

Unsealed by Board of Commissioners 04/23/2012.

SEALED MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 23, 2010 – CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with an attorney in order to protect attorney-client privilege and (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or the expansion of industries, closed session was entered into at 6:05 p.m. Present were Chairman Chappell, Commissioners Bullock, Hawkins, Hogsed and Phillips, County Manager Artie Wilson, County Attorney David Neumann, Planning and Economic Development Director Mark Burrows, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Planning and Economic Development Director Mark Burrows informed Commissioners of a new economic development project that could potentially locate to this region. Andrew Tate, President and CEO of the Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development, has been working for two years to recruit an aircraft final assembly and R & D project that would employ approximately 500 people, 100 of which would be engineers and the remainder being assembly personnel with an average pay of \$17/hour plus benefits. Mr. Burrows noted that five or six other sites around the United States are also competing for this project in their region. If chosen, it would be located on the Ferncliff Industrial site next to Asheville Regional Airport which allows easy accessibility for testing. The site consists of 220 acres; however only 20 acres are needed for this project. Mr. Burrows first heard about this project through AdvantageWest, who pledged their support in the amount of \$25,000.

Mr. Burrows reported there would be no tax advantage for any county or community. Once purchased, the State would take over ownership of the property under the NC Department of Transportation, Division of Aviation.

A number of entities have already offered their support and most have made significant investments in this project. They are Buncombe County, Henderson County, Mills River, Cane Creek, Asheville, and Fletcher. Their contributions will help purchase the land. With this regional support, the Golden Leaf Foundation plans to pay 80% towards the construction of the facility. Mr. Burrows believes the NC Chamber of Commerce will more than likely become involved by offering a significant grant opportunity through the One NC Fund.

Mr. Burrows believes there is good potential for job creation in the region, a good percentage of which could go to Transylvanians. This project could also attract more people to Transylvania County and benefit local businesses. He recommended that the Board of Commissioners offer financial support in the amount of \$50,000 spread over a two year period contingent on the project moving forward. Mr. Burrows noted that the Governor is making calls on the State's behalf to help ensure that Western North Carolina is chosen for the project.

The Manager informed the Board that the County Attorney has reviewed the project and NC General Statutes regarding financial assistance. The County Attorney is comfortable that the County will have no legal issues to contend with by offering its support.

Commissioners discussed potentially supporting the project and discussed the benefits it would have for Transylvania County residents, businesses and surrounding counties. Mr. Burrows noted that Mr. Tate plans to submit information to the State regarding the project by the end of the

week. If the Board approves, Mr. Burrows would draft a letter to Mr. Tate offering the County's support tentative to a public hearing and if the project is located in this region.

Commissioners stressed the importance of communicating to local residents how Transylvania County will benefit in the long term.

Again, Mr. Burrows recommended County support of \$50,000 over a two year period and a letter from Chairman Chappell stating this is the County's effort to promote the regional concept and in hopes that jobs will be created for Transylvania County residents. Furthermore the letter should state that the County must hold a public hearing before formally committing funds. He noted that Blue Ridge Community College is involved in developing a training package.

Commissioner Hawkins moved to write a letter of support with the \$50,000 level pending the public hearing and with the letter from Chairman Chappell stating the County's interest in local job opportunities and it being a successful project. Commissioner Hogsed added that the letter should include the County's request for them to be a consumer for already existing businesses. The motion was seconded by Chairman Chappell and unanimously approved.

Chairman Chappell moved to leave Closed Session, seconded by Commissioner Bullock and unanimously carried.

Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan
Clerk to the Board