

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 9, 2012 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, April 9, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the large courtroom of the Transylvania County Courthouse.

Commissioners present were Vice-Chairman Larry Chapman, Jason Chappell, Chairman Mike Hawkins, Daryle Hogsed, and Kelvin Phillips. Also present were County Manager Artie Wilson, County Attorney David Neumann, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Media: *Hendersonville Times News* – Nathaniel Axtell
The Transylvania Times – Mark Todd

There were approximately 60 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

WELCOME

Chairman Hawkins welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members of the audience for participating in their County government. Chairman Hawkins introduced the members of the Board of Commissioners and staff and the new member of the media present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Penny Davies: Ms. Davies is a member of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). She informed Commissioners that the AAUW has organized a public forum for concerned citizens, educators, parents and local officials on Tuesday, April 24, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the Brevard High School auditorium. The guest speakers include NC State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. June Atkinson, Superintendent of Transylvania County Schools Dr. Jeff McDaris, and a panel of students, parents and teachers. Ms. Davies invited Commissioners and the Manager to attend the forum.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

The Manager informed Commissioners of additional information that will be provided during the Manager's Report with regards to the possibility of sending a letter to the NC Association of County Commissioners about releasing HAVA funds for use by the Board of Elections. This item may require action by the Board.

Commissioner Hogsed moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Chapman moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The minutes of the March 12, 2012 regular meeting were approved.

FACILITIES USE REQUESTS

The use of Silvermont by the Waightstill Avery Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on May 5, 2012 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for a social gathering with the objective of educating members and guests about the importance of promoting historic preservation, education and patriotism was approved. Per their request, the fees were waived.

The use of the Courthouse gazebo by Love's Jewelry on May 11, 2012 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. to hold a fundraiser for Relay for Life was approved. There are no fees.

The use of the Courthouse gazebo by the Rotary Club of Pisgah Forest on May 19, 2012 from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to hold a food drive for Sharing House was approved. There are no fees.

DISCOVERY AND RELEASE REPORT

The Discovery and Release Report for February 2012 was approved. The total tax dollars released was \$2,536.45. The Tax Office refunded \$1,239.93.

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONSPROCLAMATION NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELE-COMMUNICATORS WEEK APRIL 8-14, 2012

The second week in April is permanently recognized as National Public Safety Tele-communicators Week honoring thousands of men and women who respond to emergency calls, dispatch professionals and equipment and render lifesaving assistance to the citizens of the United States. Commissioners expressed their appreciation for all the Transylvania County Communication Center's Tele-communicators and the vital services they provide to the citizens of Transylvania County and their fellow emergency services comrades.

Commissioner Hogsed moved to approve Proclamation 10-12 National Public Safety Tele-communicators Week April 8-14, 2012. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

(Proclamation 10-12 National Public Safety Tele-communicators Week April 8-14, 2012 is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.)

PRESENTATION BY BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Dr. Molly Parkhill, President of Blue Ridge Community College, and other representatives and staff members were present to give an update on happenings at the College. These particular staff members have been working closely with the Transylvania County Economic Development office to help provide the workforce needs for business and industry in Transylvania County. Each staff member made a presentation.

Julie Thompson is the leader of the newly formed Division for Economic and Workforce Development at Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) whose mission is to strengthen economic and workforce development in Henderson and Transylvania Counties through a system of training, consulting, career planning and placement services. Members of this new Division meet every other month with Transylvania County Economic Development Director Mark Burrows to share information and work together on issues where appropriate. Ms. Thompson talked briefly about a new initiative involving Transylvania County Schools. The initiative deals with mechatronics, a combination of several fields of

engineering, and she said the need for technicians is great in this changing economy. BRCC is collaborating with Transylvania County Schools to apply for a Golden Leaf Foundation grant that will provide funds to equip a classroom for a high school mechatronics program. High school students would utilize the classroom during the day to receive hands-on training in areas such as welding and machining. The classroom would be utilized by college students in the evening hours. Ms. Thompson also announced that three manufacturing experiences will be offered this summer on the Henderson County campus and they are open to Transylvania County high school juniors and seniors. She closed by saying that Blue Ridge Community College is dedicated to helping Transylvania County. Ms. Thompson turned the presentations over to four of the directors within this Division to talk about what they are doing in Transylvania County to strengthen economic and workforce development. She also recognized Commissioner Chappell as the Director of the JobLink Career Center at BRCC.

Shanda Bedoian is the Director of Corporate and Customized Training. Her role is to assist the business industry with a number of human resource and workforce development issues. She has worked with a number of businesses in Transylvania County in terms of recruiting, prescreening of applicants, assessing those applicants for skills desired within the organization, wage surveys to assist organizations to see how they fit in terms of competition with other entities, and she also collaborated with Commissioner Chappell in assisting a local business when it decided to close its doors. She also connects businesses with a host of other resources, such as Transylvania County Economic Development, AdvantageWest, Golden Leaf Foundation, etc. Ms. Bedoian provides corporate training which is the entity that provides occupational training to the job seeker or the incumbent worker. BRCC holds a number of classes on and off campus on any type of job skill development. There are funding sources available to provide customized training to qualified employers to expand their businesses and add new employees. Skillful and knowledgeable employees help organizations become viable and sustaining in communities for the future. Ms. Bedoian concluded her presentation by informing the Board of several educational opportunities for high school students.

Gary Heisey is the Director of the Small Business Center. He discussed five services delivered through the Small Business Center. The first service involves working with people one-on-one that want to start a business and may or may not have a business idea. Then he helps them create a business plan and launch their business. All of the one-on-one counseling is provided at no cost. Secondly, BRCC offers seminars, workshops and conferences. The content of each is driven by what the business needs are in the community. To assist with the Transylvania Partnership's Business Plan Competition, last fall BRCC sponsored classes to help people over a six-week period learn how to put together a business plan. The result of that was that a lot more people participated in the competition. He noted that this year's winner participated in that training. The third service is through business incubation. BRCC helps incubate start-up businesses, existing businesses and networks. Mr. Heisey provided some specific examples of businesses in the community that have benefited from incubation. The fourth service involves BRCC collaborating with a number of partners in the County that work to assist businesses. Lastly, BRCC refers out to a host of different federal, State, regional, and local types of organizations that support and help businesses.

Barbara Gregory is the Director of Cooperative Education and Human Resources Development. She reported that there are many employers in Transylvania County that have supported BRCC students. Businesses use this service to recruit employees. Ms. Gregory gave some examples of several interns who have benefited from this program and are employed with several businesses and other organizations in Transylvania County.

Commissioner Chapman commented that the Golden Leaf Foundation was established to provide money for businesses and companies that were adversely impacted by the decline of the tobacco industry. When Ecusta was in business, approximately 80% of their business was associated with the tobacco industry.

Commissioner Chapman inquired as to whether or not the County is receiving its fair share of Golden Leaf Foundation monies because as a small community, Transylvania County was severely impacted from the decline of the tobacco industry. He believes the County should do whatever is necessary to make sure those funds are coming into this County to help the economic situation. Mr. Burrows responded that Transylvania County has not received its fair share. However, he and other economic development allies and partners in the County are constantly exploring opportunities for funding. He noted that the struggle is trying to find matching grant funds.

Commissioners thanked Dr. Parkhill and her staff for taking the time to make this presentation and for being a phenomenal partner to the County, the citizens, and businesses in the community.

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE ANNUAL REPORT

Operations Director David McNeill gave an overview of the Transylvania County Animal Services and Maintenance Departments and their activities in calendar year 2011 and highlighted the following:

Animal Control

- Staff responded to 1,271 calls (313 complaints, 958 calls for service)
- Shelter took in a total of 1,045 animals (639 dogs, 406 cats)
- Staff gave a total of 455 vaccines
- Most of the calls for services are located within the County; calls for service also come from the City of Brevard but in July 2011 the Brevard Police Department began responding to animal services calls within its jurisdiction
- Complaint calls are primarily coming from the County
- Disposition of dogs taken into the shelter: adopted 396 (62%), reclaimed 118 (19%), euthanized 118 (19%); a majority of the adopted dogs were rescued by animal groups in the community; the euthanasia rate has vastly improved as a result of working with animal welfare groups
- Disposition of cats taken into the shelter: adopted 129 (32%), reclaimed 4 (1%), euthanized 269 (67%); the cats euthanized includes feral cats which are not adoptable animals

Maintenance

- Lawn care and maintenance for over 131 acres
- Provides general maintenance for approximately 222,626 square feet of County facility space that has a combined assessed value of \$60,644,190
- Average time from receipt to completion of work orders – 4.16 days (work orders in addition to general maintenance)
- In calendar year 2011, Maintenance received 375 work orders
- Work orders are prioritized – 35 were safety issues that were handled immediately, 233 were classified as high priority and handled within 1-2 days, 107 were considered low priority
- The majority of the work orders requested come from Community Services, the Library and County Administration; although many calls from County Administration are from the Manager requesting work for another department or area
- Maintenance is also assigned special projects that can last awhile (added to Board of Elections work area, assisted with renovations of the old Sheriff's building, etc.)

Commissioner Chapman asked if the County contracts out any lawn services. Mr. McNeill responded that the School System contracts out their lawn service; however the County handles its own lawn services other than the Courthouse. Richard Fry provides the lawn services for the Courthouse property.

The Manager pointed out that the Maintenance Department works with Blue Ridge Community College to provide facility maintenance as required per NC General Statute.

Commissioners thanked Mr. McNeill and his staff for all the work they do for the County. Chairman Hawkins thanked Maintenance specifically for the work they did during the Sesquicentennial in 2011.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRESENTATION

Public Health Director Steve Smith gave an update on two specific program efforts of Public Health and shared stories which demonstrated how local individuals and families are impacted by public health efforts. He thanked the Board for the timing of this report because National Public Health Week occurs in April.

The mission and statutory requirement of the Transylvania County Department of Public Health is to improve and protect the health of all people in Transylvania County. There are 11 members that are statutorily required to serve on the Board of Health. Transylvania County Public Health consists of 28 staff members. Mr. Smith felt it was important to note that public health is defined as what a society can do collectively to assure the conditions for people to be healthy.

The two stories Mr. Smith shared demonstrated community need and how prevention, education, early intervention and partnerships can make a positive difference in people's lives and how community health is achieved one individual at a time.

Healthy Smiles is the first program he talked about. Healthy Smiles has been in existence for 12 years. For this program to happen there exists a partnership with local entities. The program exists because statewide 40% of children entering kindergarten have experienced tooth decay in their primary teeth. In Transylvania County, 17% of children entering kindergarten have untreated tooth decay. This rate has declined as a result of this program. Mr. Smith told the story of a 4-year old child with advanced tooth decay and what had to be done to address the problem. A follow up visit with the child showed much improvement in the child's overall health. Mr. Smith emphasized that prevention is key to public health and allows the opportunity for public health officials to provide dental health education to the parents and child.

The next presentation was composed by a regional group of school nurses and deals with chronic disease management and in this particular case, diabetes. In 2007 a Transylvania County student was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes at the age of 8. The child's family faced several challenges. A strong referral process to sources of care was made by the child's physician. Mr. Smith briefly reviewed the goals for the child beginning at grade 3 and through grade 6 that provided the outcomes for chronic disease management and diabetes care and what the patient is able to accomplish and manage for herself every day. There was steady improvement in the child's health throughout the course of the grade levels. There was a dramatic decrease in the child's absence from school. The child's grades were dramatically better as well. Mr. Smith believes this indicates a direct correlation between improved health and academic performance which is an essential goal of school health by the school nurses.

Mr. Smith concluded by providing some trend data, noting that Transylvania County ranks 11th in overall health factors and 24th in overall health outcomes and he believes Transylvania County should be commended for these figures. He thanked the Board for its support and noted that the Public Health Department strives to make the best use of tax dollars. Commissioners thanked Mr. Smith and his staff for the services they provide to citizens and the difference they make in people's lives.

