

**MINUTES OF A
BOARD RETREAT
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
FEBRUARY 23, 2021**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Board Retreat on February 23, 2021, 1:00 p.m., Southwestern Community College, 447 College Drive, Burrell Building, Rooms C and D, 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) INTRODUCTIONS AND PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: Chairman McMahan stated that this meeting would give the Board an opportunity to get the thirty-thousand-foot view of the budgetary process. This would help get them in the frame of mind to start discussions over the next several weeks and months to be able to adopt a budget.

Mr. Adams stated that the objective of the day would be for the Commissioners to hear from Southwestern Community College (SCC) and the Jackson County Public Schools (JCPS) to start discussing their primary goals for capital.

He also requested that Michael Poston, Planning Director, discuss the 2040 Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives and successes. This would help them to start thinking about major priorities and projects they wanted to see accomplished in the upcoming year. Also, he and Darlene Fox, Finance Director, would provide information about revenues, statistics and budget drivers for the financial outlook. He wanted to then receive feedback from the Commissioners regarding what they wanted to see for priorities going into the next year.

(2) SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Dr. Don Tomas, President and William Brothers, CFO, were present for this item.

Dr. Tomas provided the Board with handouts for the Health Sciences Programs and SCC 101.

Mr. Brothers presented: Southwestern Community College Budget Workshop:

(a) Firing Range Update:

- Work on the firing range was in progress, however weather continued to be a factor at that time.
- The biggest item for completion was the wall, which would support the built up berm, “burrito” and relocated Conex box.
- The crew was working to relocate dirt from borrowed areas to backfill the current wall (approximately 50% complete). That part of the process was most weather-contingent.
- Once this phase was complete, the remaining elements of the project would be quickly completed.
- Anticipated completion (weather-contingent) was early March.

Dr. Tomas presented:

(b) Health Science Center Update:

- Currently, the Health Science Center was approximately 90% complete.
- Final completion remains projected at June 15, 2021.
- Currently, the college was in the process of ordering furniture, janitorial supplies and completing projects associated with the physical grounds of the site.
- They raised \$1,300,000 for new instructional equipment, over \$400,000 for furniture and they were working toward an end result for I.T. for a total of approximately \$2,500,000-\$2,700,000.

Mr. Brothers presented:

(c) Operating Expense Changes in 2021-2022:

- The expansion associated with the Health Sciences Center represents a significant change in the overall footprint of Southwestern Community College.
- Current square footage at the Sylva campus was 231,934.
- The addition of the Health Science Center increases total square footage to 286,934; a total increase of 23.71%.
- The result of this expansion was significant and had led to an increase in projected operating expenses.

(d) Estimated Operating Expenses from 3-1:

- Original projections listed on the College's 3-1 were as follows:
 - \$94,380 for salaries
 - \$36,223 for plant maintenance
 - \$67,346 for electric
 - \$36,465 for fuel (includes gas and oil)
 - \$5,804 for water and sewer
 - \$6,607 for telecommunications
- The sum of these projections: \$246,825

(e) Salary Projections:

- Salary projections changed since the June 15, 2017, 3-1 submission for a number of reasons.
- The original estimate was based on 3 cleaners at the minimum rate of \$24,168 times a factor of 30% for benefits. This factor was generally correct for most positions, however, benefit costs near the College minimum represent a significantly higher percentage due to insurance being a constant rate regardless of salary. In 2017, this amount was \$5,869 or roughly 24% for the minimum rate.

(f) Considerations:

- The current amount of \$94,380 would only allow for two full-time cleaning technicians and one part-time technician.
- This would mean that each cleaner would be responsible for 27,500 square feet to clean per day. The part-time person could relieve a portion of this load, but not enough to get the workload to a manageable level.
- Analysis of SCC staff as well as staff at other institutions finds that generally, the volume of square foot per person ranges from 16,000 to 20,000.
- A third cleaner would bring the assigned area to a more manageable 18,333.
- To accomplish this, the salary line item needs to be adjusted from \$94,380 to at least \$112,747.42. He requested consideration for funding between 115-120K to account for experience adjustments (they would advertise cleaning technicians with 1-3 years' experience).

Dr. Tomas presented:

(g) Strategic Planning Update:

- The college was monitoring the potential for a new bond referendum.
- Priority items for expansion, if the referendum was approved, was a relocation of the library to expand from Oaks hall, add an elevator to accommodate ADA and add faculty office space.
- Relocation would allow the Workforce Continuing Education division/Small Business Center to be housed in the current library space. The college would renovate current space to better accommodate intended use.

General discussions were held.

(3) PUBLIC SCHOOLS: Jake Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent; and Kristie Walker, CFO, were present for this item.

Mr. Buchanan presented: Capital Improvement Priorities:

(a) Continue Capital Funding:

- General Capital \$235,000 (day to day capital needs)
- Preventative Maintenance \$375,500
- Technology Funding \$400,000
- One to One Initiative \$320,700
- Security Camera Upkeep \$25,000

(b) Current Needs: Single Entry Points and Egress Courtyards: \$4.5 million

(c) Long Term Needs:

- ADA Ramp Football Stadium
- ADA Compliant Visitor Bathrooms/Concession Stand
- Scotts Creek Slope Stabilization
- Fairview Cafeteria
- Track on Jones Street Property
- Softball Field Upgrade at Fairview
- Blue Ridge Gym with Performance Stage
- Bus Garage
- Smoky Mountain High Auxiliary Gym A/C

General discussions were held.

Mr. Adams stated that Dr. Tomas mentioned earlier about the potential of state bonds. This had been discussed in the state legislature for the past couple of years. Generally speaking, bond money was restricted to certain functions. They were hopeful that next year the state legislature would look at bond money for both community colleges and public schools. He asked Mr. Buchanan which of the projects would generally have bond money center on for it?

Mr. Buchanan stated that pre-Covid, both the House and the Senate had bond bills for public schools. The bills were different and had different approaches. He thought it would probably be safe to say that there would be a priority toward classroom space, that would always be in there. They felt that the project at Fairview, which would have the cafeteria and additional classroom space and the Blue Ridge Gym, with performance space and classroom space, would be what they would focus on with bond money.

(4) ADOPTED 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SUMMARY OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: Mr. Poston presented: Comprehensive Plan and Budget Impacts

- (a) Education Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Create broadband “hot spots” at community centers, recreation center, public library.
 - Partner with the School System and Safe Routes to School to increase awareness.
 - Support Schools in the annual budget process.
- (b) Education:
 - Form a New Century Scholar type of program for vocational jobs.
 - Explore Supplemental Housing allowances.
 - Support apprenticeship and vocational based summer programs for k-12 and community college educational professionals.
- (c) Public Health Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Construct a new Animal Rescue facility.
 - Invest in infrastructure (sidewalks/greenway) in existing communities to increase physical activities.
 - Continue to support Community Centers.
 - Continue to support the Dare Program.
 - Work with health care partners to establish a mobile health services.
- (d) Public Health:
 - Continue to provide and broaden transportation options to healthcare offices and facilities.
 - Expand community gardens on county owned land.
 - Develop a food sustainability plan.
 - Invest in infrastructure (sidewalks/greenway) in existing communities to increase physical activities.
- (e) Infrastructure Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Appoint a point person to coordinate efforts and opportunities to expand broadband.
 - Partner with WCU to explore allowing the use of their power infrastructure to broadband providers to provide services along the power grid.
 - County Planning Department to work with County GIS Department to identify existing broadband and wireless communications facilities.
 - Explore funding opportunities to expand broadband.
- (f) Infrastructure:
 - Encourage local government coordinating with housing developers.
 - Work with critical facility owners to compile a list of critical assets, existing facilities, including age, condition and estimated life expectancy.
 - Coordinate with NCDOT, county, municipalities and service providers to extend trunk lines to economic nodes.
 - Synchronize master plans between county, towns, WCU, TWSA, etc.
- (g) Natural Resources/Environment Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Collaborate with local land trust to protect sensitive areas.
 - Continue to identify policies and procedures that would protect trout waters.
 - Continue to identify best management practices related to stormwater control to ensure that the ordinances encourage environmentally sound development practices.
- (h) Natural Resources/Environment:
 - Educate and promote the conservation of sensitive areas.
 - Collaborate with local land trust to protect sensitive areas.
 - Ensure the county was Dark Sky compliant.

- (i) Economic Development Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Promote and encourage reliable broadband solutions for the rural areas.
 - Update the county's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
 - Form a Citizens Academy.
- (j) Economic Development:
 - Explore opportunities to secure land for future development opportunities.
 - Establish a business incubator for emerging businesses.
 - Perform market campaign and/or analysis for the county.
- (k) Housing Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Partner and support Mt. Projects in providing housing options to county residents.
 - Create a Housing Committee.
 - Conduct a Housing Survey.
 - Partner with local non-profits to provide facilities and services for the county's homeless population.
- (l) Housing:
 - Research and identify public/private/ non-profit partnerships to provide more housing options to residents (i.e. Housing Trust Fund, Land Banking).
 - Partner with local non-profits to provide facilities and services for the county's homeless population.
 - Explore programs and policies that promote the maintenance of existing housing.
- (m) Transportation Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Finalizing the creation of a county Pedestrian Plan and update to the Greenways Master Plan.
 - Continue to Support the Airport Authority.
 - Continue to Partner with the Southwestern Rural Planning Organization (RPO) to identify multimodal transportation projects.
 - Prioritize roadway projects that create/or enhance connectivity.
- (n) Transportation:
 - Designate funds in the county budget for local match requirements and maintenance of infrastructure projects (sidewalks/greenways).
 - Expand sidewalks, bike lanes and greenways to housing and community centers.
 - Plan and construct bicycle and pedestrian connection between Fairview School and NC 107, Scotts Creek and the HUB with the Town of Sylva, Cullowhee Valley School and WCU and Village of Forest Hills and between Smokey Mountain Elementary and the Qualla Boundary.
 - Partner with Airport Authority to identify funding resources for airport improvements.
 - Partner with WCU to create transit routes that were interconnected.
 - Explore making wifi available on transit vehicles.
- (o) Recreation Achieved and Ongoing:
 - Developed pocket park in Savannah.
 - Design and Construct an indoor pool at the Cullowhee Rec Center (currently underway).
 - Create an inventory of existing rights of way (power lines, utilities, etc.).
 - Expand the county's Greenway system.
 - Update to Greenway Master Plan (update currently being completed).
- (p) Recreation:
 - Build trail connections between places of interest to increase accessibility by active modes of transportation.
 - Provide access to recreational opportunities near all major communities- Geographical Equity.

- Develop pockets park across the county.
 - Develop a Special Events program to host large scale events, increasing visitation to the county and generating revenue for the Parks and Rec Department to invest in sustaining programs and expanding opportunities.
 - Develop Cullowhee River Park/Dillsboro River Park
- (q) Cultural Resources Achieved and Ongoing:
- Updated the county’s survey historic sites.
 - Created a Historic Preservation Commission Facebook account.
 - Update Planning Department website to include more Historic Preservation resources.
- (r) Cultural Resources:
- Conduct a survey of non-structural historic and cultural sites.
 - Work with the State Historic Preservation Office to become a certified local government.
 - Explore options to preserve and maintain historic cemeteries.
- (s) Land Use Achieved and Ongoing:
- Created a Cashiers Small Area Plan.
 - Created a Cullowhee Small Area Plan.
 - Develop a UDO.
 - Continue to review ordinances to identify improvements that protect mountain ridges, slopes, rivers and streams and wildlife corridors.
- (t) Land Use:
- Update the 441 Corridor Small Area Plan.
 - Identify areas of the county that may require future Small Area Planning.
 - Create strategies that encourage a new generation of farmers in the area.
 - Include conditional zoning language in the 441 and Cashiers standards (Cullowhee standards currently include conditional zoning).

General discussions were held.

Mr. Adams stated that this plan was adopted by the Commissioners in 2017 and the overall plan was implemented in the budget process. If they looked at the strategies, there were action items with primary entities and with partners, responsible for accomplishing the items.

During the budget process, he encouraged all entities and departments, when they submitted their requests, to let him know if it was associated with a goal or objective. If a county department was named in a strategy, he mandated that they at least address one of the issues during the budget process. They did take the plans serious that came before the Board and they did implement strategies for them to be accomplished. All of these things were linked together.

(5) FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Ms. Fox presented: Financial Update:

(a) Revenues Per Capita in 2020:

- Property tax: 834
- Other tax: 5
- Sales tax: 370
- Sales and services: 77
- Intergovernmental: 185
- Debt proceeds: 0
- Other miscellaneous: 11

(b) Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2020:

- Education 19.29%
- Debt Service 7.96%
- Human Services 22.61%
- General Government 16.70%
- Public Safety 24.85%
- Other 8.64%

(c) Fund Balance:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Jackson County	41.15	44.86	43.32	45.87	49.18	29.57	32.74
Group	30.49	31.19	32.77	34.18	31.63	32.85	33.78
State	27.46	27.49	28.26	28.83	30.35	28.22	32.85

(d) Analysis of property tax:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Jackson County	96.33	96.76	97.47	97.73	97.56	97.88	98.13
Group	96.71	97.47	97.73	98.06	98.05	98.34	98.27
State	97.97	98.59	98.79	99.04	99.10	99.16	98.75

(e) Outstanding debt as of July 1, 2021:

<u>Date Incurred</u>	<u>DOLP</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
12/20/2007	12/20/2022	2.19%	FV Kindergarten, Cashiers Webster Site Work	\$990,499.91
12/11/2008	12/11/2023	2.27%	Aging Facility	\$695,166.75
7/15/2008	7/16/2024	2.49%	Jackson County, SCC	\$2,402,270.81
10/25/2012	10/25/2027	2.79%	SMH Gym, Fine Arts, BR Locker Room	\$4,333,333.39
3/22/2017	3/30/2032	0%	School Improvements-QZAB	\$6,600,000.00
01/30/2019	02/01/2039	3.81%	SCC Health Sciences Building	<u>\$9,000,000.00</u>
				\$24,021,270.86

(6) **FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 FINANCIAL OUTLOOK**: Ms. Fox presented:

(a) New year funding capacity for 2021-2022:

<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Projected Increase</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$150,000,000 New Construction Value	\$559,341
Motor Vehicle tax	\$32,699,598 Increase in Value	\$121,935
Sales Tax	5% Increase (does not include Article 46)	<u>\$635,406</u>
Total New Capacity Projected		\$1,346,682

(b) Ad valorem tax:

<u>Source</u>	<u>Value</u>
Ad Valorem Tax Value TR-1	\$9,481,660,613
New Construction	\$150,000,000
Motor Vehicle	\$415,301,148
Total Value	\$10,046,961,761

- Total ad valorem tax @ \$0.38 per \$100 = \$38,178,455
- Collection rate @ 98.13% = \$37,464,518
- 1 cent on tax rate = \$985,908
- At this time, revaluation property values and tax rate had not been set

General discussions were held.

(7) POTENTIAL MAJOR BUDGET DRIVERS: Ms. Fox presented:

(a) Payroll Projections for Fiscal 2021-2022:

- The Career Path Salary Program was currently up to date
- Projections for a cost of living increase of 2%: \$398,070
- Total for projected payroll increases: \$398,070

(b) Health Insurance

- Rate action projection of 3%: \$187,277
- Mark III Brokerage was doing a cost analysis and recommendation on the Health Insurance Coverage for the new year renewal effective July 1, 2021.
- Current monthly rate: \$1,185
- Proposed monthly rate: \$1,220
- Current annual cost: \$14,220
- Proposed annual cost: \$14,640

(c) SCC Health Science Building for Fiscal 2021-2022:

- Southwestern Community College – Current Expense
- Increased operational expenses: \$265,000

(d) Funding Capacity and Budget Driver Summary:

Source	Amount
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$559,341
Motor Vehicle Taxes	\$121,935
Sales Tax	\$665,406
Total	\$1,346,682

Driver	Amount
Payroll	\$398,070
Health Insurance	\$187,277
Health Science Building	\$265,000
Total	\$850,347
Additional Capacity Available	\$496,336

(e) Major CIP Projects – County

- Health Department Renovation: \$8,234,492 (cashed) completed during FY2020-2021
- Dillsboro Complex Project: \$5,614,326 (cashed)
- Indoor Pool Facility Project: \$20,000,000 anticipated bonds with associated tax increase
 - Advanced \$1,487,488
- Justice Center Renovations: \$1,500,000 approved in CIP

(f) Potential New Major CIP Projects - County:

- Cullowhee River Park
- Dillsboro Park
- Fairview Complex
- Whittier Park

(g) Additional Funding Sources:

Capital Reserve Fund		Fund Balance	
FY 2020 Balance	\$0	FY 2020 Balance	\$24,789,676
FY 2020-2021	\$0	Reserved by Policy 25%	\$14,965,065
FY 2021-2022	\$779,924	Reserved by State	\$4,404,025
		Advancement – Pool	\$1,487,488
Total	\$779,924	Balance	\$3,933,098

(h) CPR Projects:

- Cullowhee River Park
- Dillsboro Park
- Fairview Complex
- Whittier Park
- FY2020-2021 Budget amount of \$950,000 for New Parks
- Funds available for Projects for FY 2021-2022: \$785,986 (Fund Balance of \$285,986 plus 500,000 new funds)
- FY 2021-2022 Combined Total of \$1,735,986 available for New Parks

(i) Major CIP – Public Schools Prioritized:

1. Single Entry Points and Egress Courtyards (project approved)
2. Football Stadium ADA Compliant Ramp and Bathroom/Concessions
3. Scotts Creek Slope Stabilization
4. Fairview Cafeteria
5. SMHS Track - Jones Street Property
6. Softball Field Improvements – Fairview
7. Blue Ridge Gym with Performance Stage
8. Bus Garage
9. Smoky Mountain High Auxiliary Gym A/C

(j) Major CIP – Public Schools FY 2021-2022:

- Single Entry Point and Egress Courtyards
 - Current cost projection \$4,500,000
 - FY 2021-2022 Funding: \$4,500,000
- Football Stadium Accessibility Upgrades:
 - ADA Compliant Visitor Bathrooms and Concessions at Football Stadium: \$40,000
 - ADA Compliant Ramp – Football: TBD
 - ADA Compliant Home Bathroom at Football Stadium: \$30,000
 - ADA Compliant Seating Home Side Bleachers at Football Stadium: TBD
 - ADA Press Box and Concessions: TDA
 - Total \$70,000 - \$250,000

Commissioner Deitz stated he wanted to see them do the football stadium upgrades. He wanted to see the Board push to get this done. He felt strong about it.

General discussions were held.

Ms. Fox continued:

- Scotts Creek Slope Stabilization
 - Current cost projection \$800,000-\$1,000,000
- Fairview Cafeteria: Cost projection: \$4,500,000
- Track on Jones Street Property: Track \$750,000
- Softball Field Improvements: Field Improvements \$1,000,000
- Gym/Classrooms Blue Ridge: \$5,000,000
- Bus Garage: \$2,500,000
- Smoky Mountain High Auxiliary Gym A/C: \$1,000,000
- Total \$8,500,000
- To be funded with debt

General discussions were held.

(k) Article 40 and 42 Sales Tax:

	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025
Articles 40 & 42 Total:	\$3,417,313.65	\$3,408,225.00	\$1,516,091.85	\$1,591,896.44	\$1,671,491.26	\$1,755,065.83
School Capital Expenditures:	\$3,417,313.65	\$3,408,225.00	\$1,516,091.85	\$1,591,896.44	\$1,671,491.26	\$1,755,065.83
Balance	\$1,438,200.00					
New Year Addition		<u>\$650,508.00</u>	<u>\$839,519.25</u>	<u>\$1,037,051.06</u>	<u>\$1,243,529.47</u>	<u>\$1,459,401.79</u>
Balance Available		\$2,088,708.00	\$2,928,227.25	\$3,965,278.31	\$5,208,807.78	\$6,668,209.57

(l) Major CIP – Public Schools Funding Capacity for FY 2021-2022:

Funding Source	Amount
FY 2020-2021 Article 40 and 42 Balance	\$2,088,708.00
FY 2021-2022 Article 40 and 42	\$839,519.25
FY 2020-2021 Article 46 Balance	\$1,992,874.51
FY 2021-2022 Article 46	<u>\$848,293.75</u>
Total:	\$5,769,395.51
FY 2021-2022 Capital Request	Amount
Single Entry Points and Egress Courtyards	<u>\$4,500,000.00</u>
Total:	\$4,500,000.00
FY 2021-2022 Undesignated Balance:	\$1,269,395.51

(m) Short Term Capital – Public Schools:

- Continue funding from FY 2020-2021
- Funded from Article 40 and 42 Sales Tax

Description	Amount
General Capital	\$235,000
Security System Replacements	\$25,000
Preventative Maintenance	\$375,500
Technology Funding	\$400,000
One to One Initiative	<u>\$320,700</u>
Total	\$1,356,200

(8) ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER BUDGET PRIORITIES/DIRECTION:

(a) Schools:

Chairman McMahan stated that he thought it was obvious that they had already approved to move forward with the security upgrades for the schools and \$4.5 million was what it was going to cost. They would get a better idea in the spring of what the actual number would be when the bids came in. They had no choice on that, it was a must.

The \$1,269,395 that was left was where they had some flexibility. Commissioner Deitz already stated the desire to see some of those final items completed at Smoky Mountain High School. That was a master plan that was started 20 years ago and they were still not finished. There were just a few components to finish it.

Mr. Adams stated that he knew Fairview was fairly high on the list that the Board of Education wanted to address. From a strategy standpoint, from his conversations with Dr. Tomas, hopefully they would get back into a state bond conversation at the state.

If they looked at the numbers and the projects, it would really be the Fairview Cafeteria and Blue Ridge Gym. If those two could get funded by the state bond referendum, it really opened an opportunity for them to plan for the remaining projects to be accomplished within the next 4-5 years. If they were able to remove the Fairview Cafeteria and Blue Ridge Gym, that would add up to approximately \$9,500,000. There was value to waiting to see what happened with the state bonds.

Chairman McMahan stated that he thought they were bound to do the security, but with the additional available dollars, he wanted to see the Smoky Mountain High School projects finished. He wanted to see the master plan finished.

Commissioner Stribling stated that he agreed.

Commissioner Woody stated that she agreed.

Mr. Adams asked when they were talking about the master plan, which projects were they talking about?

Chairman McMahan stated it was all of the projects.

Commissioner Jones stated that he was comfortable with the \$4.5 million for single entry points, but he would want to see the money spread over various parts of the county in various schools.

Chairman McMahan stated they were being very conservative with the sales tax numbers and they did not know what they would be. There may be additional funds to talk about Scotts Creek and other projects.

General discussions were held.

(b) CIP:

Chairman McMahan asked about a new CIP.

Mr. Adams stated that as far as major projects, he did believe they needed to start that process. At that point, most of the potential major projects were centered around recreation once they got passed the Justice Center. Depending on what was handled at the Justice Center, he thought they may come out with multiple plans and multiple potentials with that facility.

When they threw those major projects together, they had some major expenses that would need to be tackled at once or phased. Past that, he could start having conversations about the major facilities, but the majority of the major facilities had been taken care of. They may have to deal with expansion, but it would not be building new facilities. What they were dealing with at that time would not necessarily fall within a five-year CIP plan.

(c) Parks:

Mr. Adams stated that he wanted to have a general conversation with the Board about parks. If they went back to the 2040 Master Plan for recreation regarding trying to make sure they had adequate, accessible facilities within the communities, they started using the phrase “pocket parks”. When he first came to the county, it was discussed that pocket parks would cost approximately \$250,000. He thought they had learned from the Savannah Park as it costed \$500,000.

They had not been able to find smaller acreage to locate a park in Whittier at that point. What they had found potentially would run \$500,000+. That turned the pocket park conversation in Whittier into a \$1,000,000 plus project. He was not saying they would not spend \$1,000,000 in Whittier, but if they started taking the parks and putting them in that category, then that may have to move out of the CPR Fund and move into the CIP planning process.

At Whittier, he was still attempting to work with the schools and talking with Rusty Ellis, Recreation and Parks Director, to examine what could be done with the picnic shelter area next to Smokey Mountain Elementary School. If they could also find smaller tracts, maybe they could get the park down to not \$1,000,000+ in costs. That was what he was struggling with on some of the pocket parks as they were not really pocket parks.

The last numbers they got for the Fairview Complex for the concession stand area was \$350,000, which started becoming doable out of the CPR Fund. The Cullowhee River Park was at \$1.8 million, which was an old estimate and they did not have set numbers for the Dillsboro Park. If they were just talking about a basic park, not entering into the river, that would be lesser cost. The opportunities would be Dillsboro park, as a basic park and Fairview Complex with the concession stand area.

Chairman McMahan stated that he was committed to getting a park in Whittier. That had been a priority for a long time.

Commissioner Jones stated that he agreed and ask if there was any way to partner with Swain?

General discussions were held.

Chairman McMahan stated that he thought they really needed to do the Fairview Complex. The concession stand was in poor shape and needed to be replaced.

Commissioner Deitz stated that it would not cost a lot of money to retrofit the field for softball. The concession stand did need to be fixed.

Ms. Fox stated that the cost was mostly for the lights.

Commissioner Woody stated that the concession was dangerous and needed to be fixed. She did have thoughts on the two river parks, Cullowhee and Dillsboro. She thought the river was so beautiful and unique to the county. She was not sure of the priority, but she felt that it was such a wonderful opportunity and they had plans drawn up that they paid significant funds for. She really wanted them to see if they could phase in the Dillsboro Park. Maybe not do all of it, but it was such a treasure and she wanted to see it developed in a way that could be used by people in the community.

Also, CURVE convinced DOT to build the beautiful bridge in Cullowhee so that they would be able to connect underneath it, at some point, with the Greenway. They really had worked hard to make that area attractive. She thought those were two pieces that were essential to what the county was and what people came there for.

Commissioner Deitz stated that all of those things needed to be done, but the Fairview Complex needed to be taken care of. Hundreds of people used that facility. The Cullowhee Park was going to be a bigger project.

Commissioner Jones stated that the Cullowhee Park would be more down the road.

Chairman McMahan stated that he did not disagree with Commissioner Woody. He thought those two projects had a place on the list. The Cullowhee Park would be a process of acquiring properties. Maybe they could find ways to utilize some of the existing properties with picnic tables, etc. to start getting people there. Also, they had the issue with the dam and what would happen with that. It was complex and he did not think it was going to happen quickly.

General discussions were held.

Commissioner Stribling stated that he agreed with Chairman McMahan on the projects that had the smallest to do to finish, but it had taken the longest. There was such a small amount to do at Smoky Mountain High School, why drag it out. They should get it done and then they could move on to something else.

(9) MEETING SUMMARY:

Chairman McMahan stated that the consensus he was hearing was that the Fairview Complex was ready to happen. That was the most important to move on. The others had moving parts to them and he did not know if they could tell the Manager which one to focus on next. He thought they had to be in a position to be ready to react whenever options became available.

General discussions were held.

Mr. Adams stated that he would start moving on the Fairview Complex and would continue to follow up in Whittier. If they started getting leads on more affordable land in Whittier, that would put them in a position to move forward. They would continue to have conversations with the other parks.

Commissioner Woody asked if they could have someone look at the Dillsboro property just to make it more useable? She was not talking about fully developed, but accessible.

Mr. Adams stated that if they were talking about picnic tables and trash cans, that would be an easy conversation. If they were talking about bathrooms and shelters, that would be a different conversation.

Commissioner Woody stated that she was just talking about picnic tables like at the Greenway.

Chairman McMahan suggested asking Planning to do a concept with a trail and picnic tables for Dillsboro, with no shelter or bathroom.

Mr. Adams stated that from his end, he would immediately start with the Fairview Complex concession stand. The Whittier Park would be following through with finding property. Also, he would work on the Dillsboro property.

If everyone was in agreement with the Justice Center, he would start going through the formal process of selecting an architect. He would start that in the next couple of months. That would be when they would start developing the scope of what they were actually looking at for the Justice Center. That would lead them toward the CIP as far as major construction outside the recreation projects.

Commissioner Deitz stated he would like some of these things done quickly.

There being no further business, Commissioner Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman