

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 25, 2013 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, March 25, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the large courtroom of the Transylvania County Courthouse.

Commissioners present were Jason Chappell, Chairman Mike Hawkins, Daryle Hogsted and Page Lemel. Vice-Chairman Larry Chapman was absent due to work commitments and was out of the State. Also present were County Manager Artie Wilson, County Attorney Tony Dalton, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Media: *The Transylvania Times* – Eric Crews

There were approximately 20 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

WELCOME

Chairman Hawkins welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members of the audience for participating in their County government. Chairman Hawkins introduced the members of the Board of Commissioners and staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Don Surrrette: Mr. Surrrette commented about the resolution Commissioners failed to pass at a recent meeting. He reminded Commissioners that resolutions can have an important impact on decisions. Mr. Surrrette reminded Commissioners of the resolution Commissioners passed a few years ago to stand with the citizens and oppose the reclassification of Boylston Creek. The Town of Mills River also passed a similar resolution. He believes those resolutions, along with comments by citizens, had an impact on the decision by the State not to reclassify Boylston Creek.

Gerry Hunsicker: Mr. Hunsicker expressed concern about the County's budget. He reviewed past years' budgets and noted that the County's budget in 1985-1986 was less than \$8.9 million. He reported the 1990 Census indicated a population in Transylvania at about 26,000 people. The 2010 Census showed the County's population had increased to 33,000. Mr. Hunsicker reported that the County's budget has increased 360% since 1985, while the population has increased by only 30%. He wondered about the number of County government jobs created during that time as well. Mr. Hunsicker said it is time for Commissioners to stop constructing sophisticated County facilities and hiring additional employees. He does not see the economic situation getting better anytime soon.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

The Manager reported on the agenda modifications. He requested to add Item XI.A Closed Session per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with an attorney. There were no other agenda modifications.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the agenda as modified, seconded by Commissioner Hogsted and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The minutes of the February 25, 2013 regular meeting and sealed closed session and the March 11, 2013 regular meeting and sealed closed session were approved.

FACILITIES USE REQUESTS

The use of the Courthouse gazebo by the Transylvania Christian Ministry (Sharing House) on June 8, 2013 from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. was approved.

DISCOVERY AND RELEASE REPORT

The Discovery and Release Report for February 2013 was approved. Total tax dollars released was \$2,697.67. Refunds totaled \$120.40.

UNSEAL CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Commissioners approved unsealing the following closed session minutes:

1. August 13, 2012 – (portion only) Per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or business. Commissioners approved opening the portions pertaining to Oskar Blues Brewery and Brevard Lumber Company.
2. January 14, 2013 – Per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6) to consider the qualifications and conditions for employment for County Attorney

PROCLAMATION NATIONAL PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK

The second week in April is permanently recognized as National Public Safety Telecommunications Week honoring the thousands of men and women who respond to emergency calls, dispatch professionals and equipment and render life saving assistance to the citizens of the United States. Commissioners are very proud of all the Transylvania County Communications Center's Telecommunicators and the vital service they provide to the citizens of Transylvania County and their fellow emergency services comrades. This is a proclamation that the Board has passed annually over the last few years.

Commissioners approved Proclamation 10-2013 National Public Safety Telecommunications Week April 14-20, 2013.

(Proclamation 10-2013 National Public Safety Telecommunications Week April 14-20, 2013 is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

PROCLAMATION WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

Joe Castro, Executive Director of Smart Start, has requested Commissioners proclaim the week of April 14-20, 2013 as The Week of the Young Child in Transylvania County. This is also a proclamation Commissioners have passed annually over the last couple of years.

Commissioners approved Proclamation 11-2013 Week of Young Child.

(Proclamation 11-2013 Week of the Young Child is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

APPOINTMENTS

TRANSPORTATION (ROADS) COMMITTEE

Horace Jarrett served on the Transportation Committee as the representative to the Town of Rosman but he recently resigned because he was unable to commit to the meeting schedule. On March 12, 2013 the Rosman Board of Aldermen appointed Jimmy Whitmire as its representative on the Transportation Committee.

Commissioner Lemel moved to accept the appointment of Jimmy Whitmire to the Transportation (Roads) Committee as the Town of Rosman's representative, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

SENIOR VOLUNTEER SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

The terms of Kathe Harris and Robert Anderson expired at the end of February. Both are eligible and willing to serve another term. It is recommended by LeeAnne Tucker with the Land-of-Sky Regional Council that they both be reappointed.

Commissioner Lemel moved to reappoint Kathe Harris and Robert Anderson to the Senior Volunteer Services Advisory Council, seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

APPLICATION FOR LOTTERY FUNDS

In order to draw down Lottery Funds both the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education must jointly request the drawdown of Lottery Funds. The request is to draw down \$113,738.00 for the renovation of the Career and Technical Education Wing at Rosman High School. If approved, there remains a Lottery Fund balance of \$494,246.02

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the request to draw down \$113,738 in Lottery funds for the Board of Education. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell. Commissioner Lemel requested clarification on this application because it lists both the CTE Building and Brevard Middle School roof replacement. The Manager said the application to draw down lottery funds must be associated with a project. Chairman Hawkins wondered if this was an error on the application. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE: RENEWAL OF ADMINISTRATION PLAN & EMPLOYEE WELLNESS CLINIC

The Manager reported that staff will be asking Commissioners to consider three separate items at this meeting. The first is approving the employee health insurance plan for FY 2014. Staff will also seek approval to establish an employee health clinic. The final request is for Commissioners to establish an employee premium and premium discount.

Human Resources Director Sheila Cozart and Mark Browder with Mark III presented Commissioners with these requests. Ms. Cozart first presented the request for the employee health insurance renewal which she typically does in May of each year. This year, however, because of the Affordable Care Act, staff had to push the timeline back to this meeting. The reason being is beginning May 1, as an obligation under the County's health plan, the County will have to provide to employees summaries of benefit coverages (SBC's) for them to consider during the time of open enrollment. In order to have those within the appropriate time frame, the approval of the renewal of the health plan must occur at this meeting.

Ms. Cozart discussed the history of health insurance costs. In 2000, the cost of the County's health plan was approximately \$1.48 million. Over time there has been a significant increase. What would typically happen is the County would experience an increase in costs and then it would change its health plan which resulted in some stabilization and reductions. Changing the plans might have included changing the co-pay or deductible amounts or the overall structure of the plan. Over the last 13 years, the County has experienced a lot of transition with the health insurance plan. For FY 2013, the estimated cost of the plan is \$3.1 million which is on budget with what staff expected from last year. The changes made last year helped the County to avoid a 23% increase.

In FY 2013 the County went from having one plan to having two different plans. One is a co-pay plan. The co-pays were increased under this plan to \$40 for a primary physician visit and \$80 for a specialist visit. Anything other than primary, specialist and urgent care is applied to a \$1,500 deductible. The co-insurance maximum is \$2,000. There is also a co-pay on pharmacy charges. The other plan is a deductible plan. The only item within in this plan that has co-pays is primary care as to not discourage people from visiting their primary care doctor for preventative care. Any care other than primary care is applied to a \$1,000 deductible.

Ms. Cozart reported that the County anticipates a 9% increase in claims which is basically the medical trend. Medical trend includes increased costs for treatments/services, prescriptions and new technologies and increased demands for health care, increases due to an aging population and for uninsured care. The County is also expecting an increase in administration and specific stop loss of \$16.97 per employee per month. The total anticipated increase is \$307,635. Of that amount, \$65,823 is specifically associated with the Affordable Care Act, which is comprised of \$25,818 in claims for the impact of Women's Health Benefits and \$40,005 in fees for Transitional Reinsurance and Effectiveness Research. As a self insured group, the County will avoid \$156,472 in additional fees related to the Affordable Care Act that it would have had to pay if it were fully insured.

Being self insured means that the County pays fixed fees to Blue Cross and Blue Shield for administrative services and stop loss insurance coverage for claims above a \$60,000 stop loss limit. Up to the \$60,000 stop loss limit, the County pays 100% of health insurance claims per individual. Anything the County can do to reduce claims will reduce costs paid by the County. Mr. Browder added that the real driver for the plan is the claims.

In follow up from last year's budget process, staff brought forth the idea of a wellness initiative. The County Manager brought together an independent group to explore alternatives. This group included the budget team, Commissioners Chapman and Lemel, and a citizen, Mark Emory who works in Human Resources in hospital administration. The group looked holistically at the issues that were raised. The group's goal was to determine how to maintain the current health plan without modifications for the next four years. The group identified one way to help slow down the increases in health insurance costs as being to establish an employee health/wellness clinic. There is a great network of doctors in the community, but it is sometimes very hard for someone to get in to see their primary doctor. Having a clinic helps to take care of those episodic health issues very quickly. The primary focus is to provide this service for employees and retirees. At a later date the clinic could be made available to dependents as well. Ms. Cozart provided an example of cost avoidance by having a clinic. Per Blue Cross and Blue Shield, an average office visit including lab work costs \$144. Under Plan 1 there is a \$40 co-pay for the employee and \$104 is paid by the county. Under Plan 2 there is a \$25 co-pay for the employee and \$119 for the County.

Mark III has over 20 clients implementing wellness strategies that include onsite clinics and pharmacies, biometrics and health risk assessments, financial incentives including premium discounts, tobacco/non-tobacco user rates, additional contributions to FSAs and HSAs, health coaching, and accountability

strategies. Mr. Browder emphasized that onsite clinics are a great resource for the County and employees. They have a short turnaround time and they end up paying for themselves with the services they deliver. The County would not benefit from an onsite pharmacy at this time. Most of Mark III's clients are also requiring biometrics and health risk assessments. These are tools to help employees identify their health issues; however, knowing their situation is not always enough of a reason for people to want to change the way they are taking care of themselves. It is the financial incentive that gets people's attention and this is a way to help modify and help create behavior change. Mr. Browder said Commissioners will find the economic incentive is going to be critical in getting employees to participate. The clinic serves as an advocate for the employee, coaching the employee to make positive changes in his/her life. Mr. Browder noted a few of Mark III's clients have also implemented accountability standards. Employer based solutions are the most effective.

Mr. Browder reported that Henderson County implemented a wellness clinic in 2007 and it had a positive impact on their health insurance costs without benefit change. Cleveland County also implemented a wellness clinic and experienced an overall negative growth in claims since 2006. Mr. Browder emphasized to Commissioners that implementing the clinic is only the beginning of this process. It is not going to solve the 30 to 40 years of health issues that have been created within the County. It is a resource that will pay for itself but there is more work to be done in the future.

Ms. Cozart announced that through Mark III Brokerage, providers were invited to submit proposals related to services in a health/wellness center. Through that process, four proposals were received ranging in cost from \$114,000 to \$289,000. Personal interviews were conducted with each of the groups. The independent group selected Blue Mountain Medicine. They were chosen based on their staffing model of having a two staff clinic team of which a physician would be in the clinic two days per week and a physician's assistant one day per week with a second staff person at all times. They were affordable and the individuals from Blue Mountain Medicine are currently integrated in the community. If approved, the clinic would be open three days a week for seven hours each day.

The third request by staff is a philosophy change. Traditionally employees have not paid a premium for their own health insurance coverage. Counties have begun to change this traditional philosophy. Based on a study by the School of Government, 22 of 100 counties in North Carolina charge a premium for their employee coverage. Staff recommended initiating an employee premium of \$50 per month (\$25 per pay period) effective July 1, 2013. Staff also recommended a wellness discount. If an employee completes his/her annual employee health screening they will receive a \$50 discount per month from July through December 2013. If the employee follows up at the wellness clinic during the first three months it is open, the employee would receive the wellness discount through June 2014. In future years, the wellness discount could be changed to include some accountability standards. Ms. Cozart noted that the annual employee health screening process will remain the same as in prior years. In the past there has been 100% participation by employees and their dependents.

Ms. Cozart finalized her presentation by saying it is going to take everyone working together to make the long term vision for health care and wellness a success. The most important component for the success of this program is the employees. She asked Commissioners to consider the following:

1. Approve the renewal of the current health insurance plan with Blue Cross and Blue Shield.
2. Approve the ability to implement an Employee Health & Wellness Center, giving the approval to contract with Blue Mountain Medicine for \$124,000 for the professional services and approve \$15,000 for remodeling the old Detention Center Administrative Office area as the location for the wellness clinic.