APPOINTMENTS

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

The terms of Carroll Parker, Dale Robertson and Sarah Lutz-Pietersen expire at the end of April. All are eligible and willing to serve another term. There are two other applications on file. It is also the

responsibility of the Board of Commissioners to appoint a chairman annually. Dale Robertson is the current chairman and he is interested in serving as chairman for another year.

Commissioner Hogsed moved to reappoint Carroll Parker, Dale Robertson and Sarah Lutz-Pietersen to additional terms and to reappoint Dale Robertson as chairman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Commissioner Chapman commented that there is an applicant who is very interested in serving on this board; however the current members are involved in specific projects and it is important they remain on the board at this time. He asked the board facilitator to contact the applicant and invite her to the meetings to participate in a nonvoting manner. **The motion passed unanimously.**

HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL

Transylvania County appoints six members to the City of Brevard's Human Relations Council. In February, Commissioners appointed members to fill three vacancies, leaving two vacancies remaining, and one member was reappointed. The Clerk has advertised for all of the vacancies since October and now has three applications on file to fill the remaining two vacancies. However, on April 3, Dawn McCall, one of the recent appointments, resigned from the Council because of an unexpected death in her family. As of this date, there are three vacancies and three applications on file.

Commissioner Chappell moved to appoint Timothy Garner, Amy Marquez, and Susan Rousselle to fill the three vacancies on the Human Relations Council, seconded by Commissioner Chapman and unanimously approved.

TRANSYLVANIA NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL

At the meeting on March 12, 2012 Commissioners voted to fill one of the two vacancies on the Transylvania Natural Resources Council. However, on April 3, Dawn McCall, one of the recent appointments, resigned from the Council because of an unexpected death in her family. As of this date there are two vacancies and three applications on file.

Commissioner Phillips moved to appoint Kevin Merrill and Jo Ann McCall. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Sandra Hosey resigned from the Recreation Advisory Board effective January 19, 2012. She also served as chair of this Board. The Clerk received three applications as a result of advertising for the vacancy. There are a total of six applications on file.

Commissioner Phillips nominated and moved to appoint Tamera Lawrence to replace Sandra Hosey on the Recreation Advisory Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Chappell moved to appoint Bill Sack to serve as chairman for 2012 per the recommendation of Parks and Recreation Director Rick Pangle, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION

At the February 27, 2012 meeting the Board of Commissioners agreed to pursue a visioning process for economic development. On March 23 nine people representing the County, City of Brevard, the Town of Rosman, AdvantageWest and the Economic Development Advisory Board met and discussed a visioning

process for economic development. As a result of that meeting, the group came up with a visioning process diagram. The Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce had already started working with a group of folks they called the Chamber Roundtable. The group of nine felt it was necessary to meet with the members of the Chamber Roundtable to present the visioning process and so it was done on April 4. Many suggestions were made and the diagram was modified and presented to the Board of Commissioners at this meeting. In order to be successful, the group agreed it was essential that the County Commissioners, Brevard City Council, Rosman Aldermen and the Board of Education come together and cooperatively discuss and develop a vision for economic development in the community. According to the diagram, a Community Visioning Group would be formed whose purpose would be to determine what constitutes an exceptional community and bring back a recommendation to the elected boards of what they believe that vision to be. Once the vision has been accepted by the elected boards, the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) would become involved. The EDAB would gain one new nonvoting member selected from each elected board. The EDAB would be tasked with the strategies to complete the vision. The tasks would be to grow and support existing businesses, determine new areas of need (investment) both public and private, and education and workforce. Other groups have been identified that may take ownership and work on these different tasks.

One of the most important factors in this process is that the elected boards must buy in to this process. If Commissioners approve the process, the Chamber would host a meeting of elected officials at Brevard College's Porter Center to make the presentation. Another key factor is there must be some funds available to facilitate this process. The Manager recommended \$10,000 be set aside to facilitate this process for the rest of the current fiscal year. He pointed out that the diagram is merely an example of how some of the task forces could be made up. The process is going to be fluid. The Manager pointed out that there is excitement in the community and several entities are wanting to become involved which provides a great opportunity to channel energy and resources and move forward with this visioning process for economic and community development in Transylvania County.

