

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 13, 2014 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, January 13, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the large courtroom of the Transylvania County Courthouse .

Commissioners present were Vice-Chairman Larry Chapman, Jason Chappell, Chairman Mike Hawkins, Daryle Hogsed and Page Lemel. Also present were County Manager Artie Wilson, County Attorney Tony Dalton, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Media: *The Daily Waterfall* – Kevin Brian Smith
The Transylvania Times – Jeremiah Reed

There were approximately 60 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

WELCOME

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Martha Cremer: Ms. Cremer asked Commissioners not to accept the recommended changes to the Transylvania County Telecommunications Tower Ordinance. She also urged Commissioners to enact a one-year moratorium on any applications for new cell tower construction until a new ordinance is complete. Ms. Cremer believes there has not been enough public input on the recommendations, especially in light of recent information concerning proposed new tower locations. Ms. Cremer believes the proposed recommendations are not adequate for a mountain community.

Kathleen Barnes: Ms. Barnes agreed with Ms. Cremer's suggestion of a moratorium on any new cell tower construction permits. She reported that a new cell tower has been proposed for Cantrell Mountain Road. The private road is maintained by the residents and she feels it would be destroyed by the heavy equipment used to construct the cell tower. She asked Commissioners to consider amending the Telecommunications Tower Ordinance to indicate that property owners would have to give permission before a cell tower is built on a private road.

Ed Buckley: Mr. Buckley, on behalf of the Human Relations Council, invited Commissioners to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration this coming weekend. He will provide the detailed schedule in an email to Commissioners.

Mary Rose: Ms. Rose expressed concern about the cell tower situation in the County because there is no plan for properly siting cell towers. While she understands that private property owners can elect to have cell towers constructed on their property, she believes placing towers in residential neighborhoods conflicts with neighborhood values. She asked Commissioners to complete a comprehensive study of

where cell towers should be placed for optimal function as well as aesthetic tolerance. Ms. Rose reported that she wrote a letter to the cell tower company asking them to delay building a tower until a new tower standard is better formulated. She asked Commissioners to do what is best for the County.

Jack Eubanks: Mr. Eubanks volunteers regularly at the Transylvania County Animal Shelter. He was there last week when a frozen water pipe burst and did some damage to the building. He expressed concern about the use of heat tape and felt that the insulation for the pipes was installed in a shoddy manner. He hopes that heat tape is not being used in other buildings. Mr. Eubanks urged Commissioners to move forward more quickly to make the necessary repairs to the animal shelter. He also urged Commissioners to tear down the old animal shelter because it is a deplorable building.

Tom Young: Mr. Young reported that a new cell tower is being proposed for Cantrell Mountain Road directly across from his home. He is concerned about it being built in a residential neighborhood. He agreed with the comments made by the previous speakers with regards to this subject and he asked Commissioners to act because there appears to be better options.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications.

Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The minutes of the November 4, 2013 special meeting/workshop on water was approved.

DISCOVERY AND RELEASE REPORT

The Discovery and Release Report for November 2013 was approved. Total tax dollars released was \$2,621.47. Refunds totaled \$411.00.

RESOLUTIONS/PRESENTATIONS

RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF GEORGE POOR, COMMANDER OF THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY HONOR GUARD

George Poor recently retired from his leadership position as Commander of the Transylvania County Honor Guard after 31 years of service. Commissioners thanked him for his dedicated service to the citizens and veterans of Transylvania County. For the benefit of the public, Commissioner Chapman read the resolution and presented it to Mr. Poor. Mr. Poor thanked Commissioners for the recognition. He expressed his appreciation to the members of the Honor Guard who have served with him for so many years.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve Resolution 02-2014 In Recognition of George Poor, Commander of the Transylvania County Honor Guard. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

(Resolution 02-2014 In Recognition of George Poor, Commander of the Transylvania County Honor Guard is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

APPOINTMENTS

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

There is a vacancy on the Transylvania County Council on Aging that should be filled by a citizen 60 years or older. There is one eligible application on file.

Commissioner Lemel moved to appoint Paula Bennett Paddick to fill the senior citizen vacancy on the Transylvania County Council on Aging, seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

BOARD OF HEALTH

There are three vacancies (pharmacist, dentist, and physician) on the Board of Health and one member serving as a member of the general public because no optometrist was available to fill the position. Through several advertisements and an extensive recruitment process by Health Director Steve Smith, there are now applications on file to fill all three vacancies as well as properly fill the optometrist position to comply with NC General Statutes.

