

**MINUTES OF A  
WORK SESSION  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
MARCH 08, 2022**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on March 08, 2022, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman  
Boyce Deitz, Vice Chair  
Mark Jones, Commissioner  
Tom Stribling, Commissioner  
Gayle Woody, Commissioner

Don Adams, County Manager  
Heather C. Baker, County Attorney  
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to the Board  
Darlene Fox, Finance Director

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) **MAJOR AND MID-LEVEL CIP**: Mr. Adams stated that this would be a follow up to the Budget Retreat regarding Major and Mid-Level CIP discussions and prioritization.

He presented:

(a) Major CIP Projects Approved:

- Health Department Renovation \$8,234,492 (cash); completed during FY2020-2021
- Dillsboro Complex Project \$5,614,236 (cash); estimated completion June 2022
- Indoor Pool Facility Project \$22,000,000 (anticipated bonds with associated tax increase) advanced \$1,487,488 and project an additional \$512,512 to be required
- Justice Center Renovations approved in CIP

(b) Major Recreation Projects:

- Qualla Park: Land purchase \$400,000; Construction \$1,686,302
- Dillsboro Park: Range from \$472,340-\$3,154,346
- Cullowhee River Park
- Cashiers-Glenville Recreation Master Plan: Total \$1,967,388; Cashiers Pool Removal/Splash Pad Installation \$455,000

(c) Mid-Level Capital Projects:

- Storage Building: Emergency Management, DSS, Public Works, Sheriff. He shared letters from agencies
- Cashiers Pool Removal/Splash Pad Installation: \$455,000 (total Cashiers Master Plan \$1,967,388)
- Webster Park: \$216,000
- Restroom on Tuckasegee River in Webster. He researched the county's existing property across from the church and it was in the flood plain. If they wanted to place a restroom in that area, they would have to look at buy property.
- Parris Cabin: \$500,000 ADA compliance
- Galik Property: Extend parking areas
- LED lights: Fairview Complex; Mark Watson Park, Cullowhee, Cashiers. The price for the Fairview Complex would be \$907,000. The other facilities would be comparable.
- Community Kitchen: \$75,000

- Paving: \$635,000:
  - Aging Facility \$200,000
  - DSS Parking \$55,000
  - Cashiers Building Inspections \$30,000
  - Mark Watson Park \$350,000
- Courthouse stairwell and front court area
- Jail generator replacement

(d) Capital Improvement Projects: Revenue Projections and Planning:

Revenue Type	FY21-22	FY22-23	FY23-24	FY24-25	FY25-26
CPR	\$608,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Capital Reserve	\$780,123	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Totals	\$1,388,123	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
<b>Cumulative Totals</b>		<b>\$2,888,123</b>	<b>\$4,388,123</b>	<b>\$5,888,123</b>	<b>\$7,388,123</b>

Note: CPR FY 2022: Funded \$500,000 for Recreation Improvements, \$773,850 for Fairview Concession Building, \$283,991 for the Prentice property and \$300,000 for Conservation.

(e) Additional Funding Sources:

	Amount
FY 2021 Balance	\$35,221,830
Reserved by FBP 25%	\$17,141,908
Reserved by State	\$6,563,806
Other Assigned/Committed	\$5,522,716
Additional Funding – Pool	\$512,512
<b>Available for Funding</b>	<b>\$5,480,888</b>

*Informational item.*

(2) **QUALLA PARK:** The PARTF Grant pre-application for the Qualla Park was due on March 15<sup>th</sup>. A PARTF Grant representative walked the property with the Recreation Director and felt that it was a solid project to be submitted. Staff was working on the pre-application utilizing the budget presented to the Board at the Retreat. The final grant application was not due until May 2<sup>nd</sup>. At that time, there would be more details to present to the Board.

He presented the conceptual layout that was provided at the Budget Retreat. They would need to put together a preliminary site plan with cost estimates before March 15<sup>th</sup>. As they went through the PARTF process, he was attempting to not include the upper section of the property in the PARTF application. If they were granted the \$500,000, it would only put restrictions on the lower half of the property where they would build a park. He requested that Ms. Baker start working on the survey for the property.

Ms. Baker stated that the person that did the original survey work for Duke Energy was available to work on this project. He would survey the property to show two sections instead of the three original tracts. There would be an upper and lower section. The lower section would come to the bottom of the transmission line and the rest would be the upper section, which would contain the power line easement and would be reserved.

Mr. Adams stated that PARTF would only fund what would occur on the lower section. The county would fund any trails, etc. that would occur on the upper section. If there was ever a need from the schools, they could expand on the upper section. There could also be joint programming on the upper section.

The estimated cost of Qualla Park would be \$1,686,302. He requested that the Board to consider a vote to allow staff to submit a grant application, which would include a cost of \$1,686,302 with a request of a \$500,000 grant from PARTF.

Chairman McMahan stated that for fiscal year 22-23, they were projected to have a cumulative total of \$2.8 mil, which was a combination of the CPR and Capital Reserve Funds. If they had a year or two before they had to have the park built, it could be that this would be a next year budget conversation and the \$2.8 mil could be used for other projects that year.

Mr. Adams stated that they would submit the final application in May and the awards would not go out until summer. If they were awarded the grant, they would go through months of design and bidding. More than likely, they would not start expending these funds until the end of FY 22-23.

General discussions were held.

Mr. Adams requested that the Board consider voting to approve this project and authorize the Chairman, County Manager and County Staff to sign off on the pre-application forms necessary based on committing \$1,186,302 towards this project.

**Consensus:** *Add this item to the March 15<sup>th</sup> regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

**(3) DILLSBORO RIVER PARK:** Mr. Adams stated that the Stillwell's owned an easement that went across county property and they were preparing to exercise their rights to do so. The Stillwell's offered to move the easement so it would not split the property. He would recommend that the Board accept that offer.

He presented a survey and GIS map of the property showing an easement given to the Stillwell's from Duke Energy, prior to the property being transferred to the county. He met on-site with TWSA, the Stillwell's and County Staff. The Stillwells' intention was to bore under the river and under the county's property to connect into the force main.

Ms. Baker stated that the Stillwell's had ten years to complete construction on the easement from June 9, 2014. The easement was for sewer only.

Mr. Adams stated that Mr. Stillwell thought they could get across the county's property in a location behind the bathrooms that would not cut the property in half, so they were willing to exchange easements. The Stillwell's were looking to have several borings done in the next couple of weeks to a month. This did create a timing issue for the county to survey the property and create a legal document.

The Board could choose to authorize the County Manager or Chairman to work with the Stillwell's to allow them to bore with a general agreement and with the understanding they would follow up with finalized agreements with a survey. This would allow them to bore in the newly identified area with the understanding they would remove the current easement at a later date when they could get the surveyors in place.

General discussions were held.

Ms. Baker stated that the county had this property surveyed previously. The same surveyor would go out and flag the lines so it was clear where the property lines were. The surveyor agreed that it would be easier for the Stillwell's to go ahead and move forward with the easement and he would survey the location afterwards. She was working on an agreement for the easement to be prepared and after completion, the survey would be done of the actual easement. The final easement agreement would then be executed and recorded.

Chairman McMahan stated that when they went through the original conveyance, there were environmentally sensitive areas that Duke was trying to protect and wanted to make sure the county continued to protect. Would this endanger any of those by changing the location of the easement?

Ms. Baker stated that it actually helped because it was moving the easement further away from those sensitive areas. She would prepare a draft agreement for consideration that would allow all of this to take place.

**Consensus:** *Add this item to the March 15<sup>th</sup> regular meeting agenda for consideration.*

**(4) MAJOR AND MID-LEVEL CIP PRIORITIZATION:** Mr. Adams stated that based on conversations of the Board, they were moving forward to prioritize Qualla Park. He turned the discussions back to the Board for further questions or concerns about the other items that had been identified regarding prioritization. Once prioritized, staff could place the projects in the years to start estimating how much revenue was left over after the projects.

(a) Chairman McMahan stated that the projects that had been presented were the ones they could prioritize with funding. He liked the idea of breaking down some of the Cashiers-Glenville Master Plan with the swimming pool, splash pad, etc. He wanted to see them move forward with funding that. They recognized that need in the community.

(b) Commissioner Woody stated she wanted to move forward with the Dillsboro River Park. She looked at all three options and she thought Option Three would be the best. She did not want the commercial option. She wanted to keep it natural, accessible and beautiful for the community. Dillsboro was a growing community and she thought it was an attractive area for tourist and locals.

Also, she had a strong desire to designate some of the ARP funds to parks, which would have lasting impact on the community for generations.

Mr. Adams stated they could break the Dillsboro River Park project down into phases.

(c) Chairman McMahan stated that for the money, he thought the Webster Park was a good project. He liked the idea of including the inclusive playground equipment. This was a mid-level project.

(d) Mr. Adams asked about the Galik property. They had not removed the house at that point because they needed to have a plan in place for what they would do with the property once it was removed. He would continue to research this project.

(e) Chairman McMahan inquired about the jail generator cost.

Ms. Fox stated that it was approximately \$150,000.

Mr. Adams stated those funds would come from Fund Balance and would not be included in the CIP.

(f) Chairman McMahan stated there was a huge need for storage requested from several departments. They would have to do further research on this about buying a facility, leasing a facility or building a facility, etc.

Mr. Adams stated that would be a large enough expense to be in the CIP.

(g) Commissioner Deitz inquired about a restroom along the river in Webster?

Mr. Adams stated that a restroom could not be placed at the county's current put-in at the bridge because the property was in the floodway. If they were trying to place a restroom in that particular area, they would have to look for property to purchase.

*Informational item.*

At 2:02 p.m., Chairman McMahan recessed the meeting until 3:00 p.m.

At 3:24 p.m. Chairman McMahan called the meeting back to order.

**(5) OTHER BUSINESS:**

(a) Commissioner Deitz stated that the county was currently building two greenhouses on Skyland Drive. Were there other plans for that area?

Mr. Adams stated there were no other plans. Cooperative Extension would be placing a tent in that area. Anything they put there would be temporary, there would be no permanent foundations. They were trying to get use of the property while they were still planning for potential other uses.

Commissioner Deitz stated that the greenhouses were fine. He did not want anything to be placed there that would be an eyesore in the community.

*Informational item.*

(b) Commissioner Woody stated she received information for a grant opportunity from loweshometowns.com. The grant was to enhance something in the community and she was thinking about the all-inclusive playground in Webster. Governmental agencies could apply for the grant.

Mr. Adams requested she forward the information to him and he would ask staff to review.

*Informational item.*

(c) Commissioner Jones inquired about the commercial kitchen at Skyland Services Center. He thought the equipment was estimated to be \$75,000. In the past, this was a questionable expense. Was there a need for a commercial kitchen, which would be used by local farmers and individual businesses? If there were ARPA funds left over and there was a need in the community, he thought it would be worth consideration.

Mr. Adams stated that he would reach out to Rob Hawk, Cooperative Extension. When they were dealing with this issue previously, there was a need to have someone manage the kitchen. He would find out from Mr. Hawk if there was a need and still an interest of Cooperative Extension taking the lead. If so, they could continue the conversations.

*Informational item.*

There being no further business, Commissioner Woody moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

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Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman