

**MINUTES**  
**TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**November 14, 2016 – REGULAR MEETING**

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, November 14, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in Commissioners Chambers at the County Administration Building, located at 101 S. Broad Street, Brevard, NC.

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

Media: *The Transylvania Times* – Derrick McKissock

There were approximately 10 people in the audience.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**WELCOME**

Chairman Hawkins welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members of the public for participating in their local government. He introduced Commissioners and staff in attendance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no comments from the public.

**AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

There were no agenda modifications.

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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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

The following items were approved:

**MINUTES**

Commissioners met in special session on Friday, October 28, 2016 for the purposes of going into closed session to discuss a personnel matter. Commissioners approved the minutes of the October 28, 2016 special meeting and sealed closed session as submitted.

## PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

### TRANSYLVANIA NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Transylvania Natural Resources Council Chairman Lee McMinn presented the Council's annual report to Commissioners as required by its bylaws. The Transylvania Natural Resources Council was created to inventory the County's natural areas/resources (completed in 2008), to make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners with regards to the management, improvement and maintenance of those natural areas, and to conduct public education and information series which the Council does at each of its meetings. This is a summary of the Council's activities over the last year:

#### *Annual Report*

- November 2015 – Passed resolution asking Commissioners to add green building practices to their economic incentive policy; no action by the Board of Commissioners
- January 2016 – Submitted request to Commissioners to begin funding of a program to identify and treat adelgid-infected hemlocks along the headwaters; requested funding in the amount of \$15,000 in order to leverage public and private funds; Commissioners requested development of detailed implementation policy which the Council is ready to present
- February 2016 – Submitted a resolution at the request of Commissioners stating opposition to the establishment of Wilderness Areas and their non-support of any move to establish National Recreation Areas within the Pisgah National Forest; resolution was subsequently adopted by Commissioners and submitted to appropriate legislators and agencies
- March 2016 – Submitted a request to Commissioners to create a position of Natural Resources Specialist charged with implementing remedial efforts to preserve our natural heritage and enhance or restore the “significant natural areas” identified in the inventory completed in 2008 (67 identified as significant; 200-250 management recommendations); position not included in the FY 2017 budget, but Council intends to resubmit request for FY 2018 budget
- Continues community education series by providing panel discussions and question-and-answer sessions at each Council meeting; presenters are asked to answer questions related to the natural resources that are important to their activity, the economic impact of those activities, their concerns relative to those natural resources, and to cite which County policies and procedures would be important to their future
- Meetings are not usually well attended and many times attendance depends on the planned topic of discussion; meetings are covered extensively by the local newspaper
- November meeting activity (walking tour of Headwaters State Forest) cancelled because of wildfires in the region
- Experienced changes in membership
- Currently one vacancy on the Transylvania Natural Resources Council for an at-large member
- Co-sponsored showing of movie *Hell or High Water* about the flood of 1916; expect future presentations addressing issues of landslides, flood prevention and related issues

This concluded the presentation. Chairman Hawkins called for Commissioner comments and questions.

In reference to the identified significant natural areas, Commissioner Lemel asked if these areas are located on more publicly or privately held land. Mr. McMinn stated that more areas are probably located on publicly held lands because the study consultant had more access to public lands. He was unable to gain access to some areas because landowners either would not grant access or because of the timeframe he had to complete the study. Mr. McMinn noted that one of the management recommendations in the study was to perform a follow up to the study and attempt to gain access to those areas not inventoried.

Chairman Hawkins expressed interest in touring the Headwaters State Forest. Mr. McMinn reported that the initial tour was scheduled for November 11, but it was moved to November 18 because of Veterans Day. It is now being postponed because of the wildfires and will likely be rescheduled to either March or April.

Chairman Hawkins mentioned the current vacancy and inquired about any applications on file. Mr. McMinn noted that the Council is fully functional despite the vacancy, but will be recruiting to fill the position. The vacancy has been advertised and there are no applications currently on file.

Chairman Hawkins expressed appreciation for the work this Council does and thanked them for their help with the forest study plan that the Board reviewed earlier this year. He said that the resolution crafted by the Council was very specific and provided logical rationale with its recommendation. Other Commissioners in the region commented that the resolution was by far the most coherent of the resolutions submitted with regards to the forest study plan.

Commissioner Phillips asked if the meeting time is prohibitive to public participation. Mr. McMinn stated that the meeting time is prohibitive to the public, but not Council members. Public attendance depends mostly on the topic being discussed. There were over 30 in attendance at the recent meeting at which cycling and its impact on the County were the main topics. The local media provides extensive coverage of their meetings for the benefit of the public.

Commissioners thanked Mr. McMinn and the members of the Transylvania Natural Resources Council for their service and for being such an active Council.

## APPOINTMENTS

### JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

Marilyn Kaylor represents the mental health director/designee on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. She recently resigned her position with Smoky Mountain/VAYA Health. Ashley Edmonds is taking over her duties and should be appointed to fill her spot on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to appoint Ashley Edmonds to fill the mental health director/designee position on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.**

## OLD BUSINESS

### PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN ORGANIZATIONAL OPTIONS

On September 26, the Board of Commissioners and Brevard City Council held a joint session during a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for the purposes of receiving the City and County Parks and Recreation Master Plan document. The Master Plan prepared by the consultant suggests that the City and County work together to provide a coordinated, efficient customer service experience by working to consolidate services.

Both Boards directed their respective staff to prepare the pros and cons of different options for presentation to the joint Parks and Recreation Task Force and to get feedback on next steps. On October 20, staff met with the Task Force to review the options. The Task Force discussed and considered the following options and indicated support to pursue **Option A: Form an Authority** because it provided the most flexibility and opportunity to improve services for citizens.

### **Option A: Form an Authority**

A separate entity that reports to a board/commission that is jointly formed by the City and County

#### *Process*

- The City and County form a joint authority to operate the parks and recreation system
- How the board is appointed must be determined by both parties
- Funding agreement must be developed between both parties
- Agreement must include: duration, authority being granted, how personnel is to be handled, how authority board is appointed, how budgeting and finance is conducted (accounts payable, fiscal reporting, audits, payroll), human resources (benefit administration, liability and property insurance, personnel policy), administration (hiring/firing), how real property will be managed if the agreement is abandoned or expires, legal rights for operating the property and other operational guidelines
- This option could be structured so that both entities maintain ownership of all or parts of the parks systems so that assets are not lost

#### *Funding*

- Funded out of general fund from both, per an established agreement
- Taxing authority cannot be delegated, but each agency could develop their own policy for designating funds in their respective general funds

#### *Pros*

- Neither entity would be “in charge”
- Authority board would have single focus of parks and recreation and no concern with other competing services, needs or mandates and could include a combined set of goals in the agreement
- Parks and Recreation would be in a single system
- Increase opportunity for grants
- Could be done in incremental steps depending on structure of the agreement
- Some projects could get more attention/support by being countywide in service area

#### *Cons*

- Budget process would have to include both the City and the County to establish the budget for the authority annually; at times there could be differing levels of commitment
- Would need to contract for finance and human resources services or duplicate infrastructure
- Would need to determine liability, workman’s compensation and property insurance either as umbrella under a jurisdiction or separate

### **Option B: City Lease Parks to County**

Use a lease structure and funding agreement from one agency to the other to provide a single parks and recreation program

#### *Process*

- The City leases all or some park land and facilities to the County by lease agreement
- A funding agreement from the City to the County is created to cover maintenance and/or recreation programming
- Each agency adjusts staffing levels as needed per organizational needs; staff at both the County and City parks and recreation departments perform other grounds keeping functions so this option cannot assume that staff would come out of service where they are currently to be in the authority staffing structure

- Agreement must include: duration, authority being granted, how personnel is to be handled, how authority board is appointed, how budgeting and finance is conducted, human resources, administration, how real property will be managed if the agreement is abandoned or expires, legal rights for operating the property and other operational guidelines

*Funding*

- Funded out of general fund per an established agreement; funding would be approved annually and managed through the general fund of the County for Parks and Recreation department

*Pros*

- Less complex than setting up a separate authority
- Less duplication of administrative infrastructure; County administrative infrastructure already in place
- Parks and Recreation would be in a single system

*Cons*

- Depending on terms of funding agreement, budget process would require annual interagency collaboration
- One agency would have more influence over the direction of Parks and Recreation while the other would be “hands off” for official purposes
- Each agency will need to adjust personnel to meet needs (analysis required in each agency to determine what other activities are conducted by existing personnel)

**Option C: County Lease Parks to City**

Use a lease structure and funding agreement from one agency to the other to provide a single parks and recreation program

