

**MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 23, 2015 – REGULAR MEETING**

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, February 23, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Commissioners Chambers at the County Administration Building.

Commissioners present were Vice-Chairman Larry Chapman, Jason Chappell, Chairman Mike Hawkins, Page Lemel and Kelvin Phillips. Also present were County Manager Jaime Laughter, County Attorney Tony Dalton and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Media: *The Transylvania Times* – Jeremiah Reed

There were approximately 30 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

WELCOME

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Chapman and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

The minutes of the August 25, 2014 regular meeting were approved.

DISCOVERY, RELEASE AND MONTHLY SETTLEMENT REPORT

The Discovery, Release and Monthly Settlement Report for January 2015 was approved. Total tax dollars released was \$465.38. Refunds totaled \$712.44.

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

JOINT HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE AND BOOK PRESENTATION

The Joint Historic Preservation Commission updated Commissioners on its accomplishments and presented Commissioners and the Manager with a copy of a book entitled *Transylvania County: The Architectural History of a Mountain County*. County Planner Chris Hnatin introduced Joint Historic Preservation Commission Chair Rosie Craig and she provided Commissioners with the update.

The Joint Historic Preservation Commission (JHPC) was formed in November 1994 and has powers granted to them in Section 16 of the Transylvania County Code of Ordinances. The main roles of the JHPC are to:

1. Act as an advisory board to local elected officials on historic preservation
2. Identify, review and recommend historic properties for local landmark designation
3. Review proposed renovations and alterations to designated local developments
4. Educate the public on the benefits of historic preservation

The following is a summary of the activity and accomplishments of the Joint Historic Preservation Commissioner since its formation in November 11, 1994:

- Conducted architectural survey of archeological/historic resources, 1990
- Recommended the designation of 20 local landmarks
 - 15 – City of Brevard
 - 5 – Unincorporated areas of Transylvania County
- Assisted with the designation of National Historic Districts – East Main Street Historic District and Downtown Brevard
- Published Architectural Survey book, 1998
- Reviews proposed renovations and alterations to designated local landmarks – “Certificates of Appropriateness”
- Educates the public on the benefits of historic preservation
- Works with owners and residents interested in local and/or national designation
- Acts as Advisory Council to the County Commissioners regarding historic properties
- Inventories existing local landmarks every three years
- Reviews and takes action on violations
- Holds monthly public meetings
- Held 2014 annual retreat defining the following goals:
 - By-laws and Ordinance update
 - Meeting with other Transylvania County organizations
 - Distribution of Architectural Survey books
 - Website and other publications
 - Commissioner update

After the presentation, Commissioners were presented with their own copy of *Transylvania: The Architectural History of a Mountain County* as a thank-you for their leadership in this community. The book includes the original survey taken in 1990.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Craig and the members of the JHPC for their presentation and for the work they do throughout the County to preserve its history. It was noted that the book is on sale at the Transylvania Heritage Museum and at Highland Bookstore. Commissioners encouraged everyone to purchase it because it is a wonderful historical document of Transylvania County.

In response to a question from Chairman Hawkins, Ms. Craig stated that if someone is interested in designating a structure as a historic property, they must first inform the Planning Department. There is an application process which is evaluated at both the local and State level. Once accepted the JHPC will facilitate the process through to fruition.

2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Over the past six months Planning and Community Development staff and the Planning Board have started work on the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Work thus far has included: 1) reviewing the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and accomplishments and other community comprehensive plans, 2) developing a work plan schedule, 3) seeking public support through voluntary community advocates, developing a public input survey, and 4) compiling new statistical information relevant to Transylvania County.

Planning and Community Development Director Mark Burrows, County Planner Chris Hnatin and Planning Board Chair Wayne Hennie updated Commissioners on their progress via a PowerPoint presentation. Their purpose was to provide Commissioners with background on the 2025 Comprehensive Plan, discuss their accomplishments thus far, talk about next steps and the schedule they have laid out and finally take questions and comments from Commissioners.

Mr. Hennie spoke first and he briefly talked about the work of the Planning Board. He thanked Commissioners for their support and for adding time constraints to this process. He also thanked the members of the Planning Board for the work they have done so far and expressed sincere appreciation for the support from staff because without them they would not have gotten this far into the process. Lastly, he was grateful for the members of the public who have been providing input.

Mr. Burrows presented next with the PowerPoint presentation. He also recognized the Planning Board members who are working so hard on developing the Comprehensive Plan. This is a summary of the presentation:

Background – What is the 2025 Comprehensive Plan?

- Long range guide for making growth and development policy decisions
- Evaluation of existing conditions
- Projects growth based on historical trends
- Based on citizen input (very impressed with citizen input and engagement thus far)
- Identifies tools to implement goals and objectives
- Measurable

Public participation is a critical element to success. The public will define how the plan turns out and that is done by:

- Surveys
- One-on-one interviews
- Kick-off meeting
- Community open houses
- Community enhancement workshops
- Public comment
- Engage all cross-sections of the County's population

Accomplishments

- Reviewed the 2005 Comprehensive Plan
 - Created a matrix of goals and objectives and categorized those items as completed, ongoing, and not worked on

- Researched other comprehensive plans
 - Identified comprehensive plan examples
 - Regional plans (Buncombe County, Greenville County, Clark County, etc.)
 - Award winning plans (City of Greensburg, KS)
 - National plans from communities similar to Transylvania County (Teton County, ID and Boulder County, CO)
- Developed a work plan
 - Adopted a work plan on October 16, 2014 with the major steps being:
 1. Project Planning
 2. Community Assessments (Planning Elements)
 3. Public Participation
 4. Focus 2025 (Community Enhancement Workshops)
 5. Action Plan
 6. Revise Action Plan
 7. Next Steps
- Recruited community advocates
 - 43 volunteers and growing (Each Planning Board member recruited three members from their respective community and the remaining came from all throughout the County.)
 - Cross-section population
 - Community Advocates' roles
 - Help plan, organize, promote, and host public meetings (kick-off meeting, community open houses)
 - Participate in Community Enhancement Workshops with Planning Board
 - Report progress to the public and make recommendations on behalf of the public
- Initiated an Existing Conditions Report

Next Steps

- Complete survey
 - Draft survey will ask questions related to the following:
 - Demographics
 - Quality of Life
 - Housing
 - Economics
 - Transportation
 - Natural Resources
 - Cultural Arts and Recreation
 - Community Services and Facilities
 - Land Use
 - Ranking Questions Other
- Plan and organize public input meetings
 - Kick-off Meeting: Consensus Building Workshop
 - Lead by a trained facilitator
 - Mapping question activity
 - Individual questions
 - Small group exercises
 - Full room consensus
 - Data is collected and tabulated into final report
 - Data captures likes, dislikes, challenges, opportunities, vision, core values
 - Thursday, April 19, 2015
 - Community Meetings

- Select public facilitator
- Host 2nd Community Advocate/Planning Board meeting
- Continue marketing and branding efforts
- Continue work on Existing Conditions Report
 - Complete Existing Conditions Report
 - Planning elements: population, economic trends, housing, transportation, natural resources, community facilities and services, and land use
 - Focus areas (based on public feedback)
 - Western Carolina University
- Begin mapping
- Branding, Marketing and Other
 - Logo
 - Video
 - Website
 - Facilitator
 - Survey Distribution

Schedule

- February 26, 2015: *Regular Scheduled Planning Board Meeting*, 7:00 p.m. @ County Commissioners' Chambers
- March 2, 2015: 2nd *Community Advocates Meeting*, 7:00 p.m. @ Community Services Building Conference Room
- March 19, 2015: *Regular Scheduled Planning Board Meeting*, 7:00 p.m. @ Community Services Building Conference Room
- March 30, 2015: 3rd *Community Advocates Meeting*, 7:00 p.m. @ Community Services Building Conference Room
- April 9, 2015: *2025 Comprehensive Plan Kick-off (Public Input) Meeting*, 7:00 p.m. Rogow Room
- April 13, 2015 – May 31, 2015: *Community Open Houses*, Dates/Times TBD
- May 26, 2015: *County Commissioner Update #2*
- June/July 2015: *Community Enhancement Workshops*, Dates/Times TBD

Mr. Hnatin talked about the kick-off meeting on April 9 and he explained the structure of the meeting. Following the kick-off meeting, the Planning Department and Planning Board will conduct community meetings. Staff will be working with the community advocates on the date, time and location of these meetings. The format for the community meetings will be an open-house type forum. In the meantime the Planning Board and staff will continue working on the report itself which consists of seven planning elements. Work will also continue on marketing and branding, creating a video for the website, determining the appropriate facilitator and distributing the survey.

Questions and Comments

Commissioner Lemel noted that the kick-off meeting is scheduled during spring break which may limit the number of participants. Mr. Burrows believes there will still be good participation. The community meetings will also offer plenty of opportunity for citizen engagement and input. He noted the community advocates will play a large role in determining where to hold meetings in their communities and recruiting people to attend, especially those that might not normally get involved.

Commissioner Chapman asked staff to remember there are smaller publications that can help with advertising, such as *The Mountain Voice*. He also advocated for the use of social media.

He thanked Mr. Burrows for the work his department has accomplished up to this point because planning is critical to the future of the County.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about whether or not the makeup of the Planning Board is contributing to the process because the membership is very diverse. Mr. Hennie said he is proud of the work done by the members. Everyone understands this process is an important element in moving the County forward. Mr. Burrows agreed and said although members do not always agree, they are engaging in healthy discussions and members have been challenging staff to ensure the report is workable.

Commissioner Phillips thanked the Planning Board for the work they are doing, noting that the year 2025 is not far off. He hopes the County can look back in 10 years and be able to see what has been accomplished.

Commissioner Lemel agreed that all voices and different perspectives should be represented and she was impressed with the personal ownership of the process because it is very meaningful to the community. She thanked staff for seeking expertise. Commissioner Lemel was also impressed with the number of advocates who have volunteered their time and effort. She thanked staff and the members of the Planning Board for the extraordinary commitment to this process.

Chairman Hawkins inquired about the goal of the kick-off meeting on April 9. Mr. Hnatin said the goal of the meeting is to identify priorities. After the kick-off meeting, the community meetings will begin. When the end of the process has been reached, the Planning Department and Planning Board will know that they sought and received input at every level.

Chairman Hawkins said he is pleased with the format because citizens are more likely to buy into the process if they have a hand in creating the final document. Furthermore, the interactive discussions will help to deal with any misconceptions that are out there in the communities.

Commissioner Chappell urged staff to include the County's Sesquicentennial planning groups in this process. Mr. Burrows reported that staff is working on engaging those members.

Chairman Hawkins said he was unaware the County has received an award for its 2005 Comprehensive Plan. He believes this should give the community confidence that this is going to be a great process and project.

NEW BUSINESS

ICE MAKER FOR ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The building specifications and equipment listings for the new Administration Building did not allow for the purchase, installation or plumbing for an ice maker. Since meetings are frequently held in the Administration Building, the Commissioners have requested that an ice maker be available. The cost of the ice maker, selected based on its size, capacity, energy efficiency, and quiet operation is \$2,199. To accommodate the ice maker in the large conference room kitchenette, modifications would have to be made to the cabinetry. The cost of these modifications is \$1,039. Included in the Commissioners' agenda packets were the specifications for both the ice maker and the cabinetry work. The delivery date for the cabinetry would be six to eight weeks after the proposed revisions have been finalized.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the acquisition and installation of an ice maker, including modifications to the cabinetry, in the large conference room kitchenette of the new Administration Building, with funds to be appropriated from the undesignated fund balance in the General Fund. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Commissioner Chapman was very much

concerned with the overall cost. He understood having to comply with ADA requirements, but he did not support spending this amount of money on an ice maker. Commissioner Lemel supported having an ice maker in the refrigerator. Commissioner Chappell expressed concern as well and said he was not okay with tearing out cabinets that were recently installed. He asked staff to consider other options.

Commissioner Lemel withdrew her motion.

Commissioners directed staff to develop additional options and bring back to Commissioners for consideration.

REVISIONS TO TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTMENTS TO CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCILS

The revised policy and procedures for making appointments to Citizen Advisory Councils (CAC) establishes clearer guidelines to determine who is eligible to serve on a CAC, defines the term limits, amends the previous policy to allow for the CAC members to elect their own chairs except where mandated by state statute and structures a schedule by which the Clerk to the Board must adhere to for reporting to the Board of Commissioners and placing appointments on the agenda. Staff feels the revised policy and procedures will streamline the process and help better manage the nearly 30 boards and committees the Board of Commissioners makes appointments to. It also helps to ensure the recruitment and appointment process is open, fair and equitable to all residents of the County who have a desire to serve on a CAC. It has been 14 years since the current policy and procedures has been reviewed or revised. It also dovetails with the recent purchase of Granicus software to provide efficiency with managing boards and committees.

