

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 23, 2017 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, January 23, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in Commissioners Chambers at the County Administration Building, located at 101 S. Broad Street, Brevard, NC.

Commissioners present were Chairman Larry Chapman, Jason Chappell, Mike Hawkins, Vice-Chairman 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* – Derrick McKissock

There were approximately 40 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

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

WELCOME

Chairman Chapman 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

Candice Walsh: Ms. Walsh is the Executive Director of the Cindy Platt Boys & Girls Club. The Boys & Girls Club was founded by the late Cindy Platt in 1999. It is a youth development organization that is focused on enabling all youth in the County to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens. They do that by focusing on three outcome areas: academic success, healthy lifestyles, and good character and citizenship. The Boys & Girls Club is serving over 250 youth a day. In 2016, they served 702 school aged youth through their after school and summer programs. Of the kids they serve, 62% receive free and reduced lunch, 45% live in households with an annual income less than \$30,000, and 80% of families fall outside of the standard of having their basic needs met. The building the Boys & Girls Club occupies has reached its full capacity and there are 60 youth on a waiting list to join. They are exploring opportunities to relocate the high schoolers in order to retain the other members and accommodate some of that growth. They also continue to explore opportunities to partner with the County and others to find ways to meet the needs of these youth in order to ensure they have a great future.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. Commissioner Lemel commended the WCCA on their grant application. In it they cite some of the greatest needs of some of our citizens. At the top of the list is affordable housing. She thought it was worth mentioning to the public. Chairman Chapman inquired about when the delinquent tax list will be advertised. Tax Administrator Jessica McCall reported that the list will be advertised in March. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The Board of Commissioners met in regular session on October 24, 2016 and November 14, 2016. Commissioners approved the minutes as submitted.

UNSEAL CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Commissioners met in a series of closed sessions during their search process for a new Tax Administrator. On December 12, 2016 the Board announced the appointment of Jessica McCall as the new Tax Administrator. Staff requested Commissioners unseal these minutes and make them available for public inspection. Commissioners approved the recommendation and unsealed the closed session minutes from October 28, 2016, November 1, 2016 and November 30, 2016 and instructed the Clerk to make them available for public inspection.

DISCOVERY, RELEASE & MONTHLY SETTLEMENT REPORT

Each month the Tax Administrator has a listing of proposed releases for that month. The Board of Commissioners has the responsibility of approving the releases. For December 2016, total tax dollars released was \$237.71 and refunds totaled \$262.06. Commissioners approved the Discovery, Release & Monthly Settlement Report for December 2016.

2016 DELINQUENT TAX LIST

Advertisement of delinquent taxes is required per NCGS 105-369(a). Commissioners must approve the list before it is advertised. Any delinquent taxes paid prior to the date of advertisement will not be advertised. Commissioners approved the 2016 Delinquent Taxpayer List and ordered Tax Administrator Jessica McCall to advertise the list per NCGS 105-369(a).

FY 17-18 COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT APPLICATION

Western Carolina Community Action is making application for a Community Services Block Grant. These grant funds help families in Henderson, Polk and Transylvania Counties out of poverty. The Boards of Commissioners of all three counties are required to acknowledge receipt of the grant application and be given the opportunity to offer comment. The Clerk to the Board forwarded the grant application packet to Commissioners on December 22, 2016. Commissioners acknowledged receipt of the grant application, but provided no comments. Commissioners authorized the Clerk to the Board to sign the *Documents of Submission to County Commissioners* form and submit to the WCCA for inclusion with the grant application.

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

2025 TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Planning and Community Development Director Mark Burrows stated this is the second staff report on the 2025 Comprehensive Plan that the Planning Board adopted as a draft in August. This presentation will highlight the two remaining focus areas of the plan: Land Use and Livability and Health, Culture and

Equity. Mr. Burrows and County Planner Joy Fields will make the presentation and will also review an implementation and accountability schedule for the Board's consideration. This is a summary of the presentation:

Land Use and Livability Focus

Land Use and Livability Goal: Transylvania County recognized and supports private property rights while actively seeking ways to promote new growth and development through citizen driven policies and procedures that include, but are not limited to, safety, livability, extension of utilities, road improvements and community character.

Land Use and Livability Objective 1: Supports land use that increases the economic opportunities while preserving the cultural and natural resources.

Land Use and Livability Objective 1 - Strategies:

- a. Actively protect property rights by recognizing that the first and best use of property is determined by property owners who have a right to earn a living on their properties, and who are wholly responsible for the control, use and exchange/disposal of their property within current applicable laws
- b. Facilitate community based workshops to identify local concerns and help create possible solutions
- c. Support market driven development of greater housing options and advocate for changes to the building codes for proven, safe housing alternatives
- d. Identify alternative funding mechanisms to support affordable in-fill housing throughout the county
- e. Collaborate with other agencies and jurisdictions to identify and encourage the redevelopment of underutilized properties for future industrial, commercial and/or residential use
- f. Review and update existing ordinances as needed to facilitate development that preserves forests, prime agricultural lands, sensitive areas and natural resources including the native flora and fauna
- g. Adopt policies that protect the county's interest to support future economic development

Land Use and Livability Objective 2: Ensures public safety efforts are financially supported, well-coordinated and prepared for future growth.

Land Use and Livability Objective 2 – Strategies: *Mr. Burrows noted that the County's role is in many instances a supportive role, not an active role.*

- a. Continue to support, align efforts and partner and with local, state and federal public safety-related organizations to maximize efficiency and reduce duplication
- b. Encourage and assist public safety agencies to be trained and equipped to address the changing demographics of the county
- c. Evaluate the potential for full-time fire and emergency professionals in the future
- d. Assess and support the construction of additional facilities to address identified needs to improve emergency response times
- e. Develop appropriate infrastructure and educational programs for bikes and pedestrians to ensure safer roads
- f. Evaluate future construction, equipment and personnel needs in light of accessibility by emergency services
- g. Support the Sheriff's office in fostering community partnerships countywide
- h. Continue to hold dialogue sessions between law enforcement and citizens to increase understanding and cooperation
- i. Review and revise, as needed, the emergency response protocols to make efficient use of volunteer and professional resources

- j. Continue to support the planning for and training of emergency personnel to address the safety needs during natural and man-made disasters
- k. Support efforts to move residents toward self-sufficiency during disasters

Land Use and Livability Objective 3: Promotes exceptional community facilities throughout the county.

Land Use and Livability Objective 3 – Strategies: *Mr. Burrows noted that he and his staff are meeting with representatives from several of the community centers this week to help identify their concerns and needs. This is based in part on direction given by the Board of Commissioners during the development of the budget. Staff has invited many service providers to attend these meetings as well so they can hear what those needs might be and offer assistance where needed.*

- a. Ensure public buildings have strategic facilities plans that are reflective of population changes and needs
- b. Support an indoor athletic facility with a pool for year-round use by the citizens
- c. Support the development, maintenance and planning for continual operation of a community center within each township or community
- d. Evaluate funding mechanisms and invest in recreational sites and facilities within each township or community
- e. Invest in necessary updates or new development of a courthouse that supports the needs of citizens
- f. Support the development of additional high-quality childcare facilities throughout the county and evaluate new funding mechanisms to support preschool and early education efforts
- g. Evaluate the viability of a public shooting range

Board discussion of the Land Use and Livability goal, objectives and strategies ensued.

Commissioner Lemel appreciated the acknowledgement of the community centers and the potential role that they could play in our community development. She also appreciated the mention of the early childhood efforts and its importance to the life of our community. She was also pleased with the recognition of the potential strength of recreational programs and the role they play in the quality of life for our citizens.

Chairman Chapman asked staff during their meetings with community center representatives to determine if they have written policies to support their vision for their respective community centers. Mr. Burrows stated that the majority of community centers are struggling to find leadership, to determine their role, etc. and his department has been approached by some of them for assistance. The meeting is meant to be exploratory to ask about their needs and learn more about their structure and also to get a feel for what their long term goals are.

Commissioner Chappell appreciated the strategy that refers to actively protecting private property rights. It is part of the County's ordinance related to planning, but he felt it was important to be stated in the plan. Chairman Hawkins commented that this particular strategy says two different things to him. The first part of strategy states that property owners have rights when it comes to their property, but then contradicts that statement by noting there are laws that restrict their use. Commissioner Chappell did not feel the strategy contradicted itself. Mr. Burrows stated that the crux of this discussion by the Planning Board was related to land use in terms of zoning as a future type of control. The Planning Board wanted to focus on preserving property rights within the context of current ordinances and laws. He noted that only about 12% of the land in the County is not under some type of control or restriction. The wording of this strategy is ultimately what the Planning Board voted on to include in the draft.

Chairman Chapman asked if staff or the Planning Board have identified where they expect development and growth to occur and where land use planning would be critical. Mr. Burrows said the Planning Board discussed countywide zoning, small area planning where each community decides how they want their township developed, and corridors. Growth in Transylvania County will likely occur in and up with access to water and sewer because of the limitations we have with our terrain and those areas already under some type of control. The Planning Board had a great deal of discussion about this, but they did not want to set areas. Commissioner Hawkins stated that a fundamental component of the plan is the identification of logical locations of growth over the period of the plan. Not having this identified in the plan severely limits the plan in his opinion. Commissioner Hawkins suggested a statement within the plan narrative that states where growth is likely to occur based on the characteristics of the County. Knowing where and what kind of growth we expect will help leaders determine services, policies, staffing, etc. to accommodate such growth. Mr. Burrows believes it is reasonable for the Board to ask staff and the Planning Board to address these areas before putting the plan before the public for a hearing.

Health, Culture, and Equity Focus (Joy Fields)

Health, Culture, and Equity Goal: Transylvania County is an inclusive, healthy and well-rounded collection of communities and neighborhoods that all have access to the cultural, recreational, educational and service-oriented resources that support a high quality of life. *Ms. Fields noted that through their public outreach efforts, citizens acknowledged that we have a good quality of life. She stated that quality of life should be maintained in a manner that will bring economic growth, support young families, and help our youth stay in this County and stay connected. To have a high quality of life requires a healthy community. Agencies here do a great job at addressing health needs; however, there are some areas that still need to be addressed and these needs were identified in the recent health assessment completed by the Public Health Department.*

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 1: Values the physical and mental health of all citizens, and is recognized as a leader in Western North Carolina for actively providing access to excellent health care facilities and services.

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 1 – Strategies:

- a. Support citizens' health through actively promoting exercise, recreation and access to affordable and nutritious foods
- b. Partner with existing agencies to address community needs such as medical, dental and mental health
- c. Support efforts to provide knowledge of local services to Transylvania County residents by networking, supporting and partnering with others to increase the effectiveness of our services and the services of community non-profits
- d. Support efforts to maintain Transylvania Regional Hospital as a full-service medical hospital
- e. Support efforts to reduce homelessness
- f. Support the expansion of outreach efforts for veterans by veterans
- g. Actively seek to identify needs and encourage coordinated efforts to strengthen the family within our community
- h. Support efforts to reduce substance abuse

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 2: Recognizes and actively advocates for the diverse interests and cultures of the community and fosters cooperation between citizens and communities throughout the county, while valuing the county's rich cultural and historic heritage.

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 2 – Strategies:

- a. Coordinate communication efforts between Brevard, Rosman and Transylvania County governments

- b. Actively focus on community well-being by promoting communication, interaction and cooperation between the diverse segments of the county
- c. Coordinate efforts with other agencies, jurisdictions and stakeholders throughout the county to make possible the preservation of historical and cultural resources
- d. Support the various racial, religious and cultural groups that comprise Transylvania County's population
- e. Support a diverse, geographically representative and citizen-driven Community Advisory Board to focus on community relations
- f. Encourage greater civic engagement from populations with geographical and socio-economic diversity that is representative of the entire county
- g. Advocate with one voice at the state and federal level for improvements that benefit the entire county, for example NC DOT

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 3: Actively encourages and supports high-quality art (music, performing, and visual) and recognizes the cultural, economic and educational impacts of these cultural resources.

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 3 – Strategies:

- a. Preserve the county's distinctive sense of place and small town atmosphere by supporting efforts to promote local arts, culture and heritage
- b. Support efforts to preserve and educate residents about the cultural heritage of the community
- c. Support and encourage local festivals, celebrations and events
- d. Support and partner with the Brevard Music Center, Transylvania Community Arts Council, Brevard College and area artists to develop more outlets/venues for local artists to showcase and sell their music, art and crafts

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 4: Promotes the health and well-being of its citizens, by providing and actively supporting high-quality and well maintained parks, recreational facilities, programs and services throughout the county.

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 4 –Strategies:

- a. Support development of programming at recreational facilities to enhance physical and mental well-being of all ages and abilities
- b. Partner with public and private entities to promote multi-use trails
- c. Support additional efforts from private and public entities to continue the development of the French Broad River and its tributaries as recreational and economic development venues
- d. Expand the recreational programs and facilities to capitalize on the abundant natural resources found in the county
- e. Advocate with NC DOT to develop bike lanes, trails and pull-offs to help minimize the danger on the road between bikes and motor vehicles
- f. Advocate for the development, funding and maintenance of state and federal lands, including NC State Parks, NC Forest Service Recreation Areas, the Blue Ridge Parkway and national forests

The Planning Board debated the strategy related to the multi-use trails. They discussed that not everyone in the community has the ability to access all trails. They supported the multi-use trails to provide additional access for the entire community.

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 5: Supports life-long learning and personal advancement that enables the county to retain an educated workforce and maintain the high-quality of life.

Health, Culture, and Equity Objective 5 – Strategies:

- a. Encourage policies and resources necessary for all students to excel
- b. Promote independent and lifelong learning opportunities through the Transylvania County Library, Blue Ridge Community College, Brevard College and other institutions
- c. Support the continuation and expansion of the small business incubator programs, internship opportunities and other skills training provided by local and regional institutions
- d. Partner with local educational institutions and other agencies to establish the county as a certified work ready community
- e. Actively support early childhood education programs and childcare resources and referral services
- f. Support collaboration efforts between all public and private educational institutions in the county
- g. Evaluate/assess potential funding mechanisms for the maintenance and upgrades of our educational facilities/buildings to be amongst the best in North Carolina
- h. Support and encourage participation in early and emergent literacy programs and kindergarten readiness programs
- i. Support the development of solutions to improve kindergarten readiness
- j. Support and fund programs that provide resources necessary for exceptional instruction

This concluded the presentation. Board discussion followed.

Commissioner Hawkins asked for an example of a use of land or a piece of built environment that would come from one of these strategies. Ms. Fields cited buildings for schools as an example. These buildings take up land and leaders have to determine the best place to locate these facilities. Supporting the development and upkeep of educational facilities is a way to use the land they are on already or identify other areas that need to be developed for those educational facilities. Commissioner Hawkins sees many of these strategies as action steps. He also believes the plan would be stronger if these strategies were tied to specific examples.

Chairman Chapman struggled with the usage of some of the words used in the plan such as advocate and support. Commissioner Hawkins concurred because the strategies and action steps have to be measurable as much as possible. Ms. Fields said the Planning Board wanted the plan to be broad enough to allow for specific action steps. How we encourage or advocate might become an action step toward implementation. Mr. Burrows stated that the plan is designed to give the Board of Commissioners and County the opportunity and flexibility in a 10-year period of time to accomplish many things that fit within the broad objectives and strategies. He also noted that the Planning Board spent a fair amount of time developing a template for reporting progress to the Board and public. It is included in the plan for the Board's consideration.

Commissioner Hawkins felt it was important to honor the work done by the Planning Board and staff over the last year and having a working document in place that fits into the County's annual work plan. The final implementation of the items in the plan might be more strategic than related to land use. He recommended staff work with the Manager to determine those strategies listed in the plan that we are already doing and inform Commissioners of those.

Commissioner Lemel referred to the Annual Success Matrix that staff drafted as a way to track implementation and accountability. She asked at level are the determinations made about whether an item is complete, ongoing or discontinued. She also saw an opportunity to merge the comprehensive plan with the strategic plan for the purposes of developing the annual work plans. Mr. Burrows stated that staff will begin the process of tracking through an annual review, but ultimately the Manager and the Board of Commissioners are determining the status of the strategies.

Commissioner Lemel inquired further about the Annual Success Matrix. She was unaware of Commissioners conducting any such annual review on the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and sought direction from staff on ways the Board can ensure accountability. The Manager suggested this become part of the annual work planning that department heads do now. The Strategic Plan includes an appendix of suggested action steps. Each year department heads can review the appendix to identify steps they can take to help forward the Strategic Plan. The Manager believes staff and Commissioners can connect the comprehensive plan in the same manner through annual work planning. She suggested another review of the draft comprehensive plan to differentiate between action steps and strategies and incorporate those action steps into the annual work planning progress.

Commissioner Chappell thanked staff, the Planning Board, and community advocates for the tremendous amount of work that went into drafting this document. He appreciated the diverse input expressed during each meeting and that ultimately led to a document that the Planning Board was in agreement on. He also appreciated that the plan has enough flexibility to allow for grant opportunities.

Chairman Chapman asked Mr. Burrows as the Planning and Community Development Director if he felt this plan meets the needs of the County moving forward. Mr. Burrows stated that the draft plan is a good document. The plan includes a tremendous amount of information that will benefit citizens, nonprofit organizations, businesses and others. The amount of time and energy exploring what other communities across the nation are doing is invaluable. He noted that over 2,200 citizens responded to the survey that is incorporated into the plan. He said the piece that is missing from the plan from staffs' perspective is corridor use and areas of future growth. Having this information in the plan will serve as a resource for the Board of Commissioners for economic development and other areas. Mr. Burrows also commented that one of the positives about this process was the amount of citizen engagement and how technology helped ensure staff could communicate with so many more citizens.

Commissioner Hawkins noted that part of the reason we have a comprehensive plan is there are many grant funding opportunities that require such a plan to be adopted. He offered a hypothetical scenario in which the County wants to get assistance in extending utilities along the corridors. He asked if this comprehensive plan puts us at a competitive advantage or disadvantage in terms of our chances of successfully obtaining grant funds. Mr. Burrows believes there are enough strategies in the plan that focus on the need for economic development, affordable housing, recreation, etc. to make the plan somewhat competitive, but it is not clear in terms of where we expect to see growth over the next 10 years.

Chairman Chapman asked Commissioners to review the plan once more and inform staff of any areas they feel should be looked at further by staff.

Commissioners directed staff to:

1. Identify growth areas to include in the plan thus strengthening the plan
2. Separate strategies from action steps
3. Be more specific in strategies, instead of using words like advocate, support, or encourage, or add action steps to determine how to advocate, support, or encourage
4. Identify what we are already doing

This work should be done in one month. Afterwards, Commissioners will conduct a final review and schedule a public hearing at a date to be determined.

APPOINTMENTS

COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

Support Services Administrator Keith McCoy retired from the County effective January 1, 2017. Management Analyst Jonathan Griffin is fulfilling the Transportation Director duties at this time. Part of these duties includes serving on the County's Council on Aging. The Manager requested Commissioners allow Mr. Griffin to serve on the Council on Aging until the Transportation Director position is filled.

Commissioner Chappell moved to appoint Management Analyst Jonathan Griffin to serve on the County Council on Aging until the Transportation Director position is filled, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.

REGIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING

Delores Stroup and Dan Hodges serve on the Regional Council on Aging in their roles as Senior Tar Heel Delegate and Alternate Senior Tar Heel Delegate, respectively. Their terms expire at the end of January. LeeAnn Tucker with Land of Sky Regional Council requests the Board of Commissioners reappoint them to serve in their current capacity.

Commissioner Lemel moved to reappoint Delores Stroup and Dan Hodges to the Regional Council on Aging to serve in their roles as Senior Tar Heel Delegate and Alternate Senior Tar Heel Delegate, respectively. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

ABANDONED CEMETERIES BOARD

John Monteith resigned from the Abandoned Cemeteries Board. The members recruited to fill the vacancy and as a result the Clerk received one application. The Abandoned Cemeteries Board recommends the appointment of David Reid to fill the vacancy.

Commissioner Lemel moved to appoint David Reid to fill the vacancy on the Abandoned Cemeteries Board, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Mark Emory retired from his position at Transylvania Regional Hospital, but agreed to stay on in his position on the Workforce Development Board until his replacement. New State rules related to this board require that the local chamber of commerce select private sector business appointments for consideration by the Board of Commissioners. The Chamber of Commerce recommends the appointment of Allyson Davenport to replace Mark Emory. She does not live in Transylvania County, but currently works as the Human Resources Director for the Pisgah Inn. The Chamber feels she will be an asset to the Workforce Development Board and therefore requests a waiver of the residency requirements for her as well.

Commissioner Chappell moved to waive the residency requirement and appoint Allyson Davenport to the Workforce Development Board to replace Mark Emory. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. Commissioner Chappell reported that Ms. Davenport has been extremely involved in some of the initiatives of the Workforce Development Board, especially with the greater emphasis on travel and tourism. He feels she will be a great advocate for Transylvania County. Commissioner Phillips inquired about any interest from Transylvania County residents. Staff informed the Board there were no other applications. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW

The terms of James Cruickshank and Claudia Hawkins expire at the end of January. Both are eligible for reappointment; however, Mrs. Hawkins has informed staff that she does not wish to be reappointed. There are two additional applications on file.

Commissioner Lemel moved to reappoint James Cruickshank to another term on the term of Board of Equalization and Review, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Lemel nominated and moved to appoint Jim Lorenz to replace Claudia Hawkins, seconded by Chairman Chapman and unanimously approved.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENTS

County Commissioners serve on various boards and committees in the County, region and State. Staff requests Commissioners discuss whether or not they want to continue serving in their same capacity. Here is a breakdown of the boards and committees on which Commissioners currently serve:

Larry Chapman

1. Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (appointed by BOC)
2. NCACC District Director (elected by NCACC)

Jason Chappell

1. Land-of-Sky Regional Council – alternate member (appointed by BOC)
2. Work First Planning Committee (cyclical)
3. Personnel Board (appointed by BOC)
4. Rural Planning Organization (appointed by BOC)
5. French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization, ex-officio (appointed by BOC)

Mike Hawkins

1. Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, ex-officio (appointed by BOC)
2. Land-of-Sky Regional Council-primary member (appointed by BOC)
3. French Broad Water Resources Study Committee (appointed by BOC)
4. Gorges State Park Advisory Committee
5. Tourism Development Authority (appointed by BOC)
6. Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Board of Directors

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1. Dupont State Recreational Forest Advisory Committee
2. Joint Parks and Recreation Strategic Planning Task Force (appointed by BOC)
3. Smoky Mountain LME/MCO County Commissioner Advisory Council (appointed by BOC)
4. Early Childhood Initiative Task Force
5. Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Task Force
6. REACH (Homeless Teens) Task Force
7. Extension Advisory Council

Kelvin Phillips

1. Board of Health (appointed by BOC)

Included in the Board's agenda packet was information regarding those boards and committees in which Commissioners are statutorily required to serve on. Chairman Chapman asked Commissioners to review their appointment status and determine if they want to continue serving in the same capacity. The Clerk will add this item to the next agenda for a decision by the Board.

In addition, Chairman Chapman asked for Commissioners serving on boards and committees to make regular updates to Commissioners on the work being done by the respective boards and committees they are serving one.

OLD BUSINESS

UPDATE ON RESCUE SQUAD AND REQUEST FOR LOAN EXTENSION

Assistant County Manager David McNeill presented this item. The Board of Commissioners approved a plan to allow the Transylvania County Rescue Squad to continue providing services while the department worked with an accountant to meet its contractual arrangement with the County. This included a loan for operational expenses while the Rescue Squad completed the annual audit and reinstatement of IRS tax exempt status. The agreement called for completion of the requirements as outlined by the County and repayment of the loan on January 31, 2017.

The Transylvania County Rescue Squad has been working with Carl Shaw, CPA to complete the audit and paperwork necessary to gain the tax exempt status from the IRS. Mr. Shaw reports that an audit for FY 15 could not be done due to a lack of financial records, but his firm had prepared financial statements of FY 15 and he believed they accurately reflect the current status of the department's finances. Mr. Shaw is on retainer to continue working with the Rescue Squad and has implemented some strategies to prevent future irregularities with their financial statements.

Mr. Shaw also confirmed that his agency had completed the form 990s as required to obtain the tax exempt status and submitted the required paperwork for reinstatement. Mr. Shaw stated that, based on his expertise, March 31, 2017 was a worst case scenario for receiving notice from the IRS of approval for the tax exempt request. However, he received a response from the IRS today requesting 45 days to review the documents. Given this information, the Rescue Squad has asked for an extension of the due date to May 31, 2017 with the understanding that no additional funding would be recommended until the IRS tax exempt status approval is received. The Rescue Squad has committed to continue providing services during this time.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the request to extend the due date on the loan to the Rescue Squad to May 31, 2017. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. Commissioner Lemel commended Chief Whitlock on the thorough and detailed report that was submitted to the IRS. Chairman Chapman asked if the Rescue Squad's capacity to offer services has been diminished due to a loss of funds. Chief Whitlock said the Rescue Squad is trying to rebound from a loss of membership. Their financial situation is fine with what they have in place and they are expecting payment from future claims to ensure their compliance with the County's loan requirement. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

PURCHASE OF HARRIS SOFTWARE MODULE FOR AFFORDABLE CARE ACT REPORTING

Human Resources Director Sheila Cozart presented this item. The Affordable Care Act requires employers with at least 50 full-time employees to offer health insurance coverage to all employees who work an average of 30 hours per week or 130 hours a month. The health insurance coverage must meet "minimum essential coverage" and must be a "reasonable" cost. The law also requires employers to send a statement to all eligible employees on an annual basis containing information related to that coverage (Form 1095C), regardless of whether or not they participate in the employer's health plan. As an applicable large employer, Transylvania County is also required to report this information aggregately in an electronic format to the IRS.

The first year reporting was required, which called for proof and documentation of time worked for each employee, was in 2016. The County's financial and human resources software, SmartFusion, was able to generate the necessary information to meet the requirement. Staff assumed that the software provider, Harris Local Government, would continue the application for compliance for 2017 and beyond. However, in November staff in the Finance department learned that Harris Local Government had decided to partner with Integrity Data in order to produce the required reporting forms after determining they could not develop a reporting system to accommodate the more than 80 changes to the ACA. This leaves the County with no other feasible option under the time constraints but to purchase new software to meet the reporting requirements. The financial impact to the budget for this year is \$7,450.

Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the request and appropriate \$7,450 from fund balance for this purpose. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel. Ms. Cozart confirmed this is to comply with 2016 reporting requirements and will be ongoing. Future reporting requirements are unknown at this time. Staff is exploring software provider options for future years. The Manager reported to Commissioners that she has asked the Finance Director and Human Resources Director to begin considering whether or not Harris Local Government is the right software provider for the County. There have been several instances in which she feels the services being provided were not adequate to help us function or where we were being charged excessively for pieces that should have been part of doing business within that software package. A change in software will require a significant upfront investment, but she feels it would be an overall better use of funds. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

COUNTY VEHICLE FLEET ANALYSIS

Management Analyst Jonathan Griffin presented his work on the County vehicle fleet analysis. This analysis is part of the work plan we submitted to the NC Association of County Commissioners for his position. It is also one of the key items staff wanted to have completed going into the next budget process.

Mr. Griffin conducted his research from September through November 2016. He reviewed data from internal files and external partners (contract with City of Brevard) and held interviews with department heads county-wide. Individual departments are primarily responsible for monitoring the preventative and required maintenance of their vehicles.

One of Mr. Griffin's primary findings was that the County needs to create a framework for better communication and retention of the data about its vehicle fleet. For example, the City of Brevard might notify a County department that their vehicle is due for maintenance, but there is no internal tracking to ensure the department is keeping up with the preventative maintenance. Secondly, Mr. Griffin found that the County would benefit from the adoption of a formalized system of evaluating proposals for vehicle replacement. An objective policy would make it easier for Commissioners during the budget cycle to make determinations on vehicle requests.

Fleet Overview

- 141 total vehicles across all County departments
 - 62 vehicles assigned to the Sheriff's Department
 - 60 vehicles assigned to other County functions (Tax Administration, Social Services, Health Department, etc.)
 - 13 vehicles assigned to Solid Waste, 7 ambulances assigned to EMS and 1 bookmobile
 - Average vehicle in the fleet is 9 years old (model year of 2007)
 - Average vehicle mileage is 87,000
 - Lifetime maintenance costs of \$4,100

Potential Specific Policy for Sheriff's Office

- The Sheriff's Office requested a specific policy for their law enforcement vehicles
- The Sheriff's Office is one of the largest users of these resources
- The American Public Works Association recommends a policy to replace law enforcement vehicles at 80,000 miles or 36 months of duty, whichever comes first
- 80,000/36 month policy means 11 vehicles have to be replaced; five most recent vehicle purchases for the Sheriff averaged at approximately \$47,000; therefore, approximately \$517,000 to bring the uniformed divisions up to speed
- Beyond patrol vehicles, vehicles for non-uniformed officers must be considered; if replaced at 100,000/48 month rotation, then 11 of those vehicles need to be replaced as well
- Approximately \$1,034,000 to begin to implement that policy
- There are currently 29 vehicles that have a uniformed officer therefore to meet this industry standard we would have to replace nine per year; for context, 10 were replaced last year

Policy Proposal

- Each vehicle will be rated on a 1 to 20 point scale
 - 1 to 5 points based on age (lifetime of vehicle)
 - 1 to 5 points based on mileage (length of use)
 - 1 to 5 points based on mileage per year (rate of usage)
 - 1 to 5 points based on average annual maintenance cost (financial commitment per year)
- Applied to all vehicles except for those assigned to Solid Waste, EMS and the Library
- This proposal is virtually identical to what Montgomery County uses and very similar to the City of Brevard policy

Policy Advantages

- This type of policy allows flexibility– target a specific rotation of vehicles, a specific criteria at which something gets replaced
 - Example: The Board could choose to set aside the funds to replace the top 10 scoring vehicles – for FY 2018, that would mean replacing 6 vehicles for the Sheriff's Office, 1 for the Communications department, 1 for the Tax Office and another for Animal Control
- Average cost of 10 most recently purchased vehicles is \$36,000 – this would require budgeting around \$550,000 including equipment costs for Sheriff's vehicles

This concluded the presentation. Board discussion and direction ensued.

Commissioner Lemel stated she very much enjoyed the report and was pleased with the data he collected. The report indicated that in September there were 36 vehicles that had not gone through its preventative maintenance cycle which is important to maintain the life of the vehicle. It is hard to manage when no single person is accountable.

Commissioner Hawkins agreed that the report was well prepared and presented. He commented about the proposed point system and stated that although we do not have a formal system in place staff already considers factors such as age, mileage, wear and tear, etc. when making recommendations to the Board. The Manager confirmed, but agreed it is not a formalized process. She said the policy reflects decisions Commissioners have made in the previous year; however, having a policy in place makes it objective and evens the playing field for department heads.