Commissioner Lemel moved to

1. **Appoint Ben Lamm to fill the pharmacist position.**
2. **Appoint Anthony Fisher to fill the physician position.**
3. **Appoint Gus Tucker to fill the dentist position.**
4. **Appoint Joseph Hooper Williams to replace Michael Becker and assume the optometrist position.**

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed. Commissioner Hogsed asked the Clerk to ensure a thank you letter is sent to Mr. Becker for his time serving on the Board of Health. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

OLD BUSINESS

COUNTYWIDE WATER SERVICE STUDY

The City of Brevard has determined that future demands for water in Brevard will be greater than the capacity of its Cathey's Creek water facility. In order to understand the potential water demand that may be needed by other areas of the County, staff proposed that Commissioners hire the professional services of McGill Associates to provide a county wide water service study. The study will identify existing public water supply systems, including both municipal and transient/non-transient systems, develop projections of future water supply demands for both a 20 and 50 year planning period, and develop alternatives for the expansion of existing public systems or new systems to provide water service for those areas of the County identified as requiring service in the future. The timeframe for completing the proposal is 75 days. The cost of the study is \$26,800.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the water service study for \$26,800 with funds to come from Fund Balance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell. Commissioner Chapman wondered if the City of Brevard would be an integral part of this process and amenable to sharing in the

cost since they stand to benefit. The Manager said staff would be engaging the City for data collection and other information but the study is to determine if there are needs outside of City limits. The City is moving forward with their own project to build a facility to provide 5 million gallons a day. Commissioner Lemel expressed concern that the study would not include elevations above a certain level and outside the service area. The Manager said there would be some work to determine what their needs are but it would take much more capacity to meet any need they might have. Chairman Hawkins commented that this is a starting point and until Commissioners get the data the County will not be able to move forward. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

NEW BUSINESS

REQUEST FROM QUEBEC COMMUNITY CENTER

The Quebec Community Center had their floors refurbished last year. Unfortunately the floors were not finished properly which has caused holes to form in the floors, creating an obvious safety hazard. The Quebec Community Center is one of two congregate meal sites for senior citizens. Staff has visited the site twice to examine the floors and has been working with a local firm to determine pricing to repair and properly finish the floors. The cost for removing the current floor coating and reapplying a new coating is \$8,750.

Commissioner Lemel moved to authorize the payment of \$8,750 to Advanced Polymers for the removal of the floor coating and installation of a new floor coating at the Quebec Community Center. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed. Commissioner Chapman expressed concern about setting precedent for assuming the maintenance and upkeep for all community centers. The Manager pointed out that Commissioners have assisted various community centers over the years with improvements, ADA requirements, etc. because several community centers serve as election sites and other County activities take place at many of the centers as well. The Manager also noted that staff will find an alternate meal site location if needed. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

REQUEST FROM CEDAR MOUNTAIN FIRE RESCUE

At the end of FY 2013, Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue had funds totaling \$5,747.07 in the fire tax account. The fire department has received two matching grants. The first grant comes from the Office of the State Fire Marshal in the amount of \$24,484, which requires a match of the same amount. The second grant comes from FEMA in the amount of \$74,166 and the match amount is \$18,542. Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue has used their savings to provide the required match, but they also had to use some of the funds from their FY 2014 budget allocation. They are now requesting Commissioners allow them to use the remaining funds in the fire tax reserve to replenish monies they used to match the grant awards.

Commissioner Hogsed moved to authorize the disbursement of \$5,747.07 in fire tax funds to Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel. Commissioners thanked Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue for the phenomenal job they do in securing grants. It was noted that without these two grants, the monies would have to come from fire tax funds to purchase equipment and other items in which these grants funds were used. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

WESTERN CAROLINA COMMUNITY ACTION'S APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

Western Carolina Community Action is making application for a Community Services Block Grant. These grant funds will help families in Henderson, Polk and Transylvania Counties out of poverty. The grant application request is for \$293,841. Transylvania County's portion would be \$77,123. The funds would be used to hire a part time employee to administer the program being proposed in the grant application. The funds will serve 28 individuals, six of them in Transylvania County. The Boards of

Commissioners of all three counties are required to acknowledge receipt of the grant application and be given the opportunity to comment. There are no County funds are required.

Commissioner Lemel moved to acknowledge receipt of the grant application and authorized the Clerk to sign the Documentation of Submission to County Commissioners form. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Commissioner Chappell noted that the Employment Security Commission's name has been changed to the Division of Workforce Solutions and should be corrected on the grant application. Commissioner Chapman commented that the grant application indicates there is a great need for services in the community. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

DONATION OF A SURPLUS VAN TO TRANSYLVANIA REGIONAL HOSPITAL

The North Carolina Department of Transportation recommends transportation vans be replaced when they reach 136,000 miles travelled. County Van 26 has been removed from service with a total of 142,384 miles. In order for the van to continue serving the citizens of Transylvania County the Transportation Director is requesting the donation of the van to KOALA, a department of Transylvania Regional Hospital. North Carolina General Statute 160A-280 allows a county to donate any surplus personal property to a nonprofit organization incorporated in the United States. The Manager has declared the van as surplus. Prior to the donation the County must post a public notice of its intent to donate the property prior to the adoption of a resolution donating the property. The Clerk has advertised the Board's intent to donate the surplus vehicle to Transylvania Regional Hospital in *The Transylvania Times* for the required period of time.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve Resolution 01-2014 Donation of a Surplus Van to Transylvania Regional Hospital. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

Robert Anderson with KOALA thanked Commissioners for this donation to help extend transportation services to those in need.

(Resolution 01-2014 Donation of a Surplus Van to Transylvania Regional Hospital is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

MODIFY COUNTY HEALTH AND WELLNESS AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE SPOUSES AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN (12 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE) USAGE OF THE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS CLINIC

The Employee Wellness Clinic opened in September 2013. Under the guidelines the clinic was to serve employees only. After going through the initial required appointments and four months of data regarding episodic visits, staff and Dr. Fisher discussed modifying the contract to include allowing spouses and dependent children 12 years of age and older to use the employee clinic as well. There are 249 eligible dependents. They believe this will further enhance the wellness of employees and their families while at the same time further reducing health care costs. In exchange for adding spouses and dependent children 12 years of age and older, Dr. Fisher would like for the clinic to be closed on the same holidays as the County. For the remainder of the contract period that amounts to two holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday and Good Friday.

Commissioner Lemel moved to authorize staff to amend the mutual agreement with Blue Mountain Medicine to include allowing spouses and dependent children 12 years of age and older to be seen at the wellness clinic and to modify Exhibit B as agreed upon (*Bullet three-add Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday and Good Friday; *Bullet four-remove Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday and Good Friday). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed. Dependents will not be required

to have an initial visit. The current contract is up in August. The original contract was for a one-year period and included three extensions. Staff will provide updated health care cost figures for the upcoming budget process. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER ORDINANCE

In August the Planning Board began reviewing the Transylvania County Telecommunications Tower Ordinance to bring it into compliance with recent changes in the North Carolina General Statutes. The Planning Board approved the recommended changes to the Telecommunications Tower Ordinance at its December 19 meeting and recommends the Board of Commissioners schedule a public hearing on the proposed changes.

Planning and Economic Development Mark Burrows discussed some of the recommended changes. The current ordinance was originally adopted in October 1996 and was amended in October 2000. During the review of several ordinances last year it was revealed there were changes in North Carolina General Statutes. Those changes have been included in the ordinance. Another change requires that surrounding property owners be notified via certified mail that a public hearing is being held on a proposed tower. The Planning Board decided to do this recently when a variance request was made to the ordinance so it seemed logical to include this as a revision to the ordinance.

Mr. Burrows reported that the ordinance allows the Planning Board to contract with a professional to assist with technical questions on a cell tower application and determine if the proposal is the best solution. This is already spelled out in the current ordinance and no changes are being recommended to that process.

Mr. Burrows indicated that Planning Board members have heard many times that there is a need for better cell communication and that it is woefully lacking in many areas of the County. Lack of cell coverage is a safety issue, a communications issue, and an economic development issue. Mr. Burrows believes the Planning Board has tried to address these issues with the recommended changes. Mr. Burrows asked Commissioners to schedule a public hearing for a future meeting. He noted that the draft ordinance has been posted on the County's website. Planning Board members have had many discussions about the ordinance and have received public input. More detail about the changes will be presented during the public hearing.

Commissioner Chapman noted that public notice has been made by a cell tower company about their intent to construct a new cell tower. He asked if the cell tower company is legally okay to move forward with their project or if they were waiting on a decision by the County on revisions to the ordinance. Mr. Burrows replied that there is an existing ordinance in place. Furthermore, there are no cell tower applications on file. Once the application is filed, staff will have to move forward using the current cell tower ordinance.

Commissioner Chapman referred to provisions in the ordinance where it states that towers are restricted that adversely detract from the natural beauty of the mountains. He asked who makes the determination of what might be unsightly and who enforces the ordinance. Mr. Burrows stated that the Planning Department enforces the ordinance. The Planning Board reviews the application. The purpose of the ordinance is to accommodate the orderly development of the wireless communication industry and provide residents and businesses with access to wireless telecommunications networks, while at the same time preserving the area's natural beauty and state of character. The purpose of the ordinance is also to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Transylvania County by ensuring first responders access to wireless infrastructure and to regulate construction of telecommunications towers in order to

avoid potential damage to adjacent properties from tower failure and falling ice, to minimize the total number of towers throughout Transylvania County by encouraging the joint use of new and existing towers, to minimize potential hazard to low-flying aircraft, to restrict towers that adversely detract from the natural beauty of the mountains by discouraging visual eyesores as stated in the County's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Burrows commented that this is a broad statement but it allows the Planning Board to challenge the applicant to determine if this is the best technology available, and if it is needed in a particular location. The tower builder has to prove there are no better alternatives available. This is where the Planning Board can hire a qualified engineer to ensure what the builder is saying is accurate. The applicant would be responsible for paying the fees for this service.

Commissioner Lemel asked if there are cell towers currently located on protected ridges. Mr. Burrows reported no. He said the Planning Board spent a lot of time trying to address the issue of protected ridges. They looked at all ridges and discussed looking at a comprehensive way to address multiple issues with tower communications.

Commissioner Chapman made a motion to declare a 12-month moratorium on issuing cell tower permits and to continue researching this matter by seeing how other mountain communities have addressed this issue and schedule a public hearing at a later date. Chairman Hawkins seconded the motion. Mr. Burrows stated that a longer moratorium puts the County at greater risk. He heard the concerns expressed by residents and their request to study other ordinances; however, the Planning Board has already done so. He suggested a moratorium for three to six months, because much of the work has already been done. Commissioner Lemel feels the draft ordinance is a comprehensive document that is very well done. She understands the concerns of citizens but given the provisions in the ordinance, the burden is on the cell tower company to go through the permitting process. She also expressed concern about enacting a 12-month moratorium when so much work has already been done. Commissioner Lemel said these revisions need to be put in front of the public to be completely vetted. She would be more comfortable with a shorter moratorium. Commissioner Chappell expressed concern about the direction this agenda item has taken because the recommendation was to put the revisions in front of the public for their input; not to enact a moratorium. He appreciated the comments from the public tonight but to swiftly enact a moratorium is troubling to him.

The Manager pointed out there are legal requirements that must be followed before enacting a moratorium. If Commissioners want to pursue this further, he suggested staff work with the County Attorney to ensure all legal requirements are met.

Commissioner Hogsed agreed that the draft ordinance is a comprehensive document. He is okay with putting a hold on applications until the decision is made on the revisions to the ordinance; otherwise he is not supportive of a moratorium.

Chairman Hawkins believes there are pieces of the draft ordinance that should be vetted and that Commissioners should be careful about what is adopted. He noted there is a time lag that occurs with scheduling a public hearing and the vetting process, so a better course of action might be to direct staff to look into the question of whether or not a moratorium is appropriate and then bring a recommendation back to Commissioners for consideration at the next meeting, if possible. **Commissioner Chapman withdrew his motion.**

Commissioner Hogsed moved to schedule a public hearing on the proposed changes to the Transylvania County Telecommunications Tower Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell. The recommendation is to hold the public hearing on February 10. This will

allow ample time for advertising purposes and also allow time for the public to review the draft ordinance. **The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 1, with Commissioner Chapman voting against.**

The Manager stated that staff will work on the language and legal requirements for a moratorium for Commissioners' consideration.

REQUEST FOR 2014 NCACC FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Each year the NC Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) solicits input and proposals from all counties concerning the most important issues of a statewide nature that impact counties at the federal level. Those suggestions are collected, reviewed and then approved by the NCACC Board of Directors to be used as its 2014 Federal Legislative Agenda. The list of top federal priorities will be presented to the North Carolina Congressional delegation in Washington, DC at the March 2014 NACo Legislative Conference when the NCACC will host its Congressional Delegation Breakfast.

The list of goals is due by Friday, January 10, 2014. Transylvania County has been given an extension being there has been no County Commission meeting since early December. Goals are to be submitted on the morning of Tuesday, January 14, 2014.

The Manager reported that one issue of concern is Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT). He has contacted Senator Hagan's office about this and since then she and 16 other Senators have signed a letter requesting reinstatement of PILT. The Manager participated in a conference call with Congressman Meadows this afternoon. PILT is not included in the House budget. Counties are being encouraged to contact their legislators. The vote on this item could come as early as this Saturday. The Manager intends to contact Senator Burr and he encouraged Commissioners to do so as well. Transylvania County receives \$200,000 annually in PILT.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about any possible further impact to the County from the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The Manager said the County has already absorbed the additional costs associated with the ACA. There are no other costs anticipated. Commissioner Chapman asked to include as a legislative issue that no further dollar impact be passed along to counties as a result of the ACA.

Commissioner Lemel moved that the Board of Commissioners agree with the NCACC federal legislative agenda with the addition of PILT and the economic concerns regarding the ACA. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman and unanimously approved.

2ND QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT

At the end of each quarter, the Finance Director provides a recap of the budget amendments that have been approved year-to-date and their impact on the fiscal year General Fund budget. Finance Director Gay Poor reported that in total, the budget has increased \$349,000. Half of the increase was related to the loan for the School System to upgrade the lighting at Brevard High School.

Commissioner Chappell moved to receive the report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Based on Section 34 of the FY 2014 Budget Ordinance, certain budget amendments must be submitted to the Board of Commissioners for approval. Below is a summary of amendments that have been requested that require Board approval because they increase the total General Fund budget and are derived from funding sources not previously approved by the Board.

#45. To record the receipt by Animal Services of a donation of \$38,089 from the Friends of the Animal Shelter (FOTAS) to be used for equipment, supplies, and training mutually agreed upon by FOTAS and the County

#46. To record the receipt by EMS of a \$1,000 donation to be used to recognize and benefit EMS employees

#47. To appropriate \$9,886 from unassigned fund balance in the General Fund to the Law Enforcement Separation Allowance Fund to cover a retirement that was not anticipated when the FY 14 budget was developed

#48. To carry forward \$1,565 from the General Fund balance assigned for Health Department projects for the lease of an additional copier

#49. To carry forward \$1,419 from the General Fund balance assigned for the 150th County Anniversary to complete the legacy project

#50. To record the receipt of \$10,786 in additional sales tax revenues identified through a sales tax audit (which reduces fund balance appropriated accordingly) and provide \$2,050 in funds for the audit fee

#51. To record the receipt of \$1,975 by Animal Services in private donations and appropriate them for spay and neuter fees

If approved, these amendments will increase the General Fund budget by \$55,984, bringing the General Fund Budget to a total of \$44,904,456.

Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the requested budget amendments, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS

The Board of Commissioners held a retreat on September 13 and 14, 2013. Lydian Altman with the School of Government provided the notes from the retreat and draft objectives which have been modified somewhat by Chairman Hawkins. Staff would like for the Commissioners to discuss the goals and objectives so that the Board will be prepared to prioritize the goals at the upcoming Board follow up retreat on February 6.

Chairman Hawkins shared with the public the six goals that came out of the September retreat:

1. Promote and facilitate environmental stewardship
2. Provide quality accessible recreational and cultural opportunities
3. Promote the County's unique mix of educational and cultural assets
4. Promote economic development to provide 21st job opportunities that are compatible with the County's strengths and values
5. Provide excellence in governance and stewardship of public assets
6. Promote and maintain the County's sense of place while being welcoming to all

Again, Commissioners should provide additional input or possible goals to the Manager prior to the retreat on February 6.

