



PRESS RELEASE- March 16, 2020

### **Transylvania County Collaboration of Government, Non-profits and Faith Community Planning COVID-19 Response**

Small communities can't afford to operate in silos and great small communities like ours know that collaboration is the key to success. Today, a collaboration of government, non-profits and faith community representatives met to start addressing issues arising from our new normal as we work together to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"Many of the restrictions and social distancing recommendations are fundamentally different than how we exist in a tight knit community like ours, but we know that we must think of the big picture and slow the spread of COVID-19 to prevent overtaxing of our health care system. This requires a different kind of pulling together by staying apart," County Commission Chairman Mike Hawkins said.

The group today worked on troubleshooting problems with one of those being how to make sure that critical care workers such as health care and emergency service workers can continue to report to work during the school closure. Childcare solutions specifically for those workers that will be unexpectedly impacted during normal school hours is being developed.

Additionally, the group began to discuss how to support families that will not be able to work and who will have growing needs including food support, bills and other strains that can impact locally and how to best coordinate to identify needs and reach those who need assistance.

"We have some dedicated nonprofits that are revising how they operate to both stop the potential spread of COVID-19 while also staying true to their mission to serve the community. We each bring our strengths to the table and together we form a safety net for our people," Executive Director of The Family Place Erin Drew said.

The group is hoping through collaboration and communication that they will be able to work through any new scenarios that arise as the community navigates the COVID-19 recommendations and restrictions. Pooling resources and working together to problem solve will be the role of the group while communicating across organizations new information becomes available.

"We have to make sure that we have workers that will be needed to respond to COVID-19 able to work and fixing the child care piece is critical for working parents who serve in those roles. We have been able to start meeting some of those needs as of tomorrow, but will have more to do to build capacity.

At the same time, we understand that many of our community will be feeling impacts from lost income at home. That requires thinking through plans in place on how we are going to support families through this crisis and the best way to do that is to work collaboratively and in lock step as a network of providers,” County Manager Jaime Laughter said.

The following organizations were able to attend the hastily called meeting or have been able to commit support to the effort, but the group invites any organization that wants to be a part of this effort to email [Jaime.laughter@transylvaniacounty.org](mailto:Jaime.laughter@transylvaniacounty.org) with a name, organization, email and number so that the group can leverage support as challenges present themselves.

Transylvania County Maintenance and Housekeeping  
Transylvania County Emergency Management  
Transylvania County Administration  
Transylvania County Human Resources  
Transylvania County Library  
Boys & Girls Club  
Brevard Academy  
Transylvania County Sheriff’s Office  
Transylvania County Schools  
Brevard Wesleyan Church  
Safe Transylvania County  
Sharing House  
The Haven  
The Family Place  
Transylvania County EMS  
Transylvania County Public Health  
Transylvania County Parks and Recreation  
Transylvania County Transportation  
Transylvania County Social Services  
Mountain Sun Community School  
Smart Start of Transylvania County  
Brevard Community Church  
Pisgah Health Foundation