

**MINUTES OF A  
WORK SESSION  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
DECEMBER 11, 2018**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on December 11, 2018, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman  
Mickey Luker, Commissioner  
Ron Mau, Commissioner  
Gayle Woody, Commissioner

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

Absent: Boyce Deitz, Vice Chair

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

**(1) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR SOIL AND WATER OPERATIONS:** Amanda Buchanan, NRCS-USDA Soil Conservationist and Barry Stevens, Soil and Water District Manager, were present for this item.

Mr. Stevens stated this was an agreement that came up every five years and was a partnership to get conservation efforts on the ground in the county.

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

**(2) CASHIERS SMALL AREA PLAN:** Michael Poston, Planning Director and Caroline Edmonds, Planner I, were present for this item.

Mr. Poston stated in January, they started the Cashiers Small Area Plan as part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals. There had not been a previous small area plan for Cashiers adopted by the Commissioners that detailed how growth policies would be approached in and around the Cashiers crossroads area. They worked with a consultant, Stewart, Inc., who presented a draft for consideration.

Ms. Edmonds presented

**(a) Planning Process:**

- The project kicked off in January, 2018 with the consultants coming to visit, explore Cashiers and host community stakeholder meetings. There was a full day of stakeholder meetings with community members such as realtors, developers, builders, attorneys, business owners, tourism and the Chamber of Commerce, nonprofits and representatives from the schools, recreation, and churches.
- A survey was distributed on social media, via email and on the Planning Department website. Roughly 280 people took the survey and the results could be found in the Appendix of the Plan.
- The Design Charrette was held in June and lasted three days.
  - This was a workshop where the public was invited to comment, give input on visual design preferences, land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure and the area to be studied, as well as discuss the project with the consultants, design professionals and planning staff.
  - The public was invited to participate in activities where they could vote on transportation improvement options, design options for signage and architecture.

- There was another activity called a “keep, change, toss” exercise where participants placed sticky notes on things that they felt should be preserved, things that could be beneficial if changed and things that need to be tossed.
- The charrette and the survey provided the consultants with the majority of the information required to begin drafting the plan.
- In early November, they took a draft to the Cashiers Planning Council for review. They had a work session where they discussed all of the major components of the plan, the study area, the action plan and the implementation schedule.
- After incorporating the comments and revisions from the Cashiers Planning Council and the public, they have the Final Adoption Draft.
- The Cashiers Planning Council would be holding a public hearing the next Tuesday to give the community an opportunity to comment on this Final Draft. After the public hearing, the draft would go to the Planning Board for review.

**(b) Purpose:** To guide development in a way that promotes positive growth while maintaining the natural environment. To do this, the plan took inventory of the current development conditions and gave recommendations.

- Land use: This section looked at the different areas and how they could be developed or redeveloped based on community desires and input. For example, during the charrette, they heard a lot about the need for a sense of arrival, so the “gateway” areas were placed on the map to show where the development should begin to change from bigger stores and parking lots to walkable shopping and restaurant areas to create the Village feel closer to the crossroads.
- Village Housing: This section looked at the lack of housing options and the missing middle.
- Parks and Natural Resources: This section looked at protecting and preserving the natural assets. Some recommendations were to encourage outdoor activity space and connect parks and trails.
- Transportation and Connectivity: This section looked at possible on and off road improvements that could be made to support safe, comfortable and active transportation for everyone.
- Public Utilities and Infrastructure: This section looked at storm water, public safety, health and wellness, broadband and water and sewer.
- There was also an action plan with implementation strategies, proposed time frames and partners for each recommendation given.

Commissioner Woody inquired if stakeholders were identified from historical native residents?

Ms. Edmonds stated that they made an effort to contact many people that were recommended from the Planning Council, but it may have been that they just did not participate.

Mr. Poston stated that the survey was distributed wide and far in the community, but unfortunately, they did not always know who would choose to fill the survey out.

Commissioner Woody stated that she felt that affordable housing was an issue in Cashiers and throughout the county.

Commissioner Mau suggested to have the Commissioners regular meeting and public hearing in Cashiers.

Commissioner Luker recommended early spring so that could also include part-time residents.

*Informational item.*

**(3) SOUTHWESTERN CHILD DEVELOPMENT HOMELESS SERVICES:** Dr. Marilyn Chamberlin, Director of Operations; Bob Cochran, Case Manager; Shelia Hoyle, Executive Director; and Tyler Henry, were present for this item.