Mary Lynn Manley, current President of the Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce, spoke about the Chamber Roundtable event on economic development. This group met on April 4 and heard a presentation from the Manager on how to structure the economic development action plan. The positive feedback from this group is to endorse the process presented for visioning. The group would also like to endorse the elected boards coming together as a body to move the County forward with economic development endeavors through this vision.

The Manager recommended the Board make the commitment to move forward with the process and approve funding to engage a facilitator to help with the process. Chairman Hawkins noted that the requested funds will not necessarily be designated towards a facilitator. To him, he sees the designation of funding as an indication of a commitment to move forward. He believes this is a good opportunity to move forward. The funds indicate seriousness for the process.

Commissioner Chappell thanked Chairman Hawkins for this explanation. He is concerned about the use of funds to pay for a facilitator because there are other resources available in the community and region. Commissioner Phillips agreed and stated that he is supportive of moving forward with the process.

Commissioner Chapman said it is important not to let this become just another program. He encouraged the elected boards to establish goals and benchmarks throughout the process and provide communication to citizens about the efforts that are being made.

Chairman Hawkins commented that the funding allocation should not be the focus. The focus should be on the elected boards establishing what is important for Transylvania County. The Community Visioning Group will play an important role in this process and the other tasks on the diagram cannot take place

until everyone decides what is important and how to go about getting there. He believes if done correctly, this process has the great potential to transform the County and get people energized about the opportunities here. He asked Commissioners to approve the recommendation.

Commissioner Chapman moved to approve the process as outlined and to appropriate \$10,000 for the process with funds to come from the contingency line item. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

USE OF EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SYSTEM FUND BALANCE

The Emergency Telephone System has notified local governments that they can use up to 50% of their local emergency telephone system fund balance for one time public safety needs. These items must be purchased and in use by June 30, 2012. For Transylvania County, 50% of the emergency telephone system fund balance amounts to \$143,943.37. The Transylvania County Emergency Management team has identified several public safety items that were to be included in the FY 2013 budget request totaling \$53,600 and some items that need to be replaced within the next couple of years. Most of these items could not have been purchased by emergency telephone system funds but due to this one time allowance it will now be allowed.

Public Safety Items to be purchased include:

1. Narrowband compliant radios, mobile 22 , handheld 11: \$38,739
2. 911 Communications Equipment: \$75,051
3. Emergency Telephone System Replacement for emergency shelter: \$4,583
4. EMS Data Reporting System: \$21,777
5. Fire Marshal Field Collection Reporting System: \$1,794
6. SRT Bullet Proof Vest, quantity 2: \$2,000

Commissioner Phillips moved to approve the purchase of the public safety items totaling \$143,943.37 with funds coming from the Emergency Telephone System Fund. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chappell. After some clarification on the spending request and noting that the monies are not being spent on frivolous items, **the motion was unanimously approved.**

RECLASSIFICATION OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AIDE TO HUMAN RESOURCE AIDE

The New Adventure Learning Center has been looking at ways to maximize resources. This past year with the retirement of an educational development aide, the Director made substantial changes in the duties of this position. After reviewing the changes in responsibilities, it is the recommendation of the Human Resources Director and New Adventure Learning Center Director that this position be lowered to a salary grade 4, human resource aide position. Based on 30 hours per week the savings would be \$910 annually. Commissioners thanked staff for their efforts to be wise with taxpayer dollars and for recognizing efficiencies within their departments.

Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the reclassification of an Educational Development Aide position (grade 5) to a Human Resource Aide position (grade 4). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

SEATING AND INSTALLATION OF CARPET FOR LARGE COURTROOM

Improvements for the large courtroom began last year with the purchase of carpet for the entire courtroom. The carpet near the judge's bench was installed last year but the remainder of the carpet could not be installed until a decision was made on the replacement of the theater-type seats in the courtroom. Recently this issue was discussed by Commissioners and staff was allowed to go out for quotes on

replacing the seats with pews. The County received four quotes for the pews with the lowest responsible bidder being Kivett's, Inc. at \$23,562. The Finance Department has checked references and recommends awarding the bid to Kivett's, Inc.

