$425.72 was to offset the headache as a good gesture.

Mr. Adams stated they recognized they would get questions potentially from taxpayers of why they were spending money to refund the low amounts. It was the principle and was really the right thing to do.

Consensus: *Provide \$425.72 to Dillsboro as a good gesture for the issue.*

(5) NCACC VOTING DELEGATE: Mr. Adams stated that it had been requested by the NCACC that each Board of Commissioners designate a Commissioner or other official as a voting delegate for the 2018 Annual Conference. The Conference would be held August 23-15 in Catawba County.

Consensus: *Add this item to the August 6th regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(6) COMMISSIONER GOALS: *Carry over.*

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Luker seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman