

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 11, 2016 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, January 11, 2016 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* – Derek McKissock

There were approximately 30 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding declared a quorum was present and 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 Commissioners and staff in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jill Gottesman: Ms. Gottesman is a resident of Haywood County. She works for the Wilderness Society, a nonprofit conservation organization in Sylva. She reported that the Southern Appalachian regional office has been working closely with the plan revision process for the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. They have specifically been working with the local mountain biking community to develop a long term vision for conservation and recreation in Western North Carolina. As a result, the organization has submitted a draft memorandum of understanding to the US Forest Service as part of their public comment period on the wilderness area evaluation process which supports a National Recreation Area designation. The organization believes this designation will be a benefit to Transylvania County. She gave a copy of the proposed memorandum of understanding and area map to the Clerk for dissemination to the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Gottesman noted the document has been supported by 42 organizations and businesses. She understands there is concern by other groups because National Recreation Areas are created individually by potential users to address local needs and circumstances. For the benefit of the public, she stated the agency's definition of a National Recreation Area. Ms. Gottesman asked that the Wilderness Society be a part of any future conversations and said they intend to be available to answer questions and provide accurate information on their quest to seek a National Recreation Area.

Lisa Carpenter Baldwin: Ms. Baldwin is a candidate for the North Carolina Senate. She said she shares the Board's vision of a thriving county and State where businesses and families want to work and live. She asked Commissioners and citizens for input on issues they are concerned about. She invited everyone to visit her website to learn more about her senatorial campaign.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel and Phillips simultaneously. Commissioner Lemel inquired about a statement in the mutual assistance resolution in reference to workers compensation coverage. She asked staff to ensure the statement is supported by the NC Association of County Commissioners and that the County is indeed responsible for workers compensation for an employee working temporarily for another agency. Commissioners agreed to approve the resolution with the caveat that if this statement is incorrect, it would be brought back before the Board of Commissioners. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The Board of Commissioners met in regular session and held its annual organizational meeting on Monday, December 14, 2015 and following held three closed sessions in which the minutes were sealed. The December 28, 2015 Board of Commissioners' meeting was cancelled. Commissioners approved the minutes as submitted.

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A POLICY FOR MUTUAL ASSISTANCE WITH OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Sheriff Mahoney requests the Board of Commissioners adopt Resolution 02-2016 to allow the Sheriff to enter into mutual assistance agreements with other law enforcement agencies in accordance with reasonable arrangements, terms and conditions as may be agreed upon between the respective heads of the law enforcement agencies. A resolution was first approved by Commissioners on January 26, 2009 and according to the minutes should be approved annually. The Board last approved such a policy on January 26, 2015. Commissioners approved Resolution 02-2016 Adopting a Policy for Mutual Assistance with Other Law Enforcement Agencies, but as noted in the motion, staff will confirm the statement about workers compensation.

(Resolution 02-2016 Adopting a Policy for Mutual Assistance with Other Law Enforcement Agencies is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER

In July of this year, the Board of Commissioners approved a recommendation by Commissioner Lemel to implement a recognition program for the purposes of expressing our appreciation to citizens who volunteer their time and expertise on the County's many citizen advisory councils. At the December 14, 2015 meeting, Commissioners recognized those volunteers in attendance and presented them with a certificate and coffee mug. The Clerk mailed the certificates to those who could not attend. Board of Education member Marty Griffin was unable to attend because the Board of Education meeting had been rescheduled to the same date. Commissioners recognized him for his many years of service on the Nursing and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee and presented him with a certificate of appreciation

and coffee mug. Commissioners intend to recognize citizens every six months. Commissioner Lemel noted there are many openings on our citizen advisory councils and she invited the public to apply.

TAX ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

Tax Administrator Annette Raines reported that her department started its public awareness campaign today. They have several group presentations scheduled throughout the weeks and months to come. They intend to mail notices of property valuations on February 29. They will be mailed with a brochure explaining the revaluation process. Property owners should call the Tax Administration office with questions after they receive their notices. Ms. Raines noted that the tax base calculations are not as bad as expected. The second home market took a hit due to new lending practices for second homes. The impact of houses valued below \$200,000 has been positive. At the request of Commissioners, she briefly reviewed the appeal process for the benefit of the public. This is a bullet-pointed summary:

- Notices mailed February 29
- Property owners have 30 days to appeal to Tax Administration; informal appeal can be done via phone, in person, email, online
- Notices to be resent in mid-April
- Next appeal process is to Board of Equalization & Review if property owner does not agree with new notice
- Board of Equalization & Review to hear appeals
- Next appeal level is to the State Property Tax Commission and NC Court of Appeals

Ms. Raines noted there is a vacancy on the Board of Equalization & Review.

Commissioner Phillips inquired if the notices of value include the previous value for comparison purposes. Ms. Raines said this has not been standard practice, but it is an option to consider.

Ms. Raines recognized her staff in attendance. Commissioners thanked them for their very important work.

PRESENTATION BY NORTH CAROLINA FOREST SERVICE

Transylvania County Ranger Frank “Buster” Rogers gave a brief update on the services provided by the North Carolina Forest Service. This is a summary of his presentation:

Mission

The mission of the NC Forest Service is to protect, manage and promote forest resources for the citizens of North Carolina. Transylvania County is comprised of over 240,000 acres and approximately 88% is considered forestland. Half of that belongs to the private citizens of this County. The NC Forest Service manages private property.

Staff and Organization Structure

There are three staffs in Transylvania County. The Transylvania County Board of Commissioners pays a part of the organization’s budget for the services they provide. The NC Forest Service has a presence in all 100 counties.

Services

- Forest Protection Services
- Forest Management Services
- Information and Education Programs

Forest Protection Services

- Over 4,000 wildfires annually statewide
- Transylvania County averages 25 fires per year; usually contained to about 1.5 acres
- Protected over 192 structures worth nearly \$20 million in the past five years in Transylvania County
- Prevention
 - Fire-wise communities – Transylvania County has two certified communities (out of 27 in the State) and working on a third
 - Community Wildfire Protection Plans
- Protect/Education Prevention
 - Law enforcement used mostly as a prevention tool rather than enforcement
 - Local school fire prevention programs
 - Civic group meetings
 - Home Owners Associations
 - 7th grade field days in conjunction with Soil and Water Conservation
 - Fire department training
 - Serves as all-risk emergency agency
- Initial Attack Equipment
 - Type 6 engines
 - Dozers
 - Hand crews
 - Air craft
- Cooperation with volunteer fire departments, incident management teams, fire compacts with designated forests
- Provide protection against insects and diseases that threaten our forests
- Extensive surveys and trapping done annually

Forest Management

- Written forest management plans
- Assist landowners in obtaining necessary management services and carrying out practices
- Site preparation for planting
- Tree planting
- Herbicide treatments
- Forest fertilization
- Intermediate timber harvest
- Final harvest advice
- Water quality and FIA
 - Work with loggers on best management practices to protect water quality
 - Provide forest inventory for the entire State on a five to seven year rotation
- Administer the Forest Development Program providing cost share for forest management practices
- Utilize prescribed burning and other timber stand improvement practices

Information and Education Programs

- Educational programs in schools and civic organizations
- Soil and Water Fields Days for Brevard and Rosman 7th grades
- Smokey Bear Fire Prevention Programs to K-2 annually

Next Greg Smith spoke briefly. He is the District Forester/Supervisor for this region. He thanked the County for the great working relationship the two organizations have with each other. He noted that 40% of the Forest Service's budget is funded by the County which equates to slightly over \$89,000. All of the items mentioned by Mr. Rogers are provided to the County over and beyond the budgeted amount because of the service agreement between the organizations. He noted it costs the Forest Service sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars to manage forest fires.

This concluded the presentation. Chairman Hawkins then opened the floor for questions from Commissioners.

Commissioner Chapman asked if the NC Forest Service sends rangers to help with fighting fires in other counties or states. Mr. Smith responded yes. One advantage is it allows North Carolina to gain national support should we experience a catastrophic situation. The NC Forest Service bills other states for any costs incurred.

Commissioner Lemel thanked Mr. Rogers and Mr. Smith for their presentation. She noted she is a frequent user of the Cooperative Extension Service for handling tree issues on her camp property. She inquired about the process and wondered if the Extension Service makes referrals to the NC Forest Service if a problem is beyond their capabilities or should she be contacting the NC Forest Service directly. Mr. Smith said the NC Forest Service employs foresters and specialists in insects and disease who are available for assistance at any time. They also assist with shade tree and wood lot assistance in both urban and large scale forestry. He encouraged her and all citizens to contact the NC Forest Service with any questions or concerns and said they will assist in any way they can.

Commissioner Lemel asked if there are incentives for a community to become a fire-wise community. Mr. Smith said citizens have to invest so much capita in their community. Once certified, there are opportunities for the community to receive funding for hydrants, widening roads for access/egress for emergency vehicles and equipment, creating evacuation routes, etc. Mr. Rogers noted this does not only apply to communities, but to individual homeowners as well. The NC Forest Service will perform a fire-wise evaluation on a house and suggest ways to make it safer in the event of a wildfire. There are several opportunities available for homeowners through the use of available grant funds.

OLD BUSINESS

DONATION OF SURPLUS VEHICLE TO LITTLE RIVER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

A 2000 Ford Crown Victoria vehicle in the Sheriff's Office has been declared surplus. Little River Volunteer Fire Department has expressed an interest in the vehicle. The estimated salvage value of the vehicle is \$2,446.00. NCGS 160-280 gives authorization to local government entities to donate personal property to a nonprofit organization. The governing board shall post a public notice at least five days prior to the adoption of a resolution approving the donation. The Board of Commissioners authorized staff to post public notice at the previous meeting. Staff has met the notice requirement. The resolution shall be adopted prior to making the donation. Staff requested the approval of Resolution 01-2016 Donation of Surplus Vehicle to Little River Volunteer Fire Department. Upon approval, staff will proceed with the necessary steps to complete the transaction.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve Resolution 01-2016 Donation of Surplus Vehicle to Little River Volunteer Fire Department, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

(Resolution 01-2016 Donation of Surplus Vehicle to Little River Volunteer Fire Department is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

ADOPTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

The Board of Commissioners began a process in December 2014 to develop a strategic plan with a work session identifying six goal statements. Those goal statements were used for the budget process for the current fiscal year. Throughout 2015, task groups met in facilitated sessions around each goal to begin development of strategies and to brainstorm work plan activities that would implement those strategies and accomplish the goal statements. Staff developed a draft of all the information and then held sessions with department heads and again with the task groups to refine the plan and develop strategy measures to arrive at a draft for Commissioners' review and discussion. The draft was reviewed in November 2015 and refined during a facilitated workshop session. The final draft incorporates the changes and, if adopted, will begin to be implemented throughout the organization, particularly during the budget process. Implementation will include tying budget requests and work plans to the strategic plan with a budget product of a master County work plan including annual measures and regular reporting of whether those work plan elements are accomplished using the devised template. A snapshot report of strategic plan measures will be developed in 2016 with the intent to redo the snapshot in 2019 to gauge effectiveness of the strategies. Staff recommended Commissioners adopt the strategic plan as presented. Upon approval, the Manager will begin distribution of the final plan so it can be used to develop next year's budget.

Commissioner Lemel moved to adopt the strategic plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Commissioner Chappell thanked the Manager and staff for all the work that went into the development of the strategic plan, noting this has been a completely different process and experience for Commissioners and Department Heads. Commissioner Lemel expressed her excitement about the County having a strategic plan. She stated it will have a role in the budgeting process and help Commissioners make decisions on where to effectively spend taxpayer dollars and move towards accomplishing a long term vision for the County. She also thanked the Manager and staff for the work that went into this process. Commissioner Chapman has historically been concerned about plans that just end up sitting on a shelf and not getting implemented. He is confident the strategic plan will be living documents that will help Commissioners develop better budgets that work toward established goals. Chairman Hawkins thanked the Manager and staff who worked extraordinarily hard on this process. He thanked Commissioners as well. Chairman Hawkins stated the whole point of having a strategic plan in place is that it provides for a framework through which the Board of Commissioners makes decisions on the individual items that come before them and help them work toward their goals and vision. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