The major changes to the policy include:

1. Establishing a policy for persons filling unexpired term. The policy states that an individual whose initial appointment was to fill less than 50% of an unexpired term shall be eligible to serve two full terms. Conversely, an individual whose initial appointment was to fill more than 50% of an unexpired term shall be eligible to serve only one full term following the initial term appointment.
2. Reporting and advertisement requirements for the Clerk to the Board. The Clerk will have monthly and quarterly deadlines to adhere to for reporting to the Board of Commissioners, advertising vacancies and upcoming appointments, and placing appointments on the agenda. This will help to create efficiencies, manage work flow and provide for accountability.
3. CAC's shall elect their own chairs and other officers except where mandated by state statute. All of the responses from a recent inquiry to other counties/cities showed that their CAC's elect their own chairs. This is a better model for creating leadership among the boards and committees.

It should be noted that because of our questions and the research we have done, the UNC School of Government is interested in following our work as they seek to position themselves to better assist other counties, cities and towns across the State.

Commissioner Chapman moved to approve the revised *Transylvania County Policy and Procedures for Appointments to Citizen Advisory Councils* as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Phillips. Commissioner Chapman thanked Commissioner Lemel and others for their work on this. He thought it was an excellent document. Commissioner Lemel said a great deal of effort has been put into being consistent with this process. The schedule allows for most appointments to be made during the second regular meeting of the month. The process allows time to recruit and interview applicants. Commissioner Chappell preferred that the Board of Commissioners continue appointing the CAC chairs. It is the chair whom Commissioners will have the most interaction. In terms of filling unexpired terms, he inquired about whether or not the new practice would be retroactive or from the

approval date of the new process. Commissioner Lemel stated that the changes would not be retroactive. This change came about because vacancies and unexpired terms are not clearly defined. Some CAC's are not turning over equally in terms of membership and that needs to be addressed. With regards to appointing the chair, she said Commissioners are not serving on these CAC's so the membership should decide who is most capable of leading the respective CAC. She noted examples, such as juries, who elect their own foreman or chairs. She also noted that Commissioners do not appoint all of the chairs of the CAC's they make appointments to now. Commissioner Lemel stated there will be a provision for education that will come later as well as a process for posting minutes for public inspection. County Commissioners will be holding CAC's more accountable. Commissioner Phillips agreed there should be uniformity across the CAC's. He expressed concern about many of the CAC's meeting schedules prohibiting participation for others. Commissioner Lemel stated that the goal was to establish a process where everyone is considered and it will be fair and equitable. Chairman Hawkins thanked Commissioner Lemel and others for the work that has been done thus far. He was proud that the School of Government is interested in our work because it speaks volumes to the quality of the work being done. He suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee so this can be an open process. After further comments, **the motion was approved by a vote of 3 to 2, with Commissioners Chappell and Phillips voting against.**

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported the following:

- The tax collection rate is ahead of this same time last year
- Construction
 - 80% complete on Tax/Register of Deeds building
 - Silvermont window project underway
 - Rosman Community Park in permitting
- TPED Executive Director hiring close to completion
- Animal Control implemented body cams as a best practice
- DSS Assessment Center for a new Director commences early next month
- Soil and Water will host their annual plant sale March 7 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
- Budget is underway and on target; proud of IT and Finance for implementing digital budgeting for electronic submission; eliminating duplication of effort; department budgets due next week

PUBLIC COMMENT

Edwin Jones: Mr. Jones said he recently had a conversation with the Clerk to the Board about the process for managing boards and committees and he learned it is a laborious process. He is happy to see the work being done to streamline the process. Mr. Jones stated that government can be most effective when they get out of the way of the people and he believes relinquishing the appointment of the CAC chair to the respective membership is a good first step. He referred to the presentation on the Comprehensive Plan and expressed concern about branding without first creating a mission and vision statement.

Jackie Hovey: Ms. Hovey commended Commissioners for approving the updated CAC policy. She said sometimes citizens apply for a board or committee and they never hear back from anyone. She also commented that the Board of Commissioners does not need to micromanage every CAC and they should trust the membership to elect the best person to lead them.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Lemel reported on her County Commissioner activities since the last meeting. She attended courses last week offered by the School of Government. Attending the courses allowed for the

opportunity to spend time with and learn from colleagues and peers. She noted that Commissioners all attended the courses on scholarships.

Commissioner Chapman said the NC Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) has published its legislative goals and they are available online. He said while the NCACC is a wonderful advocate for counties in terms of legislative issues, citizens should also contact their legislators.

Commissioner Chappell thanked all those working in emergency services and transportation for keeping everyone safe during the recent ice storms. He appreciated the sacrifices they make for others.

Chairman Hawkins responded to Mr. Jones. He said the branding referred to in the Comprehensive Plan process is not a branding of the County, but a branding of the process to update the Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Commissioner Chapman moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously carried.**

Mike Hawkins, Chair
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board