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager updated the Board on the following:

1. Bids for the renovation of the old Library are due tomorrow. Several contractors have expressed interest in submitting a bid. Staff intends to bring a proposed bid award and project budget to the Board of Commissioners at the January 27 meeting.
2. Met with NC Department of Transportation officials and reviewed the status of NC 215. Another endangered species has been found in the areas on the new route alternatives which places another hurdle on this project. A new potential alternative of improving the existing road was introduced as a fallback strategy and is being further investigated. A follow up meeting is planned for January.
3. Survey forms were completed by key stakeholders involved with the Courthouse Expansion Study. This information is being compiled by Moseley Architects.
4. Met with Engineer Terry Allen regarding plans for Phase III of the Community Park near Rosman. Staff intends to go out for bids on the project as soon as the plans are finalized so work can begin this spring. This next phase includes a restroom/concession building, a walking trail, a playground, lighting for the baseball field, and a basketball court. This list is being prioritized in order to maximize costs and bring the most value to the most users. Some of the costs have been more expensive because the park is located in the floodway.
5. Met with Chairman Hawkins and Ray Miller to discuss the Chapter 7 Bankruptcy of Glen Cannon Country Club. The Manager contacted the Bankruptcy Trustee to learn more about the situation. He hopes someone will purchase the property and continue to operate it as a golf course.
6. Work continues on a new County logo.
7. Work continues on the porch renovation at Silvermont. Painting of the porch ceiling is complete and the porch flooring has been removed for repair.
8. Worked with Josh King of Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization to allow Transylvania County to participate in a bicycle study from Mills River to the intersection of US 276, US 64 and NC 280 in Pisgah Forest. There are no additional funds required from Transylvania County for this portion of the study.
9. Learned that DHHS Secretary Wos has approved the dissolution of Western Highlands and the consolidation of Smoky Mountain and Western Highlands Local Management Entities.
10. A frozen pipe burst in the animal shelter and caused water damage. Staff met with the insurance representative and the County has been given the go ahead to begin clean up and make repairs. Contractors have already reviewed the project and it should move forward soon. The pipe was insulated and had a heat strip on it, but it was not plugged in.
11. There was an article in the *Hendersonville Times News* about a potential 28.3% increase to homeowners in insurance costs. The article stated that Transylvania County does not have adequate water sources, which is an incorrect statement. The local fire departments have demonstrated the ability to provide adequate coverage. He drafted a letter to the Department of Insurance if Commissioners so wish for him to send it. The letter states that factual information be provided before an increase is considered.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Edwin Jones: Mr. Jones commented about Commissioners continuously dipping into the General Fund Balance to fund various needs. He asked if someone is keeping an eye on the balance and how fast it appears to be declining. Mr. Jones talked about cell towers and expressed concern about where the County crosses the line about tower aesthetics and who makes the decision.

Coty Ferguson: Mr. Ferguson commented about the cell tower issue and said the lack of cell coverage on Highway 276 South to South Carolina is a safety concern. He also referred to a federal issue of concern to him. Mr. Ferguson asked Commissioners to use their influence with representatives at the federal level

to consider creating an educational user base for national lands. Currently Brevard College and other educational institutions are treated as corporate entities when they go get their permits for land use.

Commissioner Chapman asked Mr. Ferguson to put his request in writing for submission along with the other federal legislative issues.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Chapman thanked the members of the Board of Commissioners for their work serving the citizens of Transylvania County.

Commissioner Lemel reported that she and Commissioner Chapman have been conducting interviews with Planning Board applicants. There are 17 applicants for four positions on the Planning Board. They intend to bring forth a recommendation for the Board to consider at the next meeting.

Commissioner Chapman stated that the VISION program is undertaking a project to study the County board and committee process. They will help the Board of Commissioners determine a better recruiting process, whether or not all the boards and committees are useful to the County, etc. He encouraged citizens to apply for a board or committee in order to get more involved in their local government.

Chairman Hawkins said he traveled on the City's bike trail yesterday and was amazed at the number of people utilizing it. This struck him because it was a good example for Commissioners as they consider recreation because it is an initiative that is getting used by all kinds of people and is a benefit to the community. He hopes as Commissioners move forward with planning recreation over the next few years that they consider those amenities that have broad appeal to many users.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mike Hawkins, Chair
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board