The Finance Department has also received four quotes for removing the old carpet and installing the new carpet with the lowest responsible bidder being Kerry Wilson at \$1,397.50.

The total project cost is broken down as follows:

Purchase & installation of pews	\$23,562.00
Cut pews additional charge	\$ 1,500.00
Removal of old carpet & installation of new	\$ 1,397.50
Contingency 5%	<u>\$ 1,322.50</u>
Total Project Cost:	\$27,782.00

The total project cost is \$27,782 with funds coming out of the Court Facilities Fund. If approved, the project would be completed during the week of June 18. There is no court going on that week. The Manager requested authorization to dispose of the surplus seating being removed from the courtroom by placing them online for sale.

Commissioner Chappell moved to award the purchase and installation of the pews to Kivett, Inc. for \$23,562 and the removal and installation of the carpet to Kerry Wilson for \$1,397.50 and to approve a budget amendment transferring \$27,782 to Court Facilities from the Court Facilities Fund. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hogsed. Commissioner Hogsed asked the Manager to notify the local historical groups to inform them about the disposal of the theater seats. Commissioner Chapman inquired about the seating capacity with the new seating and the Manager informed him the seating capacity will be approximately the same. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

WESTERN HIGHLANDS NETWORK'S FISCAL MONITORING REPORT

NCGS 122C-117(c) requires that each Board of Commissioners be given a copy of the local management entity's financial status on a quarterly basis. For the report ending December 31, 2011, total revenues for Western Highlands Network equaled \$21,323,886 and total expenditures equaled \$24,138,340. This equates to a drawdown of reserves in the amount of \$2,814,454. The Manager pointed out that this is anticipated and there are no financial issues.

Commissioner Hogsed moved to accept the report, seconded by Commissioner Chapman and unanimously approved.

BUDGET UPDATE

The Manager provided an update on the budget process.

FY 2012 Update

The Manager reported the FY 2012 budget is on target as anticipated. The approved budget indicated a need to draw down \$690,000 in reserves to balance budget. An update in January indicated a need to draw down \$1.1 million to balance the budget. However, sales taxes have been better than anticipated and the County is expected to receive an additional \$253,000 more than expected in Medicaid Hold Harmless Funds. There are still some unknowns but at this point he expects to be on target with the budget. He noted that if estimates are off by 1% that is a difference of \$394,000.

FY 2013 Second Pass

The first pass of the FY 2013 budget indicated a \$2.5 million deficit assuming the School System's budget request is flat. The deficit increase was based on a \$600,000 increase in health insurance costs, \$900,000 in capital spending, and a 3% salary increase for employees.

Further budget review indicates the following:

- Sales tax is predicted to increase 2% which provides another \$100,000
- Medicaid Hold Harmless Funds are anticipated to be \$81,000 higher than the first estimate
- Staff also made reductions in capital requests by \$272,000
- Health insurance changes allow for a decrease of \$200,000; however staff requested an increase of \$100,000 for wellness initiatives
- The net deficit is at \$1.85 million

Major items included in the update:

- Health Insurance \$300,000 increase and includes modifications to the plan and funds for wellness
- Capital requests total \$637,000
- Pay increase for County employees is \$450,000
- Personnel increase of 7 additional employees is \$302,000

The Manager continues to meet with department heads to discuss all these different elements. Staff is not in a position to make a budget recommendation to the Board at this time. Some of the items staff will continue to address are fuel prices, personnel requests, and the School System's request.

According to the budget schedule the Board is supposed to have another budget meeting next Monday but the Manager recommended cancelling that meeting because staff is still going through the process and refining the numbers. Staff will continue to update Commissioners on the process. He said staff is approximately six weeks away from presenting the Board with a final recommended budget. Staff will continue to look for efficiencies in their departments while continuing to provide vital services to citizens. The Manager pointed out that many items and projects have been delayed for a number of years and some of them need to be funded.

Commissioner Chapman said he has been in contact with representatives in Raleigh and they expect to pass a budget on time and do not intend to pass any unfunded mandates down to the county level. Chairman Hawkins thanked the Manager and department heads for the work they put into the budget process.