FUNDING REQUEST FOR SITE ANALYSIS AND MASTER PLAN STUDY FOR BREVARD COLLEGE

Brevard College is expected to have interest and/or ownership in downtown property adjacent to County property. As they explore potential uses for the site, a site analysis and master plan is warranted and there is potential to coordinate uses with County property. There is a proposal for a scope of work through Domokur Architects for a study hosted by Brevard College that would look at multiple parcels for a potential master plan. As part of this project, Domokur Architects would explore feasibility of a downtown courthouse on the combined property that would incorporate parking and meet the long term needs of the courthouse to compare with other options on the table, including cost. This would entail engaging County staff as stakeholders in the process. The project would also explore facilities for Brevard College on the site with all potential uses remaining complementary to one another.

Final deliverables would give Commissioners comparable information, as in other studies, for courthouse facilities and offer a potential downtown alternative not presently being considered. It would also look at complementary uses on both County and future College property that are adjacent to each other so that

even if the courthouse were located elsewhere, a building of similar size could be located and still work comprehensively across the entire combined property. The schematics prepared as part of the study would benefit the College as they look at possible future needs and development. There is no proposal that any property change ownership at this time and this study would be intended to explore compatible development across multiple properties that benefit all parties and enhance the downtown area.

The scope of work estimate for the study totals \$58,700. The Board of Commissioners is being asked to contribute \$25,000 towards the study with expected participation as a stakeholder and sharing of ownership of the deliverables. It is expected that both the City of Brevard and Heart of Brevard will contribute to the study as well because of the potential for partnership that benefit all parties and how coordination of development within a block benefit downtown. The Manager recommended Commissioners approve funding as requested so that Brevard College can move forward with approval of a contract for the study. Funding would come from fund balance.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve funding in the amount of \$25,000 for the proposed study of the Brevard College property. The motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins. Commissioners had a lengthy conversation about this proposal.

Commissioner Phillips said the request does not offer enough detail, such as, the exact location of the property and whether or not the study would design a courthouse that is sufficient for 50 years. To him, this is just another study and he believes citizens are ready for the Board to make a decision.

Commissioner Phillips believes a courthouse on this site would be the most expensive option. With that said, he would prefer more detail about the scope of the study before approving the request. The Manager reported that the property is located behind and adjacent to the existing historic Courthouse and connects to property from the Pickelsimer estate that has been willed to Brevard College. The area almost creates a new downtown block. The study would include looking at the feasibility of building a new structure with the same square footage and program needs as a new facility on Morris Road, which is one of the options on the table. The option is being brought forth in response to public comments indicating they wanted a downtown option to meet the needs of court functions. The structure should meet the needs for at least 50 years and would incorporate a parking structure. The time frame to complete the study, once approved by the City and all funding components are committed, is 60-90 days.

Chairman Hawkins asked the Manager if the funds spent on the study would be considered wasted if it turns out that building a new courthouse in downtown is the most expensive option. The Manager said this action is being taken in response to strong response from the public about a downtown option, therefore she does not believe spending the funds on this study is wasteful. One of the deliverables is the County would have an idea of how the property could be developed should it not be feasible cost-wise or otherwise for a new courthouse. In addition, Brevard College will be able to utilize the site plan to determine their future expansion. The plan would also include an option to enhance the site where the old administration building and gazebo exist.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about how the County's proportion of the cost was determined. The Manager stated that a good portion of the study will involve courthouse feasibility on the site. The negotiation was based on each entity's ability to pay and fairness. The City of Brevard and Heart of Brevard would not receive a direct benefit; however, they have funds designated to assist with master plan development in downtown. Domokur Architects already has an existing relationship with all entities. All parties were in favor of the cost proportions.

Commissioner Phillips said he felt like Commissioners are only hearing from a very small portion of the public. He believes the reason users and stakeholders that were once so vocal about wanting the County

to build a new facility at the Morris Road site are no longer speaking out is because they are not confident the County is going to take action.

Commissioner Lemel said she understands the concern about another study, but she believes Commissioners are being responsive to citizens who were strong in their stance about having a functional courthouse in downtown Brevard. Furthermore, the study will be completed by professionals with expertise in site plan development and will aid Commissioners in their decision-making.

Commissioner Chappell said it would be helpful to have more detail about the scope of work involved with the study which may answer questions and concerns. He asked the Manager to confirm that there are no issues with the joint ownership of the study results and the request for proposal process. The Manager reported there are no issues of concern here. Both the County and Brevard College would own the study. There are no issues with the request for proposal process because the elements of the study are very preliminary. It would need to be put forth for advertisement for a full design package for the site.

Commissioner Chappell said he would prefer the motion to be tabled. Therefore, **Commissioner Lemel withdrew her motion.**

Commissioner Chappell moved to table this item to the next meeting and asked for a more in-depth scope of the study to be brought back before Commissioners at the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.

REQUEST FOR WATER & SEWER EXTENSION FOR BREVARD ACADEMY

The City of Brevard has requested the County enter into a joint economic development agreement. The local governments entered into a contract in 2004 that stipulates that when water and sewer are extended outside the City's boundaries, but the property is to be annexed, the City assumes the cost. If the property is not to be annexed, then the County would pay up to the value of the taxes that they would receive over five years. In this request, Brevard Academy is proposing to extend water and sewer to their new location at the former Wood Chevrolet building and to be voluntarily annexed into the City. The City is also looking at running additional lines particularly to pick up one of the neighborhoods along the way that has had some septic issues that are well-documented with the County. The City is waiting for County support in order to extend lines to accommodate Brevard Academy. There is no expense to the County. The property would be voluntarily annexed which does require some level of approval with the changes to annexation laws.

Commissioner Lemel moved direct staff to enter in an agreement with the City of Brevard in support of the voluntary annexation of the Brevard Academy site and allow water and sewer extension to that site at no cost to the County. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

MANAGER'S REPORT

- WCCA CDBG grant request submitted for review and comment from Commissioners; approval will be on the February 8 agenda; the Clerk to the Board has a copy of the grant if anyone is interested in viewing it
- The Medical Countermeasures Point of Dispensing (POD) is scheduled for January 26; every five years the Health Department is required to show they can operate a POD to deliver medicines to our citizens within a certain timeframe in case of an emergency; the exercise will be held at the Parks and Recreation department
- Attended Connect NC Bond meeting today in Henderson County; if passed, Transylvania County should receive funds for investments at Gorges State Park and infrastructure grant money that will be made available to all jurisdictions; Blue Ridge Community College would also benefit

from some infrastructure between the two campuses; the purpose of the regional meetings is to educate the public and local governments

- Sealed closed session minutes continue to be reviewed monthly by the Manager, Attorney and Clerk to the Board; will recommend unsealing them when doing so does not frustrate the purpose of the closed session
- New Animal Services Director, Elma Rae Greene to start March 1, earlier if possible
 - 19 years direct experience, currently working in Warren County
 - Author of “North Carolina Laws for Animals”
- Building Department 2015 Report
 - Highest # permits issued last five years
 - Most new houses/remodels with over \$30 Million in value
 - Commercial activity up with \$15 Million in value
 - Highest total value construction in five years
- Budget Kick-off begins next meeting; budget presentations will include departments reporting on their accomplishments, goals and trends and start to lay the groundwork for the requests Commissioners will see in the Manager’s recommended budget; continuing to move toward data-driven decision-making; the presentations will be made over the next two Board of Commissioners’ meetings
- The Davidson River Connector Road to LET in March according to the NC Department of Transportation; construction is expected to last 18 months; NCDOT intends to add three new projects to the STIP since the State has allocated additional funding for transportation projects
- Preschool Task Force meeting scheduled for late January as a follow up to the release of the State of the Young Child Report; purpose is to discuss next steps and begin to move forward with addressing some of the issues in the report; Manager continues to receive interest from the public
- Smoky Mountain meeting Friday to discuss county-level data regarding the services provided in this County related to mental health, substance abuse and developmental disability
- Kudos to Emergency Management and responders to floods that occurred over Christmas and New Year’s; evacuation in Rosman and many organizations helped:
 - Connestee Fire
 - Sheriff’s Department
 - County Maintenance
 - County Emergency Management
 - County Parks and Recreation
 - Rosman Fire and Rescue
 - Brevard Rescue Squad
 - American Red Cross
- Kudos to Carleen Dixon, Parks and Recreation Director from Gene and Sally Baker who were very complimentary of her work at Silvermont; many accomplishments and improvements to the park made over the last year and implemented well with her leadership
- Kudos to Support Services Director Keith McCoy; spearheaded new program in County Transportation; no longer operating the Lake Toxaway route because of lack of participation; however, he worked with Land-of-Sky on a national effort called the Senior Companion Program which allows volunteers to partner with seniors who need medical trips in and out of the County; there is no cost to the County; will help provide a much needed service, but will also help track data to determine demand as we explore opportunities for providing out-of-county transportation services

Commissioner Lemel expressed how proud she is of Mr. McCoy for getting us involved with the Senior Companion Program because it sounds like a phenomenal opportunity for the County.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about who intends to attend the meeting with Smoky Mountain officials. The Manager reported that she and Commissioner Lemel will be attending. She has also invited representatives from law enforcement, Social Services, Health Department, and others who depend on Smoky Mountain to provide services to the serve their clients.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom Thomas: Mr. Thomas is a Transylvania County citizen. He reported he has been a volunteer in the Pisgah National Forest for the last 43 years. He has been participating with the group that developed a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the US Forest Service. He hopes the Board of Commissioners will be supportive because it will have a positive economic impact on the County. The purpose of the MOU is to request a legislative designation of a National Recreation Area (NRA). Mr. Thomas stated that the designation does not prohibit the US Forest Service from managing the Pisgah National Forest or stop forest products from being taken from Transylvania County in the form of cutting timber, but it will stop the growth of trees for harvest purposes. It also opens up opportunities for additional funding in order to maintain the amount of current and future usage of the Forest. Mr. Thomas encouraged the Board of Commissioners to give serious consideration to supporting the MOU.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Chapman reported that he continues to receive a number of calls from concerned citizens regarding the Rosman pool and its operation this summer. He believes this should be a priority of the County to ensure the pool is open this summer; otherwise it would be devastating to the citizens in Rosman. His message to concerned citizens is that Commissioners are going to do what they can to resolve the issues there.

Commissioner Phillips said he has received many phone calls about the Rosman pool as well and he believes it is important that it remains open to the public. He noted that unfortunately some people were under the impression the pool would be closed permanently.

Commissioner Lemel reported that she, Chairman Hawkins and the Manager met on Friday with Community Foundation of Western North Carolina Director of Programs Phillips Belcher to discuss the State of the Young Child Report. The report is receiving favorable attention for its concise statements regarding the issues facing our young children. She is excited about the next phase of the task force meetings. She noted that the 0-5 population makes up only 4% of the County's population and that the community should be able to wrap its arms around 1,500 children. Commissioner Lemel also intends to provide some information on the homeless youth population soon. She is working on this issue in response to David Siniard's report at a recent Board of Commissioners' meeting.

Chairman Hawkins referred to the comments made about the US Forest Service this evening and reported that at the recent meeting of the Transylvania Natural Resources Council (TNRC), after examining some questions in detail and hearing presentations, members voted to offer their assistance to the Board of Commissioners in determining what, if anything, the County should communicate as a stance or opinion on the service plan revision. He noted that our citizens have many different perspectives on this issue which has resulted in some tension and conflict. He expects the TNRC to work with staff to provide information over the next couple of meetings so the Board can craft a statement to send to the US Forest Service.

Chairman Hawkins moved to enter into closed session per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (5) to establish or instruct the staff or agent concerning the negotiation of the price and/or terms of a contract

concerning the acquisition of real property, after a 5 minute recess, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (5) to establish or instruct the staff or agent concerning the negotiation of the price and/or terms of a contract concerning the acquisition of real property, closed session was entered into at 8:45 p.m. Present were Chairman Hawkins, Commissioners Chapman, Chappell, Lemel and Phillips, County Manager Jaime Laughter, County Attorney Tony Dalton and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan. Commissioners held the closed session meeting in the Arthur C. Wilson, Jr. Conference Room.

As a follow up to a previous closes session meeting, Commissioners received an update from staff regarding the potential purchase of property. Commissioners directed 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, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mike Hawkins, Chair
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board