3. Approve establishing an employee premium of \$50 per month for employees' health insurance plan and provide a wellness discount, if an employee complies with the annual health screening and follows up with the wellness clinic.

In order to facilitate discussion, **Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the request to approve the renewal of the health insurance plan, to make an investment to establish an employee wellness center, and to establish an employee premium charge for FY 2014. Chairman Hawkins seconded the motion.**

Commissioner Chappell commented that the recommendation is to enter into a contract with Blue Mountain Medicine for a period of one year. He asked if included in the agreement would be an option to opt out if the County is not satisfied with their services. Ms. Cozart said the one year contract will include a minimum of a 90-day opt out clause on the part of both parties.

Commissioner Chappell asked if the housekeeping needs can be covered with existing staff. Ms. Cozart reported that the Housekeeping Department is aware and understands the additional duties.

Ms. Cozart noted that a point that came up in discussions with Department Heads was if the clinic staff has to follow HIPPA guidelines. She reported the Blue Mountain Medicine will have to comply with HIPPA regulations as it pertains to employee healthcare privacy. She will receive information only as it relates to utilization data and nothing specific to individual employees.

Commissioner Chappell wondered if this would hinder future utilization of the jail site. The Manager stated that only the old administrative offices of the jail would be used for the clinic. The old detention side of the jail would be available for future use.

Commissioner Lemel assured everyone that a lot of time and effort went into this process. Health insurance is a real challenge in this country. She commented that the County has seen a 109% increase in health insurance costs since 2000. During its meetings, the independent group felt it was very important to continue providing this benefit for employees, but in doing so they had to determine how to control the costs. Commissioner Lemel feels that if the County is going to provide this employee benefit, then employees have the obligation to be fairly responsible with their health. By putting in biometric requirements and offering the premium with the discount options, she feels this is the best way to go about this. She feels this is the only way the County can control its costs outside of getting rid of the employee health plan.

Commissioner Hogsed inquired about how the savings will be measured in terms of cost to the County and as a benefit to employees. Mr. Browder said typically the provider will track the frequency of the visits and compare those visits to the average cost of a doctor visit. The way they will measure changes in the health of the population is by looking at the biometrics from year to year. Mr. Browder said the clinic will pay for itself. The clinic staff will be able to coach and motivate employees to improve their health. It has gotten to the point where employers have to determine a way to improve the health of their employees. Mr. Browder emphasized that this is a voluntary wellness program. Employees do not have to participate in this wellness program, but the County can provide incentives for them to participate. He truly believes this avenue is the only way to have a chance of improving the health of employees.

Commissioner Hogsed asked if other established clinics were asked to submit proposals. Ms. Cozart reported that Mark III sent requests to 10 different companies. Only four proposals were received.

Commissioner Hogsed asked if Blue Mountain Medicine plans to bring its own medical equipment. Ms. Cozart said they will provide their own medical equipment. The County will provide the office and furniture. They will also have the means to provide their own electronic medical records.

Commissioner Hogsed thanked staff and Commissioners for their time and effort on this process. He commented that his employer offers this benefit and it is one that he takes advantage of.

To quantify the costs to establish this clinic, Commissioner Lemel reported that at a \$119 per reimbursement currently for a doctor visit, the County would essentially be getting 1,042 visits to the health clinic. This averages to 3.1 visits per person. She expects that it is reasonable that the County would exceed the utilization of 1,042 visits in the first year and thus save money, especially if the plan is to add spouses and dependents as soon as possible.

Commissioner Chappell inquired about the premium discount and asked if the only requirement is to follow up with the clinic after it opens for operation or if the employee would be asked to comply with any recommendation from the clinician. Ms. Cozart explained the purpose is for the employee to establish a relationship with the clinic.

Commissioner Hogsed said he is opposed to the recommendation to establish an employee premium at this time. While he understands the long term goal the County is trying to achieve, the federal government is going to be responsible for healthcare in the future which is the way the Affordable Care Act is designed. So until that takes place, he believes the County needs to provide its employees with the best healthcare plan as possible with as little cost as possible. Ms. Cozart explained that the rationale behind adding an employee premium with the discount option is to motivate County employees to attend and establish a relationship with the clinic and essentially for employees to start receiving health coaching right away. Mr. Browder said if Commissioners do not establish an incentive for employees, they should expect to see much less participation by the employees. The only requirement is for employees to complete the health screening, which is already done on an annual basis, and to visit the clinic once. There is no performance or any other action requirement on the part of the employee. Without the incentive, the wellness portion of this employee benefit does not occur. Chairman Hawkins commented that the premium discount takes the County through the first year, the same length as the contract. Commissioner Chappell expressed concern about asking employees to attend the clinic as a follow up from their health screenings if their screenings indicated they are in good health and no red flags were present. Mr. Browder asked Commissioners to consider calling the visit an orientation and making employees aware of a resource available to them. Commissioner Hogsed said he understands the motivation behind charging a premium but the discount is only being guaranteed for one year. Ms. Cozart noted that if an employee avoided a visit to the clinic and went to their doctor instead, the employee would be responsible for a \$40 co-pay. She said the clinic is also an alternative for those who choose not to visit a doctor because of financial reasons.

Chairman Hawkins inquired further about the opt-out provision that would be included in the contract. Ms. Cozart commented that this provision is included in most contracts. Chairman Hawkins therefore concluded that if the concerns raised by Commissioners were to become a problem the provision in the contract would allow the County to end the contract with at least a 90-days notice. Ms. Cozart agreed, but noted that this is really about addressing the long term costs of providing this benefit.

Commissioner Chappell expressed concern about future years and what is going to be required of employees in terms of their behavior. Ms. Cozart said any accountability standards attached to employee premiums will be a decision by the Board of Commissioners on a yearly basis. Mr. Browder understood Commissioner Chappell's concerns; however he stated Commissioners really have two choices. The first is to start to attack this problem or see health insurance costs continue to rise. The other choice is to erode

the plan and overall benefit of health insurance. No matter what choice Commissioners make, he said no one is going to be completely happy. He reiterated Ms. Cozart's comments that the Board will approve the plan each year. He truly believes this is in the best interest of the employee in both economic and quality of life terms.

Chairman Hawkins believes this is a cost containment measure as an employer. He agreed that it is not a perfect solution. If Commissioners cannot find a way to contain the costs, the negative impact on employees in the future could be significantly greater. He also appreciated the rationale behind the premium while understanding the financial strain it could place upon an employee.

Commissioner Chappell asked if employees would be allowed to visit the clinic during work hours. Staff responded yes.

To quantify, Commissioner Lemel stated that \$50 represents 6.4% of the total cost per month for what the County pays per employees for health insurance. The County currently pays \$9,381.97 per member per year, or \$781.83 per month.

Commissioners Chappell and Hogsed continued to express concern about future years and the financial impact to employees. Mr. Browder informed Commissioners that his clients in other counties continue to waive the premium fees each year as long as employees participate.

Commissioner Chappell cited the Board's Rules of Procedure and suggested Commissioners vote on each portion of the motion separately.

First, Chairman Hawkins stated that Commissioners cannot make a decision on their intent to waive the premium for future years because Commissioners are only voting on a one-year contract. A possible solution is for Commissioner Lemel to amend her motion or vote on each portion of the motion as suggested by Commissioner Chappell. Commissioner Lemel pointed out that the commitment made by the independent group over the course of their meetings was to maintain the same level of benefits for employees for the next four years and provide an incentive for employees to participate in a health and wellness program. Commissioners discussed lowering the premium amount; however Commissioner Hogsed said he needed assurance that this discount option would be available every year. Chairman Hawkins responded to him that this assurance is not possible but it would be his intent to waive it each year.

After further discussion about possible amendments to the motion, Commissioners moved forward with the vote. **The motion failed by a vote of 2 to 2, with Commissioners Chappell and Hogsed voting against.**

Commissioner Hogsed moved to approve the renewal of the current health insurance plan with Blue Cross and Blue Shield and approve the implementation of an employee health and wellness center. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Hogsed commented that he would entertain other possible incentives to encourage employee participation to achieve the County objective. Ms. Cozart expressed concern that the savings will not be achieved if employees do not participate.

