

**MINUTES OF A  
WORK SESSION  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
MAY 17, 2016**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on May 17, 2016, 10:00 a.m., Justice & Administration Building, Room A227, 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  
Heather C. Baker, County Attorney

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

**(1) SMOKY MOUNTAIN MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT**

**PLAN:** Shelly Foreman, Senior Director of Planning and Public Affairs, gave a special thank you to Commissioner Greene as she was a valuable member of the Smoky Mountain Mental Health Board of Directors and the Chair of the County Commissioner Advisory Board. Commissioner Greene was a great representative of the county and she was very much an advocate for people with behavioral health and developmental disabilities.

Ms. Foreman presented the Smoky Mountain Community and Capital Reinvestment Initiatives: Vision: Creating a robust crisis continuum will help divert individuals from long waits at and costly visits to hospital emergency departments (EDs).

**(a) Initiative C3356 and child facility-based crisis center (FBC):**

- Description: Using state Crisis Solutions Initiative grant funding awarded to Smoky, they developed the C3356 BHUC in partnership with Mission Health, RHA Health Services, Buncombe County Health and Human Services, Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministries and NAMI Western North Carolina. The second phase of the project would be the development of one of the first child FBC centers in North Carolina at the previous adult FBC (the Neil Dobbins Center).
- Cost: They expanded nearly \$1.7 million of their fund balance in relocation expenses in 2015 to kick off the project and committed another \$500,000 for ongoing operational expenses that fiscal year. Other funds include \$800,000 (plus in-kind investments totaling \$383,000) from Buncombe County Health and Human Services, a \$2 million grant from DHHS/Crisis Solutions Initiative and \$1 million from Mission Health.
- Outcome: C3356 had already diverted individuals from the ED and provided crisis intervention, response and stabilization services and supports within a recovery-oriented system of care. Soon it would include a peer living room model and community pharmacy under one roof.

**(b) Balsam Center FBC:**

- Description: Smoky was working to expand and upgrade the existing FBC center in Haywood County from 12 to 16 beds and develop an enhanced involuntary commitment (IVC) drop-off process at the facility.
- Cost: They would contribute \$400,000 in funds to support building renovations being conducted by the Evergreen Foundation.

- Outcome: The expansion of beds would provide additional capacity for the westernmost Smoky counties and would assist local law enforcement agencies by providing a secure IVC drop-off site. This would enhance law enforcement efficiency and improve outcomes for individuals.
- (c) Substance use recovery housing:
- Description: Entails developing and/or expanding housing for individuals in recovery from substance use who need stable housing to maintain long-term recovery.
  - Cost: \$250,000
  - Outcome: This activity fills a gap in the service system that contributes to the cycle of addiction and in particular, will assist individuals discharging from state Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Centers (ADATC) to continue their recovery post-discharge.
- (d) Naloxone initiative:
- Description: In response to the opioid epidemic gripping the country, they invested in supplies of Narcan®, the first FDA-approved nasal spray version of naloxone hydrochloride, to be distributed to targeted agencies throughout the 23 counties. They were working on that initiative in partnership with the Governor’s Office, DHHS and the N.C. Harm Reduction Coalition.
  - Cost: \$100,000
  - Outcome: The initiative would have an immediate impact by saving lives, providing an opportunity for treatment and recovery and avoid family trauma associated with deaths that would otherwise result from opioid overdose.
- (e) Youth Villages Lifeset Program:
- Description: They plan to expand the Lifeset program to cover all 23 Smoky Counties and all individuals aged 16-21 transitioning out of the foster care system.
  - Cost: Up to \$2 million
  - Outcome: The program will better assist young adults in their transition from the child treatment system. The program had shown to reduce costs in the adult treatment and legal systems, while simultaneously demonstrating exceptional outcomes for the individual.

Chairman McMahan stated the Board had been discussing a homeless shelter and how to have a plan to move forward. He thought that sometimes substance abuse and mental health were two issues that often played into homelessness.

Ms. Foreman stated that housing was an issue for many people. They had a housing coordinator that served the region that would be available to participate and share what had worked in other counties. In the past, they were able to put together projects and grants to help address the issue.

*Informational item only.*

**(2) IN-HOME CAREGIVERS:** Eddie Wells, Department on Aging Director, stated The Department on Aging is requesting to start a new In-Home List program for families in the county searching for someone to hire to provide in-home services. This list would be beneficial for seniors who need to hire someone to provide in-home personal care/home management services, as well as caregivers looking for someone to hire for respite. The In-Home List would be managed by the Department on Aging and would be available for potential employers to obtain after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), releasing the Department on Aging/Jackson County Local Government of all liability.

Over the past year the agency had reports of individuals stealing from the elderly, the same individuals hired to provide their in-home services. Many times these seniors hired the in-home workers from advertisements in the newspaper or word-of-mouth, due to no other alternative. This new program at the Department on Aging could offer an alternative for individuals looking to employ someone for their in-home service needs. As the senior population continues to grow, the need for in-home services will increase, providing a larger need for this type of program.

The In-Home List would provide barriers for those wanting to take advantage of the elderly due to the steps involved to be on the list. Candidates who wish to have their name on the list would have to sign an MOU, pass a background check, and complete the initial training. The background check would be paid for by the candidate and completed through Castle Branch. The In-Home List would include the candidate's name, phone number, and any trainings or qualifications to provide in-home services to potential employers. All payments for services would be handled between the In-Home Candidate and the In-Home Employer.

The Council on Aging Board had approved the program for the Department on Aging and made the recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for approval.

**Consensus:** *Move forward with the program.*

**(3) SALARY COMPARISONS AND POSITION REALLOCATIONS:** Danielle Wittekind, Human Resource Director, presented the 2016 Compensation and Benefits Report:

(a) Executive Summary: The compensation and benefits report was written to provide information as it relates to the county's current total compensation system. The first section of the report reviews information regarding the total compensation of the average employee, including assigning monetary value for benefits received and comparing it to the national average for total compensation. The later section includes information regarding salary ranges for regional benchmark positions, historical county salary adjustments by year and a review of what neighboring counties and municipalities are proposing for this upcoming fiscal year. The report also includes information about the Consumer Price Index and how the county adjustments have compared to the increased cost of goods and services.

Overall, the county is successful in recruitment for new entry level positions as the starting salaries for these positions are market competitive and the county's benefit offerings are richer in comparison than other private and non-profit sector organizations; however, a continued area of concern is the salary compression that has occurred since 2009 as adjustments within the salary grade were not made until last year and the long-term results this may have on retention and morale, if not addressed.

The report did not include any proposals or options for general salary increases as included in previous years as the county manager's recommendation for a step increase (2%), continuation of the longevity pay and bonus leave is competitive; however, the report discusses the county adopting a living wage pay policy to compensate permanent employees at a calculated living wage.

The county's total turnover rates have been below 10% over the past few years and was slightly above that figure this year at 10.49%, currently at 6.5%. Compared nationally, the average total turnover rate was much higher, ranging from 18-24%. In the last year, the county remained steady in all types of turnover (voluntary, involuntary and retirements). It was projected that the number of retirements would continue to grow over the next decade as the workforce aged and an increased number of employees became eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit.

(b) County salary benefits as a percentage of average salary:

<b>Benefit Category</b>	<b>Percentage of Average Salary</b>	<b>Average Value</b>
Holidays	4.62%	\$1,820.34
Sick Leave	4.62%	\$1,820.34
Vacation Leave	5.77%	\$2,275.43
Bonus Leave	0.96%	\$379.24
FICA	7.65%	\$3,017.22
Retirement	6.78%	\$2,674.08
Health & Dental Insurance	23.33%	\$9,202.96
<b>Total Benefit Value</b>	<b>53.73%</b>	<b>\$21,189.61</b>
Average Base Pay		\$39,440.77
Average Benefit Value		\$21,189.61
<b>Average Total Compensation</b>		<b>\$60,630.38</b>

(c) Turnover Rates and Retirements:

<b>Turnover Type</b>	<b>FY 2013-14</b>		<b>FY 2014-15</b>		<b>FY 2015-16 to date</b>	
	<b>Separations</b>	<b>Turnover Rate</b>	<b>Separations</b>	<b>Turnover Rate</b>	<b>Separations</b>	<b>Turnover Rate</b>
Voluntary	15	3.92%	26	6.65%	15	3.78%
Involuntary	3	0.78%	3	0.77%	3	0.76%
Retirement	13	3.39%	12	3.07%	6	1.51%
<b>TOTAL TURNOVER</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8.09%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>10.49%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6.05%</b>

(d) Requested new positions, reclassifications and living wage adjustments:

<b>New Positions</b>		
<b>Department</b>	<b>Requested Position</b>	<b>Requested Grade / Step</b>
Board of Elections	Election Specialist (70%)	20/1
DSS	IMC II	19/1
DSS	SW Case Auditor	24/1
Aging	Front Desk Associate	13/8

<b>Reclassifications/Adjustments</b>					
<b>Department</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Current Position</b>	<b>Current Grade/Step</b>	<b>Requested Position</b>	<b>Requested Grade/Step</b>
Housekeeping	Henderson, Johnnie	Housekeeper (50%)	13/2	Housekeeper (50%)	13/8
Housekeeping	Green, Mitchell	Housekeeper (50%)	13/2	Housekeeper (50%)	13/8
Housekeeping	Russell, Martha	Housekeeping Crew Leader I	17/13	Housekeeping Crew Leader I	18/14
Housekeeping	Washabaugh, Lucretia	Housekeeper (50%)	13/1	Housekeeper (50%)	13/8
Transit	Taylor, Norma	Admin, Secretary	17/13	Asst. Transit Director	21/6
Transit	Hunter, Leola	Transit Driver (62.5%)	13/2	Transit Driver (62.5%)	13/8
DSS	Allen, Joseph	SW IAT	25/4	SWIII	24/8
DSS	Chasteen, Kelli	SW IAT	25/2	SWIII	24/6
DSS	Jenkins, Brandi	SW IAT	25/2	SWIII	24/6
DSS	Masson, Jorden	SW IAT	25/2	SWIII	24/6
Aging	Angel, Jackie	Admin. Support (62.5%)	13/3	Admin. Support (62.5%)	13/8
Aging	Rohner, Howard	Project CARE/FIRE Aide (62.5%)	12 / 1	Project CARE/FIRE Aide (62.5%)	12 / 10
Aging	Connor, Dorothy	Adult Day Care Act. Mgr. (50%)		Adult Day Care Act. Mgr. (50%)	12 / 10
Aging	Griffin, Marsha	Adult Day Care Act. Mgr. (50%)		Adult Day Care Act. Mgr. (50%)	12 / 10

Mr. Wooten stated he thought Cherokee County was an outlier and was pulling down the average. He requested that Ms. Wittekind remove Cherokee from the salary comparisons and provide that updated information to the Commissioners.

*Informational item only.*

**(4) COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER EXPANSION FEASIBILITY STUDY:**

Ron Smith, Managing Principal, stated that Chinn Planning and McMillan Smith & Partners completed a requested program analysis for the Community Service Center in 2005. At that time, the summary space requirements of the Facility Program Final Report indicated there was a need for a 45,721 SF building to support the Health Department, Cooperative Extension and Soil and Water, with a projected 15 year growth. Since the study, many of the functions within the building had not changed; however, many changes had occurred with several departments being relocated to other facilities. The number of employees at the time of the study was around 77, now the number of employees was 55. The 2005 study listed three options:

(a) Option One: Renovation of the existing building and adding a 16,500 SF addition.

- Pros:
  - Cheaper up front cost than building all new construction.
  - All agencies remain in current identified location.
- Cons:
  - Construction would be phased requiring multiple moves by employees and adjustments by users.
  - Eventual parking would be limited to approximately 117 spaces.

(b) Option Two: Renovation of existing building, adding a 13,700 SF addition.

- Pros:
  - Cheaper up front cost than building all new construction.
  - All agencies remain in current identified location.
- Cons:
  - Construction would be phased requiring multiple moves by employees and adjustments by users.
  - Eventual parking would be limited to approximately 117 spaces.

(c) Option Three: Remotely locate the Health Department to a new site with new construction of a 38,200 SF stand-alone Health Department.

- Pros:
  - Provide state of the art new construction.
  - Eliminates parking shortage.
  - Allows for future expansion of the Health Department.
  - Minimizes the number of department moves and user adjustment.
- Cons:
  - Higher projected first cost.
  - Potentially locates the Health Department further away from the Hospital and offices of health care providers.

Mr. Smith stated that Option Three would be the recommended option and given the fact that there had been some downsizing, that would affect the 2005 study. The need for a 38,000 SF stand-alone building could be reduced to approximately 29,000 SF. Depending on the type of construction, stick built or steel and concrete, the price per square foot would range from \$155-\$225 with about 25% of construction cost for soft cost, plus a 10% contingency. When talking about a 38,000 SF building, he estimated 105 parking spaces, 50 public parking spaces with extra ADA parking spaces, he estimated they would need 1.75-2 acres of property.

Chairman McMahan stated he thought it would be worth the effort to engage Mr. Smith's company to do an updated study, since several major components had changed with the decrease of employees and that fact that two services were relocating out of the building.

**Consensus:** *Authorize Mr. Smith move forward with updating the 2005 study of the Health Department building with current space needs and current costs.*

**(5) ANIMAL SHELTER:** Mr. Wooten stated that he had also asked Mr. Smith to comment on an animal shelter since his firm had done a number of animal shelters.

Mr. Smith stated that his firm had done several animal shelter that had been highly successful. He had learned over the years how to design and build animal shelters incorporating ideas so that a lot of money did not have to be spent on the interior to create an inviting atmosphere, making adopting animals as easy as possible. He recommended a 16,000 SF building with 30 parking spaces, which would need a property with approximately 1-1.25 acres.

*Informational item only.*

**(6) QUARTER-CENT SALES TAX REFERENDUM:** Mr. Wooten stated that on the upcoming ¼ cent sales tax referendum, he requested that the Commissioners consider the county purchasing ad space, as a public service announcement. The ad would be informing the public of the facts only of the referendum in the local newspapers over the next two weeks.

*Informational item only.*

There being no further business, Commissioner Elders moved to adjourn the meeting. Chairman McMahan seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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

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