

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
June 8, 2015 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in regular session on Monday, June 8, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Commissioners Chambers at the County Administration Building.

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

Media: *The Transylvania Times* – Jeremiah Reed

There were approximately 40 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Hawkins presiding called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. and thanked the members of the audience for the participating in their County government. He introduced Commissioners and staff in attendance. He also wished Finance Director Gay Poor a Happy Birthday.

PUBLIC HEARING

FY 2016 BUDGET

The Manager presented a recap of the FY 2016 recommended budget for the purposes of the public hearing.

FY 16 Proposed Budget

- Manager's recommended budget presented on May 26, 2015
- Budget Workshop held on June 1, 2015 to discuss modifications to the budget proposal regarding the following items:
 - Community Center funding
 - PREA Officer staffing request in the Sheriff's Office
 - Fire Department funding
 - Education funding
- Consensus of the Board to propose a General Fund Budget of \$47,899,927 with no tax increase and maintaining the ad valorem tax rate for Transylvania County of \$0.4499 per \$100 valuation
 - Includes draw down of Fund Balance by \$1,293,496

General Fund Revenues

- \$47.9 million
- Largest revenues:
 - 57% ad valorem taxes
 - 15% Intergovernmental Restricted Funds
 - 14.3% Sales Tax

General Fund Expenditures (by Natural Classification)

- \$47.9 million
- Largest expenditures:
 - 41.9% Personnel
 - 32.4% Education
 - 13.2% Operational

General Fund Expenditures (by Function)

- \$47.9 million
- Largest expenditures:
 - 32.4% Education
 - 23.6% Public Safety
 - 20.6% Human Services
 - 13.2% General Government

As part of the presentation for the public hearing, the Manager must also present the Home and Community Care Block Grant Funding proposal for FY 2016, as follows:

HOME & COMMUNITY CARE BLOCK GRANT - FY 2015-2016		
<u>Program</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Western Carolina Community Action	Congregate & home delivered meals	\$ 104,740
Transylvania Home Care	In-home aide	\$ 94,118
KOALA Adult Day Services	Adult health & day care	\$ 65,516
Pisgah Legal Services	Legal services	\$ 5,767
Senior Companion Program	Senior assistance	\$ 17,152
Transylvania County Transportation	General & medical transportation	\$ 15,423
Total		\$ 302,716

The Manager also presented the figures for the category of Other Funds that fall outside the General Fund. They are:

OTHER FUNDS	
Law Officers' Separation Fund	\$ 194,421
Retiree Health Fund	\$ 410,945
457 Contribution Fund	\$ 244,500
Self-Insurance	\$ 3,665,923
Fire Districts	\$ 3,004,378
Solid Waste	\$ 2,056,526
Emergency Telephone System	\$ 908,134
Silvermont	\$ 265,750
Total Other Funds	\$ 10,750,577
Less Inter-Fund & Intra-Fund Transfers	\$ 4,664,736
Total All	\$ 53,985,768

Next the Manager announced the proposed fire tax rates for the local fire service districts:

FIRE SERVICE DISTRICT	
Brevard	\$ 0.0443
Rosman	\$ 0.0980
Little River	\$ 0.0849
Conestee Falls	\$ 0.0656
Cedar Mountain	\$ 0.1115
Lake Toxaway	\$ 0.0359
Balsam Grove	\$ 0.1056
North Transylvania	\$ 0.1279

The Manager asked Commissioners to adopt the proposed FY 16 Budget at the next regular meeting on June 22, 2015. If any changes are warranted she requested Commissioners schedule a second public hearing in order to allow time for public inspection of the amended documents.

Before opening the public hearing, Chairman Hawkins noted that Commissioners do not generally respond to public comments until the end of the meeting during the Commissioners' Comments item on the agenda. He asked citizens to limit their comments to three minutes.

Chairman Hawkins declared the public hearing open at 7:12 p.m.

Kathy Zimmerman: Ms. Zimmerman is a member of the Silvermont Centennial Committee. She thanked the Board of Commissioners for their financial support of Silvermont over the past two years and requested their continued support. With these funds many repairs and renovations have been made to the mansion and grounds. These projects are possible with the assistance of County funding, donations and grants and there is still much to be done to preserve this historic property and make it more usable by the community.

Unknown Gentleman: (Did not give name) The speaker is a member of Friends of Silvermont and the Silvermont Centennial Committee whose goal is to preserve Silvermont park. He thanked the Board of Commissioners for their support because the results are visible. He invited everyone to visit Silvermont and see the renovations. He emphasized the importance of preserving the history of Silvermont in order to protect a piece of the County's history so it can be shared with future generations.

Pinkie Byrd: Ms. Byrd spoke on behalf of Parks and Recreation and thanked the Board of Commissioners for planning for the future. She said while we live in a place of abundant natural beauty, not all residents are able to enjoy it. This fact makes the accessible parks in town extremely important. She thanked Commissioners for their continued support of the parks and the repairs being done to Silvermont.

Karla Marr: Ms. Marr pointed out that \$11.3 million, or 23.6% of the budget, will be spent on public safety, while only \$9.9 million or 20.7%, and is budgeted for human services. She believes part of the high cost for law enforcement is caused by outdated federal and State laws on drugs and the impact on minority populations. Ms. Marr said while this County has a sprawling \$18 million law enforcement complex, it lacks affordable housing and has many families going to bed hungry. She believes decriminalizing certain drugs, such as legalizing marijuana, would drastically cut law enforcement costs. Ms. Marr asked the Board of Commissioners to petition the State to change its drug laws.

Kevin Smith: Mr. Smith serves on the Parks and Recreation Commission. He thanked Commissioners for their support and vision that has led to the revitalization of the Activity Center and the forward motion of the Rosman

Community Park. He is happy to see how the budget will influence staffing. Knowing there is going to be increased attention paid to these amenities and resources will be a great benefit for the community. With that said, Mr. Smith commented on the frequent use of the gymnasium at the Activity Center and the need for air conditioning. This is something that is supported by the Parks and Recreation Commission and he said the addition of air conditioning will make the facility more enjoyable for its users.

Jimmy Jones: Mr. Jones spoke on behalf of Cedar Mountain Fire Rescue. He commented that public safety is a service that is needed within seconds and on a moment's notice. He reported that 377 times the County's paramedic trucks were all busy for the period January through May of this year and 91 of those times occurred in May. He also stated that the number of tele-communicator positions will directly impact the fire departments' insurance rating and will result in higher insurance costs for citizens.

Valerie True: Ms. True spoke on behalf of Pisgah Legal Services. She thanked the Board of Commissioners for their support which goes to help the most vulnerable citizens in the County and she looks forward to continued support.

There were no further comments. **Chairman Hawkins declared the public hearing closed at 7:26 p.m.**

Commissioner Chapman responded to Ms. Marr. He was offended by her mischaracterization of local law enforcement and stated that our Sheriff's Office deputies and officers are some of the best trained and equipped officer in the State and this County has one of the most highly respected Sheriffs in North Carolina.

Commissioners intend to vote on the budget at the next regular meeting on June 22, 2015.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications.

Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the agenda as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Lemel and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

The following items were approved:

MINUTES

Commissioners held a joint meeting with the Board of the Directors of the Transylvania Partnership for Economic Development on January 29, 2015. Commissioners approved the minutes as submitted.

APPOINTMENTS

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The terms of John Welch and David Watkins expire at the end of July. Both gentlemen are eligible and willing to serve another term. There are no other applications on file. It was the recommendation to reappoint them both.

Commissioner Lemel moved to reappoint John Welch and David Watkins to serve another term on the Library Board of Trustees, seconded by Commissioner Chapman and unanimously approved.

JOINT HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The terms of Edith Darity, Gene Baker, Ellen Harris and Jeff Carter expired at the end of May. Edith Darity is not eligible for another term. She has been granted a waiver of term limits in the past, but she no longer wishes to serve. Gene Baker is eligible to serve another term, but he does not wish to be reappointed. Ellen Harris and Jeff Carter are eligible and willing to serve another term. In addition, Rosie Craig has resigned her position. There are no other applications on file.

Commissioner Lemel moved to reappoint Ellen Harris and Jeff Carter and instructed the Clerk to advertise for the vacancies. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Chairman Hawkins made a point to note there were no other applications on file for either of the two citizen advisory councils on the agenda tonight and stated it is the priority of the Board to get more people involved with local government. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

NEW BUSINESS

LEACHATE AGREEMENT WITH TOWN OF ROSMAN

The County has previously had an unwritten trade agreement with the City of Brevard to dispose sludge at the landfill in exchange for leachate disposal at the wastewater treatment plant without charging fees to either party, regardless of fluctuations in volume from year to year. The proximity of the County landfill to the Town of Rosman's wastewater treatment plant presented an opportunity to explore a disposal method that would save the County by reducing travel miles and personnel time. Test loads conducted last fall to measure the impact of the leachate on the plant and both parties were satisfied with the results.

An approved contract (Rosman Board of Aldermen to consider on June 9) would be effective July 1, 2015. It would be a three-year agreement between the County and Town of Rosman to maintain a leachate disposal fee of 2.5 cents per gallon at the Rosman Water Treatment Plant and a sludge disposal fee of \$52 per ton at the Woodruff Landfill. In addition, the County would be responsible for installing an additional aerator by the end of the first year at the Water Treatment Plant. The City of Brevard has been notified of the change and will begin paying the regular sludge disposal rate as of July 1 with billing to be included in the Solid Waste disposal bills they already receive. The Manager recommended Commissioners approve the Leachate Disposal Contract as presented with the Town of Rosman.