Dr. Chamberlin thanked the county for the past assistance with the Jackson County Homeless Program (JCHP) and stated she was pleased that they would again provide direct services and case management for the county's homeless population. Southwestern Child Development began offering the case management services in 2014 and assumed the role of overseeing the shelter services in 2017.

JCHP had been working on various connections with the hotels and updating information on the services provided, dates of services and expectations of clients. Staff in the JCHP also pursued several sources of funding totaling \$33,084 and with that along with the \$85,000 provided by the county, they had a somewhat smaller budget than last fiscal year. Funding would allow them to offer six to eight rooms during the coldest months. Their goal for the year was to work with clients to assist them to be housed more quickly, find informal networks for temporary housing and staff to refer those in need of greater services to other programs.

They were still actively working with Rapid Rehousing and she wanted staff to reach out to community partners to let them know the services JCHP provided. She hoped to arrange staff presentations for county departments and other partnering agencies. They also continued to work closely with local churches and the Community Table.

Dr. Chamberlin presented:

**(a) Case Management:** Provided July 1 – June 30. Case management focusing on permanent housing and referrals for other services once housing was obtained.

- Meet with the clients for the intake packet
- Regular meetings to assist with obtaining permanent housing
- Referrals to funding assistance for permanent housing including but not limited to:
  - Rapid Rehousing
  - Section 8
  - Veterans Services
  - Permanent Supportive Housing
- Assist with transportation needs:
  - Vouchers for Jackson County Transit were provided. Transit must be arranged by client
  - Transport when necessary
- Refer to additional services including but not limited to:
  - Employment
  - Mediation
  - Mental Health Providers
  - Medical Healthcare Providers
  - Department of Social Services
  - Childcare Subsidy
- Medical financial assistance (limited funds)
  - Prescriptions
  - Vision
  - Dental

**(b) Shelter:**

- Oversee the clients in shelter
- Assist with arrangements for some meals, as possible
- Work with hotel staff to maintain the rules of the hotel
- Provided November – March (when cold weather begins and ends)
- Shelter was limited to the availability of hotel rooms based on funds
- Shelter was in a local preselected hotel/motel

- Shelter was limited to 30 days with the potential for 45, if progress toward permanent housing was significant

Mr. Adams requested that they educate other serving agencies and provide them with a number with days and times that calls were answered and also, what to do if there was a need not during those hours. He requested they develop a press release providing the available services.

Ms. Hoyle stated they could do a question and answer sheet and a press release and make that available to the media. Also, they could make direct contact with the Police Department, Sheriff's Office and The Community Table, because each of their needs were very individualized.

Mr. Cochran presented:

(a) July 2018 – September 2018:

- 11 Adults
- 9 Children
- 6 Households
- 0 were continuing from the cold weather shelter period

(b) Cold Weather Shelter Season: A contract was negotiated with the Quality Inn owner to provide rooms for the Cold Weather Shelter at a rate of \$59.99 per night, a slight increase from last year. The shelter opened on November 15<sup>th</sup> with three rooms and by November 20<sup>th</sup> had eight rooms, the capacity for the year.

(c) October 2018:

- 1 child
- 9 adults
- 10 were new clients
- 9 households
- 0% of the households were housed
- All received case management only. Referred to other services such as rehab, dv and mental health. Helped with connecting to resources DSS, Section 8 Housing, job searches. Checked in with clients at three month and six month period before releasing them from services.

(d) November 2018 – December 10, 2018: 47 people served:

- Number of people sheltered 18:
  - 7 children
  - 11 adults
  - 8 households
- Number of people served, but not sheltered 29:
  - 11 children
  - 18 adults
  - 16 households

*Informational item.*

**(4) HOMELESS CASE MANAGEMENT AND SHELTERING SERVICES RFP:**

Mr. Adams presented a first draft of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide temporary shelter services and case management services to the homeless population group in Jackson County.

Southwestern Child Development was the organization that volunteered and stepped up to provide these services and allow the county to contribute funds for the program. The concept of an RFP was not reflective on what Southwestern Child Development had done. This had been in the thought process the whole time with the understanding that Southwestern Child Development may or may not wish to be involved in the program in the future. The county was looking for a long-term partnership and if Southwestern Child Development wished to entertain that concept, they would be part of the RFP process. There were also other groups with an interest to participate.

Mr. Adams highlighted several items in the RFP:

**(a) Description and Purpose:** Jackson County (the county) would accept proposals from entities who were interested in serving the homeless population in the county. The basic core mission in serving this population was that no one's life in the community should be at risk due to exposure or extreme weather.