Commissioner Hawkins noted that Mr. Griffin included a utilization report in his information to the Board. Outside of the Sheriff's Office vehicles, it indicates a high of 62% in some months and as low as 20% in others. He wondered if a common pool of vehicles was feasible. Mr. Griffin stated that this type

of management is possible, but it would require investments in software. He did not study that possibility any further because he thought it was more prudent to focus on the near term needs. With that said, he added that moving toward having a common pool of vehicles could be advantageous because the model could result in the consolidation of some vehicles.

Commissioner Lemel encouraged Commissioners to consider implementation of these recommendations separately. She believes the first step should be to adopt a policy related to the operation and accountability of the vehicles, as well as the point scoring system to assist the Board with planning for upcoming and future budgets. The second part would be an analysis of combining some of the vehicles as some are moved out of service, possibly implementing a fleet operation for some of the departments that do not have high utilization. After that determination is made, the third piece would be to determine whether or not to invest in computer software to manage the fleet. Mr. Griffin concurred that implementing a policy for communicating and gathering data is most important. What he has constructed in his analysis is a snapshot which might not lend itself well to a real deep analysis of utilization. Until more information is gathered, it would be difficult to move forward.

Commissioner Phillips inquired about how staff will ensure departments are meeting their preventative maintenance schedules. Mr. Griffin's assessment was that the oversight requires more executive attention, so he cited the County Manager or designee as being responsible for gathering this information in the short term.

Commissioner Phillips noted that County vehicles receive quality preventative maintenance, well above what the average person might spend on their personal vehicles. Newer vehicles require less maintenance and he wondered if we might modify the maintenance schedule to make it less cumbersome. The Manager suggested a maintenance schedule based on the manufacturer's recommendations. She agreed with previous comments that the first step should be to adopt a policy to utilize during the budget process and then to recommend accountability standards as stated by Commissioner Phillips.

Commissioner Hawkins moved to adopt the point schedule recommendation for use during this upcoming budget year and to ask the County Manager to develop a process through which we are comfortable that our routine maintenance is being done consistently across all departments. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel. For clarification, Commissioner Lemel asked if this motion included adoption of the policy. Commissioner Hawkins said his motion is to adopt the point system for the development of the upcoming budget year and nothing further. Commissioner Lemel said she hopes Commissioners consider adopting a policy at a future meeting. The Manager pointed out it would be a great step forward to use this policy during FY 2018 and then evaluate from there. It would give staff more time to answer questions related to customizing maintenance schedules and to conduct further analysis on non-Sheriff's Office fleet. Administration has been managing a micro-fleet which gives staff a snapshot of what a larger fleet program might look like and determine if any vehicles can be eliminated. Commissioner Chappell asked to see a comparison of the Manager's previous recommendations versus what the point system would recommend as a tool to help draft a policy. Commissioners thanked Mr. Griffin for the work that went into this report. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

BOARD UPDATE REGARDING SPAY NEUTER PROGRAM

Animals Services Director Elma Rae Greene presented this item. She reported that the low cost spay neuter clinic located in Transylvania County has closed; therefore, the need for low cost, accessible pet spaying/neutering services within the community is not unmet. Of the approximately 14,000 owned dogs and cats in Transylvania County, nearly 25% of those animals are not sterilized. To put this into perspective, Ms. Greene stated that if just one of those animals has a litter of five, the animal population could potentially grow to 17,000.

Animal Services and FOTAS (Friends of Transylvania Animals) have partnered to develop a future program to provide accessible spay-neuter services to the general citizenry. Animal Services is now transporting animals to the Humane Alliance clinic in Asheville because the County's local ordinance mandates the surgical neutering of dogs and cats prior to adoption. FOTAS provides subsidies for the spaying and neutering of pets at the Humane Alliance in Asheville.

Local pet owners are requesting access to the Humane Alliance being they have no options for low cost spay/neuter services in Transylvania County. In an attempt to meet the need and accessibility of this service, Animal Services proposed providing private pet owners with affordable transportation for a minimal fee of \$10. Mr. Greene pointed out that the addition of transporting privately owned animals is expected to increase time and labor costs to the program in the following ways:

- Additional paperwork is required to be obtained, recorded and distributed
- Increase in animals handled increases the time required, i.e.; identifying, loading, unloading
- The office will receive an increase in inquiries and time in responding to inquiries
- Contingency planning required when owners do not adhere to schedule

Ms. Greene stated that this program is intended to be a stopgap measure for ensuring this service is accessible to our citizens and to help reduce the animal population. The fee will help cover the cost of transporting.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the \$10 animal transport fee for Animal Services. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hawkins. Commissioner Phillips stated that the fee does not cover the full cost of transport according to the information provided by Animal Services. He was concerned about the impact to the department's budget. Ms. Greene stated the estimated cost is approximately \$11.60 per animal. Commissioner Chappell expressed concern that this program might negatively impact the services the department is already providing. Ms. Greene reported that volunteers assist with the trip to Asheville at times. However, Animal Services is already transporting animals to Asheville, so the additional animals from local pet owners are essentially riding along. She feels that if the County does not make this effort now, we will pay for it in the future. In response to Commissioner Lemel, Ms. Greene reported that over the next six-month period she anticipates 300 privately owned animals will be transported. Commissioner Phillips asked if Animal Services anticipates having to hire another staff person. Ms. Greene said the transports are occurring once per week and allows the department to comply with the local ordinance. The program has been implemented for a month and so far it is going well. She does not anticipate the additional work to be substantial enough to request more staffing. Her department will be providing biannual reports to the Board to keep them apprised of the status of the program. Chairman Chapman stated he did not want to discourage citizens from participating in the program. If staff needs to adjust the fee in the future to cover costs, they can come back before the Board to do so. The Manager clarified that the department is not adding more trips; the privately owned pets are riding along with shelter animals. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

FINGERPRINT COMPUTER PURCHASE

Captain Eddie Lance presented this agenda item. He reported that the State of North Carolina under the United States Department of Homeland Security received a Secure Communities grant to provide all Sheriff's offices with a fingerprint computer in 2008. The Sheriff's Office received the current system in late summer of that year.

North Carolina General Statute 15A-502 (a1) requires that a person charged with a felony be fingerprinted and those prints are to be forwarded to the State Bureau of Investigation. Additionally, under subsection (a2), a person charged with certain misdemeanors is to be fingerprinted and those prints

submitted to the State Bureau of Investigation. The Sheriff's Office is also required by court order to fingerprint individuals with certain conviction of crimes which are to be submitted electronically to the SBI.

The current system uses the Windows XP Operating System and averages 2,000 processes a year. In the spring of 2016, the hard drive was replaced due to a critical error. In December of 2016, the system experienced a critical failure. Since this failure, Sheriff's Office staffs have had to take arrestees out of the security of the jail and to the public lobby to fingerprint them. Additionally, the scanner that scans the prints is no longer manufactured.

The fingerprint station in the lobby is operating on the same system that failed so there is a concern that this system could potentially fail. If this system fails, the Sheriff's Office will have no ability to submit fingerprints electronically as required by North Carolina law. This system is used to fingerprint applicants for concealed carry, education, health care and public safety. The cost to replace the system is \$37,444 and staff requests Commissioners approve the purchase with funds to come from Fund Balance.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the purchase of the fingerprint system in the amount of \$37,444 plus applicable sales tax with funds to come from fund balance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Commissioner Lemel commended the Sheriff's Office for negotiating a really good price for this equipment. Commissioner Hawkins inquired about the lifespan of the equipment. Captain Lance stated that the typical lifespan is 5-8 years. Technology is constantly changing as well. Commissioner Hawkins commented that this purchase is a significant capital expense and inquired if this is part of the Sheriff's Office 5-year capital plan. Captain Lance said the Sheriff had intended to budget for the replacement in the upcoming budget being that the scanner is no longer manufactured. The Manager pointed out that jail revenues are ahead of projections at this point and could help offset the purchase. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

REQUEST FROM CEDAR MOUNTAIN FIRE RESCUE

Assistant County Manager David McNeill presented this item. Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue is requesting the County sign a letter acknowledging that Cedar Mountain Fire has made them aware of its intent to obtain a loan for new capital assets, the department is in compliance with its contract with the County and the County has no objection to the transaction. They are also requesting the County provide prior years' funding information for Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue to the financial institution.

These are standard forms required by most financial institutions for approval of loans to nonprofit fire rescue organizations. In the past, the County has added wording to the letter to include "acknowledgment of this transaction does not obligate Transylvania County for repayment of any loan agreements entered into by the department and it is recommended with this transaction as well.

Commissioner Lemel to authorize letter including the acknowledgement that this transaction does not obligate Transylvania County for the repayment of loan agreements entered into by the Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue department. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell. In response to questions from Commissioners, Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue President Jimmy Jones reported that the loan will reduce the department's annual debt service payments by extending the length of the loan and reducing interest rate. He stated that the loan would not increase the annual budget request. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

ACTUAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION THROUGH SECOND QUARTER OF FY 17

Finance Director Gay Poor gave an overview of financial activity for the first six months of the fiscal year.

General Fund

Half way through the year, actual General Fund revenues had reached 56.9% of the amount budgeted. At the end of December, 76.5% of the current year ad valorem taxes had been collected, versus 80.5% through December of 2015. The net increase of \$172,169 in ad valorem taxes reflected the impact of the higher tax rate, offset to a large extent by the lower tax base and year-to-date collection rate. Sales tax revenues continued to improve, exceeding FY 17 projections by 13.3% and FY 16 actuals by 8.3% for the three months of sales taxes distributed to date. Both real property excise taxes and building and inspection fees surpassed prior year actual levels and budget expectations. The significant growth, particularly in commercial construction, pushed building and inspection revenues to 90.9% of the total projected for the entire year. While only 28.9 % of other revenues had been received, this is comparable to FY 16's 29.7% six month level and is normal for this point in the fiscal year mainly because of the lag in State and federal reimbursement funds and grants that have not been used yet. Overall, FY 17's revenues exceeded FY 16's through the second quarter by \$579,744.

As of the end of December, General Fund expenditures were 45.9% of budget, one percent more than a year ago. Personnel expenditures, including fringes and benefits, were 49.2% of the budgeted level. The 10.7 % increase over FY 16 was due mainly to an additional payroll occurring during the period. Charges for fuel and utilities are recorded on a month-behind basis, but have been running below budget and prior year levels, thanks to lower gasoline prices and abnormally warm weather during the second quarter. Almost two-thirds of the amount budgeted for capital was used in the first half of the year, mostly for vehicle replacements and building improvements. Appropriations for the local school systems are disbursed on a monthly basis and consequently were at 50% of budget; lottery proceeds when requested by the school Board. Since the largest bond principal payment is not due until February, debt service was only 26% of the annual appropriation. Likewise, all other budgeted expenditures were less than half of the amount budgeted. FY 17's expenditures to date were, however, more than FY 16's at this point - by \$1,329,443 - primarily because of salaries and fringes, the timing of capital acquisitions, and the increase in appropriations for the school system.

Self Insurance Fund

Considering the lag between the time claims are incurred and the time they are processed, claims costs at 41.7% of budget were on track with FY 17's projections. Compared to a year ago, claims were up 9.9%, also on track with the 10% increase budgeted based on national medical cost trends. The administrative costs for health insurance were right on budget and almost equal to the prior year's.

Solid Waste Fund

Through the second quarter actual Solid Waste operating revenues totaled 55.2% of budget, exceeding FY 17 projections but slightly less than FY 16 results for the same period. Other operating revenues were on budget and a little ahead of the prior year as recycling revenues rebounded somewhat. The increase in other revenues stemmed from insurance proceeds received for a Mack truck damaged in an accident. Solid Waste expenditures were at 51.9% of budget, with 52.2 % of the operating budget and 50.7% of the capital budget used during the first six months of the year.

Summary

Overall there are no budgetary concerns. There is also the potential for sales taxes to be considerably higher than budgeted. Sales taxes are up statewide which could indicate an uptick in the economy. Staff will be watching these revenues in the coming months.

SUMMARY OF BUDGET AMENDMENTS FOR FIRST HALF OF FY 17

Finance Director Gay Poor provided a recap of the budget amendments that have been approved and entered year-to-date and their impact on the fiscal year General Fund budget.

During the first half of the year, amendments were made that increased the budget by \$1,885,103, with \$1,217,589 attributable to grants and increases in funding from outside sources. The \$1,100,000 Golden LEAF Foundation Grant made up the majority of this amount. The County also received a \$48,626 Library Services and Technology Act Planning Grant and \$48,386 in additional funding for Public Health programs. Another \$362,066 was carried forward from the previous year for purchases and projects initiated in FY 16 but not completed prior to year-end, including window replacements and roof and gutter work at the Social Services Building (\$94,099), a playground delayed pending the results of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (\$90,000), a van for Child Development transportation (\$53,500), and an upgrade of the AV system in the Rogow Room (\$45,150). Unspent funds from Emergency Management grants (\$37,370) and Health Department grants (\$10,599) were also moved to FY 17. Of the amount carried forward, \$314,097 was withdrawn from Fund Balance assigned for and \$47,969 restricted for these purposes. Other appropriations totaling \$300,348 were made from Fund Balance. The most significant of these were transferred to the Solid Waste Fund to address environmental compliance issues (\$90,090) and to replace a track hoe that was no longer operational (\$134,525). Among other smaller appropriations from fund balance were \$42,946 to add staff hours at Animal Services and \$30,397 to implement the Sheriff's tuition assistance policy. With these amendments, the FY 17 General Fund budget closed the 2nd quarter at \$50,272,139.

Commissioner Chappell moved to accept the report, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Based on Section 28 of the FY 17 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 by more than \$5,000 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.

#33: \$19,400 from fund balance assigned for river clean-up for debris removal projects

#34: \$7,265 from Animal Shelter fees in excess of the FY 17 budgeted level to be used to continue the spay and neuter program conducted by Animal Services

If approved, these amendments will increase the final FY 17 General Fund budget by \$26,665, bringing it to a total of \$50,298,804.

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

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported the following:

- Cedar Mountain House evacuation due to frozen pipes; commended several County departments and partner agencies for assistance in transporting patients, opening an emergency shelter, and assisting the Cedar Mountain House with measures to prevent this from occurring in the future
- Retirements effective February 1
 - Sheila Hunter – County Transportation
 - Emmerson O'Shields – Solid Waste
 - Richard Fry – Parks and Recreation
- Institute of Emerging Issues Forum on Early Childhood in Raleigh on February; Commissioner Lemel will be participating as a panel speaker and share with leaders across the State what Transylvania County has been doing to address early childhood issues

- Manager will be presenting to the local American Association of University Women Presentation in March on the Early Childhood Initiative/State of the Young Child Report
- Manger will be presenting at the NC City/County Managers Association conference on career development and helping students understand the profession of county management in North Carolina
- Community Services Building-single entrance only effective February 1; security badge required for entry into side doors; improve safety and signage to make safe and easier to navigate
- Automated Tool announced today that they will be relocating to a building in Rosman; allows them to expand and additional space to up fit for another business; this positive news; commended all the behind the scenes work by the Alliance, Building Permitting and Automated Tool
- Nonprofit agency call for applications will be going out this week with a deadline of February 24; issued guidance to departments today to begin preparing their budgets for the coming year

Chairman Chapman was proud of the recognition and respect many of our employees and departments receive across the State.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Lemel stated that the opportunity to speak at the Emerging Issues forum speaks to the collaborative efforts in Transylvania County in support of early childhood. The Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Task Force has also afforded the opportunity to work with groups that aim to improve the quality of life for your citizens. The Task Force supported SAFE, Inc.'s recent grant application to the Governor's Crime Commission for a dedicated domestic violence investigator and a domestic violence victims navigator. Commissioner Lemel reported that in February Transylvania County will unveil a mental health screening kiosk from VAYA Health. We are the very first county in the 31-county region of VAYA to receive the kiosk. A ribbon cutting ceremony is forthcoming. In addition, Captain Eddie Lance has been working with VAYA which resulted in Transylvania County being the first county to receive support for a jail diversion program to assist with assessing individuals for mental health issues.

Commissioner Phillips encouraged citizens to visit a downtown store called Gravy where the proceeds go to support the Boys & Girls Club here in Transylvania County.

Chairman Chapman attended the NCACC Legislative Goals Conference recently. He provided Commissioners with a hard copy of the goals approved during the conference. He pointed out North Carolina is one of the few states that still treats 16 year olds as adults. There was much discussion about this at the conference. The delegates approved a goal to increase the age for non-felony offenders to 18. The goals are available on the NCACC website.

Commissioner Hawkins noted there was an article in *The Transylvania Times* last week about the number of people in Transylvania County being served by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The article reported over 8% of the population is covered by the ACA. There is a movement to repeal the ACA. He is concerned that if the program is eliminated without a viable alternative in place, it will have tremendous consequences for many people, including 1 out of 12 citizens in Transylvania County. Commissioner

Hawkins intends to send further information to Commissioners and he hopes the Board will communicate to legislators that repealing the ACA impacts our citizens.

Chairman Chapman moved to entered into closed session per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body, 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, and per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee, after a 5 minute recess. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Closed session was entered into at 9:45 p.m.

Closed Session #1

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee. Present were Chairman Chapman, Commissioners Chappell, Hawkins, Lemel and Phillips, County Manager Jaime Laughter, Human Resources Director Sheila Cozart, Social Services Director Tracy Jones, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Commissioners met to receive feedback on interviews for the county attorney position. After discussion, they instructed staff on how to proceed.

Closed Session #2

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body. Present were Chairman Chapman, Commissioners Chappell, Hawkins, Lemel and Phillips, County Manager Jaime Laughter, Transylvania Economic Alliance Executive Director Josh Hallingse, County Attorney Tony Dalton, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Transylvania Economic Alliance Executive Director Josh Hallingse provided an update on several potential economic development projects and received direction from Commissioners.

Closed Session #3

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. Present were Chairman Chapman, Commissioners Chappell, Hawkins, Lemel and Phillips, County Manager Jaime Laughter, County Attorney Tony Dalton, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

The Manager brought forth a proposal for the potential acquisition of property. Commissioners instructed her on how to proceed.

Closed Session #4

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee. Present were Chairman Chapman, Commissioners Chappell, Hawkins, Lemel and Phillips.

Commissioners met to continue the annual performance evaluation of the County Manager.

Commissioner Phillips moved to leave closed session and reenter open session, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.

OPEN SESSION

Chairman Hawkins moved to seal the minutes of each closed session until such time that opening the minutes does not frustrate the purpose of the closed sessions, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously carried.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Phillips moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Hawkins and unanimously carried.

Larry L. Chapman, Chairman
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board