Commissioner Lemel moved to approve the contract between the Town of Rosman and Transylvania County for leachate disposal. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Commissioner Chapman asked if there should be an issue with the Rosman plant would Brevard allow the County to dispose of its leachate at its facility. The Manager reported she offered a three-year agreement with the City of Brevard, but they declined. The City will charge the County a rate of 4.5 cents if the County has to use their facility as a backup. Commissioners thanked staff for all the work that went into facilitating this agreement. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

REQUEST FOR FUNDS FROM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Historical Society plans to hold a free community event on July 25, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Allison-Deaver House. This event is intended to help celebrate the 200th anniversary of the oldest standing frame house in Western North Carolina while showcasing how pioneer families lived, worked and played. The Historical Society is hoping that this will further their efforts to ignite interest in the community to protect the legacy of local heritage.

Expenses are estimated to run at \$12,100 and they are requesting sponsorship from the County of the event in the amount of \$5,100. This will support live music, children's games, a celebration cake and advertising for the

event. The Manager recommended Commissioners allocate \$5,100 from the 150th Celebration Reserve Fund.

Commissioner Lemel moved to allocate \$5,100 from the 150th Celebration Reserve Fund for the 200th Anniversary of the Allison-Deaver House. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman.

Commissioner Chapman asked if the City of Brevard intended to make a contribution. The Manager was unaware if the City of Brevard had been asked to participate. Chairman Hawkins noted the Tourism Development Authority was making a contribution. Commissioner Chappell thanked the Manager and staff for thinking of creative ways to help fund this event. He requested Commissioners develop a form of grant application to help dispose of the rest of the funds in this reserve account. Chairman Hawkins said the 150th Celebration ended with the goal of creating a lasting legacy in the County and this event fits in with that criterion. Commissioner Chapman thanked Don Surrette for his hard work on planning this event. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

SMOKY MOUNTAIN CENTER FISCAL MONITORING REPORT

Finance Director Gar Poor reported that the County is required to submit the Fiscal Monitoring Reports for the Local Management Entities on a quarterly basis. She presented the reports for the second and third quarters of FY 15, which ended December 31, 2014 and March 31, 2015, respectively.

Commissioner Chappell asked for a future presentation by Smoky Mountain Center to see how dollars and services are being allocated because service delivery for mental health has changed drastically over the last several years. Commissioner Lemel serves on the Smoky Mountain Center County Commissioner Advisory Council. Chairman Hawkins agreed a presentation would be informative because Commissioners need to ensure the citizens are getting services they need.

Commissioner Chappell moved to receive the report, seconded by Commissioner Phillips and unanimously approved.

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported the following:

- As of Friday, June 5 the tax collection rate was 99.73%, ahead of last year at the same time
- Has a meeting with Rosman Mayor Shelton and Interim City Manager Jim Fatland later this week regarding water resources
- Announced sign ups at the library for summer reading starts June 11
- Champion Pool update; addressing leak with funds from current year budget

PUBLIC COMMENT

Don Surrette: Mr. Surrette thanked Commissioners for their support of the Historical Society. He challenged the members of the Board of Commissioners and Brevard City Council to a game of horseshoe.

Karla Marr: Ms. Marr responded to her previous comments and Commissioner Chapman's reply and said her comments were misinterpreted.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Phillips requested a breakdown of all the counties' contributions to Smoky Mountain Center.

Commissioner Chapman attended the DARE graduation ceremony today at Pisgah Forest Elementary School. DARE is a phenomenal drug prevention program in the schools. He reported that he was in Raleigh this weekend and heard other County leaders mention that local Boards of Education are required to send monthly financial statements to their respective counties. He asked if this was required by law because this is something

he was unaware of. Commissioner Chapman thanked staff for the new budget process and citizens for their input.

Commissioner Lemel reported that summer camp season has arrived. There were 132 campers that arrived at Camp Keystone yesterday coming from 16 different states and two foreign countries. Her staffs are diverse as well and come from another six different foreign countries.

Commissioner Chappell commended the State for changing fishing regulations to encourage young people to fish and enjoy outdoors. As a result, he got to enjoy this weekend with his family and saw other families enjoying their time along the river as well. He plans to attend the DARE program at Rosman Middle School this Friday. His daughter will be a graduate of the program.

Chairman Hawkins also commended staff for the new budget process. It showed how staff, Commissioners and other officials can work together to find solutions to difficult problems. With local government budgets, there are always more good ideas than there are funds to pay for them. The art of budgeting is prioritization. There will be difficult decisions to make next year, just like any year, but this new budget structure will help prepare Commissioners for next year. Chairman Hawkins said one of the values of attending regional and statewide county commissioner meetings is to see what is going on in other places and many times we return home grateful for us being where we are. He shared a story from Moore County and was relieved and thankful Transylvania County does not have the dysfunction other counties have. He expressed much appreciation for the members of this Board, staff and members of the public for the collaborative nature in which we try to approach issues. Lastly, he thanked Solid Waste Director Jeff Brookshire for his efforts in facilitating the leachate agreement with the Town of Rosman.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mike Hawkins, Chair
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board