

**MINUTES OF A  
REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
MARCH 19, 2015**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on March 19, 2015, 6:00 pm, Justice & Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman  
Mark Jones, Vice Chair  
Charles Elders, Commissioner  
Vicki Greene, Commissioner  
Boyce Deitz, Commissioner

Chuck Wooten, County Manager  
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board  
J. K. Coward, Jr., County Attorney

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

**AGENDA:** Chairman McMahan amended the agenda by adding Natural Resources Defense Council Representation Agreement and Fires Service Districts Public Hearing. Commissioner Jones moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

**MINUTES:** Commissioner Greene moved to approve the minutes of a Work Session of March 02, 2015, a Joint Meeting with Municipalities of March 02, 2015 and a Regular Meeting of March 05, 2015. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

**(1) COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

(a) Commissioner Greene stated that she attended a meeting “The Best and Worst of WNC’s Open Government”, and overall Jackson County is doing very well with the open meetings and the release of information to the public. The Closed Session Resolution Jackson County adopted on March 5<sup>th</sup> was referred to as an example that other local governments should adopt.

(b) Commissioner Deitz stated that he and the Chairman had visited the Cashiers VFD’s sub-station located in Breedlove earlier that day and he realized why the substation was needed being so far from the main fire station.

**(2) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT:** Mr. Wooten reported:

(a) **Jackson County ABC Board:** David Noland, Chairman of the ABC Board, provided a summary for the financial activity for the Board through February. During the first eight months of the fiscal year, the total sales have increased by \$770,152. Obviously, there has been a sharp drop in the sales at the Cashiers store while the Sylva store sales have been consistent with the same time last year. The original estimate for the Cashiers store was approximately \$1.1 million and it now looks like the first year of sales may be closer to \$1.5 million.

(b) **NC Unemployment Rate:** The state rate for January was 5.4% which is the same as December and .1% less than November. The rates by county have not been released; however, it is suspected that the county rate will continue to be in the range of 4.4% to 4.5%.

(c) **NCACC Strategic Planning Process:** He attended the NCACC meeting in Asheville on Tuesday evening to provide input in the planning process for updating the strategic plan for the NCACC. Representatives from Polk, Transylvania, Haywood and Jackson were in attendance. The last strategic plan was approved in 2005. These meetings are being held across the state to gather input and suggestions.

**(d) T-Mobile Cell Tower Inquiry:** A representative from T-Mobile did inquire about the possibility of constructing a tower at the airport. He advised the representative that he would discuss with the Airport Commission to gauge their interest. He also reminded the representative that they would have to submit an application for a cell tower and go through the formal application process.

**(e) Upcoming Meetings:**

- April 1, 2015 NCACC District Meeting, Cullowhee NC
- April 2, 2015 Regular Commissioner Meeting
- April 16, 2015 Regular Commissioner Meeting
- April 21, 2015 Work Session / Budget Hearings
- April 23, 2015 Cullowhee Planning Standards Public Hearing, Cullowhee Recreation Center
- April 30, 2015 Fire Service District Public Hearing, Cashiers Recreation Center
- May 6, 2015 NCACC County Assembly Day, Raleigh NC
- July 10, 2015 NACO Annual Meeting, Charlotte NC

**Informal Comments by Public:**

**(a)** Marie Leatherwood of Sylva stated her disapproval of decisions made by the Board.

**(3) CONSENT AGENDA:**

**(a)** Darlene Fox, Finance Director presented the Finance Report for February, 2015 for approval.

**(b)** Brandi Henson, Tax Collector presented Tax Collector and Refund Reports for February, 2015, for approval.

**Motion:** *Commissioner Deitz moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(4) CHARTERS OF FREEDOM:** Vance Patterson presented the scope of the project Charters of Freedom is to design and build replicas of the Charters of Freedom monument as exhibited in the National Archives Rotunda, Washington, D.C. These monuments will be in communities across the country with prominent locations, high visibility, high foot traffic and easy access for school children.

There will be three documents displayed:

- The Declaration of Independence
- Four pages of the Constitution
- The Bill of Rights

The foundation will be reinforced, poured concrete. The structure will be reinforced, poured concrete covered by granite panels. The panels will be 4” thick, rubbed and brushed. The center panel will have the Charters of Freedom Seal on polished Mesabi black granite. The center display will measure 12’x4’x3’6”x4’. The backside of the center monument will be a vault with a time capsule sealed inside to be opened on Constitution Day on September 17, 2087, to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary adoption of The United States Constitution. The side displays will measure 4’x4’x3’6”x4’. Each of the six documents will be original size on .25” etched bronze, weighing over 60 lbs. and mounted 3” under a ¾” sheet of laminated viewing glass.

Mr. Patterson proposed a similar project in Jackson County. The cost would be \$70,000-\$80,000.

**Consensus:** *The Board asked Mr. Patterson to continue to work with the County Manager to move forward with the next steps of this project and to present back to Commissioners at a later date.*

(5) **SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE (SCC)**: Dr. Don Tomas, President of SCC, presented:

(a) Demonstrating the value of SCC: Analysis of the economic impact and return on investment of education.

Added Income in Region

Impact of operations spending	\$16.5 million
Impact of construction spending	\$113.6 thousand
Impact of student spending	\$1.1 million
Impact of alumni	\$109.2 million
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>\$126.9 million</b>

(b) Investment analysis measures:

- Student perspective
  - Benefits = greater job opportunities and higher lifetime income
  - For every \$1.00 invested in their SCC education, students receive \$2.90
  - Average annual return 14.5%
- Social perspective
  - Benefits = expanded economic base and savings related to improved health, reduced crime and reduced unemployment
  - For every \$1.00 that society spent on education at SCC in 2012-13, the communities received a cumulative value of \$8.40
- Taxpayer perspective
  - Benefits = added tax revenues and reduced demand for government services
  - For every \$1.00 in taxes for educational costs, yields benefits of \$3.80
  - Average annual return 13.0%

(c) Understanding the results:

- Creates new income in the region
- Supports local jobs
- Sustains a skilled workforce
- Increases students' lifetime income
- Expands the state's economic base
- Improves quality of life

(d) Facilities and Capital Funding: Based on estimates, a shortfall in funding is anticipated for the 2014-2015 year of \$236,791.

County Funding – Estimated Shortfall (not including administrative costs)

	<b><u>Operating Expenses</u></b>	<b><u>Capital</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
14-15 Appropriation	\$1,681,850	\$216,817	\$1,898,667
Annualized Estimate	<u>\$2,036,291</u>	<u>\$99,167</u>	<u>\$2,135,458</u>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>(\$354,441)</b>	<b>\$117,650</b>	<b>(\$236,791)</b>

Dr. Tomas requested the opportunity to use capital expenditure funds for operational expenses should a need arise as they continue to move forward in their budget year process.

***Motion:*** *Chairman McMahan moved to grant the request to move funds from Capital to Operating Expenses, should the need arise. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(6) NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENCE COUNCIL (NRDC) REPRESENTATION**

**AGREEMENT:** Chairman McMahan stated that the Board previously adopted a resolution in opposition to fracking and as a part of that adoption, he asked the planning board to begin the process of reviewing the county's Industrial Development Ordinance. Gerald Green, Planning Director identified several items in the ordinance pertaining not only to the exploration of gas and oil, but also junkyards and other various heavy industries, where some of the language needs to be amended.

NRDC is an organization that has offered to help with review of the county ordinances making sure the correct language is place that would provide the greatest protection. They provide this service free of charge, but do require a formal agreement with the county.

**Motion:** *Commissioner Greene moved to authorize the execution of the Agreement. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(7) FIRE SERVICE DISTRICTS:** Chairman McMahan directed the Clerk to schedule a public hearing on April 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm to be held at the Cashiers Recreation Center Gymnasium located at 355 Frank Allen Road, Cashiers.

**Motion:** *Commissioner Elders moved to set a public hearing. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(8) ABC LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT:** Sheriff Chip Hall and Mr. Wooten stated NCGS 18B requires that the ABC Board either hire an ABC law enforcement officer or contract for ABC law enforcement with a local law enforcement agency. The ABC Board is also required to expend at least 5% of profits for ABC law enforcement. The ABC Board is of the opinion that contracting with the Agency for ABC law enforcement would constitute the most efficient use of its ABC law enforcement funds. The Agency agrees to provide ABC law enforcement in the county, outside the Town of Sylva, in return for the agreed 60% of the funds set aside for law enforcement.

**Motion:** *Commissioner Deitz moved approve the contract. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(9) FUNDING FOR THE DREXEL BUILDING ASSESSMENT:** Mr. Wooten stated that before taking any further action about utilizing the Drexel site, they need to understand the condition of the building. The subcommittee that has been working on the project has identified a budget of \$10,000 that would be used to engage an architect and an engineer to assess the building and determine what would need to be done to make the building functional both from a standpoint of actual repairs to the existing system and also electrical, plumbing and HVAC. The \$10,000 would come from contingency and would be used then to develop an assessment to determine the next steps for the building.

**Motion:** *Commissioner Greene moved to approve the \$10,000 funding request from contingency for the Drexel building assessment. Commissioner Elders seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**Press Conference:**

There being no further business, Commissioner Deitz moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Attest:

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

Approved:

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