

**MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF
THE COUNTY OF JACKSON, TOWN OF DILLSBORO,
TOWN OF SYLVA, TOWN OF WEBSTER AND
VILLAGE OF FOREST HILLS
HELD ON AUGUST 03, 2015**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Joint Meeting with the Town of Dillsboro, Town of Webster, Town of Sylva and Village of Forest Hills on August 03, 2015, 6:00 p.m., at the Department on Aging Center, Heritage Dining Room, 100 County Services Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

County Board of Commissioners:

Brian McMahan, Chairman
Mark Jones, Vice Chair
Charles Elders
Vicki Greene
Boyce Deitz
Chuck Wooten, County Manager
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk
Jan Fitzgerald, Executive Assistant

Town of Dillsboro:

Mike Fitzgerald, Mayor
David Jones
Beauford Riddle
Debbie Coffey, Clerk

Village of Forest Hills
Kolleen Begley, Mayor
Carl Hooper
Clark Corwin

Town of Sylva:

Maurice Moody, Mayor
Danny Allen
Mary Gelbaugh
Barbara Hamilton
Harold Hensley
Lynda Sossamon
Paige Dowling, Town Manager
Amanda Murajda, Clerk

Town of Webster:

Nick Breedlove, Mayor
Janice Blanton
Billie Jo Bryson
Danell Moses

County Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order and recognized County Commissioners in attendance: Mark Jones, Vicki Greene, Charles Elders and Boyce Deitz.

(1) COUNTY UPDATE: Mr. Wooten recognized county staff in attendance: Rich Price, Economic Development; Logan Jeleniewski, I.T. Department; Angie Winchester, Clerk to the Board; and Jan Fitzgerald, Executive Assistant to the County Manager. He stated that the tax revaluation is coming up soon, which will be a significant event in the county. Bobby McMahan, Tax Assessor, will be presenting the property schedule of values to the Commissioners in mid-October. The Commissioners will then hold a public hearing in November. Current tax bills would be placed in the mail that weekend.

(2) HARRIS REGIONAL HOSPITAL: Lucretia Stargell, Director of Corporate Relations, stated that the hospital had recently marked its one year anniversary with their affiliation with Duke LifePoint. Several changes have occurred, including new flooring in the waiting area, new signage, upgraded ultra sound machines, and much more. Also, for the first time in five years they were able to provide raises to employees - a one million dollar investment in their staff. Each week they work closely with the Duke Quality Network, which infuses small communities with quality standards and practices born out of the Duke University Health System. Harris and Swain are on a journey to be designated Duke LifePoint Quality Affiliates.

Construction will begin later in the year on the \$11 mil, 18,000 square foot addition to the hospital, which will be the new emergency department. Also, approval for the new \$3.5 mil, Generations Family Birthing Center is expected later in the year.

The hospital has embarked on publicly identifying and naming important community partnerships with Western Carolina University and Southwestern Community College. Both institutions have been long standing counterparts on behalf of training the next generations of health care workers and keeping the communities healthy and economically vibrant.

The hospital partners with local schools on health and wellness initiatives and focused athletic training programs. They work closely with local businesses to find ways to keep employees safe and healthy, while keeping costs down. Duke LifePoint has an “invest and grow” approach to its hospitals. The acquisition included a commitment of a minimum of \$42 mil in investments in Harris and Swain over the next 8 years.

In the coming months they will launch a psychiatry program through their Duke LifePoint partnership with East Carolina University, to improve on a statewide unmet need to facilitate care for patients experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Their mission is simply making the communities healthier by providing a world class patient and family experience for the community. Harris Regional has served Jackson and surrounding counties for 90 years.

(3) ECU DENTAL CLINIC: Dr. Robert Manga, Clinic Director, stated that the first ECU School of Dental Medicine is located in Greenville, NC. Its mission is to take care of residents of North Carolina. They started in 2011 as a dental school and now has 7 learning centers. Only North Carolina residents are accepted into the program. The ECU graduated its first class of 50 students in May, 2015. Of these, 24 went on to post graduate programs. The remaining graduates are working for the state in some capacity.

The clinics have served 93 counties by Ross Hall and their Community Service Learning Centers: Ahoskie, Elizabeth City, Lillington, Davidson County, Robeson County and Sylva. There has been 1,761 patients served in 11 states.

(4) TOWN OF SYLVA: Town of Sylva Mayor Maurice Moody, stated that all of their Board Members were present: Danny Allen, Mary Gelbaugh, Barbara Hamilton, Harold Hensley and Lynda Sossamon. Also in attendance was the Town Manager, Paige Dowling and Amanda Murajda, Clerk to the Board. He stated that the Sylva Fire Department was looking to building a substation in Dillsboro and had worked out an agreement with the Dillsboro Board. They are also conducting a traffic study, which they were seeking input from county residents. The next public hearing for the traffic study would be September 10th at 5:30. The “Taste of Sylva” event was scheduled for October 3rd 1:00-5:00. Also, Concerts on the Creek were very successful with tremendous turn-out. He recognized one of the local bands “Mountain Faith” and stated they had done extremely well on the show “America’s Got Talent”. The band would be at the bridge park on the 14th. They would like to have at least 1,000 people in attendance to show their support.

(5) TOWN OF DILLSBORO: Town of Dillsboro Mayor Mike Fitzgerald, stated David Jones, Beauford Riddle, and Clerk to the Board Debbie Coffey were in attendance. He stated they have a new BBQ Restaurant in town that is now open. They have also instituted a small economic stimulus package to increase business and to encourage new hiring. Also, they have partnered with Southwestern Commission to pursue an ARC Grant so that the town can have a Comprehensive Plan to allow for future funding.

(6) TOWN OF WEBSTER: Town of Webster Mayor Nick Breedlove, introduced Commissioners Janice Blanton, Billie Jo Bryson and Danell Moses. He stated they have received a \$5,000 matching planning grant for ARC funding administered by Southwestern Commission. They have engaged Asheville-based Kostelec Planning to create a plan that focused on walkability and physical activity, historic preservation and ordinance revision. The complete plan is available at www.townofwebster.org.

The ten action steps for implementation for Webster: Heart & Soul:

- Adopt this plan
- Update the zoning ordinance
- Upgrade the ballfield site and install water fountain
- Pursue funding for Buchanan Loop pedestrian facilities
- Develop a Land Use Plan
- Work with the county and Southwestern Commission on plan updates
- Fund an initiative to develop a brand and town seal for Webster
- Develop a wayfinding system
- Adopt a Complete Streets Policy
- Erect a Little Free Library

Historic Walking Tour:

- Received \$1,200 TDA grant for historical tourism promotion
- Signage to be installed
- Promotes Webster’s history and six National Register Properties

WCU Partnership

- Partnered with WCU Small Business Technology Development Center and was assigned a student team for Spring Semester
- Utilized team to conduct first ever town-wide survey
- Results were extremely useful and of great value to town

Survey:

- Objective: what services and developments do Webster and surrounding residences desire and what is the feasibility of these developments for the Town of Webster
- 66 respondents

Current efforts:

- Finishing LED lighting project in near future
- Soliciting bids for Land Use planning
- Updating zoning ordinances

(7) VILLAGE OF FOREST HILLS: Village of Forest Hills Mayor Kolleen Begley introduced Councilmen Clark Corwin and Carl Hooper. She reported that the Cullowhee Farmer's Market is located in the Village of Forest Hills behind the entrance sign on 107. It is open every Tuesday from 4 pm to dusk. They have had a great turn-out. Also, after community input at their workshop last fall and the survey they put out to all their residents, they received a finally report in March, which has been loaded on their website. They are now working with Professional Systems to update their future Land Use plans based on information from the report. They are also looking at changes in their ordinances to bring them up to date. In responding to the speeding and safety issues in the Village, they adopted a speed limit on all of the non-state maintained roads of 15 mph. In response to the concern of parking on the side of the roads, they have adopted a no parking on Village roads. They are working on revising the entrance sign to the Village with a goal of reducing the yearly maintenance costs and to blend more with surroundings. They also have a 3-5 year plan to pave remaining gravel roads within the Village. They also plan to re-submit a sidewalk request to NCDOT. It is an important goal to make their community more walkable.

