

Posted: January 27, 2003
Time Posted: _____
Posted By: Evelyn Baker
Witnessed By: _____

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JANUARY 23, 2003**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Special Meeting on Thursday, January 23, 2003, at 6:00 p.m. in the Boardroom, Justice & Administration Building, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Stacy Buchanan, Chairman
Roberta Crawford, Vice Chairman
Joe Cowan, Commissioner
Eddie Madden, Commissioner
Brian McMahan, Commissioner
Kenneth L. Westmoreland, County Manager
Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk to the Board

Absent: W. Paul Holt, Jr., County Attorney

Chairman Buchanan called the meeting to order and stated the purpose of the special meeting/work session is to discuss Smart Growth.

INFORMAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC: Mark Jamison of Cullowhee read an excerpt from Organizing for Local Governmental Planning in North Carolina outlining how to have a successful planning program within the county. He suggested that a 5-member committee be appointed to develop an organizational structure for planning within the county, define a mission statement and goals, and address areas of immediate concern. Bill Coward of Cashiers inquired about Item 9 of the proposed "Plan of Action" concerning Cashiers and if it is in fact a proposal for a zoning area pursuant G.S. 153A-342.

(1) Tamera Crisp, Director, Planning Department, gave a brief overview of the Smart Growth process from its inception to the present.

(2) Chairman Buchanan presented a draft proposal entitled "Jackson County Planning Document, 'Plan of Action'" which outlined ideas for discussion. Attached to that document was a list of twelve Land Use Ordinances previously adopted. Also attached was the Development "Plan" Task Force Recommendations adopted by the Board on July 25, 2002.

(3) **CITIZEN VOLUNTEERS**: The Planning Dept. has designed a “Taskforce Volunteer Data Sheet” for use in developing a data base for citizens interested in serving on various task forces and should be widely publicized. Each task force should have no more than 9 members.

(4) **CURRENT PLANNING BOARD ASSIGNMENTS**: The prior Planning Board was working on amendments to the Noise Ordinance and the Sediment Control Ordinance. Two separate 5-member task forces should be appointed to complete these projects.

(5) **COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**: A professional-certified planner should be hired to develop this plan. Mr. Westmoreland stated that he received 11 applications after the position was advertised; however, only two of those had greater than two years of experience. The salary advertised was \$45,000 - \$50,000, which is comparable to surrounding counties; however, it may be necessary to increase the salary to attract experienced planners. Hiring consultants during the interim was discussed.

A 7-member task force should be appointed to work on the plan. Each Commissioner would appoint a member from his/her district, the Chairman would appoint one member, and the entire board would appoint two at-large. This task force would be assigned the following tasks and goals:

- (a) Review all existing ordinances.
- (b) Research existing Ordinances. It may become necessary to appoint an ad hoc committee to work on a particular issue such as adult entertainment, etc.
- (c) Recommendations to the existing Noise Ordinance and the Sediment Control Ordinance must be completed before a Comprehensive Land Use Plan can be finalized, as well as codifying existing Ordinances and printing them in an easy to read handbook.

(6) **RE-AUTHORIZING A STANDING PLANNING BOARD**: There is a need for a 9-member standing planning board. Each Commissioner would make an appointment from his/her district, one at-large appointment by the Chairman, the Board of Commissioners would appoint a sixth at-large member, and a representative from the Department of Transportation, Tuckasegee Water & Sewer and the Economic Development Commission (these representatives would be selected by the Board of Commissioners). The planning board would serve 4-year staggered terms. A meeting should be scheduled to discuss re-authorization, by-laws, goals and visions the Board of Commissioners have for that board.

(7) **SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE**: This should be the first assignment for the re-authorized Planning Board.

(8) **OTHER BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PLANNING ISSUES**: This item will be held open for further review.

(9) **INDIVIDUAL COUNTY DEPARTMENTS PLANNING ISSUES**: The County Manager should chair this task force.

(10) **CASHIERS DISTRICT “MODEL” COMMERCIAL DISTRICT PLAN:**

A 5-member task force should be appointed to develop this plan. The Board of Commissioners will appoint one member each from the Cashiers community. This plan would allow for the orderly future physical and economic development within the proposed Cashiers business district. It would restrict certain types of commercial and industrial development to approved areas within the district. Commissioner Madden suggested that this plan might be an alternative to incorporation. He called attention to G.S. 153A-340 which gives county government land use control authority. Also G.S. 153A-342 which gives county government the authority to set up districts that are less than the entire jurisdiction, provided the area is at least 640 acres and must involve ten separate tracts of land in separate ownership. He suggested the plan would anticipate future growth and manage commercial development in the “downtown” area of Cashiers, as well as along the corridors of “town”. This plan is an option to incorporation and taxation and is limited to the commercial area and any anticipated commercial area, and would not affect residential areas. This plan would become a part of the county’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan. If the plan is implemented, he suggested a task force be appointed to oversee the day to day operations of the commercial district. If Cashiers is incorporated, this plan could be rescinded. He was of the opinion that time is of the essence on this issue. It will probably be the end of February before a task force could be appointed to review this issue. This task force would make a presentation to the Commissioners at a meeting to be scheduled in Cashiers for the convenience of citizens in the Cashiers community.

(11) **INFORMAL COMMENTS:** Bill Coward stated that the Commercial District Plan is a good idea if the incorporation issue fails. It is possible that a referendum concerning incorporation could come up as early as April or May 2003. Mark Jamison commented that it was not a good idea to have a representative from DOT, TWSA and EDC on the planning board. He requested that if Cashiers is incorporated, that a resolution be adopted to eliminate ETJ (extra-territorial jurisdiction).

(12) **ASPHALT PLANT:** A meeting will be scheduled for a presentation by Mr. Fortner after his attorney has submitted documents (i.e. synopsis of his experts’ opinions, suggested amendment and/or variance to the ordinance, and any other pertinent data including proposed locations) to the county attorney. The Qualla residents will also be allowed to make a rebuttal presentation.

Chairman Buchanan stated he would try to have a revised Plan of Action on the February 11, 2003 Agenda.

Commissioner Crawford moved that the meeting be adjourned, Commissioner Madden seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Attested By:

Approved:

Evelyn B. Baker, Clerk to the Board

Stacy Buchanan, Chairman