Another component in this basic core mission was that the homeless population should be afforded access to services and programs that could eventually lead to a permanent housing solution. At a minimum, the county would attempt to continue the current temporary Cold Weather Shelter operations using the hotel model along with providing year round case management services to the homeless population.

The county was also interested in other solutions such as shelters. But in order to accomplish solutions such as shelters, the county must find a partnering entity. The county cannot accomplish a permanent shelter alone (both financially and in governance). The county was searching for a partner who was dynamic and creative in their approach. The entity should be capable of bringing together multiple partners (both local and regional) when addressing the issues that the homeless population faces. Responders to this RFP should have direct knowledge and expertise in dealing with the homeless population. Responders should also be able to demonstrate their capacity to operate and manage budgets and complex operations.

**(b) Background:** Response to the homeless in the county began in 2009 with the inception of Jackson Neighbors in Need (JNIN). In 2010 JNIN began offering case management to the homeless as well. The number of homeless continued to rise and the voluntary association struggled to provide support alone. In 2016, JNIN requested the Commissioners provide additional funding assistance. The Commissioners responded in several ways. First, they approved additional funding for the shelter and case management as shown below:

- FY15-16 \$15,000 to Habitat for Humanity for Shelter Costs (Administered by JNIN)
- FY16-17 \$15,000 to Habitat for Humanity for Shelter Costs (Administered by JNIN)
- FY17-18 \$115,183 to SWCDC (\$85,000 original and then added \$30,183)
- FY18-19 \$85,000 to SWCDC (SWCDC may ask for additional funds at end of cold weather season if needed to offset actual costs)

Second, the Commissioners requested an agency assume oversight of the program to help the homeless. Southwestern Child Development Commissioner, Inc., which was already overseeing case management, agreed to have oversight of the homeless program for the remaining 2016-17 season and the 2017-18 season. SWCDC also agreed to provide these services for the current 2018-19 season.

The Commissioners requested that a task force be formed to study the options for sheltering homeless in the county. SWCDC took the lead of organizing a task force of managers from county offices and nonprofits assisting the homeless.

The county gave the committee the charge of researching three shelter models and best practices for shelters. The committee was not charged with recommending which model to choose, but to analyze the costs, benefits and disadvantages of each model.

**(c) Scope of Proposals:** Respondents were required to submit a proposal on how they would assume the current hotel model. The proposal must detail all components of the hotel model during the extreme weather season. The respondent must also detail how they would provide case management services to the homeless population throughout the year. Cold weather sheltering and case management services were the minimal services needed to accomplish the county's core mission. Respondents were encouraged to submit an additional proposal on how the hotel model could be transitioned into a brick and mortar shelter model, a hybrid model or other shelter.

**(d) Submittal Content:**

- Cover letter
- 2019-2020 Jackson County Non-Profit Grant Application with detailed budget
- Additional proposed Shelter Models
- Additional background on respondent

**(e) RFP Timeline:**

- RFP Issuance: December 17, 2018

- Proposals Due: March 29, 2019
- Anticipated Award: Prior to June 30, 2019
- (f) Selection Criteria: Selection of any proposal shall be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - Respondent’s overall experience in dealing with the homeless population group.
  - Respondent’s overall experience and capacity to manage budgets and complex operations.
  - Respondent’s ability to create, enhance and maintain partnerships with other local agencies that in some capacity serve the homeless population.
  - Respondent’s ability to obtain other funding.
  - Respondent’s anticipated costs to deliver services.
  - Respondent’s vision on how to serve the homeless population group along with a demonstrated capacity to accomplish the vision.

Mr. Adams stated that there was a governing body that was looking to financially partner with groups to serve the homeless population and that was an unusual circumstance and above and beyond what other counties had done.

*Informational item.*

**(5) SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE:** Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented a Capital Project Ordinance for the construction of the health sciences building at SCC.

(a) The following amounts were appropriated for the project:

• Design/Oversight Fees	\$ 1,553,832
• Engineering Costs	374,785
• Administrative and Legal	30,000
• Construction	17,660,000
• AV/Network	121,238
• Contingency	941,300
• <b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,681,155</b>

(b) The following revenues were anticipated to be available to complete this project:

• Connect NC Bonds	\$ 5,445,597
• EDA Grant	2,015,395
• Sales Tax	3,220,163
• GS 160A-20 Financing	10,000,000
• <b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,681,155</b>

Mr. Adams stated that the EDA Grant helped to cover the additional cost and also allowed the 1/4 Cent Sales Tax fund to have a little less than \$1mil remaining for future conversations and requests coming to the Board.

