

**MINUTES OF A  
REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
HELD ON  
FEBRUARY 02, 2021**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on February 02, 2021, 6:00 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 Board

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order.

(1) **AGENDA**: Chairman McMahan requested to add two items: Schedule Changes and Retirement Requests from Sheriff. Commissioner Woody moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(2) **MINUTES**: Commissioner Jones moved to approve the minutes of a Work Session of January 12, 2021 and a Regular Meeting of January 19, 2021, as presented. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(3) **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**: Chairman McMahan stated that the trash along the highways was at a horrible level. He did not know if he had ever seen it that bad. Cleaning up the Mountains, the annual roadside pickup, was just weeks away. They needed to do what they could to continue to combat the litter problem. Commissioner Woody had worked on this endeavor along with others as well.

(4) **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**:

(a) Commissioner Stribling thanked the Fire Departments and First Responders, along with Emergency Service personnel for their dedication to the people of the county and their tireless efforts.

(b) Commissioner Woody provided an update on Covid money that the Jackson County Arts Council received. The Jackson County Arts Council had been around for many years and had their office in the Library Complex. The county provided funds each year to help with their endeavors, as they did a lot in the community.

They received \$50,250 for distribution from the Cares Act. They received requests for \$283,409, which showed they had lots of art entities and organizations supporting the arts. They gave out the entire \$50,250 to several organizations, including: Blue Ridge Jam, Full Spectrum Farms, Hights, Appalachian Women's Museum, Glenville Historical Society, Boys and Girls Clubs in Cashiers and Dogwood Crafters. It was gratifying to her to see how the funds were used to help these groups in the county.

As far as the litter, she had noticed it also. She participated with the Trout Unlimited River Cleanup on Saturday. It was amazing how many bags they filled. She thought they were going to look forward to the big event, Cleaning up the Mountains, but in the meantime, if any of them that had a little time take a bag out to pick up some of it. She felt that where there was no trash, people would tend to not throw trash out. They all needed to do their part.

(c) Commissioner Deitz stated they lost a lady in the community that week, Erica Waldrop in a tragic car wreck. Ms. Waldrop had taken part in public discourse about things in the community, some of which he disagreed with. He had known her parents since she was a kid. It took all of them. He very much appreciated Ms. Waldrop and the way she handled herself. People needed to find a way around being mad at one another because they did not agree. Ms. Waldrop was an example of finding a way around it.

**(5) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT:** Mr. Adams reported:

(a) **Dillsboro SRC**: The Dillsboro SRC would be closed on Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup>. It should be reopened after that without much more disruption.

(b) **Covid Vaccinations**: He wanted to commend staff at the Health Department, Emergency Management, Sheriff's Office, Sylva PD, volunteers from the hospital, EMS workers, county department volunteers and more. They were all volunteering and participating in the mass vaccination clinic.

As a county, they had been transitioning as the state had been revising the rules for them to react. The new rules would allow them to start planning into the future. They were looking to set up primary days for a first dose and a second dose. They were developing long-term calendars to identify resources needed over a period of time. They were ready for the state to start releasing more vaccinations.

They started out at the first clinic doing 40 vaccinations per hour. The last smaller clinic, they were able to handle 120 per hour. They did have a drive thru clinic set up for Friday with 300 people. The Health Director would be informed on Thursday night what the doses would be for the next week. Within that time period, they had to schedule people to times in an orderly fashion.

Currently, they had 5,500-6,000 people 65 and older in the queue awaiting the vaccination. They were ready to start moving forward with 120 per hour. They felt confident that the state was proceeding forward and they would receive a significant increase the next week.

He shared a drone aerial photo of the Aging Department during the last drive thru clinic to show the process they used during the event. He was proud of how well they were running the clinics. Also, WCU was being evaluated to become a mass vaccination site and they were coordinating efforts with county staff and resources. They looked forward, in the next months or so, to have a couple of mass vaccination sites active within the community and have a large portion of the population vaccinated.

Chairman McMahan requested that the County Manager to report back to the Board at the work session on the status of the homeless shelter funding. They were getting ready to go into a very cold few weeks.

Commissioner Stribling stated he was approached by some firemen and he was asked to relay a message to possibly reevaluate the hiring pay rate.

Mr. Adams stated that would be something they could discuss at the work session.

**(6) INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC:** None.

**(7) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR:** Kathleen Breedlove, Human Resources Director, was present for this item via Zoom video conferencing.

Adams stated this item was in response to previous conversations to provide the Economic Development Director job description to the Board. He requested the Board to review the documents provided and be prepared to discuss this item at the work session.

*Informational item.*

**(8) 2021 TAX REAPPRAISAL:** Tabitha Ashe, Tax Assessor, presented: 2021 Reappraisal Update:

- (a) Building permits by year:
  - 2016: 1,526
  - 2017: 1,634
  - 2018: 1,872
  - 2019: 1,959
  - 2020: 1,984
- (b) Residential 2020:
  - Number of Permits: 604
  - Cost Range: \$1,000 - \$3,980,000
  - Square Footage Range: 22 - 10,622
  - Cost over \$1,000,000: 52
- (c) Commercial 2020:
  - Number of Permits: 76
  - Cost Range: \$1,500 - \$8,000,000
  - Square Footage Range: 56 – 39,272
- (d) Plats Recorded by Year:
  - 2016: 529
  - 2017: 571
  - 2018: 590
  - 2019: 641
  - 2020: 826 (26.86% increase)
- (e) Deeds Recorded by Year:
  - 2016: 2,527
  - 2017: 2,657
  - 2018: 2,686
  - 2019: 2,998
  - 2020: 3,679 (22.72% increase)
- (f) Real Property Taxable Value Countywide Comparison:
  - 2016: \$8,534,398,061
  - 2020: \$9,026,875,540
  - 2021: \$10,657,783,770 (18.07% increase)
- (g) Additional Information:
  - Available at: <https://www.jacksonnc.org/real-property>
  - Email: [reappraisal@jacksonnc.org](mailto:reappraisal@jacksonnc.org)
  - Phone: 828-586-7549
  - Office: Jackson County Justice and Administration Building, Suite 132

Ms. Ashe provided the Board with a sample of the reappraisal notices they mailed out on February 1<sup>st</sup>. If someone wished to appeal the value of the notice, they must complete the form and return it by March 2, 2021. Reappraisal personnel would review the assessment value based on the information provided on the form.

Chairman McMahan stated that it was important for people to understand that there was a very defined process. They had to go by the process as there was a limited period of time. It was very time sensitive.

Ms. Ashe stated that if they received the form back by March 2<sup>nd</sup>, her office would take a look and see if it could be adjusted prior to the window of time for the formal hearing before the Board of Equalization and Review.

Chairman McMahan stated that it was also important to note that people needed to understand that this was just the value of the property. It was not what they would pay in taxes. They would not know what they would pay in taxes until the County Manager presented a budget and the Board officially set a tax rate by the end of June. The tax rate would determine what people would pay in taxes.

General discussions were held.

*Informational item.*

**(9) SCHEDULE CHANGES:** Mr. Adams stated that since the beginning of the pandemic, the courts had been utilizing the Commissioners' Board Room more often to hold sessions. There were several upcoming conflicts between court dates and regular scheduled Board of Commissioner meeting dates:

February 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

March 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

April 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

April 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

May 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

May 18<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

There were several options available. Meetings could be held off-site at an alternative location or all meeting times could be moved to 6:00 p.m. on the dates of the conflicts. They could continue to discuss this matter further at the work session on February 9<sup>th</sup>. At a minimum, the Board would need to vote to change the time or location of the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

***Motion:*** *Commissioner Deitz moved to change the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting to 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(10) SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT SERVICE SIDEARM:** Sheriff Chip Hall requested authorization, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 20-187.2, to present service sidearms to:

Rene Elders-Clontz

James L. Clawson

John Buchanan

Shelia Aikins

Andi Green

The Sheriff recommended that the price for the sidearms be set at \$1.00. It was recommended that the firearms be declared surplus and the Sheriff be authorized to present the sidearms, as requested. In addition, the Sheriff should be directed to provide the serial numbers and descriptions of the weapons to the Finance Director for removal from the fixed asset inventory and replace with a new sidearms at no cost to the county.

***Motion:*** *Commissioner Deitz moved to declare the sidearms surplus for \$1.00 and authorized the Sheriff to present them as requested. The Sheriff was directed to provide the serial numbers and descriptions of the sidearms to the Finance Director and replace the sidearms at no cost to the county. Commissioner Stribling seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(11) RESOLUTION APPOINTING REVIEW OFFICERS R21-05:** Ms. Ashe presented Resolution R21-05 Appointing Review Officers. The resolution allowed the Land Records Office to review plats before they were recorded. The resolution was updated to reflect recent employee changes.

***Motion:*** *Commissioner Jones moved to approve Resolution R21-05 Appointing Review Officers, as presented. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(12) AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD:** *Carry over.*

**(13) BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

***Motion:*** *Commissioner Stribling moved to reappoint Roger Bartlett to serve another three-year term on the Business and Industry Advisory Committee, term expiring December 31, 2023. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(14) PLANNING BOARD:** *Carry over.*

**(15) REGION A AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL:**

***Motion:*** *Commissioner Deitz moved to reappoint Kristine Kiska to serve another three-year term on the Region A Aging Advisory Council, term expiring February 02, 2024. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

**(16) TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD:** *Carry over.*

**(17) PRESS CONFERENCE:** None.

There being no further business, Commissioner Stribling moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

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Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman