

**MINUTES  
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
December 8, 2014 – REGULAR MEETING**

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, December 8, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in Commissioners Chambers at the County Administration Building.

Commissioners present were Vice-Chairman Larry Chapman, Jason Chappell, Chairman Mike Hawkins, Page Lemel, and Kelvin Phillips. Also present were County Manager Jaime Laughter, County Attorney Tony Dalton, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Media: *The Transylvania Times* – Jeremiah Reed

There were approximately 30 people in the audience.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding called the meeting to order at 7:03 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**

Gerry Hunsicker: Mr. Hunsicker commented that the County's tax rate increases do not correlate to the population growth which has been stagnant. He said local government needs to control its spending or else another tax increase will be imposed upon citizens. Mr. Hunsicker further stated that employee bonuses and pay raises should be based on performance. He also inquired about the status and salary range for the new economic development director.

**AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

The Manager reported on the agenda modifications. She requested to remove Item VIII-E Update of NC Cooperative Extension Strategic Plan and Request to Fill Vacant County Director Position under New Business. The presenter, Interim Director Eric Caldwell, was absent due to illness and therefore unable to make a presentation tonight. There were no other agenda modifications. The Manager will add this item to an agenda in January. She has already authorized the Mr. Caldwell to advertise for the Director position since it was approved in the budget.

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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The Oath of Office Ceremony for the Clerk of Court, Sheriff, Soil and Water Conservation Board and Board of Commissioners was held on December 1, 2014. Following the ceremony, the Board of Commissioners convened for their organizational meeting. Commissioners approved the minutes of the 12/1/2014 Oath of Office Ceremony and Organizational Meeting

CLOSING OF COUNTY OFFICES FOR EMPLOYEE CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

The County Employee Christmas Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, December 2, 2014. Staff requests permission to close County offices at noon on this day. Offices will be closed for the remainder of the day. Commissioners approved closing County Offices at noon on Friday, December 2, 2014 in order for County employees to attend the Christmas luncheon. Staff will properly advertise and post notice of the office closings.

CANCELLATION OF THE DECEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

There is no pressing business for Commissioners to consider for the 2<sup>nd</sup> regular meeting scheduled for December 22. Commissioners will be attending a half day strategic planning workshop on December 19. Staff recommends cancelling the December 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Commissioners cancelled the December 22<sup>nd</sup> Board of Commissioners meeting and instructed the Clerk to advertise and post notice.

RESOLUTION SEEKING LEGISLATION TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT VOTING SYSTEMS USED BY COUNTIES GENERATE A PAPER BALLOT

The life expectancy of the current voting equipment is 10-12 years. The current voting equipment will reach its life expectancy between the years 2016-2018. For the past few years, the Elections Department has submitted capital budget proposals for \$500,000 anticipating an upgrade to the existing direct record electronic (DRE) machines. However, SL 2013-381 changed the requirement of DRE machines from generating a paper record to all voting machines must generate an individual paper ballot effective January 2018. This change eliminates many voting machines from consideration and would require a complete replacement of the voting system, not just machines, but also ballot boxes, storage containers, transport units, security measures, and many other components, in addition to increased voter education and precinct official training since Transylvania has not used a non-DRE system for 20 years. The financial impact to the County as a result of the session law requirements is likely to exceed \$500,000. Staff requested Commissioners pass a resolution that will be sent to the NC Association of County Commissioners for their consideration as a legislative goal to focus on for the upcoming legislative session. Commissioners approved Resolution 40-2014 Seeking Legislation for Remove the Requirement that Voting Systems Used by Counties Generate a Paper Ballot, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF AN OFFICIAL TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NORTH CAROLINA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL COMMISSION ON ABC PERMIT APPLICATIONS

NC General Statute 18B-904(f) authorizes a governing body to designate an official, by name or position, to make recommendations concerning the suitability of persons or locations for ABC permits. The Sheriff of Transylvania County is already designated for those seeking permits within the city limits of Brevard and town limits of Rosman. This is part of the ABC permit application process. Commissioners designated the Sheriff of Transylvania County as the official to make recommendations to the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission on ABC Permit Applications and approved the resolution form indicating such.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A NORTH CAROLINA MAIN STREET SOLUTIONS GRANT APPLICATION BY THE CITY OF BREVARD