*Process*

- The County leases all or some park land and facilities to the City by lease agreement
- A funding agreement from the County to the City is created to cover maintenance and/or recreation programming
- Each agency adjusts staffing levels as needed per organizational needs; staff at both the County and City parks and recreation departments performs other grounds keeping functions so this option cannot assume that staff would come out of service where they are currently to be in the authority staffing structure
- Agreement must include: duration, authority being granted, how personnel is to be handled, how authority board is appointed, how budgeting and finance is conducted, human resources, administration, how real property will be managed if the agreement is abandoned or expires, legal rights for operating the property and other operational guidelines

*Funding*

- Funded out of general fund per an established agreement; funding would be approved annually and managed through the General Fund of the County for Parks and Recreation department

*Pros*

- Less complex than setting up a separate authority
- Less duplication of administrative infrastructure
- Parks and Recreation would be in a single system

*Cons*

- Depending on terms of funding agreement, budget process would require interagency collaboration annually
- One agency would have more influence over the direction of Parks and Recreation while the other would be “hands off” for official purposes
- Each agency will need to adjust personnel to meet needs (analysis required in each agency to determine what other activities are conducted by existing personnel)

**Option D: New Authority Takes Lead on New Expansion of Park Facilities**

Under this option, City and County maintain current parks and recreation facilities. Expansion of new parks and recreation facilities would be under an Authority.

*Process*

- Create authority as shown in Option A, but retain separate parks and recreation programs at the City and County as well
- New facilities would fall to the new authority

*Funding*

- County wide tax increase or funded out of general fund from both per an established agreement
- Taxing authority cannot be delegated, but each agency could develop their own policy for designating funds in their respective general funds

*Pros*

- Authority board would have single focus of recreation and no concern with other competing services, needs or mandates
- Some projects could get more attention/support by being countywide in service area

*Cons*

- Creates a third parks and recreation agency and more confusion for citizens
- Budget process would have to include both the City and the County to establish the budget for the authority annually; at times there could be differing levels of commitment
- Would need to contract for finance and human resource services or duplicate infrastructure
- Would need to figure out liability, workman’s compensation and property insurance either as umbrella under a jurisdiction or separate

**Option E: “Do Nothing” Option – Leave City and County Parks with No Change**

No changes made to the operations of either City Parks or County Parks and Recreation.

*Process*

- Nothing is required; however, plans would need to be considered on how to better serve our citizens as two individual agencies which is the main concern we have been trying to address with the operations review
- Some needs to consider
  - Master planning together
  - How to assist citizens with park questions in City parks
  - How to offer rentals in City parks
  - Steps to complete a joint greenway
  - Are there ways we can work together still to gain some efficiency?
  - Consider quarterly joint County Parks & Recreation Commission and City Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee meetings to help facilitate collaborative efforts

*Funding*

- Funded out of general fund per each agency annually

*Pros*

- Both agencies retain existing facilities and determine levels of service
- Budget process remains the same

*Cons*

- No consolidated system for customer service improvement
- All collaborative efforts are a piece at a time
- Grant opportunities may be missed because of lack of collaboration

After reviewing all of these options, the Task Force indicated overwhelming support for **Option A: To Form an Authority** because it provided the most flexibility and opportunity to improve service to citizens.

Additionally, the Task Force suggested the following:

1. County staff will share this recommendation with County Commissioners for discussion.
2. City Manager Jim Fatland indicated he would like to present the Task Force recommendations to the City Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee prior to presenting this to City Council.
3. The County was asked to contact the City to determine if the two can work together to do a full ADA assessment of our park facilities; City Parks and Property Management Director Lynn Goldsmith noted at the meeting that the City was already looking into this. The County is hopeful we can work together on this and share a consultant. As of yet, the City has not responded with interest in partnering.
4. The County is working on a NC Connect Bond Grant that would address some ADA needs as well as new additions at South Broad Park. The application will be submitted by the end of the year.

The Task Force will convene once staff has received direction from City Council and the Board of Commissioners should the decision be to pursue a structure under Option A. The Manager asked Commissioners to consider the pros and cons of the options presented as well as the recommendations of the Task Force.

Chairman Hawkins asked for clarification as to who prepared the document detailing the various options. The Manager informed Commissioners that it was a work product from County and City staff. They met prior to the Task Force meeting, reviewed the different options, and prepared the document for presentation to the Task Force and subsequently the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Hawkins wanted to stress that a lot of work went into the information presented and he commended staff for their work.

Commissioner Chappell suggested that while the Board is in the process of digesting this information and prior to City Council receiving the recommendation, the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Parks, Trail and Recreation Commission move forward with joint meetings as recommended. They may be able to offer other ideas related to the consolidation recommendation or other alternatives not detailed in the presentation. The Manager stated she could initiate this by contacting the City Manager and City Council and informing them of the Board's desire for these groups to start holding joint meetings. She will also direct the Parks and Recreation Director to have the Parks and Recreation Commission take the

lead and schedule quarterly meetings with the City's committee whose membership is made up of two City Councilmembers and City staff.

Commissioner Phillips requested that the Town of Rosman be represented as a government entity and have equal input. While he understands that Rosman Community Park is part of the County's system, since the master plan study was completed the Town of Rosman has taken over ownership and operation of Champion Park and Pool and they have proven their ability to operate a parks and recreation system and therefore should be represented and allowed to offer input.

To include the Town of Rosman, Commissioners discussed either modifying the makeup of the Task Force (which was created by resolution) or utilizing the Parks and Recreation Commission which is comprised of countywide representation. Two City Councilmen serve on the City's Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee, but the County's Parks and Recreation Commission contains no elected officials. Elected officials from both the City and the County serve on the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan Task Force which includes members of the County's Parks and Recreation Commission and City staff. Given the level of conversation that needs to occur, it is important that there is equal elected official involvement. After further discussion, Commissioners decided the best option moving forward would be to modify the Task Force to include a second Commissioner and up to two Rosman Aldermen depending on the Town's wishes and for the Task Force to start meeting at a minimum of every other month. Commissioner Chappell asked that the Task Force not be committed to Option A until all new members of the group are educated on the options.

To reiterate the direction of the Commissioners, the Manager stated she will communicate to the City of Brevard and Town of Rosman the Board's desire to expand the Task Force and for the Task Force to begin meeting to revisit the options and bring back a recommendation. In the meantime, staff will begin working on the other recommendations, such as the ADA review, to include the Town of Rosman. The Manager will provide updates to the Board when available.

Chairman Hawkins stressed that the Task Force needs to have a timeline for bringing back a recommendation. He noted that the master plan was presented two months ago and we are in a sense starting over by reconvening the Task Force with additional membership. The Manager will strive to begin holding Task Force meetings in December with a recommendation coming back to the Board in March.

## NEW BUSINESS

### DISCONTINUATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL PLAN REVIEW

In March 2010, Commissioners gave approval for the Building Permitting Department to perform residential plan reviews; however, the practice was not implemented. Residential plan review is not required by the Department of Insurance, with the exception of alternative methods of construction, such as modular homes and log structures. The Fire Marshal anticipates little or no impact on ISO ratings by discontinuing this policy.

Building Permitting Director Mike Owen stated that implementation of residential plan review will cause delays in issuing permits, add costs to the customers, and may require the addition of a qualified plan reviewer to handle this task. He recommended Commissioners discontinue the previous directive to require residential plan review.

**Commissioner Phillips moved to discontinue the previous directive to require residential plan review beyond what the Department of Insurance requires. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel.** Commissioner Chappell noted that the backup data in the Board's agenda packet

indicates one of the reasons residential plan review was implemented was because the Department of Insurance noted it as a deficiency. He asked for confirmation that not requiring residential plan review would have no impact on insurance rates. Chairman Hawkins was concerned about this as well and wondered what had changed since the directive was made by Commissioners. Mr. Owen shared his conversation with Fire Marshal Gerald Grose in which he was advised that there would be no impact to insurance rates. He noted that other counties require this practice, particularly larger counties, but they also have staffing levels to accommodate the workload. Mr. Owen said he is not opposed to performing residential plan reviews; however, his current staffing level could not perform the task in a timely manner and it adds another layer of burden to contractors and homeowners. He said his office provides customer service second to none and it is his goal to continue that. Commissioner Phillips stressed that if State law does not require it, there is no reason for the department to require residential plan review. Chairman Hawkins agreed, but stressed that if not requiring residential plan review begins to impact insurance rates the Board will modify its directive with the understanding that it may require additional staffing. Commissioner Lemel agreed with the recommendation, but was still concerned about what had changed since the 2010 directive and asked for further confirmation from the Department of Insurance that insurance rates will not be affected. Staff will provide the information. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

#### HOME FUNDS APPLICATION 2016

Joy Fields, County Planner presented this agenda item. The Planning and Community Development department requested permission to apply for a HOME Funds grant application for 2016. It is intended to rehabilitate four owner-occupied residences in Transylvania County for owners making 50% or less of the median income. This is similar to the Scattered Site Housing grants that the department has assisted with in the past. The department would like to submit the application with the Board's support.

Transylvania County has been a part of the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium for many years. They receive funding from HUD based on population. Transylvania County's population figures are included. Ms. Fields stated that while Transylvania County does not have a project for affordable housing in the works, there are homeowners that are struggling to keep their homes safe and affordable. Using reallocated funds in a way to rehabilitate these homes to ensure their safety and that they are up to code would keep four families in safe and affordable housing.

There is no cash match from the County. These funds come from the federal government. Ms. Fields requested approval of the HOME Funds grant request.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the \$220,000 HOME Fund grant request. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell.** Commissioner Phillips noted the similarity to the Scattered Site Housing grant and expressed concern that not all citizens were aware this help was available to them and he shared the same concern with this grant. At the same time, he felt it was not the role of government to spend taxpayer dollars in this manner and that assistance should come from churches and local communities. Ms. Fields reported that the last Scattered Site Housing project which came from the federal government in the form of HUD funds attracted 24 applicants. The grant was advertised via the local newspaper, radio and other media. Once applications were received, staff ensured each property had a clean title and that the cost of rehabbing the house could be done within the allocated funds. From the 24 applicants, seven were served by the last grant based on selection criteria and a scoring system that included elderly status, income level, disability status, and families with children. Commissioner Lemel appreciated Commissioner Phillips' comments and shared his frustrations about the appropriate use of taxpayer dollars; however, she stated this is the system in which we live and if Transylvania County does not apply for these funds they will be awarded to another county. She said she would rather the funds, which are taxpayer dollars, come back to Transylvania County to help the less fortunate be able to remain in their homes. Commissioner Chappell noted a discrepancy in the amount reported on the application

that is included in the Board's agenda packet and the amount Ms. Fields is requesting Commissioners approve tonight. Ms. Fields reported that the original request was for \$165,000 to rehab three homes; however, the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium asked that the County increase its application request to include funds to rehab a fourth home, otherwise the funds would be used in another region. The Board's agenda packet should have included the revised application. Staff will send the revised application to Commissioners. Commissioner Chappell disagreed with Commissioner Phillips on this matter and stated that these funds go to help those in need and furthermore that the funds cycle through the economy by creating work for contractors and the like. Chairman Hawkins said he does not see these funds as being a government handout, but rather as a means to help the elderly, disabled and desperately poor in our community to have fundamentally basic housing. He has seen from personal experience how this assistance has changed lives and he is supportive of the grant request. Commissioner Phillips stressed that he does not disagree with the fact that we want to help people, he just disagreed with the method. **The motion passed by a vote of 3 to 1, with Commissioner Phillips voting against.**

#### WAYFINDING PROJECT PROPOSAL

Over the past five years the City of Brevard has installed a comprehensive wayfinding signage project within its jurisdiction. The signage is designed to be welcoming, attractive, functional and useful in creating a community brand. The City partnered with the Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA) to cover the costs of the signage.

In recent months, Commissioners Chappell and Hawkins have been discussing the possibility of extending the wayfinding project out into the County. The purposes would be similar to that of the City, but applied to areas and attractions around the County. It is recommended that the County use the City's existing templates and specs, substituting the County logo for the City logo. This ensures consistency in brand, as well as a reduction in design and setup costs.

A rough concept would be to produce up to 10 additional signs to be placed in strategic road locations and directing motorists to locations throughout the County. Examples might include the Rosman and Cedar Mountain business areas, as well as attractions such as Gorges State Park, DuPont State Forest, Pisgah National Forest, Connestee Falls Park, PARI, and others.

Commissioners Chappell and Hawkins have also discussed the desirability of asking the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to evaluate its signage in conjunction with this project. The goal would be to reduce signage clutter, especially in congested areas of the County.

Current TCTDA Chairman Randy Burgess worked with City Planning Director Daniel Cobb to estimate possible costs per sign and their best guess at this point is in the \$6,000 per sign range. The TCTDA has allocated \$25,000 in its FY 2017 budget to partner with the County on this project, should Commissioners decide to move forward.

Staff is requesting permission to explore the idea further, including: 1) identifying potential signage locations, 2) determining contents of signage, 3) developing specs and cost estimates for the project, 4) working with NCDOT on a signage inventory and possibilities for reduction in signage in areas of the County, and 5) exploring grant opportunities to increase potential impact of the project. Staff expects this work to take 90-120 days, which would put us in a mid-spring timeline for reporting back to Commissioners with recommendations.

**Commissioner Lemel moved to direct staff to identify potential signage locations, determine the contents of the signage, develop specs and cost estimates for the project, work with NCDOT on a signage inventory and possibilities for reduction in signage in areas of the County, and explore grant opportunities to increase potential impact of the project. Staff is directed to report back to**

**the Board in the spring with a recommendation. The motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins.** Commissioner Chappell thanked the TCTDA for their assistance with this project. He is supportive of the project because it is important to be able to advertise our resources and keep people in the County. In addition, he believes the reduction of sign clutter is an important aspect of this project. He was also appreciative of the fact that there may be grant funds available to assist the County. Chairman Hawkins agreed, stating that this is part of a strategy to ensure we have appropriate signage and reduce signage clutter. Chairman Hawkins also noted there are no funds allocated within the budget at this time so Commissioners will have to commit funds should they decide to move forward with the project after they receive staffs' recommendations. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Clark Lovelace was in attendance. He supported the request as presented by the Manager.

#### MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported the following:

- Shop with a Cop to be held on December 10
- Transylvania County School Nutrition Program received USDA Award for Backpack Buddies for Summer Feeding Program in cooperation with School Resource Officers
- New County website redesign underway; increase accountability and transparency and intended to be more user friendly
- Solid Waste project repairing cells 1-4 is complete; waiting on rain to stabilize seeds on banks; staff will continue to monitor
- Today Manager hosted Open World Group from the Republic of Georgia; a project of Henderson County's League of Women Voters; visitors had questions about social inclusion and how our democratic process works at a local government level; shared that they have the same frustrations as we do with the budgeting process
- Drought update
  - Public health concerns over air quality; working to ensure public understands impact of air quality issues on health
  - Burning ban imposed by Fire Marshal's office
  - Co-operative Extension funding available for agriculture issues
  - SBA loans available for businesses impacted by drought
- Kudos Report
  - Congratulations to Commissioners Jason Chappell, Mike Hawkins and Page Lemel on their successful reelection to the Board of Commissioners.
  - Swearing in ceremony and organizational meeting of the Board of Commissioners to be held on the morning of Monday, December 5 in Commissioners Chambers.
  - Thanks to Commissioner Chapman and staff for work on Veterans Day Ceremony held at Courthouse Gazebo last Friday. It was a fitting tribute to our veterans.
  - Received compliments about our Library from Mayor Jimmy Harris; he wanted Commissioners to know they work hard serving the community; praised facility and staff there
  - Praised Benny Frady in the Sheriff's Department and Courthouse Security; officers roaming County campus to ensure departments and buildings are safe; helps to address concerns about safety and security
  - Congratulations to Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan for completing her course work and examinations. She is now eligible to apply for her NC County Clerks certification.
  - Thanks to NC Forest Service, all of our fire and rescue departments and Emergency Services staff for working to protect the County from the wildfires and smoke danger; no active wildfires in Transylvania County but we are still on high alert; staff waiting to pull

together a shelter if necessary to do so; Transylvania County 911 FaceBook page will post any emergency information; in response to a post, we are now providing text alerts for updates on wildfires; collections for water and Gatorade for emergency personnel can be dropped off at several locations

- Congratulations to Commissioner Chappell for recently being inducted into the Rosman Alumni Hall of Fame for his public service.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Edwin Jones: Mr. Jones asked County Attorney Tony Dalton if there were any possibilities of the County being held legally liable for discontinuing residential plan review. He commented on the wayfinding project, noting there are over 400 access points to the French Broad River between Rosman and the Tennessee state line and he recommended that river access points be included in the signage project.

## COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Lemel reported that the Early Child Initiative has been extremely busy. They are planning several activities for the 0-5 population that will encompass the entire week of April and the first week in May. The focus will be on our young families in an effort to strengthen our families and provide support systems that they need in order to stay healthy, productive and together. In addition, she is working on the challenges of public transportation in rural counties. Transportation provides access to jobs, education and a multitude of other opportunities. There are opportunities on the horizon that could greatly benefit the County. She will report back information as groups move forward with some action steps.

Commissioner Chappell thanked all those who supported his reelection to the Board of Commissioners. While he ran unopposed, he said he does not take that for granted and he said it is a privilege to serve the citizens of Transylvania County.

Chairman Hawkins announced that former County Commissioner Fran Waser passed away last week. He recognized her service as a County Commissioner from 1980-1992 noting she is one of five females to serve as Commissioner in the history of Transylvania County. Mrs. Waser also served as the first woman chair. Her passing deserves to be noted. He offered condolences to her family.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Commissioner Lemel moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Phillips 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