Chairman Hawkins allowed public comment on this item. Gerry Hunsicker asked what employees pay monthly for health insurance in addition to the co-pays. Mr. Hunsicker was informed that employees currently do not have a monthly premium.

ACCEPTANCE OF IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program requires that the County must accept the Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. The report contains a tremendous amount of statistical information but page 75 details the recommendations to improve affordable housing choices in Transylvania County. These are not mandatory, simply recommendations and the Board is required only to accept the report. This work is a result of collaboration between the Land-of-Sky and the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve Resolution 09-2013 Accepting the Regional Analysis for Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell.

Commissioner Chappell clarified that the passage of this resolution requires no action by the Board and only indicates the Board is accepting the report. The Manager confirmed. **The motion passed unanimously.**

(Resolution 09-2013 Accepting the Regional Analysis for Impediments to Fair Housing Choice is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

The Manager said he reviewed the lottery application after the Board raised some concerns about it. He had not noticed before that two projects were listed on the application. He is sure it is an error and he will follow up with the schools.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike West: Mr. West said he heard some Commissioners say they were only concerned about resolutions that directly impacted the County. The recent resolution that failed to pass regarding removing the names of concealed carry weapons permit holders from public records would have a direct impact on the County. By releasing the names of the people, they are put at risk by criminals knowing they have weapons, which could increase the crime rate as well. Secondly, there was an issue a few meetings ago with appointments to boards and committees and whether or not County policy regulated these appointments. Mr. West pointed out that the County's website uses the term citizens. A citizen is a resident of specific geographic area. He recommended the Board should stick to appointing citizens if their policy states that. Thirdly, he does believe anything new came out of the Goldsmith Report on economic development. The only area he thought was intriguing was the task force which he believes should be made up of citizens, not just with those that have an interest financially or legally on what goes on in the County. Citizen participation will provide fresh ideas.

Judith West: Ms. West spoke about health insurance. She informed Commissioners that an \$80 co-pay for a specialist is not covering behavioral health services. She has been a Clinical Social Worker for 43 years. Physical health is related to mental health. With the co-pay being \$80, that is more than the insurance even allows. She is unsure what the Board can do, but she wanted them to know they are essentially not insuring employees for outpatient mental health services.

Edwin Jones: Mr. Jones said as a member of the Board of Trustees at Brevard College he is required by procedure to announce possible conflicts of interest. He assumed the Board of Commissioners has a similar procedure. He inquired about whether or not there was a procedure for boards and committees.

Gerry Hunsicker: Mr. Hunsicker said his understanding of the County's health insurance is that employees only have to pay co-pays; yet teachers pay a tremendous amount out of pocket for their insurance plus co-pays. He said he believes County employees have received a 6% raise over the last four to five years while teachers received 3% during that same time frame. Mr. Hunsicker said there is an imbalance between County employees and teachers.

Ms. Cozart responded to his comments. She said County employees are responsible for deductibles and co-insurance limits depending on the health insurance plan they choose. Their financial obligation could be \$3,500 a year plus co-pays or \$3,000 a year plus primary care co-pays. Ms. Cozart also reported that employees received a salary increase last year which was the first since 2008. The increase was 3%. In 2008, Commissioners implemented a compensation study.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Lemel encouraged Mr. Hunsicker to attend the Board of Education meetings as well. She hopes he will hold them to the same standards as he does the Board of Commissioners. The school system has a budget very similar to the County's and it is important citizens know how they spend their money as well.

Commissioner Hogsed said he unsure of the scale Mr. Hunsicker is using to compare County employees, but he assured him that the increases they have had to pay in insurance over the last five years has wiped out any salary increases they have received.

Chairman Hawkins moved to enter into closed session per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with an attorney. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with an attorney, closed session was entered into at 8:50 p.m. Present were Chairman Hawkins, Commissioners Chappell, Hogsed and Lemel, County Manager Artie Wilson, County Attorney Tony Dalton, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Commissioners consulted with the County Attorney on a matter and instructed staff on how to proceed.

Chairman Hawkins moved to leave closed session, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously carried.

OPEN SESSION

Chairman Hawkins moved to seal the minutes of the closed session until such time that opening the minutes does not frustrate the purpose of the closed session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Chairman Hawkins moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously carried.**

Mike Hawkins, Chair
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board