Commissioners approved Resolution 41-2014 In Support of a North Carolina Main Street Solutions Grant Application On Behalf of Aetholwold Development, LLC, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

**PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS**

RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF DAVID LYNN REID

Tax Administrator David Reid will retire as a Transylvania County employee effective January 1, 2015. He began employment with Transylvania County in 1976 as an appraiser. He was promoted to Tax Assessor shortly thereafter and was appointed Tax Administrator in 2006 by the Board of Commissioners.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve Resolution 39-2014 In Recognition of David Lynn Reid. The resolution was seconded by Commissioner Phillips.** Through his time as a member of the Board of Directors of the NC Association of County Commissioners, Commissioner Chapman hears from other counties about the wonderful job David Reid does for Transylvania County, particularly with the tax collection rate. Commissioner Chapman thanked him for his work and years of service to the County. Commissioner Lemel noted that her father hired Mr. Reid as the Tax Collector and it was a proud moment for him. She thanked him for his patience, kindness and understanding while working with citizens. She also noted how beneficial the tax collection rate has been to the County. Commissioner Chappell thanked Mr. Reid for his service to the community and for ensuring a smooth transition for his replacement. Commissioner Phillips thanked him for his willingness to ensure a smooth transition for the next year and for creating an office with excellent staff. Chairman Hawkins said the fairness and respect Mr. Reid and his staff have shown to citizens have contributed to the success of the department. He said Mr. Reid is the best Tax Administrator in the State and he will be missed. Mr. Reid said he would not have been successful without such great a great team and he recognized the employees from the Tax Office. Mr. Reid stated he is looking forward to assisting with the transition. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve in his position for so many years. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

(Resolution 39-2014 In Recognition of David Lynn Reid is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FY 2013-2014

The laws of the State of North Carolina, along with policies and procedures of the North Carolina Local Government Commission, require that all local governments in the state publish a complete set of financial statements annually. Elsa Swenson from Martin Starnes & Associates presented an overview of the FY 2013-2014 Financial Report. This is a summary of her report.

Ms. Swenson reported that Martin Starnes has issued an unmodified audit opinion which means this is the best audit opinion. There were no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses identified in regards to the financial statements and the compliance with federal and State grant awards. The report is mainly about the general fund. The audit report has been submitted to the Local Government Commission and is awaiting their approval.

Audit staff works year round with the Finance Department. They perform interim procedures such as compliance testing and reading through Board minutes. Final procedures involve performing a financial statement analysis and issuing the audit opinion.

Next Ms. Brown highlighted the General Fund for FY 2014:

*General Fund Summary*

- Revenues increased 9.25% - includes transfers in and capital lease obligations issued
- Expenses increased 7.82% - includes transfers out

*Total Fund Balance-General Fund*

- As of June 30, 2014=\$23,546,719
- An increase of \$1,582,859

*Fund Balance (Calculations)*

Available fund balance as defined by the Local Government Commission (LGC) is calculated as follows:

Total Fund Balance

Less: Non spendable (not in cash form, not available)

Less: Stabilization by State Statute (by state law, not available)

Available Fund Balance

This is the calculation utilized as the basis for comparing Transylvania County to other units and calculating fund balance percentages.

*Fund Balance Position-General Fund*

Total Fund Balance	\$23,546,719
Non-spendable	- 40,733
<u>Stabilization by State Statute</u>	<u>- 3,021,928</u>
Available Fund Balance 2014	\$20,484,058

Available Fund Balance 2013	\$19,043,272
Increase in Available FB	1,440,786

*Fund Balance*

- Serves as a measure of the County's financial resources available.
- Assets – Liabilities – Deferred inflows of resources = Fund Balance
- 5 Classifications:
  - Non spendable - not in cash form
  - Restricted - external restrictions (laws, grantors)
  - Committed - internal constraints at the highest (Board) level-do not expire, require Board action to undo
  - Assigned - internal constraints, lower level than committed
  - Unassigned - no external or internal constraints

*Fund Balance Position-General Fund 2014*

Total Fund Balance	\$23,546,719
Less:	
Non-spendable	- 40,733
Restricted by State Statute	- 3,021,928
Restricted, all other	- 472,793
Committed	- 2,264,227
Assigned	- 5,227,709
Total Unassigned Fund Balance	\$12,519,329

*Unassigned Fund Balance as a Percent of Expenditures General Fund*

Unassigned Fund Balance – GF (Numerator)

Total Expenditures + Transfers out – GF (Denominator)

$$\frac{\$12,519,329}{\$43,161,301} = 29.0\%$$

This is how internally the Fund Balance percentage is calculated. This is different from the Local Government Commission's calculation because this calculation excludes all restrictions, commitments, and assignments.

*Fund Balance as a Percent of Expenditures and Transfers to Other Funds-General Fund*

This is comparison to FY 2013.

In 2013, the Available Fund Balance, per the Local Government Commission (LGC), was 47.6% of expenditures. Unassigned Fund Balance was 30.7% of expenditures. In 2014, these figures were reduced to 47.5% and 29.0% respectively.

*Top 3 Revenues: General Fund*

- Ad Valorem Taxes-60%
- Local Option Sales Tax-15%
- Restricted Intergovernmental-15%
- All other revenues make up 10% and is comprised of the following:
  - Other taxes and licenses
  - Unrestricted Intergovernmental
  - Permits & Fees
  - Sales & Services
  - Investment Income
  - Miscellaneous Revenue
  - Donations and Grants

*Property Tax*

- In 2013, revenues totaled \$23,781,655
- In 2014, revenues totaled \$26,934,524

*Sales Tax*

- In 2013, revenues totaled \$6,122,549
- In 2014, revenues totaled \$6,560,048
- This equates to an increase of \$437,499; up 7.1%
- This increase is due to overall increases in local option sales taxes

*Restricted Intergovernmental*

- In 2013, revenues amounted to \$6,644,095
- In 2014, revenues increased to \$6,656,677
- The increase over 2013 was by \$12,582, or 1%

*Top 3 Expenditures: General Fund*

- Education-36%
- Public Safety-25%
- Human Services-20%

- All other expenditures make up 19% and is comprised of the following:
  - General Government
  - Transportation
  - Economic and physical development
  - Cultural and recreation
  - General debt

*Education Expenditures (Including Related Debt Service)*

- In 2013, expenditures totaled \$13,405,585
- In 2014, expenditures increased to \$15,052,313
- This equates to an increase of \$1,646,728, or 12%

*Public Safety Expenditures*

- In 2013, the County spent \$10,196,118
- In 2014, this expense was up slightly at \$10,607,468
- The increase totaled \$411,350, an increase of 4%

*Human Services Expenditures*

- In 2013, expenditures totaled \$8,166,218
- In 2014, expenditures increased to \$8,422,509
- The increase over 2013 was \$256,291, a 3.1% increase

This concluded the presentation. Ms. Swenson took comments and questions from Commissioners.

In response to Chairman Hawkins, Ms. Swenson stated that the detailed audit will be submitted to the Local Government Commission for approval next week. Once approved, it will be available to Commissioners and for public inspection in mid-January. The approval process is behind schedule due to delay in the new Medicaid system.

Commissioner Chappell asked if the auditors recommended any changes. Ms. Swenson said there are no changes that are worth citing. The auditors continue to review the County's internal controls.

Chairman Hawkins noted that Commissioners raised the tax rate last year because they were under the impression that funds would need to be transferred from Fund Balance to balance the budget. It turned out not to be the case due to a number of factors. He said he is anxious to see the detailed report to understand the budget better. In addition, he noted it is Commissioners' policy to keep a level of 15% of expenditures in undesignated Fund Balance and the current amount is \$6 million over the 15% level. He stressed the importance of working closely with the Manager to address the County's needs and devise a plan to address those needs.

Commissioner Lemel agreed with Chairman's Hawkins assessment. She noted there was a \$2.7 million budget variance between the two years and there are many components to understanding why. She noted that the County spent more in education but saved in other areas.

