

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
August 10, 2009 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, August 10, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the large courtroom of the Transylvania County Courthouse.

Commissioners present were Lynn Bullock, Chairman Jason Chappell, Mike Hawkins, Daryle Hogsed, and Vice-Chairman Kelvin Phillips. Also present were County Manager Artie Wilson, County Attorney David Neumann, and Clerk to the Board Trisha McLeod.

Media: *Transylvania Times*: Mark Todd

There were approximately 20 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jason Chappell presiding called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

WELCOME

Chairman Chappell welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members of the audience for participating in their County government.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Larry Dills: Mr. Dills submitted a petition from residents on Happy Acres Road requesting for the last (+ -) .75 miles to be included in the NC Department of Transportation's road maintenance schedule.

Lisa Landis: Ms. Landis expressed concern about a criminal matter that she brought forth to the Board at a previous meeting. She also inquired about what resources the County has to protect its citizens in case of a natural disaster.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no Agenda modifications.

Commissioner Hogsed moved to approve the Agenda as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Bullock and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Bullock moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The Minutes of the July 27, 2009 Regular Meeting were approved.

FACILITIES USE REQUESTS

The use of Silvermont by the Transylvania Republican Party on September 19, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for their fall event and fundraiser was approved.

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

TRANSYLVANIA REGIONAL HOSPITAL – COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

Bob Bednarek, President and CEO of Transylvania Regional Hospital, discussed the benefits the hospital provides to the community. He said, as a non-profit organization, the hospital is committed to providing quality services. Profits or excess funds are used to recruit new staff and physicians, build facilities, invest in new technology, and develop new services.

Mr. Bednarek reported that the hospital provided \$1.3 million in charity care last year to 2,530 people. He pointed out that this figure has doubled since 2006. The hospital also incurred \$2.4 million in bad debt from 5,235 people who can not pay their hospital bills. He noted that the hospital turns no one away on their ability or inability to pay. Mr. Bednarek also reported the hospital wrote off \$38,000 in charges that Medicaid and Medicare did not cover.

Transylvania Regional Hospital's annual economic impact to the County is over \$110 million. The hospital is a significant revenue stream for both the City and County governments, in terms of fees and utilities paid annually. Mr. Bednarek noted that the City's UDO added approximately \$350,000 to their building fees last year.

Mr. Bednarek announced that the new dialysis center has been somewhat delayed because of the economy. The hospital, however, has been able to survive the recession due to putting in place temporary measures and continuing to maintain its focus on quality. He concluded his presentation and thanked Commissioners for their support.

APPOINTMENTS

HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL

Commissioner Hawkins moved to appoint Daniel Brightwell and Melissa McGill to fill the vacancies, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE DOCUMENT IMAGING – DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

At the July 27, 2009 meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved a resolution allowing the use of the "piggyback" method for the purchase of electronic record management and document imaging software for the Department of Social Services (DSS). Orange County has submitted bid requests for software and hardware identical to that which is being requested by Transylvania County.

The Department of Social Services has experienced an overall growth of 11% in their caseloads, including a 30% growth in Food Stamp caseloads, without an associated increase in case workers. By automating their processes, it is estimated that DSS can avoid hiring two employees at a cost of \$82,000 and reduce operating supply costs by \$7,550 per year. The cost of the project is \$228,650.38 and approximately \$78,000 will be reimbursed by the State. The estimated payback period for the project is 3.2 years. Annual maintenance costs of \$32,888.75 have been included in the payback calculations. Staff recommended the purchase of the software and hardware from

Northwoods Consulting Partners at a cost of \$228,650.38 with funds to come from the Information Technology Reserve.

Former Social Services Director Carson Griffin reported that the agency's record management issues have grown significantly over the past several years. The State's record retention policy is strict in that income maintenance records must be kept indefinitely. Ms. Griffin said she learned of a document imaging system in Macon County that would benefit Transylvania County DSS. The County also formed a document imaging committee to explore the needs of all County departments. Ms. Griffin said the current system of filing can not be maintained and eventually records will have to be stored offsite because of the lack of space.

Information Technology Director Dean Landreth reported that the document imaging committee began meeting in March 2008. In their research they found two vendors that had a complete Social Services program. The committee received negative feedback on one of the vendors. He and Ms. Griffin made an onsite visit to Macon County. They found that the pricing for the program components were the same as in Orange County. The main cost of the program involves software, licensing and maintenance. Mr. Landreth also said this program could eventually be used countywide.

Social Services Income Maintenance Supervisor Jeanine Verhaeghe showed Commissioners what a typical client file looks like. The files were extremely thick and were duplicated if the client received services for various other programs. If a client transfers to another county, the entire file gets mailed which can be costly. With the new system, staff would only have to mail a disc. She said DSS is currently using empty cubicles and file cabinets in hallways to store records. The new system will eliminate this. The new system will also eliminate issues with bad handwriting, filling out multiple applications since the new program will populate common information from form to form, reduce filing and copying, and file cabinets that are continually breaking due to being burdened with heavy case files. She said currently DSS staff spends too much time copying, waiting, wasting paper, etc. She noted that their caseloads are continuing to increase and this system will be a huge benefit to case workers.

Michael Drabek of Northwoods Consulting Partners showed a Power Point presentation explaining how the new system will benefit Transylvania County but first pointed out some of the challenges facing Transylvania County DSS:

- 30% increase in caseloads
- File rooms are full
- Storing files in basement
- Three cubicles are full with files
- Case workers are carrying caseloads of 400-500 cases
- Increase cost in supplies (paper, toner, file folders, filing cabinets, and additional office equipment).

Benefits include:

- An increase in caseworker productivity
- A decrease in supply costs
- Free up space from reduction to elimination in filing
- Could be a countywide solution
- DSS will get a federal reimbursement for adding a laser fiche software and server infrastructure.

Other Northwoods Consulting customers have reported lower error rates and case audit findings, increased communication among staff, and dramatically improved customer service and case worker morale. Other counties were able to eliminate file rooms and were able to do their jobs more efficiently.

Northwoods Consulting's approach to document imaging and management is to start scanning documents from the date a contract is signed so nothing is added to the file room. Mr. Drabek explained that all documents are scanned at the point of entry and get returned to the client along with a receipt. Once the documents are scanned into the system, case workers have immediate access to the case file. The electronic forms packet will save case workers a significant amount of time. Mr. Drabek said when DSS is ready to back-scan old files; Northwoods Consulting will be ready to assist them.

Commissioner Hawkins inquired about the annual maintenance fee of \$33,000. Mr. Drabek said there are two types of maintenance programs Northwoods Consulting recommends. The first is the software maintenance. They typically release a new version of their software every month which the County would receive. The County would also have access to their technical support system. The second is an onsite maintenance plan which they strongly recommend for the first year.

After further comments, **Commissioner Phillips made a motion to approve the purchase of software and hardware from Northwoods Consulting Partners at a cost of \$228,650.38 with funds to come from the Information Technology Reserve. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed.** Commissioner Hawkins said it will be interesting to see how this system can help other County departments. The Manager said some preplanning has occurred with other departments. After the system in DSS is up and running, staff will continue to look at ways to expand to other departments. Commissioner Phillips pointed out that without this system, additional staff would have to be hired. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

NEW BUSINESS

CHANGE ORDER FOR THE PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY

The Manager presented the following approved change order for the Public Safety Facility for the Board's information:

- Change Order #83: Fire Shutters (required to meet one hour fire rating); \$5,349.50; negotiating cost with Moseley Architects

Change Orders to date total \$231,461.30, or 29.1% of the contingency budget. There will be more change orders as the project nears completion. The Manager reported that the substantial completion has been extended past August 14, 2009. The facility has to pass State inspection before it can be occupied. The State plans to make a visit in early September. He also noted that the City has given the County two years to construct the sidewalk. The paving and landscaping are moving along quickly and going well.

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported the following:

- The Open Meetings Law training is scheduled for Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Library.
- At the next meeting staff will present proposed changes to the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance for the Board's consideration. Staff has been working with the Town of Rosman about what they want to do in terms of approving an ordinance. The Manager

recommended that the Chairman send a letter to the Town of Rosman suggesting a date by which they should pass an ordinance in order to make sure they retain their eligibility for flood insurance.

- Staff has begun efforts on a Continuity Plan in case there is an outbreak of the H1N1 Flu. The Continuity Plan will determine how services will be provided in an emergency.
- Staff worked with the Transylvania County Schools staff to establish a timeline for issuing the school bonds.
- The criminal cases against Michael Baxley will begin tomorrow. The County's civil lawsuit has been continued to January.
- A special meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2009 to review and discuss the animal shelter plans. The architect will make a presentation and answer Commissioners' questions. Time allowing, staff will also discuss other facilities (Sheriff's Department – moving Tax Offices).

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Chairman Chappell congratulated Sue Fox as the newly appointed Board of Education member.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Commissioner Bullock moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously carried.**

Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha D. McLeod
Clerk to the Board