

JACKSON COUNTY CITIZENS ACADEMY OVERVIEW

Jackson County established a Citizens Academy in 2017 and began their first academy on September 14, 2017. The Citizens Academy offers a unique opportunity for county residents to get an in-depth look at the functions of county government. The participants get a behind-the-scenes look at various departments within county government. The Citizens Academy provides interaction with department heads and elected officials allowing the participants to learn more about their roles throughout the county. The main goals are 1. Promotion (make citizens aware of positive impact local government has on the community and increase citizen's awareness of the value of local government, 2. Education (learn how county government operates), and 3. Engagement (the chance to meet and make connections with county operations and let citizens know how they can be involved).

The program is a 8 week course, beginning on Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 5:30 pm, that focuses on services provided by the county, such as Administration/Governing Body, Register of Deeds, Emergency Management, Public Works (Solid Waste management/recycling, Green Energy Park, etc.), Sheriff's Office, Health Department (Public/Environmental Health, Animal Shelter), Soil and Water Conservation, Social Services, Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Aging, Jackson County Public School System and Southwestern Community College to name a few. The program consists of interactive sessions facilitated by various local government officials and school leaders. A program agenda will provide individual session information and location of each session, sessions will take place at various facilities. Sessions will be held for 8 weeks, and will last 2 to 3 hours. The following are the scheduled dates.

DAY	DATES
THURSDAY	SEPTEMBER 12, 19, 26, OCTOBER 3, 10, 17, 24
TUESDAY	OCTOBER 1, 29

An application should be submitted to County Manager's office during the recruitment period. Applicants must be 18 years old, be a resident of Jackson County, and commit to attend all sessions. Applicants will be selected to create a diverse participant population and obtain a mix that will represent a cross-section by commissioners districts. Space is limited to 25 participants. If you have questions or would like to request an application, please contact Jan Fitzgerald at 631-2207 or jcfitzgerald@jacksonnc.org.

The benefits to the organization, participants and community are:

- Familiarize citizens with the function and purpose of Jackson County government
- Increase citizens awareness of services offered by local government
- Meet county government leaders
- Learn how citizens can take a more active role in local government
- Better informed citizens through first-hand knowledge of the structure of County government
- Gain knowledge and personal contacts to become more effective leaders in their communities by sharing new information with friends and neighbors
- An understanding of opportunities to serve the county through advisory boards
- Get to know the men and women who oversee the day-to-day operation of departments that provide services

Changes regarding date, time, location and material covered will be made if necessary.