

**MINUTES OF A
WORK SESSION
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
AUGUST 05, 2025**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on August 05, 2025, 7:36 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	John Kubis, County Attorney (Via Zoom)
Jenny Lynn Hooper, Commissioner	Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to the Board
Michael Jennings, Commissioner	
John W. Smith, Commissioner	

Chairman Letson called the meeting to order.

(1) DEPARTMENT ON AGING REPORT: Jamie Davis, Aging Director, presented: Department on Aging Impact Report FY24-25:

(a) Department on Aging was a one-stop resource center dedicated to providing services and support to the aging population of the county.

(b) Mission: Aim for the highest quality of life for seniors in the county.

(c) Department on Aging:

- Building opened in 2009
- Other locations, Cashiers Senior Center, Woodshop woodlot
- Over 600 volunteers each year
- Council on Aging Advisory Board
- Team Effort: great staff, Board of Commissioners, volunteers, other county departments and community
- Impact for the presentation from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

(d) Services:

- Adult Day Program
 - Provided respite for 37 families
 - Help with cognitive state of participants while providing much needed relief for the caregiver
 - Partnership with WCU and SCC for direct experience with students
 - A total of 17 regular volunteers, 1,352 hours
 - 3,418 meals provided
- Ani-meals
 - Distributed 2,920 pounds of food to pets of Meals on Wheels clients
- Caring Hands Respite
- Cashiers Senior Center
 - Served 1,424 meals to seniors providing lunch and socialization
 - 105 activities and 132 seniors
 - Activities, trips, clubs, classes, health and wellness
 - Hosted annual volunteer appreciation event
 - Served as satellite location

- Congregate Nutrition
 - Provided lunch and socialization for seniors at two locations
 - Monthly themed events
 - Served a total of 15,875 meals to 227 seniors
 - Distributed 175 cases (4,200 meals) of Ensure Plus
- Consumer Directed
- Hands-on Jackson
 - Day of caring event each year
 - Collaboration focused on providing assistance to neighbors in need through mobilization community volunteer teams of all skill levels and matching them with volunteer projects
 - Great impact and served a large of seniors
- Health and Wellness Programs
- In-Home List
 - 136 new families
 - 177 active lists
 - 45 trained providers for hire
- Liquid Supplements
- Meals on Wheels
 - Provided 26,679 meals to homebound seniors
 - Served 214 homebound seniors
 - 138 volunteers served 5,775 hours and drove 111,558 miles
 - March for Meals on Wheels
 - 122 fresh produce boxes
- Options Counseling
 - 35 families
 - 556 services
- Project C.A.R.E.
 - Ramps and home modifications
 - 45 ramps built
 - 9 ramp/deck repairs
 - 5 set of stairs, 10 handrails
 - 24 grab bars, 2 shower wants
 - 164 volunteers, 549 hours
 - 22 fans given to seniors in need through Duke Energy funding
- Project F.I.R.E.
 - Volunteer Day once a month October through March
 - 270 firewood loads delivered to seniors in need
 - Wood 100% donated to DOA
 - 290 volunteers, 870 hours
- Project Lifesaver
 - 9 bracelets to families dealing with dementia
- Respite Lending Closet
 - for lift chairs, shower chairs, etc.
 - 23 loans
- Senior Center
 - Activities, trips, clubs, classes, health and wellness
 - 962 participants, 1,363 guests for classes and events
 - 600+ 200 guests for health and wellness
 - 585 served by AARP Tax Aide
 - Classes held virtually and in-person

- Certified Senior Center of Excellence by the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services
- Senior Christmas Boxes
 - Delivered 920 Christmas boxes to seniors in need in December
 - 55 volunteers, 234 hours
- Senior Games
 - Partnership with Parks and Recreation
 - 99 activities
 - 105 participants registered for Local Senior Games
 - 20+ compete at the NC Senior Games held in Raleigh
- Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)
 - Multiple outreach events
 - Free unbiased counseling
 - 504 Medicare beneficiaries contacts, saving almost \$2.1 million
 - One volunteer serving 15 hours
- Senior Fan Program
- Special Events:
 - Caregiver events, Scam/Shred Event, Mobile Free Pharmacy, Elder Abuse Awareness Walk, 90's Birthday Party, Medicare 101, Volunteer Recognition, Support Groups, Seminars
- Sylva Senior Café
- Volunteers
 - 714 volunteers served approximately 9,980 hours of service
 - Value of \$334,430

General discussions were held.

Informational item.

(2) INTERVIEW PROCESS FOR APPOINTMENTS: Mr. King requested to continue discussions regarding the process and procedure for appointments. An ad would be placed in the newspaper in September to solicit volunteers for board positions through June 2026. Appointments would be made in December for the appointments expiring in the next six months. Certain boards had solicited members based on specific criteria. Would the Commissioners want to interview each of the applicants for each board?

Chairman Letson stated he looked at the boards that would be better for staff to make recommendations, such as the planning councils. It would be the same for the Business and Industry Advisory Board, TDA, Health Board, etc. All of these were heavily ruled by who could serve and from what field. He did think they could pull those out and say staff should be directing. With staff recommendations, the Commissioners could make those appointments. He did not want to make it more cumbersome so it would become more difficult to find people to serve.

Commissioner Bryson stated he agreed.

Commissioner Hooper stated she thought staff making recommendations would be fine with the Commissioners looking through them. She did not see a problem interviewing because she thought it was important to put the right people on the right boards.

Chairman Letson stated the Commissioners' due diligence was to call applicants and vet them prior.

Commissioner Bryson stated he thought one or two recommendations should be submitted to the Board for appointment.

Commissioner Smith inquired about the Community Advisory for Long Term Care Board. There were six vacancies on the board. It required a two-week training course in Raleigh to serve.

Commissioner Hooper stated she thought the county should pay for the training, hotel, meals and the person's time. It was a very important board.

Mr. King stated it was a required board.

Commissioner Smith asked where the funding would come from to pay for this.

Ms. Fox stated it would come from contingency or fund balance.

Mr. King stated they would work on a policy for this specific board and bring it back for consideration.

General discussions were held.

Mr. King stated if they received more than three applications per seat, did the Commissioners want to proceed with an interview process?

Chairman Letson stated he thought that was the best method. If they only received one application, they should not hold up the process waiting for more applicants.

Commissioner Bryson stated they did not want to make the process too hard so people would not want to volunteer.

General discussions were held.

Informational item.

(3) OTHER BUSINESS: None.

There being no further business, Commissioner Hooper moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Mark A. Letson, Chairman