Ms. Fox stated that regarding the financing proposals, they did receive a 20 year quote. If they went from the 15 year to the 20 year, it would automatically start freeing up \$200,000 per year off the debt payment, if that was an option they wanted to choose. The 15 year loan rate would be 3.67% and the 20 year loan rate would be 3.81%. Also, there was no penalty for prepayment.

**Consensus:** *The Board was in favor of the 20 year loan option.*

**(6) SYLVA ROTARY CLUB:** Mr. Adams stated he received a letter from the Sylva Rotary Club to thank the county for help with their very successful fundraiser “Flags for Heroes” last year. Along with allowing community members to honor veterans, they also raised money that was included in the \$15,000 and were able to give back to community efforts in the county.

They requested permission for the American Flags be placed on the lawn of the historic courthouse on Memorial Day, May 27, 2019 and be displayed at Mark Watson Freedom Park on July 4, 2019. They also requested to have the flags placed on the lawn of the historic courthouse on Veterans Day, November 11, 2019.

**Consensus:** *Place this item on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

**(7) JANUARY 2019 MEETING SCHEDULE:** Mr. Adams stated there was a need to change the January meeting schedule due to the first Tuesday being January 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Consensus:** *Change the January, 2019 meeting schedule to be:*

*Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting at 3:00 pm*

*Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> work session at 1:00 pm*

*Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> regular meeting at 6:00 pm*

**(8) MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM 2019:** Mr. Adams stated the applications had been sent to all of the town mayors and would be due January 4, 2019. This would be an item on the January 15<sup>th</sup> work session.

*Informational item.*

**(9) ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY:** Mr. Adams stated he was not requesting any changes to the policy, but he did need direction on one issue that was not clear. He reminded the Board that all county employees received 2.5 bonus days per year and his understanding that the creation of the bonus days was based on the idea that it would be used for inclement weather. The county chose to generally not close the doors, but gave all employees 2.5 days of bonus leave that could be used if they did not feel safe to come to work.

The policy stated:

“It shall be the policy of the Jackson County Justice Center and all Jackson County Offices to always remain open during normal work week hours. If adverse weather conditions prevent Jackson County Employees from reporting to work or Jackson County Government Offices are declared closed, employees must use compensatory time, annual leave, bonus leave or leave without pay for scheduled work hours missed unless otherwise designated as administrative leave by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. Department Heads should make reasonable efforts to allow employees to adjust schedules, as needed, to make up any missed hours during the work week due to inclement weather at the request of the employee. Adherence to this policy shall be the responsibility of the County Manager.

All law enforcement and emergency services personnel are excluded from the above adverse weather policy. Work hours will continue to be set at the discretion of the Department Head.

Public Works and other department personnel necessary for snow/ice removal operations or critical county functions as deemed necessary by the County Manager, will work such hours as needed during times of inclement weather.”

Mr. Adams stated that the policy did allow for county offices to close during extreme adverse weather and everyone would still use their administrative time, but it did allow for the Board to change this if they wanted to give everyone a free day. When they start talking about closing, who was authorized to close the county. That was not clearly stated in the policy.

Chairman McMahan stated that he thought the County Manager should have the authority as he controlled other aspects of the county employees and operations.

**Consensus:** *Draft an amendment to the Adverse Weather Policy authorizing the County Manager to close the county, if deemed necessary, during adverse weather, to be placed on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

**(10) NCACC VOTING DELEGATE:** Chairman McMahan stated this was for the Legislative Goals Conference that occurred every other year and coincided with the Legislature’s long session where they developed the budget. NCACC held a Goals Conference that preceded the start of the Legislative Session to discuss the top goals the association would lobby on behalf of counties. It was a very detailed process that started early fall with counties submitting goals to various committees. The committees developed potential goals that were forwarded to a goals committee and then to the Board of Director’s for the Association of County Commissioners, which were approved and presented at this conference. A representative from each county would go through the process of debating the goals and a voting process where they would choose five goals.

**Consensus:** *Place this item on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

**(11) COMMUNITY TABLE ROOFING REQUEST:** Mr. Adams stated he had been approached by Paige Dowling, Sylva Town Manager, regarding issues at the Community Table with roof leaks. They had gotten an \$18,000 quote and the Community Table had reserved funds specifically for facility maintenance. Ms. Dowling inquired if the county would split the remaining balance of \$10,000.

**Consensus:** *Place this item on the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

There being no further business, Commissioner Mau moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Luker seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman