

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JULY 16, 2024**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on July 16, 2024, 6:30 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Mark A. Letson, Chairman	Kevin King, County Manager
Todd Bryson, Vice Chair	Debra Bechtel, County Attorney Rep. (Via Zoom)
Mark Jones, Commissioner (Via Zoom)	Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to the Board
John W. Smith, Commissioner	
Tom Stribling, Commissioner	

Chairman Letson called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Jones requested to vote, for the record, even though his vote would not count because he participated via Zoom.

(1) **AGENDA**: Chairman Letson requested to remove two items: Offer to Purchase and Contract - 8 Colonial Square and Budget Ordinance Amendment. Commissioner Stribling moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(2) **MINUTES**: Commissioner Bryson moved to approve the minutes of a Work Session of June 11, 2024 and a Regular Meeting of June 18, 2024. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(3) **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**: None.

(4) **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**:

(a) Commissioner Stribling stated he drove by the Aquatic Center frequently and it looked good. The paving was done and hopefully, it would open soon.

(b) Commissioner Smith stated he drove through Mark Watson Park and the new paving looked good. He asked if they had decided about the railing for the ledge in the parking lot?

Mr. King stated they were looking at the best option for the railing.

(5) **COUNTY MANAGER REPORT**: Mr. King reported on county construction projects:

(a) **Recreation Center Aquatics Complex**: The project was 92% complete. There was a meeting on July 11th and there would be a slight delay.

(b) **Center for Domestic Peace**: A pre-construction meeting was held on April 26th. Notice to proceed was issued on April 29th for phase 1 and the second notice to proceed was issued on July 13th. A groundbreaking ceremony would be on July 17th at 10:00 a.m.

(c) **Cashiers Splash Pad**: Projected to begin bidding soon. Utility work was being finalized and they were awaiting the return of stormwater permits.

(d) **Webster Park**: The project was completed.

(e) **Whittier-Qualla Park**: Nearing the bidding stage.

(f) **Department on Aging**: Working with Chad Parker, Public Works Director, to look at other alternatives due to increased prices. They would engage a structural engineer to look at the building and work with the original architect for options.

(g) **Canada Fire Department and Community Center**: Working with Mr. Parker and Odell Thompson, Architect, to develop a scope of work for the project. He visited the site and determined the project would need architectural and engineering service to create an adequate scope of work for fund development and bidding. He provided a preliminary rendering of a workable option.

(h) **Mark Watson Park**: Paving was complete and they were looking at the installation of railing.

(i) **Justice Center**: Working with the architect on multiple phases. The first phase would be the Administration Building and the second phase would be upgrades to the Justice Center. They hoped to have a presentation in September.

(j) **Drexel Plant**: A meeting was planned with FEMA to look at flood mapping. They would request a detailed study area to make a determination about the berm.

(k) **Dillsboro River Park**: The Parks and Recreation Department and Economic Development would look at possible uses for the vacant property.

(l) **Greenway**: Over the last year, several properties had been purchased to extend the Greenway. Property acquisition and fund development would continue to extend the Greenway footprint. Public Works would start a phase in the winter to extend the Greenway before spring 2025.

(m) **NCDOT Shared Use Path Cullowhee Recreation Highway**: The county match was estimated at \$417,440. The project was 80% funded and would be bid and constructed by NCDOT.

(6) INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC:

(a) Leigh Anne Young, Chair of Friends of Jackson County Greenways, expressed appreciation to the Board for the investment in greenways in the county. They looked forward to working with the Board to realize a more extensive network of greenway opportunities.

(b) Kathy Smith of Macon County requested the Board look at the amendments to the FRL Agreement to include appointments to the FRL Board be made by the Boards of County Commissioners instead of the local advisory library boards. She requested the Board vote for the amendments and address citizen concerns.

(c) Keith Blaine stated when the three county commissioners met last year, they made one recommendation, which was direct appointment. He supported the Macon County Commissioner amendments. They needed to let the Commissioners take back the direct appointment, the power the people elected them to have versus a local board. Also, he supported Beth James to be appointed to the Library Board. Ms. James was involved in the community and cared about and loved the library.

(d) Rainy Brake stated her support of Ms. James for the Public Library Board. She had known Ms. James and she was her friend. She stood behind Ms. James 100% and hoped the Board would consider her for the appointment.

(e) Beth James stated she submitted her application to volunteer to serve on the Library Board. She worked at Juvenile Justice and always looked for opportunities to serve. She understood the correlation between the juveniles she served and reading comprehension. This was a great way to be proactive and help get kids excited about reading again. There was a lot of work to be done. Her purpose of being on the Library Board was to get back to basics and be an asset to the public schools.

(f) Steve Kuehl stated his support of Ms. James' appointment to the Library Board. He endorsed her 100%. He had seen her in action in meetings and she was able to observe, listen and provide positive, constructive feedback.

(7) PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROJECT FOR FAIRVIEW SCHOOL: Mr. King stated this item was discussed at the work session. He requested consideration to proceed with the process of programming for the Fairview School capital project. Funds had been identified for the program piece. He and Ms. Fox would be charged with the funding mechanism going forward for \$18 million. The request would be to proceed to the next phase with programming and identifying the funding for the proposed \$18 million.

Commissioner Smith stated he thought this was long overdue.

Motion: *Commissioner Bryson moved to approve the Fairview School Capital Project, as requested. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(8) OFFER TO PURCHASE AND CONTRACT – 76 WAYEHUTTA ROAD: Mr. King presented an Offer to Purchase and Contract for the county to purchase 76 Wayehutta Road, Cullowhee, from Consolidated Property Services, Inc., for the purchase price of \$106,000. The property was located at the end of the Greenway next to the Cullowhee dam.

Motion: *Commissioner Smith moved to approve the purchase of 76 Wayehutta Road, Cullowhee, in the amount of \$106,000, as presented. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(9) NCACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE VOTING DELEGATE: Chairman Letson stated the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners 117th Annual Conference would be August 8th - 10th. The business meeting would be held on Saturday, August 10th. The Board would need to designate a Voting Delegate. He could attend the conference as the Voting Delegate and Ms. Bechtel volunteered to be the Alternate Voting Delegate.

Motion: *Commissioner Smith moved to appoint Chairman Letson to serve as the Voting Delegate and Ms. Bechtel to be named as the Alternate. Commissioner Bryson seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(10) SHERIFF'S OFFICE REQUEST FOR POSITION CHANGES: Ms. Fox presented the Sheriff's Office requests for position changes:

(a) Eliminate:

- One Bailiff Deputy, Grade 22, Salary (\$41,507.99)
- One Road Deputy, Grade 22, Salary (\$41,507.99)

(b) Add:

- Patrol Lieutenant, Grade 26, Salary \$50,453.22

(c) Reclassify:

- Court/Civil Process Lieutenant, Grade 26, Salary (\$50,453.22)
- Patrol Lieutenant, Grade 26, Salary \$50,453.22

(d) Net savings \$32,562.76

Motion: *Commissioner Stribling moved to approve the Sheriff's Office Request for Position Changes, as presented. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(11) TAX COLLECTOR REPORT: Brandi Henson, Tax Collector, presented the Tax Collector and Refund Reports for June, 2024, for approval.

Motion: *Commissioner Smith moved to approve the Tax Collector Report for June, 2024, as presented. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(12) ORDER OF COLLECTION – RESOLUTION R24-03: Ms. Henson stated the Order of Collection authorized, empowered and commanded the collection of taxes as set forth in the tax records filed in the office of Tax Administration. She requested approval of the Order of Collection Resolution R24-03.

Motion: Commissioner Stribling moved to adopt the Order of Collection Resolution R24-03, as presented. Commissioner Bryson seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(13) OFFER TO PURCHASE AND CONTRACT FROM ULLOA AND RESOLUTION R24-05: Mr. King stated the county received an offer from Devis Ulloa for Lot 62, Unit 6, Holly Forest (PIN #8502-42-6606) in the amount of \$3,240.00, which was the amount the county had in the property.

He presented Resolution R24-05 for consideration.

Motion: Commissioner Smith moved to approve Resolution R24-05, as presented. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(14) KROGER OPIOID SETTLEMENT AUTHORIZATION AND APPROVAL – RESOLUTION R24-06: Mr. King stated this item was discussed at the work session. He presented Resolution R24-06 authorizing execution of Kroger Opioid Settlement and approving the second supplemental agreement for additional funds.

Motion: Commissioner Smith moved to approve Resolution R24-06, as presented. Commissioner Bryson seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(15) PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD:

Motion: Commissioner Stribling moved to appoint Beth James to serve an unexpired term on the Public Library Board. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(16) VAYA HEALTH COUNTY REGION ONE BOARD:

Motion: Chairman Letson moved to appoint Cris Weatherford to serve on the Vaya Health County Region One Board as a Jackson County Representative. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(17) PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

The Board took a five-minute recess
Chairman Letson called the meeting back to order.

(18) CLOSED SESSION: Ms. Bechtel stated pursuant to G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) Legal and G.S.143-318.11(a)(5) Real Property, she requested the Board go into closed session to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney client privilege between the attorney and the public body and to establish or to instruct the public body staff for negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase option exchange or lease. She did not anticipate any public action following the closed session.

Motion: Commissioner Smith moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) Legal and G.S.143-318.11(a)(5) Real Property, as stated by Ms. Bechtel. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Letson called the regular meeting back to order and stated no action was taken in closed session.

(19) MINUTES: Commissioner Stribling moved to approve the Closed Session minutes of June 18, 2024 and July 09, 2024. Commissioner Bryson seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Commissioner Bryson moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Mark A. Letson, Chairman