OFFER TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY FROM THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Transylvania County Board of Education passed a resolution on March 19, 2012 stating the property commonly known as the Cathey's Creek Community Center is no longer needed for school purposes. NCGS 225C-518(a) provides that the Board of Commissioners shall be afforded the first opportunity to obtain the property. The value of the property is unknown. The property is currently being used by the Cathey's Creek Community as a community center. The Board of Education would prefer that the County decline the offer to purchase the property. It is the intent of the Board of Education to transfer the property to the Cathey's Creek Community with the provision that if it ceases to be used as a community center, then the property would revert back to the Board of Education. The Cathey's Creek Community has set up a 501(c)(3) to secure the property. The Manager noted that the facility will continue to be used as a voting location.

Commissioner Hogsed moved to refuse the offer to purchase real property from the Board of Education and authorized Chairman Hawkins to respond via letter by April 19, 2012, seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Commissioner Hogsed asked that the response include a request that the School System continue working with the Cathey's Creek Community Center. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported the following:

1. One vacant position has been approved to be filled since the last report. A paramedic position became vacant.
2. New Animal Shelter - discussions are ongoing with Bill Daggett regarding minor changes to the plans and specifications. Staff hopes to go out for bids on the project in April.
3. Work is progressing on the renovation of the old Sheriff's Building. The HVAC units have been installed and cabinetry work is almost complete. Staff has determined a projected move date of May 18. The offices will be closed on May 18 and reopen in the new facility on May 21. This gives all attorneys and the general public a month's notice.
4. A public hearing on adding the Connector Road to the County's Transportation Plan will be held on April 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the Rogow Room at the Library. The Manager is working with the NC Department of Transportation to get the project added to the draft State Transportation Improvement Plan coming out late summer.
5. The Town of Rosman appointed Alderman Roger Petit to serve as the Town's representative to the Economic Development Advisory Board.
6. The Criminal Justice Partnership Program will no longer be functional after June 30, 2012. Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities (TASC) will be making application for some of these funds to provide cognitive behavioral classes to offenders under supervision. The Manager intends to write a letter of recommendation for TASC to receive those funds.
7. Ecusta Trail - The Manager attended a meeting regarding the proposed Ecusta Trail from Pisgah Forest to Hendersonville. The consultants gave an overview of the report that showed an annual benefit of \$9.4 million with an estimated cost of \$20 million. He received a copy of the entire report and is currently circulating it among the Commissioners. There is a copy at County Administration for public inspection. There will also be a meeting in Transylvania County. The Manager will be sure to announce the date of this meeting.
8. Budget- Work continues on the budget. This week staff finished up the last departmental review. The Manager hopes to meet with School System officials soon and discuss their request.
9. HAVA Funds - Transylvania County has used these funds for the last several years to pay for the maintenance on the voting machines. Last year a significant portion of those monies were frozen. Elections Director Karen Brinson has been working to find a way for the State to release the funds but has been unsuccessful. The Manager recommended sending a letter to the NC Association of County Commissioners and encouraging them to ask the legislators to appropriate the funds so counties would not have to cover the cost of the maintenance of the voting machines. Discussion ensued amongst Commissioners. Ms. Brinson explained further and noted that if the funds are released, \$30,000 would be released to Transylvania County. **Commissioner Phillips made a motion for Transylvania County to send a letter to the NC Association of County Commissioners and copy to the County's representatives in Raleigh as presented. The motion was seconded by Chairman Hawkins.** Commissioner Hogsed said he is unclear about the motives of some particular groups that are pushing for the funds to be unfrozen and their interest in pursuing these funds so he felt inclined to side with the legislature and not the groups pushing for the release of the funds; therefore he was unsupportive of the letter. **The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 1, with Commissioner Hogsed voting against.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Burrows: Mr. Burrows thanked the Board for the action they took tonight with regards to moving forward with the visioning process. He thinks having a community visioning process that involves the Chamber of Commerce, the Transylvania Partnership, the local elected boards, and other groups is one of the best things this Board can do for economic development in Transylvania County.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

There were no comments from Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Chairman Hawkins moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.**

Mike Hawkins, Chair
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board