

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
FEBRUARY 3, 2014**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on February 3, 2014, 2:00 pm, Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Rd., Sylva, North Carolina.

Present:

Mark Jones, Commissioner
Charles Elders, Commissioner
Vicki Greene, Commissioner

Chuck Wooten, County Manager

J. K. Coward, Jr., Co. Attorney
Pat Parris, Clerk to Board

Absent:

Jack Debnam, Chairman
Doug Cody, Vice Chair

Commissioner Jones, Acting Chairman, called the meeting to order.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: Commissioner Jones presented a certificate and commemorative clock to the following employee who will be retiring during the month of February 2014:

Kenny Hall, 16 years, Public Works-Housekeeping Division

AGENDA: Commissioner Elders moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Commissioner Greene moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 6 and Retreat of January 21, 2014. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(1) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT: Mr. Wooten reported:

(a) **Revolving Loans:** The revolving loans approved since March 2011 are current and Webster Enterprises has repaid the entire amount of its loan. Loans outstanding include 540 Broadcasting Company, Inc. and Jackson Paper.

(b) **State Maintenance Agreements:** Petitions are being prepared to recommend that the Board request NCDOT to assume maintenance responsibility for the new phase of Frank Allen Road at the Cashiers Recreation Center as well as the streets inside the Webster Services Center property. In both cases, these roads were designed to state standards and were constructed with the idea that they would become part of the state maintenance system.

(c) **Building Inspection Jurisdiction:** He has been notified by officials at WCU that they believe a building owned by the WCU Endowment Fund and the WCU Research and Development Corporation fall under the jurisdiction of the County for building and fire inspections. He is confirming this situation with NC Office of State Construction. From a building inspection standpoint, the University would purchase building permits for improvements or new construction related to these facilities. From a fire inspection standpoint, this will introduce an additional work load for the inspectors that heretofore have not been provided. As a result, he has asked Tony Elders to review the possibility of establishing a fee schedule for these services.

(d) **Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT):** He participated in two conference calls with Congressman Meadows over the past week. The proposed spending bill to be introduced in the US House does not include funding for PILT. Obviously, this would negatively impact many of the counties that Congressman Meadows represents. Jackson County has 80,289 acres of property owned by the federal government and is scheduled to receive \$193,316 in PILT funds. Congressman Meadows has a commitment from the Speaker of the House that these funds will be included as part of the Farm Bill to be introduced and voted on before the end of January. In addition, Senators Hagan and Burr have pledged their support. The NC Association of County Commissioners is also working on this issue.

(2) **CONSENT AGENDA:** Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented Finance, Tax Collector and Refund Reports for December 2013, 3 budget amendments and Capital Project Ordinance (Skyland Services Center - \$200,000).

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(3) **CULLOWHEE COMMUNITY GARDEN:** Adam Bigelow stated that the Cullowhee Community Garden is a project of the Health Department and is located on a 5.2 acre tract owned by the County. He expressed appreciation for the invaluable services provided by the County Grounds Dept., WCU Facilities Management, Parker Excavating (donated use of their equipment and fuel for grading the land), The Hub (students helped build the tool shed), plus the Cullowhee Community Garden Project Partners (The Community Table, Planning Department, H.I.G.H.T.S. Program of Jackson Psychological Services, WCU Service Learning Department, and NC Cooperative Extension Service).

In May of 2013 the garden was ready for plot adoptions. All of the tools, equipment and materials necessary for organic gardening are supplied. Seeds and plants are not provided. There is no monetary fee for joining which removes most economic barriers to gardening. Instead, members are charged one half of their produce which is then donated to the local food relief agency partners (Community Table, United Christian Ministries, Vecinos (provides food relief and other services to the Hispanic community), and The Market (a discount grocery and Manna food bank in Cullowhee).

As of today, 24 plots have been adopted. Through a collaborative effort between the Garden and the H.I.G.H.T.S. program, \$1,400 in grant funds was used to provide a 20% match for the purchase of a greenhouse. The greenhouse will be constructed during the winter and includes laying a concrete pad foundation lined with flex-tubes. Those tubes will be connected to a passive solar water heater which will provide passive, radiant floor heating to the greenhouse, thus allowing extension of the growing season and produce vegetable starters for gardeners and as a potential fundraiser for the Garden.

Funding and Budgeting:

Funding 2012-13:		Budget for 2014	
2012 NC Eat Smart, Move More Community Grant	\$45,080	Health Dept.	\$ 9,360
2012 Southwestern Commission Grant	\$10,000	Rec Dept	\$ 9,000
2013 Nourishing NC Grant	\$ 3,000	Donations	\$ 3,274
Donations	\$ 1,274	T-shirt sales	\$ 2,500
Health Dept	\$11,520	Nourishing NC Grant	\$ 3,000
Total	\$70,874	Total	\$27,134
Expenditures to date	\$45,080		

Future Plans

- Expand Garden to 40 full-sized plots, and increase production and donations of produce;
- Develop an afterschool and summer program for youth based on Youth Farmstand Model from Rutgers Univ. and the University of Michigan;
- Continue infrastructure development:
- Erect stands for water tanks, and plumbing to connect them to solar water pump;
- Continue planting fruit trees, bushes, and ornamental plants;
- Improve drainage from parking area and garden;
- Erect signage for garden;
- Fund and construct naturally-built outdoor kitchen on-site;
- Work with NC Community Garden Partners to designate The Cullowhee Community Garden as a regional community garden hub;
- Explore other sections of the County for potential interest and locations for developing more publically owned land into community gardens;
- Increase community outreach and volunteerism through media outlets, direct organizational contact, and through educational workshops held in the garden.

The Board commended Mr. Bigelow for his outstanding dedication and continued work on the project.

(4) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION 2013 UPDATE: Rob Hawk, Director, stated that 2013 was an extremely busy and productive year. 34,573 citizens (county population of 40,448) benefited from the educational programming. The nine major program areas were:

- Natural Resources Conservation and Environmental Sustainability
- Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Chronic Disease Risk Reduction
- Parenting and Caregiver Skills
- Profitable and Sustainable Agriculture Systems
- Urban and Consumer Agriculture
- School and Career (Youth and Adults)
- Leadership Development
- Community Development and Local Food Systems

(a) **Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program:** This program educates youth and families about eating smart and moving more and is funded 100% by the NC A&T State University. This program impacted 317 youth with the latest nutrition education. This program also works successfully with the Parks and Recreation Department and the county school system.

(b) **4-H Programs:** Heather Gordon, 4-H Agent, stated the programs revolve around the four “H’s” - Head, Heart, Hands and Health. Many diverse programs are promoted under the “Leadership” philosophy of building youth to become effective citizens of the community and directly impacted 1,714 youth in 2013. Projects included a community mural, an autism program, gift bags for sick/injured children in the hospital, and a commercial for classrooms highlighting ways to make good choices.

(c) **Agriculture & Horticulture:** Included 40 educational programs and technical assistance in the areas of profitable and sustainable agriculture systems, local food systems, safety and security of the food and farm systems and urban and consumer agriculture. These programs impacted 19,674 citizens by increasing their working knowledge of the best agricultural and horticulture production practices to increase net farm incomes and help build the local food systems along with good horticulture practices. Mr. Hawk provided 12 livestock educational programs from small ruminant, basic poultry to cattle herd and health management.

(d) **Community & Leadership Development:** 2,367 community leaders gained assistance which included work through extension programs, extension clubs, working committees and technical assistance. In October the Balsam, Caney Fork, Norton and Pumpkintown Community Development Clubs participated in the Annual Jackson CDC Awards program. The Extension Office is assisting with the development of the old Drexel plant site in Whittier as a “Great Smokies Agricultural Development Station”. A committee has been developed and Mr. Hawk will take the primary lead on this initiative.

(e) **Natural Resources Conservation & Environmental Sustainability:** These programs reached 867 people primarily through educational programming during the Annual Soil and Water Conservation Field Days and 4-H Nature Club. Those two programs taught youth about conservation stewardship and how to appreciate and enjoy their natural environment. Fifteen educational programs in the area of natural resource conservation were provided.

(f) **Summary:** Jackson County Cooperative Extension made 34,573 total educational contacts in 2013, which included 4,955 face-to-face contacts and 29,618 non-face-to-face contacts. 180 educational programs were provided. Mass Media (newspaper; radio and social media) is a large part of the educational process: 97 newspaper articles with a circulation of 1,271,350; 65 radio programs reached 1,171,000 people; 13 county website articles had 22,323 hits. The Extension Center received \$28,822 in grants, gifts and donations.

(5) **REVALUATION 2016 BUDGET PLAN:** Mr. Wooten stated that pursuant to G.S. 153A-150, a budget plan must be submitted for the reappraisal of real property as required by G.S. 105-286. The reappraisal cycle has been advanced to eight years and will become effective July 1, 2016. The Revaluation staff currently consists of one Appraiser I position, two Appraiser II positions, and two Appraisal Technician positions. Seventy percent of the salaries are related to reappraisal. Thirty percent will be charged to the Tax Assessment budget for work relating to appraisal of new construction and other duties not deemed reappraisal. The reappraisal will be performed in house with some outside contracted services during selected months of the cycle.

The estimated total reappraisal cost is \$2,250,000, the estimated number of parcels is 40,000 and the estimated cost per parcel is \$56.25. The amount of the budget reserve will be \$2,250,000. The plan proposes that \$333,334 be budgeted for FY2013-2014 and the remainder of the reserve be appropriated each year of the reappraisal:

Schedule for Budgeted Reserve	
FY 2008-2009	\$ 250,000
FY 2009-2010	\$ 250,000
FY 2010-2011	\$ 250,000
FY 2011-2012	\$ 250,000
FY 2012-2013	\$ 250,000
FY 2013-2014	\$ 333,334
FY 2014-2015	\$ 333,333
FY 2015-2016	\$ 333,000
TOTAL:	\$2,250,000

(6) **BOARD OF ELECTIONS POSITION:** Mr. Wooten stated the changes implemented by House Bill 589 added a significant amount of time necessary to comply with the new regulations. The Board of Elections has requested adding one fulltime Election Specialist position (Pay Grade 15/Step 1) beginning in February or March of 2014 to allow for training prior to the 2014 primary. Funding for the position would be 50% from the Board of Elections contracted services line item and 50% from the general fund. He recommended the new position.

(7) **RESOLUTION SETTING SALARIES FOR SHERIFF and REGISTER OF DEEDS (R14-01):** Pursuant to G.S. 153A-92, the Board is authorized to set the starting salaries for the Sheriff and Register of Deeds positions. The 2014 filing fees for the offices of Register of Deeds and Sheriff shall be based on current entry-level salaries, i.e., \$44,834.87 and \$63,087.16 respectively.

Motion: *Commissioner Greene moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(8) 441 CORRIDOR SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS RESOLUTION (R14-02): Mr.

Wooten stated that Mr. Coward and he attended Council Meeting of the Eastern Band of Cherokee in December 2014. He presented a Resolution adopted by the Tribal Council at that meeting. The Tribe has requested the County to adopt a similar Resolution urging the Department of Transportation to implement safety improvements by constructing sidewalks and installing street lights on US 441N for the purpose of providing safety for pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(9) SURPLUS PROPERTY (DENTAL EQUIPMENT) RESOLUTION (R14-03):

Darlene Fox, Finance Director, submitted a Resolution describing county dental equipment that has been removed from service and is not needed or desired by other departments. She requested that the equipment be declared surplus and authorized for sale.

Motion: *Commissioner Elders moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(10) SURPLUS PROPERTY (MDT COMPUTERS) RESOLUTION (R14-04):

Darlene Fox, Finance Director, submitted a Resolution describing county equipment that has been removed from service and is not needed or desired by other departments. She requested that the equipment be declared surplus and authorized for sale. NCGS 160A-266-270 authorizes the County to dispose of personal property by private negotiation, public auction either live or electronic, sealed bid or upset bid process. The Macon County Sheriff's Office has offered to purchase the 5 MDT Computers in the amount of \$400.00 each which is

Motion: *Commissioner Greene moved to adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(11) GREENWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Carry over

(12) PLANNING BOARD: Carry over

(13) ROAD NAMING BOARD: Carry over

(14) CASHIERS PLANNING COUNCIL: Carry over

Public Comments:

Marie Leatherwood of Sylva stated that in her opinion there is not a proper location for a turntable in Dillsboro for GSMR.

Press Conference

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Attest:

Approved:

Patsy C. Parris, Clerk to Board

Mark Jones, Commissioner
Acting Chairman