(8) WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY: Mike Byers, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, stated it was an exciting time at WCU for lots of reasons. They were looking at another potentially record year of enrollment. Some of the physical changes occurring at WCU include the construction of their mixed use facility, which will contain a 430 bed student housing facility, with the ground floor containing retail and other amenities. This is located at the site where the fire took place in November of 2013. Later in the fall, construction will begin on the renovation and addition of the Brown Building, which will be a dining facility for students on campus. Also, they recently selected a developer for the Millennial Campus, who will be their partner in developing a medical office building adjacent to the Health Building on Little Savannah Road. The group is Bracket Flagship out of Charlotte. They will construct, manage and seek tenants for the space. The most important physical capital project for WCU is their desire to obtain funding for a new science building. At the time, the house, senate and governor were not in agreement on how to fund state projects. They were hopeful the outcome would produce a badly needed science building for WCU.

(9) SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Dr. Thom Brooks, Executive Vice President for Instruction and Student Services, recognized Scott Baker, Vice President for Information Technology; Danell Moses, President of Faculty Senate; and Mark Jones, SCC Board of Trustees Member. Dr. Brooks stated there were four key priorities in the coming year that would be in the forefront at SCC:

- Pursuing enrollment growth. SCC has seen its highest enrollment in the shortest period of time at in the past 8 years. Enrollment has increased 30% since 2006. They hope to sustain these numbers or see a slight growth.
- They are working on a new facilities master plan for Jackson and Swain campuses. They updated the plan in Macon County a couple of years ago. They will also be working on a deferred maintenance analysis plan for the campus. They expect both to be completed by the end of the year and be presented to the Board of Trustees by January.
- They were in the process of seeking reaffirmation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. This is their 10 year reaffirmation effort that they started last year. They will work through this year and most of next year towards the reaffirmation, which includes a self-study and quality enhancement plan.

- They are in the process of pursuing a \$1 mil fund raising goal through the SCC Foundation for their Student Success Scholarship Fund. Last year was the first phase, which was to raise funding for a federal matching grant. They exceeded that goal raising more than \$350,000, which left the fund with \$650,000.

Other initiatives include waiting for resolution with the state budget where there is not a lot of difference in the three budgets proposed for community colleges. It is anticipated that tuition will increase between \$2 and \$4 per credit hour. They are also waiting to know about salary increases, but they do anticipate an increase for faculty.

Two other projects that are underway to expand parking on campus should be completed in September. Also project 1943, which includes renovations and construction projects on campus, began in the summer. This was the first significant renovation project on campus in over 30 years. The first phase should be completed in 2 weeks.

(10) NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION: Ed Green, Division Engineer and Jack Debnam, Division 14 DOT Board Member were in attendance. Mr. Green stated he had several updates for DOT projects.

- R-5000 is almost 75% finished. It has a completion date of May, 2016, with hopes of being open to traffic later that year.
- US 74 – Willets Bridge is about 25% finished. It has a completion date of May, 2017.
- The chronic slide on Highway 281 is 85% finished. It should be completed by the end of the month.
- Cope Creek Road improvements, 2nd section from east cope creek to US 74 has been awarded. Work should start next month and the completion date is March, 2017.
- Minor widening, curb and gutter across hospital drive from US 23 business, past the Health Department. Work should start this month and be finished by the end of the year.
- There are ten bridges on secondary roads throughout the county that are in various stages of completion.
- Future upcoming project: Old Cullowhee bridge; Highway 107 Cullowhee to Tuckasegee; Bridge on US 23 over Scotts Creek; and four other bridges on various secondary roads in the next couple of years.
- Other projects include the sidewalk 441 business, which has been funded. This item will be on the September agenda for the Board of Transportation.
- Jackson County CTP is in progress.
- Community survey is being finalized and will go out in the next 2-3 months.
- Project development for widening Highway 107 right-of-way will begin in 2019 with construction in 2021.

(11) TUCKASEEGEE WATER AND SEWER: Dan Harbaugh, Executive Director, presented ten areas of management focus for water resource enterprises:

- Financial viability
 - Product quality
 - Water resource adequacy (expansion)
 - Infrastructure stability (sustainment)
 - Customer satisfaction
 - Community sustainability
 - Stakeholder understanding and support
 - Operational optimization
 - Operational resilience
 - Employee and leadership development
- Water Resource Enterprises Common Areas of Focus:

- Resource stability, adequacy and product quality:
 - Plan for current and future needs
 - Manage capacity
 - Promote sustainability
 - Regulatory compliance
 - Comprehensive study last in 2000
 - Annual CIP
 - Flow management by allocation
 - Monitor, test and inspect
- Financial viability:
 - Promote the financial health of the enterprise
 - Control costs and rates
 - Annual O& M Budget
 - Annual CIP / future year plan
 - Capital revenue
 - Impact fees – one-time
 - System improvement fees-monthly
 - Fund transfers
- Recent Activities
 - Received three part NPDES Permit for Horsepasture River discharge; Phase 1 design work funded in FY15-16 CIP.
 - Board approved revision of Cashiers Sewer Capacity Transfer Policy, allowing much broader use.
 - Board adopted a policy allowing monthly payments instead of mandating on-time impact fees when a business required additional water / sewer capacity.
 - Board adopted an “Economic Development and Community Outreach Fund” policy along with funding.
 - FY 2015-16 CIP approved including Comprehensive Study Update, 441 S Corridor Study, Cashiers Water System and Whittier SD Ownership Plans
 - For Policies – Procedures, Forms and Instructions in progress
 - Major projects that will be wrapping up include the University Heights water system consolidation and the River Park mobile home park. Both projects are about 90% complete now.

(12) SOUTHWESTERN COMMISSION: Ryan Sherby, Executive Director, stated he was going to give highlights from the three areas they work in:

- Workforce Development:
 - In May they had a Real work youth expo held at the Ramsey center with 240 youth throughout the region
 - Just completed the last job profile report for Consolidated Metco
 - Staff is preparing for an upcoming Caterpillar coordinated response due to the plant relocating
- Aging Department
 - June was Elder Abuse Awareness Month had simultaneous walks across the region with 400 people participating
 - They held their Aging conference on June 16th in Webster
- Community and Economic Development
 - Still working on the Mountain West Alliance, which is a temporary name, for the regional collaborative which includes seven County Economic Developers, including: small business centers that are three community colleges, WCU, The Millennial Initiative, Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovations and EBCI. They are working together to jointly promote and market the region.

- Americas Best Communities was a private grant competition, which they applied for. They partnered with a non-profit and made the first round with their Mountain West Alliance concept and was awarded \$50,000. This is being put towards the regional marketing effort. They will continue to compete in the next levels of the competition.
- They chose a square in the region to include Graham, Swain, Macon and Clay Counties. Even though Jackson County was not included, the entire region will benefit.
- Have put together an Opt-In Implementation Fund, which was similar to the Mountain Landscapes Toolbox Fund, which was secured by Commissioner Greene when she was the Director at the Southwestern Commission. This will help with small planning projects and to give the funding to hire the expertise needed to complete those projects.

(13) **JUSTICE CENTER SECURITY UPDATE:** Mr. Wooten stated that work is currently in progress to improve security at the Justice Center. The phase to convert to a single-point of entry is nearing completion. There will also be a screening process, which will be staffed by a Sheriff Deputy. When you enter the building you will go through a magnetometer and a bag screening process. If all goes as planned, this will be in place in five weeks. This will eliminate use for after-hours except for Commissioner Meetings, which will continue to be held at the facility.

Chairman McMahan recognized Register of Deeds, Joe Hamilton in attendance.

There being no further business, Commissioner Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Greene seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

 Angela M. Winchester, Clerk
 Jackson County Board of Commissioners

 Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman
 Jackson County Board of Commissioners