

Unsealed by the Board of Commissioners on 11/13/2023.

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
November 23, 2020 – CLOSED SESSION

Per NC General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (5) To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease, closed session was entered into at 9:40 p.m. Present were Chairman Hawkins, Commissioners Chappell, Dalton, Guice and Lemel, County Manager Jaime Laughter, Assistant County Manager David McNeill, County Attorney John Kubis (participating via Zoom meeting software), and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

During a previous closed session, the Board directed the Manager to seek a three-month extension on the due diligence contract for the Johnson Street property (former dentist office). In the meantime, she should work with an architect and others to determine what would be needed for renovations and the associated costs.

The Manager reported the owner agreed to an extension of the due diligence contract which expires December 20. The owner settled on a purchase price of \$515,000. During diligence, staff ordered testing of soils and asbestos and an environmental study. All of those came back reasonable, but there is some asbestos that will need to be removed. In the future, if the Board decided to build a structure on the lot similar to the Community Services Building, the soils would require remediation as well.

The building has been explored for use as a second courtroom, but there are issues with ceiling heights and loadbearing walls. It has also been explored for use by Probation/Parole which would normally be housed within the Courthouse. The County is currently paying approximately \$20,000 annually in lease payments for Probation/Parole due to lack of space in the Courthouse. The County is required by law to provide space for this department.

To do the minimal renovations required by the State to make the space suitable for Probation/Parole, the costs range between \$150,000 to \$175,000. This option leaves the residential bathtubs in place. Another option provides renovation for longer-term use at a cost range of \$288,000 to \$325,000. This option removes the bathtubs and upgrades for the HVAC.

The Manager sought direction from the Board on whether to proceed with the purchase or allow the due diligence contract to expire. Should the Board decide to cancel the contract, the earnest money would be returned to the County, but the monies invested during due diligence would not be recouped.

Following discussion, the Board was in consensus to cancel the contract before the end of the due diligence period and to seek a refund of the earnest money.

Chairman Hawkins moved to leave closed session, seconded by Commissioner Guice, and unanimously carried.

S://Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

S://Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board