It was noted that the County's tax collection rate for FY 2014 was 99.79%.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Swenson for her for her presentation. They look forward to seeing the detailed audit report soon.

## APPOINTMENTS

### VOTING DELEGATE TO THE NCACC LEGISLATIVE GOALS CONFERENCE

Each year the NC Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) hosts its annual Legislative Goals Conference where the delegates decide the most important legislative goals to pursue during the legislative session. Each county has an opportunity to select a voting delegate to represent their county at the conference. If the Board wishes to participate, Commissioners will need to select a voting delegate to represent Transylvania County. Commissioner Chapman serves on the Board of Directors of the NCACC and intends to attend the conference in January.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to elect Commissioner Chapman to serve as the Voting Delegate at the NCACC Legislative Goals Conference in January 2015 in Pinehurst, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.**

### SMOKY MOUNTAIN LME/MCO COUNTY COMMISSIONER ADVISORY COUNCIL

Former Commissioner Daryle Hogsed served as the County's representative on the Smoky Mountain LME/MCO County Commissioner Advisory Council and he agreed to serve until his term as County Commissioner ended. The council meets quarterly and serves as an advisory board to the LME/MCO. The council was created by NC General Statute 122C-118.2.

**Chairman Hawkins moved to appoint Commissioner Lemel to replace Daryle Hogsed on the Smoky Mountain LME/MCO County Commissioner Advisory Council. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman.** Commissioners intend to review their appointments to boards and commissions to ensure they are sharing in the responsibility. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

### COUNTY COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT TO THE RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The Land-of-Sky Rural Planning Organization (RPO) is a voluntary organization of local governments working cooperatively with the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and local officials to enhance transportation planning opportunities for rural areas in the region. The RPO is comprised of two committees: the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). The TAC is the governing policy board for the RPO and its membership includes elected officials, members of the local governments, the area's representative on the Board of Transportation and other members as may be designated. Recent former Commissioner Daryle Hogsed was the Board of Commissioners' representative on the RPO and Commissioners need to appoint a Commissioner to replace him since his term in office has ended. The TAC meets quarterly the fourth Tuesday at 12 noon in the large conference room at the Land-of-Sky Regional Council.

**Commission Chapman moved to appoint Commissioner Chappell to replace Daryle Hogsed on the Land-of-Sky Rural Planning Organization. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.**

## OLD BUSINESS

### TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE POLICY

Commissioners reviewed the existing County economic development incentive policy in October at the same time as approving funding for the Transylvania Partnership for Economic Development (TPED). Commissioners then directed staff to review the existing policy and propose a new draft. The incentive policy for Chatham County was discussed at the same meeting with particular focus on the point methodology used in that policy.

The Manager provided a draft policy which included updates to language and incorporates a point system as the basis for tax grant incentive discussions. The point system is designed to provide more points for larger employers and higher investment while also rewarding jobs that pay well and are environmentally good stewards. At the same time, a realistic approach to the size companies that Transylvania County may attract at this time was used while also being considerate of entrepreneurial efforts that the County may want to encourage. To test the breakdowns and points used, staff consulted with TPED's Creative Economic Development consultant to run likely scenarios and they worked with the formula presented on the scorecard.

Discussion and direction to staff is needed on the following areas:

- 1) Are the proportions and measures for scoring appropriate for providing incentives to industry that Transylvania County would likely have the opportunity to recruit? Are points weighted to what Commissioners prioritize in determining if a company locating is an attractive venture?
- 2) Should sense of place factor into the incentive policy points? If so, what factors and with what weight?
- 3) Are the criteria for determining the quality of jobs appropriate? The State requires that a company pay greater than 50% of the premium for health insurance in order to qualify for incentives.
- 4) Should clustering be considered as a factor?
- 5) Should more environmental factors besides LEED certification be included? If so, what are they?

The Manager asked Commissioners to consider the draft policy and provide feedback on the elements of the proposal. She said it may be advantageous to have a workshop in the near future to focus specifically on this.

Commissioners commented briefly. They were in agreement that the assignment of points should have more weight in certain areas. An incentive policy should also be competitive, effective and affordable. The incentive policy is also a statement that identifies the sorts of businesses and jobs the County values and wants to incentivize to locate here. Commissioners agreed to schedule a separate workshop with TPED in January to discuss the incentive policy in detail and make recommendations to staff.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### REQUEST FOR FUNDS FROM CEDAR MOUNTAIN FIRE RESERVE FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS

As of June 30, 2014, the Cedar Mountain Fire Service District Reserve Account had a balance of \$10,068.22. No funds from the reserve account were applied to the FY 2014-2015 budget. On Wednesday November 26, Emergency Services staff received a request from Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue for disbursement of the available funds for the unexpected repairs of the breathing trailer, the generator on Squad 126, and the light tower on Rescue 121. They reported that the total cost of the repairs is estimated to be just over \$17,000. The department is working to identify other funds that may be used to make up the difference in repair costs and funds available in reserve. If they cannot, they will prioritize the repairs with available funding. This request results in a reserve balance of \$0.00 for the Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue Service District. Provided tax collections are consistent or exceed estimates there will be no negative impact. Tax collections less than the estimates would result in a negative balance at the end of the current fiscal year. Operations Manager David McNeill asked Commissioners to approve the request from Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the request for reserve funds for emergency repairs from Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips.** Commissioner Chappell commented that this request shows the importance of having a reserve balance and that each

agency should be working toward this goal. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

#### CHAMPION PARK POOL FACILITY AUDIT

Champion Park Pool was built in 1978-1979 and opened in August of 1979. Since then some repairs have been made including the pool decking, re-plastering the pool liner, replacement of the large sand filter, and many other minor repairs to keep the plumbing, pumps, and other features in operation. With the age of the pool being approximately 35 years old staff constantly struggles to keep the facility operational and safe. There are many areas that the facility is considered “grandfathered” in because of the age of the facility and therefore is not required to meet current code. However, with the significant work that is needed, the County will be required by law to bring everything up to current federal and State codes. This professional audit is needed to determine the true state of the systems and structure of Champion Park Pool and will give staff recommendations on how best to proceed in spending future funds on the facility. Staff requested funding in the amount of \$3,500 to pay for a facility audit and cover travel expenses for the firm. Pictures were included in the agenda packet showing corrosion and cracking.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve up to \$3,500 to fund the facility audit of Champion Pool.**

**The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman.** Commissioner Chappell inquired about the time frame for the feasibility study so that it does not impact the operation of the pool for the upcoming summer. The Manager said the study will happen quickly after approval. Staff intends to request funds to resolve the many issues there in next year’s budget. Commissioner Chapman stressed the importance of maintaining the pool and ensuring it is operational because it is important for recreation.

Commissioner Phillips said he preferred the monies to go more toward the feasibility study rather than for travel costs. The Manager said unfortunately there are no local companies in the area that can perform the study. All of the proposals included travel costs. In this particular proposal the travel costs were less because it was the closest firm. The auditor is traveling from Missouri and plans to complete the onsite visit in one day with the report available within 60 days. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

#### ROSMAN PARK NAMING

The Parks and Recreation Commission (formerly Parks Commission and Recreation Advisory Board) was tasked with naming the new park in Rosman. The Parks and Recreation Commission, with the support of the Board of Commissioners, created an internet based survey to ask the community what they would like to name the park. The results of this survey were included in the Commissioners’ agenda packets.

The Parks and Recreation Commission recommended the Board of Commissioners honor the results of the survey and name the park, “The Rosman Community Park”. Not only did this name receive the most votes but this is also the name that the community started calling the park when it did not have a name. It was noted that members of the Parks and Recreation Commission feels this name is a natural fit for the park.

**Commissioner Chapman moved to name the park “The Rosman Community Park”. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips.** Commissioner Phillips asked to ensure the Hogsed family is recognized somehow because without their generosity there would be no community park. After brief comments, **the motion was approved unanimously.**

#### PARKS AND RECREATION DONATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

There are a few items that have been placed on or at the County’s parks and facilities in memory of an individual. The act of honoring someone through parks and recreation amenities is very desirable in this community. Current examples include trees and benches. The Parks and Recreation Department would like to be able to continue this practice; however, there is no policy directing staff on how to go about this

process. Parks and Recreation Director Carleen Hanscom proposed a policy that will guide staff and the community on how they can memorialize an individual in the County's parks and recreation facilities. The approval of this policy will streamline the staff process for handling memorial requests and how they are implemented.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the proposed Transylvania County Parks and Recreation Memorial Policy, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.**

#### RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has started the process of building a new equipment shop for the Transylvania County operation, which will replace the current small 3-bay shop with a larger 4-bay one. The new shop will have drive-through bays, a machine shop area, welding area, wash bay, an office and parts storage space. The funding is in place for the project and drawings are pending approval. NCDOT needs the sewer line right-of-way so the engineers can locate all the discharge points from the new building which will finalize the plans. This will enable NCDOT to move forward with the bidding and construction phase. The 10-foot right-of-way is shown connecting to the main sewer line and routing around the current animal shelter then under Old Calvert Landfill Road to access the NCDOT site. The Manager asked Commissioners to consider the request from NCDOT, noting there would be no expense to the County.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the right-of-way request from the NCDOT. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman.** If approved, construction will begin in early summer. Commissioner Chappell asked if the Town of Rosman had been consulted and if they were in agreement. He also suggested the line should be designed in such a manner that would be usable for future economic development on that property. There being no objection, **Commissioner Chappell moved to amend the motion to have the line designed in such a manner that would be usable for future economic development on the property. The amendment was seconded by Commissioner Phillips and approved. The main motion was approved.**

#### FUNDS TO HIRE CONSULTANT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Commissioners hired Developmental Associates to conduct the executive search. During that process Commissioners expressed their support for the development of a strategic plan as a tool for guiding the organization forward to achieve comprehensive prioritized objectives. The proposal details that Developmental Associates would facilitate meetings with Commissioners, staff and possibly stakeholders to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the County and prioritize what steps need to be taken to achieve measurable objectives. The strategic plan would become an active tool for use in policy and budget development. This focused approach to the use of resources to achieve objectives then creates efficiency moving forward. The process of developing and using a strategic plan serves the public at large by insuring that there is thoughtful direction to achieve a better outcome for the citizens served. The process would begin with a half day retreat with Commissioners on December 19 to flesh out the details of the strategic plan development process and expectations for Transylvania County. The cost for Developmental Associates to facilitate this process is \$19,500 and if approved, should be paid out of Undesignated Fund Balance.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the request to appropriate \$19,500 to Developmental Associates for the purposes of assisting Commissioners with developing a strategic plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman.** Commissioner Chapman stated that it is time for Commissioners to stop being reactionary to issues that arise and develop a long term plan. He believes Commissioners need the assistance of this firm in order to be successful. Commissioner Lemel agreed and added that knowing what Commissioners value will make the budget process easier. Commissioner Phillips inquired as to how a strategic plan ties in with the comprehensive plan. Chairman Hawkins

responded that it enhances it. As Commissioners establish priorities with limited resources, it will help guide the Planning Board in its process to update the comprehensive plan. Commissioner Chappell added that a strategic plan allows Commissioners to develop tools for success in many areas. At the request of Commissioners, the Manager described the difference between a master plan (single site or single system), comprehensive plan (multiple elements for land planning; elements include transportation and the environment for example) and strategic plan (organization in the community; broader) and how they work together to achieve specific goals. Commissioners agreed they need a plan that does not sit on a shelf and that a strategic plan should be a living working document. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

#### GRANICUS SOFTWARE PROPOSAL

Transylvania County has approximately 30 boards and committees that it either manages or makes appointments to. The Clerk to the Board is responsible for tracking and managing applications, appointments, vacancies and almost all other functions related to the boards and committees process.

Recently a committee was formed to review the entire board and committee process. Members are reviewing the recruitment process, applications, vetting of applicants, and training for board and committee members so they can be effective and engaged members. Tracking of boards and committees is handled by the Clerk and is cumbersome at best and all done manually by using spreadsheets and rosters. The Clerk and Information Technology Director Dean Landreth have been researching and reviewing various software products that are available for tracking and notification purposes. They have been very much impressed with the Granicus software and have been in contact with their office on several occasions to discuss the software capabilities, terms of an agreement, cost, etc.

The Granicus software product allows the Clerk and thus Commissioners to take a more proactive approach at managing boards and committees being that it is all web-based and prompts users (mainly the Clerk) to take action when necessary. All of this work is currently being done manually.

The Granicus software program automates the entire board and committee process. It offers an online application and gives the Clerk the ability to manage the application electronically. Through this web-based program citizens can view information on each board and committee and the qualifications for appointment and complete and submit an application. The Clerk will be able to manage the applications and track appointments so much more efficiently as this is all done manually at the current time. Updates to the website in terms of membership and other information will also occur automatically. This is also currently completed manually by the Information Technology Department.

The proposal from Granicus includes a promotional use if an agreement is reached prior to the end of the calendar year. If the County enters into a 3-year agreement prior to December 1, 2014 the County would have use of the software at no cost through June 30, 2015. The system should be operational and in use by the Clerk and citizens in February 2015. Beginning July 1, 2015, the monthly fee is \$400 per month or \$4,800 annually. The fee is paid on a quarterly basis. The proposal includes an implementation plan which provides for set up and training. The Clerk spends from 10-25 hours per month managing boards and committees. A more efficient process would allow the Clerk to focus on other tasks and projects. The cost savings is not stated here, but the current process is timely and unproductive and requires the use of equipment and supplies that will not necessarily be needed with the new software program.

To summarize, the Granicus software provides a proactive approach for managing boards and committees and eliminates the manual data entry of applications, appointments, web updates, etc. and ensures more accuracy of information. At this time, much of the same information is entered several times onto spreadsheets and other documents which could result in errors. The management of boards and committees takes time and concentration and staff believes the Granicus software module will make the entire process exponentially more efficient.

**Commissioner Chappell moved to enter into a 3-year agreement with Granicus for its boards and committees module and to authorize the Manager and Attorney to negotiate a 90-day opt-out clause. There will be no fee to use the software through June 30, 2015. The monthly fee of \$400 will be charged beginning July 1, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel.**

Commissioner Lemel was supportive of moving forward. She believes this will be a more user friendly system for both the Clerk and citizens and will attract more citizens to become involved. The purchase of this software allows staff to use better technology in an effort to be more efficient. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

#### BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Based on Section 32 of the FY 15 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 either because they increase the total General Fund budget and are derived from funding sources that have not been previously approved by the Board and are not simply pass-through funds or because they decrease the total General Fund budget and reflect reductions in projected funding sources.

#37: \$14,726 carried forward from the FY 14 Supplemental EMPG grant for Emergency Management for Ebola preparedness supplies

#38: \$2,150 for Emergency Medical Services from fund balance restricted by donors for employee appreciation

#39: \$38,165 carried forward from FY 14 for Maintenance for paving projects approved but not completed in the prior year

#40: \$5,057 for the Sheriff's Office from fund balance restricted by donors for K-9 units

#41: \$3,000 for the Health Department due to revisions to State funding for the Immunization Action Plan, HIV/STD program, and Health Promotion

#42: \$6,000 from the Register of Deeds Enhancement Fund for the purchase of a scanner

If approved, these amendments will increase the General Fund budget by \$69,098, bringing it to a total of \$47,519,035.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the requested budget amendments as presented, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.**

#### MANAGER'S REPORT

The following are highlights and updates for the month of December:

- December 8 is the first meeting for the Commissioners where live streaming will be available online. The link can be accessed by going to [www.transylvaniacounty.org](http://www.transylvaniacounty.org). Comporium will also be airing meetings twice a week on channel 102.
- Silvermont window restoration and dormer repair will begin in December and the ADA walking trail at Silvermont is scheduled to begin in January. Both projects represent County funds paired with private donations and outside grants/fundraising to complete.
- The Board of Health has selected a new director with an expected start date of January 5, 2015. Her name is Elaine Russell and she previously served as the Health Director for Cherokee County.

- The employee Christmas party is scheduled for Friday December 12 at 12:30 and the Manager hopes Commissioners will be able to join staff in celebrating the holiday together.
- The Manager has been invited to participate as a panelist in February with NC Management Association. She has also been invited to NC State University in March to speak to students currently enrolled in public administration courses.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Edwin Jones: Mr. Jones commented that forecasters are expecting a severe winter and any repairs made to Champion Pool may be damaged as a result. He asked if other counties are using the Granicus software and if they were happy with it.

Done Surrette: Mr. Surrette said he is excited to hear discussions on economic development. He suggested including staff from the Tax Office in the conversations because they are familiar with property appraisals. Mr. Surrette understands the difficulty sometimes in deciding how to use public dollars toward economic development efforts. Commissioner need to decide upon what is a good investment and use that tool to help guide them in where to spend those dollars.

Gerry Hunsicker: Mr. Hunsicker asked if the NC Association of County Commissioners information was accessible by the public. Commissioner Chapman referred him to their website and noted they have compiled lots of statistics comparing all 100 counties. All of this information is available to the public. Mr. Hunsicker commented that service duplication causes confusion and slows down processes. Finally, he asked how the functions of the Planning Department changed when economic development was removed from that department.

### **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Lemel reported on her Commissioner activities over the last two weeks. She attended the Legislative Goals meetings held by the NC Association of County Commissioners. Her attendance afforded a good opportunity to network with other counties. She also was able to meet with the State Budget Director and had conversations with him about needs in rural counties. Commissioner Lemel participated in an assessment luncheon with SAFE and had a lunch meeting with the Manager and the new CEO of Transylvania Regional Hospital. She announced she would not be able to attend the Employee Christmas Luncheon because she will be at the NC School of Science and Math Board of Trustees meeting, but she hopes other Commissioners will be able to attend.

Commissioner Chapman congratulated the Manager on her recent engagement. He expressed appreciation for the great job she is doing for the County. He wished everyone Merry Christmas and noted that Commissioners have a lot of work ahead of them in the coming year.

Commissioner Chappell encouraged everyone to donate to the Backpack Buddies program. This program provides food packets for over 350 children.

Commissioner Phillips suggested staff invite the members of the Product Development Task Force members to the joint meeting with TPED. He said he will be participating in a financial teaching opportunity on Friday at Brevard Middle School and will be unable to attend the Employee Christmas Luncheon. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Chairman Hawkins welcomed Commissioner Phillips onto the Board of Commissioners. He stated that all the items discussed and acted upon tonight are designed to move the County forward. He announced there

will be an open house here at the new building on Thursday evening and the public is invited to attend. He thanked staff for planning the event. Chairman Hawkins was proud to announce that Duke Energy is going to help fund the TIME program in Transylvania County Schools. Unfortunately though the Secure Rural Schools funding is going to be eliminated so he contacted Congressman Meadows today to voice his opposition to the elimination of these funds and he encouraged others to do so as well.

Chairman Hawkins responded to Mr. Hunsicker. He said TPED met with economic allies with the goal of increasing communications among these groups to avoid duplication of effort. He believes TPED is doing a good job with the transition.

Chairman Hawkins reported that he attended the first meeting of the economic development board he was appointed to by the State. The board is made up of a good group of representatives and he was impressed with the conscientious nature of the membership. The main topic of discussion at the meeting was in the context of helping rural areas. He has been assigned to serve on the business recruitment committee of this board. Chairman Hawkins reported that he attended a workshop sponsored by the City of Brevard on economic development density from a government perspective. Unfortunately he was not impressed with the presentation and was unable to follow the logic. He believes we need to be able to resist the temptations of applying policies that work in larger areas to our area. Chairman Hawkins reported he visited the New Excelsior plant was very impressed with their operations. They received an incentive package from the County. Lastly, he stated he would be out of town on Friday and unable to attend the Employee Christmas Luncheon. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

#### ADJOURNMENT

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

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Mike Hawkins, Chair  
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

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Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board