

**MINUTES  
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
December 19, 2014 – SEALED CLOSED SESSION**

Pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body, closed session was entered into. Present were Chairman Hawkins, Commissioners Chapman, Chappell, Lemel and Phillips, County Manager Jaime Laughter, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

The Manager informed Commissioners that a local business owner wants to expand his business, but he is finding it difficult to locate product that suits his needs. The business owner, who will remain anonymous at this point, has declined \$1 million in additional business because he has no capacity, yet he wants to remain in Transylvania County. She posed to Commissioners a solution to help this business owner expand and possibly provide space for other potential businesses as well.

The key challenges are that the County owns no product, has no negotiated agreements with any property owners, and has no control over any property.

The Manager informed Commissioners of property available in a specific area of the County. A deal on the property is feasible if the business owner qualifies for the Small Business and Entrepreneurial Assistance (SBEA) grant and can achieve tax abatement during an 18-month lease. The transaction needs to be affordable so the business owner can pursue expansion. If an agreement can be reached, there will be a 90-day wait period because the property/building has a current tenant. The Manager emphasized the business owner cannot expand at his current location. The business owner would prefer to lease the new property with a future option to purchase. In order for the business owner to move forward, he has requested approval from Commissioners on an incentive package. He intends to add 33 jobs now and more when expansion occurs.

The Manager informed Commissioners there is water and sewer at the new site with the potential for connectivity to the City's water supply. There may be the possibility of the business owner seeking assistance with building upgrades through the Building Reuse Grant. However, if the current property owner does not agree to a lease with the business owner, she offered the possibility of the County purchasing the property and then leasing it back to this or other business owners. With this option, the County could create an industrial node because there are other properties on the market in the same area. To secure these properties the County could look at using fund balance, with the understanding that local government does have purchase restrictions. The Manager sought guidance from the Board of Commissioners in terms of offering an incentive package to the business owner and/or securing property to create an industrial node.

After discussion, Commissioners instructed the Manager to explore options on how the County might assist in acquiring the property at the new location. They did not offer any commitments at this time. Commissioners were in favor of exploring the available properties in the area and determining what components are needed for the County to consider an industrial node. This item will be brought back to Commissioners at the first meeting in January in closed session to receive an update from the Manager and further discuss viable alternatives.

**Chairman Hawkins moved to leave closed session, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.**

ATTEST:

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Mike Hawkins, Chair  
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

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Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board