

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
SEPTEMBER 10, 2019**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on September 10, 2019, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A227, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

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

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

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) HEALTH INSURANCE: Mark Browder, Vice President, Mark III; Tracy McCarty, Senior Consultant, Mark III; and Darlene Fox, Finance Director, were present for this item.

Mr. Adams stated that as discussed when they hired Mark III and then transitioned to Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS), Mr. Browder would provide quarterly updates to the Board.

Mr. Browder presented: Medical Plan:

(a) 2018-2019 Experience:

- The current Plan Year was trending well.
- The challenge was the underfunded position.
- The underfunded position required a significant change in funding for 2019-2020.
- The estimated negative position for 2018-2019 was \$1,200,000.
- The information included Crescent Runout Claims and Stop-loss reimbursements.
- In May and June of 2019, the county increased funding to the Plan. Had the funding increase not occurred, the deficit position would have been -\$1,107,959.89.
- The actual deficit position was -\$951,269.77

(b) Runout Claims:

- July 2019 was a very large runout claim month from Crescent.
- Runout claims were incurred prior to May 1, 2019, but paid after the 2018-2019 Plan Year ended.
- The challenge was a high claimant that was hospitalized out of network.
- This was completely outside the norm.
- They were working with Crescent to improve the facility costs, to impact the number.
- July 19 – Runout:
 - Medical \$378,005.14
 - Pharmacy \$0.00
 - Combined Medical Claims \$378,005.14
 - Stop-loss credits \$0

(c) 2019-2020 Plan Performance: The next report would be in late October, 2019, once claims through September, 2019 were in.

Ms. Fox stated that they had a positive position of \$271,218 at the end of June. They funded the May and June premiums in April, which were \$206,608 and in May they made another funding for the balance of the year of \$950,674. They were within \$596 of Mr. Browder's estimate.

Mr. Adams stated they were facing higher runout claims than expected, but they were not completely unexpected as Mr. Browder had calculated in some of the costs.

Commissioner Mau stated that when they met at the end of June, they found that they were internally making a mistake. Where would the deficit have been if that mistake had not been being made? The year he had all the data for that he had asked for was a \$750,000 mistake. He thought they were taking steps to fix that.

Mr. Adams stated that they were calculating revenues in the rate setting module a couple of times. Ultimately, that was what caused them to be under funded. It was hard to answer what would have happened because they may have raised rates higher, which could have reduced that. This actually gave them what happened based on the rates at the time versus expenses. If they did not set the rates based on that additional revenue, he thought it was about half of the deficit. Half of it was claims and half of it was double booking the revenue, but he would have to go back and verify that.

Also, there were two ordinances passed by the Board. One was to finish out the fiscal year, which was really based on estimates and trying to put the monies in place. The other ordinance somewhat did the same thing as they looked at some of the revenues and it was anticipated that they were going to get more than what they were actually going to get. The good news was that the expense side was overbooked also. They were going to have to eventually fix that ordinance. He wanted to wait until they had the actual numbers for the full quarter.

Mr. Browder stated that he thought the first quarter would give them a good idea of where they stood and how it was going.

Commissioner Mau asked if the formulary for BCBS was that much different than Crescent. He received an email from a retiree that had to pay \$130 out of pocket a month versus \$30.

Mr. Browder stated that those inquiries needed to go to Human Resources. There would always be differences in formularies. Part of the change was not only an increase in payment by the county, but there was also additional cost-share by the membership. He suggested that the retiree reach out to Human Resources to see if there was something that could be done such as alternative medication.

Informational item.

(2) OPIOID AWARENESS CAMPAIGN: Holly Jones, WNC Outreach Coordinator, North Carolina Department of Justice, was present for this item.

Ms. Jones presented: The More Powerful NC Opioid Awareness Campaign:

- (a) Poisoning death rates were higher than traffic crash death rates in NC.
- (b) Illicit opioids were involved in approximately 80% of unintentional opioid overdose deaths in 2017.
- (c) Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement:
 - Reduce over-prescribing of opioids:
 - STOP Act
 - Law Enforcement Task Force
 - Synthetic Opioid Control Act
 - HOPE Act
 - Raise public awareness and encourage action
 - More powerful NC campaign
- (d) More Powerful NC: The Need:
 - Wide variation in awareness and understanding
 - Little guidance on how to take action to address the challenge

- (e) More Powerful NC: Coalition Partners:
 - DOJ, DHHS, DPI, DOI
 - Atrium Health, BCBS-NC
 - UNC Health Care Labcorp, Carolina Hurricanes and others
- (f) More Powerful NC: Website Content:
 - Get Help
 - Get Involved
 - Get the Facts
- (g) More Powerful NC: Key Messages:
 - Take back unneeded drugs
 - Talk to your health care provider
 - Talk to your family
- (h) More Powerful NC: Take Action Now:
 - Take the pledge
 - Become a partner
 - Pass a resolution
 - Link to the site
- (i) Other County Partnerships:
 - Pretrial Release
 - Upcoming Regional Summits: In December at Southwestern Community College

Chairman McMahan stated that on the subject of Pretrial Release, he spoke with the Resident Superior Court Judge, Brad Letts, who wanted to be on the agenda in the fall to present a summary of the year-long case study for the Pretrial Release and the impact that it had in the jurisdiction.

Commissioner Woody stated that there was a summit that took place in Bryson City surrounding this issue for the seven western counties. They had 14 task forces that were acting on the action plans they developed that day. They had great attendance from Jackson County there that day. They were taking the first steps and as they all knew, it was a huge problem.

Commissioner Mau stated that there was research done by Notre Dame that he could send to Ms. Jones regarding when they reformulated Oxycotin.

Informational item.

(3) HOUSING REPORT: Rich Price, Economic Development Director and Michael Poston, Planning Director, were present for this item.

Mr. Adams stated that this was a follow up to a previous presentation made by Mr. Poston regarding the Housing Committee Report.

Mr. Price presented the Housing Report:

The report examined population, household and tenure trends, broken out into the senior market and the market from the working age population. The projections were supplemented by additional information from existing households that could be expected to consider residing in several housing options segmented by tenure and age, taking income and affordability into consideration also.

The study area of Jackson County was based on a three year projection period over a five year study period 2020-2025, that could support:

- A single family development of detached single story homes, catering to the active adult market at a location in the Sylva area (including Dillsboro and Webster). Initially, a 54 lot development could be considered.
- The Sylva area could accommodate a 91 unit subsidized apartment project for low and very low income seniors and the Jackson County portion of Cherokee and Whittier could absorb up to 30 such units.

- An affordable tax credit rental property for seniors to be developed in the county could offer approximately 44 units and should be located in the Sylva area.
- Regarding subsidized rental housing for low and very low income persons, projects could be considered for the Sylva, Cullowhee and the Jackson County portions of Cherokee and Whittier. The Sylva area could absorb up to 500 units, Cullowhee up to 100 units and the Cherokee and Whittier area up to 175 units.
- Calculations of the needs for affordable rental housing for families suggested a 140 or 200 unit property in the Sylva area, depending on the occupancy status of the Village Overlook Apartments. The Jackson County portion of the Cherokee and Whittier area could accommodate approximately 69 units.
- The calculations for market rate rentals for families suggested that the Sylva area could absorb approximately 92 units, focusing on households at 60-80% of the median, which was the focus for what was typically considered to be workforce housing.
- Regarding for sale housing for families, based on the data for the county, they suggested that the market growth to be approximately 15 new homes annually and 18 new homes annually for potential first home buyers, in the Sylva area. That area could absorb approximately 33 units per year in a development that catered to those market segments, possibly featuring separate neighborhoods in one development that catered to those income/price segments.

The goal was to take this information and provide it to the Board to hopefully guide their discussions in regards to policy and as it related to housing and how the county could potentially assist. They could also provide this information to developers and realtors and use it as a marketing tool to demonstrate the significance of the need in the county. The third piece would be that the report stated that the county was lacking in tradespeople. They would take that information and help facilitate more workforce development issues with the community college, other agencies and employers.

The largest employers being WCU, the hospital and the casino were struggling to recruit new employees to come to the area to work because they could not find adequate or affordable housing both rental and homeownership. He suggested that applied to the educational system and first responders also. They also saw a continued need for the tax credit and subsidized housing they had experience with in the county as well.

Informational item.

(4) MOUNTAIN PROJECTS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT: Mr. Poston stated that Mountain Projects received a grant from USDA to construct new single family housing units in Jackson County that would serve households that made \$42,800 or less per year and could meet the USDA loan qualification standards. The grant required approved applicants to contribute sweat equity in the construction of the houses, but did not require a down payment or payments on the loan until the closing was finalized. Mountain Projects had been working to identify a property for the program for several years without success. That year, they identified a 1.2 acre property on Second Avenue in the Town of Sylva that could accommodate five housing sites. They currently had the property under contract and were in their due diligence stage.

The project would provide five single family houses that would be serving households that made between 80-100% of the median household income. This was a housing segment that was much needed in the county. In similar projects in Haywood County, Mountain Projects stated that the average value of the houses at closing was approximately \$200,000 per unit. Upon approval of the project by USDA, Mountain Projects would be responsible for identifying and qualifying five applicants. USDA did not have any restrictions on who could apply for the program. However, Mountain Projects would be encouraging members of the law enforcement community, the educational community and other emergency services members in the county to apply for the program.

USDA had to approve the site and project prior to moving forward. One of the criteria of the grant program was that the site acquisition cost and site development costs could not exceed approximately \$45,000 per lot. Mountain Projects estimated that the total cost would be approximately \$51,000 per lot. It was their understanding that USDA would not approve the project with the projected site development costs. Staff requested that the Board of Commissioners consider partnering with Mountain Projects by allocating up to \$30,000 to offset site development cost in order to meet the USDA program requirements.

Commissioner Deitz inquired about the type of work the homeowners would do?

Mr. Price stated he thought it was very similar to Habitat for Humanity, but he did not know specifically how much time they had to put into the project.

Consensus: *Add this item to a future regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(5) HOMELESS PROGRAM: Dr. Marilyn Chamberlin, HERE Board Chair and Destri Leger, HERE Housing Case Manager, were present for this item.

Mr. Adams stated he believed they were in the position to move forward with an official designation of HERE as the primary service provider for the homeless population.

Dr. Chamberlin stated that HERE formally requested support in administering both a cold weather shelter and homeless case management services geared toward securing permanent housing, along with needed auxiliary services, such as drug treatment, health care, financial management, employment assistance and transportation.

(a) Operating Budget FY2019-2020:

- Income total for year: \$248,122.00
- Expenditures total for year: \$229,252.84

(b) Start-up expenses for September, 2019: \$11,468.00

(c) Financial policies approved by HERE Board of Directors on August 23, 2019

Chairman McMahan inquired about their fundraising efforts.

Dr. Chamberlin stated that since they had the 5013C designation, HERE could accept contributions.

Ms. Leger stated that they started minimal community fundraising efforts with a lot of them being in-kind donations. They also had social media fundraising and hoped to have wide community fundraising, which would be developed based on interest in helping to develop it and the staff and volunteer capacity to work with the events. It was definitely a priority.

Dr. Chamberlin stated that their board was just coalescing and had been focusing on policy and budget decisions. She anticipated that in November, once the shelter was up, they would talk more about fundraising.

Mr. Adams stated that they scheduled out the anticipated cash flow needs from the county. The Board authorized \$10,000 to HERE for organization. In October and January there would be \$50,000 allocations and in April \$19,500 for the total request. Their cash flow would be dependent upon receiving the grants. If the Board moved forward to designate HERE as the primary homeless service provider, they requested that the Board agree to a minimum of the October cash flow conversation.

Dr. Chamberlin stated that regarding employees of HERE, Robert Cochran was the Program Director and Destri Leger was the Housing Case Manager. They would bring a third position in to be a part-time Prevention and Data person. Their location was three doors down from Eastgate Pharmacy, which was donated space from the hospital. The eight member HERE Board met and approved the budget, minor changes to Bylaws and all of the fiscal policies.

Mr. Adams stated that the request that would come before the Board would be to vote to designate HERE as the primary agency dealing with the homeless issue and for the \$130,000 be awarded to them in accordance with the budget discussions.

Consensus: *Add this item to the October 1st regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(6) SHOOTING RANGE: Dr. Don Tomas, SCC President; William Brothers, SCC CFO; Thom Brooks, Executive Vice President for Instruction and Student Services; and Curtis Dowdle, Dean of Public Safety Training, were present for this item.

Mr. Adams stated that he requested Dr. Tomas give an update to the Board on the shooting range upgrades and the environmental reports. Also, to discuss classes that were being held at the range to provide the Board with general information.

Dr. Tomas stated that a few months ago, they opened bids for remediation and they were more than they thought they should have been and more than what they allotted for the project to be. The Board asked them to do more due diligence, go back to Wood Architect and at look at phases.

(a) Current Site: Mr. Brothers stated that regarding the current site, they previously discussed the following:

- Backstop improvements
- Raise Berm with wall/Conex
- Borrow source stabilized with grass
- Leyland Cypress trees
- Adding two firing lanes to increase throughout / reduce range time
- Electric target system

They put the project out to bid three times and received one bid, which was well over the allotted funds. They went back to Wood Architecture to break out the bid per unit. They would include this information with the RFQ along with having a pre-bid meeting. They would be getting started in the next few weeks.

Mr. Adams stated that they were looking at a couple of potential different phases. The primary purpose of the first phase was about the backstop and mitigating the lead. As a secondary part, there was some attempt to mitigate sound, but that was not the primary purpose of the initial phase. This project needed to be done with or without the sound mitigation.

General discussions were held.

(b) Environmental Report: Mr. Brothers stated that on August 7th ECS Environmental conducted a surface water sample testing and they had a very low result of 8.4 ug/L, which was below the limit of 25 ug/L. Also, there was no indication of lead migration. As a due diligence measure, they would be conducting additional testing in November, 2019; February, 2020; and May, 2020.

Dr. Tomas stated that this had been successful with the community collaborating on the effort to make sure they did not have any environmental dangers.

Mr. Adams stated that these were items that had to be done based on DEQ requirements and were agreed upon at the time, but they could have additional discussions about future steps. There were going to be attempts for mitigation of sound, but this was not going to eliminate the sound. That was what was discussed at the time and agreed upon and what SCC had been moving forward with. It probably would have already been done if they could have gotten bids in.

(c) Facility Use: Mr. Adams stated that he requested that Dr. Tomas and staff provide a report on the facility use.

Mr. Tomas presented: SCC-PSTC Firearms Range Outline prepared by Mr. Dowdle:

The firearms range was utilized for law enforcement training and qualifications for academics, in-service as well as specialty training such as Active Shooter and SWAT. The range must be flexible in order to accommodate all aspects of firearms training as well as ability to accommodate future firearms training requirements.

All qualification courses and training were conducted in variable lighting conditions. Established standards required all law enforcement officers to qualify under day and night conditions. Firearm qualification and requalification for law enforcement agencies changed in 2019, which mandated officers that were issued a shotgun, rifle or automatic weapon to qualify with each weapon respectively for both day and night use at least once each calendar year. As with any schedule, it was fluid.

- In 2017, the range was used 94 days by 14 agencies and four academies, which equated to 800 law enforcement personnel training.

- In 2018, the range was used 90 days by 14 agencies and four academies, which equated to 785 law enforcement personnel training.
- A listing of training with date/time/agencies and number of students they served in 2019 from January current was provided.
- A list was provide of state and federal agencies that used the SCC Firing Range as well as a couple of private companies that did firearms training at SCC. All local agencies had sponsored individuals to attend Basic Law Enforcement Training as well as several of the state agencies.

Mr. Dowdle stated they had 57 days utilized and 22 scheduled for 2019. The numbers went down, but mostly because of the expected lead mitigation project.

Dr. Tomas stated that he gave kudos to Mr. Dowdle and his team for the job they did. He knew this had been a source of conversation for the past two years or more. They were there to serve and work with and to do what they could do alongside of the county to provide information and work toward a win-win.

Commissioner Woody stated that she felt that serving these agencies was appropriate and important for the community, but it appeared that access could be happening outside the scope of trainings and classes. She received texts from people living nearby on August 31st and September 4th, which those dates were not listed, where one person was shooting. Who had access and were they allowing people to use the range just for practice or fun?

Mr. Dowdle stated that no, they were not allowing that.

Dr. Tomas stated that he thought that was part of the conversation. He had talked with Mr. Dowdle about access and a non-sanctioned course. They did not know who it was as they only had record of their trainers and Mr. Dowdle would vouch for their trainers. The range was not enclosed, so someone could walk the boundary and go to it. He would ask if it was actually on the range, did they have a visual or did they know the person on the range? From a security standpoint, there were some things they could do, such as making new keys for the gate. Also, they did not have security cameras on site and was that a possibility. What types of things could they do to help eliminate or identify the people on an off-day to help prevent that from happening in the future. There could be times when Mr. Dowdle may get a call from an agency that needed to qualify someone, so they could go on the street the next day. That may not be on the schedule, but it would be easily verifiable.

Mr. Dowdle stated that if an officer or deputy was handed a new weapon, they had a certain time frame to qualify with the new weapon. They tried to be flexible with the agencies.

Dr. Tomas stated that he requested that Scott Baker, SCC Vice President for Information Technology, put numbers together to see what the cost of cameras would look like. They were doing some field work to get an idea of what that would look like at some point. He would forward that information to Mr. Adams. This could help begin to mitigate some of the use they were not aware of.

Commissioner Deitz stated that they had been talking about this for two or three years. Did they meet as a group, the four of them, and discuss the situation to see how they could lessen some of the impact? If there was a quick answer they would have already taken care of it. If there was 1,000 people texting and calling, he guessed it would be different, but it was not, it was just a few people, but they represented everyone in the county. He liked to think they were concerned. He wanted to see them come in and say that they were not going to allow shooting on holidays, etc. He was not against them doing what they were doing, it was important, but he was for trying to help those people that seemed to be in anguish having to hear this continually.

Dr. Tomas stated that they had several conversations. He did not see this as pointing fingers at anyone else. They took strides to address some environmental issues and the county had been very gracious to support that and they thanked them for that. In the middle of that, they also had the noise issues come up.

He and Mr. Dowdle had conversations about how to control it and who had access. Mr. Dowdle had control over courses, they did not have control over individuals that may be using it, because it was not a secure site. If they said they were not going to use it on a holiday and someone did use it on a holiday, they would still be getting phone calls. He thought they had to figure out a way collectively, collaboratively, how could they help resolve the non-course use. He thought that may be a bigger issue, to some degree, than the course issue. He thought that had to be part of the conversation. There was no fence around the range, so there was nothing to really stop someone from using it.

Mr. Adams stated that there should be some technological answer to this question whether it be cameras, etc. If they could work that issue out to capture unauthorized use on video and follow through with it, did that take care of the conversation?

Chairman McMahan stated that with the people he talked with, the only way it would ever be taken care of for them, would be if it were completely closed. He made it very clear that he was not in support of that. He supported the facility 100%. It was essential to the community and he would support it. He thought SCC had made a very reasonable effort to try and minimize the impact, the county was spending money to try and minimize the impact, but at the end of the day it was not going to stop. Some people would never be satisfied. Some of those people moved there knowing that the shooting range existed prior to them moving there. They were made aware of it by their realtors that it existed and they still purchased their home.

Commissioner Woody stated that she was with Chairman McMahan from what she understood on what it would cost to relocate, which was outside the question of what she wanted to support. She wanted to support this location and make it as best it could be for the citizens. She wanted to see if there was any way they could say no holidays. She knew there may be exceptions, but as much as possible.

Chairman McMahan stated that they were going to look at cameras and look at a fence, if that was what it was going to take to guarantee 100% compliance.

Commissioner Mau stated that he talked with some of the same people. There were issues related to shutting the firing range down. People he talked to requested that it be limited to Sylva, WCU and Jackson County using the range, which would get the usage down a lot. He did not know what the options were about relocating, so he did not have an opinion on that, at that point. Some folks were going to other ranges now, so there were other facilities being used. He also heard about folks that it was frustrating that Jackson County taxpayers were the ones footing the bill for the cleanup.

Mr. Dowdle stated that based on research and trends in law enforcement training, he could not say it was going to lessen anytime soon.

Chairman McMahan requested that SCC work on the cameras and a price on a fence.

Dr. Tomas stated they would work on the request and forward the information to Mr. Adams.

Informational item.

(7) LAND CONSERVATION INVESTMENT POLICY/PROCESS: Mr. Adams stated that this item was a follow up from several conversations. The document was a combination of a policy and process.

He presented the Jackson County Land Conservation Easement Investment Policy/Process:

“Jackson County greatly benefits from its natural beauty. The County’s streams, rivers, lakes, open space, mountain ranges and wildlife provides us with a source of water, food, recreation, entertainment and jobs. Our environment continues to be our most valuable resource and asset. Jackson County has determined that there is value in investing in land conservation easement projects with the County through partnering with appropriate agencies. Agencies requesting partnership/financial assistance from Jackson County must meet certain criteria. It must be demonstrated that the proposed project helps achieve goals and objectives identified in the Jackson County Land Use Plan 2040. At a minimum the following should be addressed in the agencies proposal to Jackson County.

1. Environmental/Natural Resources

The proposed project should at a minimum assist with some of the goals and objectives within the land use plan that relate to protecting the County’s environmental and natural resources. Projects that meet these type of goals will preserve land with high biodiversity/wildlife ratings, preserve land with high potential for hillside erosion, protect watersheds and protect view sheds.

2. Recreation, Public Health, Education and Economic Development

These subject areas within a land use plan generally have goals relating to achieving healthy life styles, access trail/greenway/waterways, preserving agricultural land and enhancing tourism. Conservation easements used for these activities should be described in the proposal.

The requesting agency must also be able to demonstrate its experience and capacity to negotiate, close and manage land trust easements in a legitimate manner. In order to demonstrate this capacity, the requesting agency must be able to meet one of the two following requirements:

1. The Land Trust Alliance (LTA) is a national land conservation organization based out of Washington D.C. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission (an independent program of the LTA) has an accreditation process that requires adherence to ethical and technical guidelines for the responsible operation of a land trust. Agencies that have been accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission have demonstrated their capacity and automatically qualify to apply to Jackson County for a conservation partnership project.

2. The Land Trust Alliance has developed a technical document titled “Land Trust – Standards and Practices – Ethical and Technical Guidelines for the Responsible Operation of a Land Trust”. Any non-LTA accredited agency who applies to partner with Jackson County on a conservation project must demonstrate that they can comply with all of the elements identified in this document. It will be the applicant’s sole responsibility to document and comply with every element with the document. Note: These requirements apply to both the applicant and eventual easement holder if they are different entities in the proposed project.

It is mandated that any proposal be discussed with the County Manager (and any other staff member deemed appropriate by the County Manager) prior to submitting any written proposal. County staff will provide the requesting agency feedback regarding the agency’s experience and capacity to negotiate, close and manage land trust easements. County staff will also work with the agency to assess the project’s consistency with the Jackson County Land Use Plan 2040. If the agency demonstrates that it has the capacity to manage the proposed project and the proposal seems consistent with the land use plan then the agency will be invited to submit a full written proposal.

Invited written proposals should be submitted to the Jackson County Manager’s Office in the following manner:

Section 1 – Cover Letter

Cover letter should be from requesting agency that provides a one page summary of the requested partnership.

Section 2 – Detailed Proposal Summary

This should be a detailed summary of the proposal. This detailed summary should at a minimum include the following information:

a) Details on the proposed property easement. This would include land description and proposed easement language.

b) Description of how this conservation easement will achieve goals and objectives identified in the Jackson County Land Use Plan 2040.

c) Detailed proposed budget. This would include the purchase price and all proposed funding sources. Describe how the purchase price was derived at and provide summary of all potential funding sources.

Section 3 – Description of Agencies Involved

Provide information about lead agency, easement holder (if different) and all other entities involved.

Section 4 – Supporting Documentation

Provide copies of all supporting documentation. This is to include (but not limited to) items such as property appraisals and proposed grant applications.

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners will make the final decision regarding any proposed conservation easement partnership proposal. The following illustrates some (but not limited to) of the criteria to be used in the decision making process.

1. Agency's experience and capacity.
2. How well the project assists in achieving goals and objectives identified in the Jackson County Land Use Plan 2040.
3. Cost benefit analysis. An example of information to be considered in this analysis includes comparing the total Jackson County tax investment (cash investment plus future property tax loss) versus the public benefits from the conservation easement project. The Board at the time of the project will make the final decision regarding the value of the proposed project.

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to change or modify this policy/process as it deems appropriate. The Board reserves the right to request any additional information deemed necessary to make the final decision.”

Commissioner Mau suggested one change: the specific reference to the “Land Use Plan 2040” to “the most recent Land Use Plan”.

Chairman McMahan stated that he and Commissioner Mau, both served on that committee to help produce the final version of the land use plan that the Board adopted. It was a very comprehensive plan and he really liked the idea that this drove the point back to the document when they looked at these type of potential projects. This could be a tool for the Board to show legitimate reasons of why they should invest or allow the conservation effort to move forward on these projects because it did satisfy the 2040 Land Use Plan.

Commissioner Mau stated that he assumed Ms. Baker had seen the document.

Ms. Baker stated that she just read it attached to the agenda. It was guidelines that they could change if they needed to.

Consensus: *Make the suggested changes and add this item to the next regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

(8) MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM: Mr. Adams stated that they were starting up the Municipal Grant Application Program. They would accept applications until November 1st and then present them at the November work session.

Informational item.

(9) OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Commissioner Woody stated that two constituents requested that the Board schedule a meeting in Qualla. One suggestion was for the location to be the Wolfe Town Gym.

Chairman McMahan requested that Mr. Adams look at when would be best to have an off-site meeting.

Informational item.

(b) Commissioner Mau stated that he thought the pesticide pickup would be September 27th at the Cullowhee Rec Center and they needed to get the word out.

Informational item.

(c) Chairman McMahan stated that Ms. Baker had an update on a previous item on the agenda. Ms. Baker stated that on the housing project with Mountain Projects and USDA, USDA subsidized the loans, if they wanted to sell and the loan was paid off, the subsidy had to be recaptured from USDA, so it was a higher payoff than a regular loan. Also, they would typically build all five houses together and they would all work on the houses. They typically put in 15 to 20 hours per week.

Informational item.

There being no further business, Commissioner Mau moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman