



November 7, 2014

A Highlight of Departmental Activities

The Weekly Report showcases the activities and accomplishments of the many Departments within Rutherford County Government. Click on the Directory list, department headings, icons and text in blue to be linked to more information.

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Special Announcements



Board of Elections

Now that Election Day is over, our staff is working hard to audit all the records, research provisional ballots, prepare for a Sample Count of the machines and possibly for a state-wide recount of a Supreme Court Justice seat. The office staff should be commended for surviving the weeks of 10-18 hour days and after the Canvass on November 14th should be able to resume a more normal life!

We want to thank all of the poll workers and rovers who handled the stress of Election Day with no major problems. They even kept the voting process going during a power outage. Thank you also to all the county employees who assisted us. We could not do it without you!

Subscribe

Clerk to the Board

County Commissioners held their regular meeting on Monday, November 3. They also had a special meeting prior to the regular meeting.

Tuesday was Election Day so there was a lot of activity at the County Office Building. Rutherford County elected 3 new Commissioners - Commissioner-Elect Bryan King representing District 1, Commissioner-Elect Mike Benfield representing District 4, and Commissioner-Elect Alan Toney representing District 5. They will be sworn into office on December 1 at the County Office Building at 5:00 PM.

Chairman Eckler and Commissioner Owens attended the Open House at the MAHEC Family Health Center at Lake Lure on Tuesday.

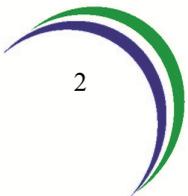
Chairman Eckler and Commissioner Owens attended the Rutherford County Schools Breakfast at the Carolina's Conference Center on Wednesday morning. Commissioners and the Clerk to the Board attended a hot dog lunch at the Solid Waste Department on Wednesday. Following this the Clerk to the Board attended a Department Head meeting.

Commissioners attended the Ameridial Grand Opening on Thursday. Chairman Eckler and the County Manager attended the County Commissioner Advisory Council of the Smoky Mountain LME in Asheville on Thursday evening.

On Friday, Commissioners were invited to the Forest City Family Dentist Ribbon Cutting and Commissioner Owens attended the Advantage West Community Meeting at Isothermal Community College.

County Manager

Monday started a very busy week in the County Manager's office. He held his weekly update meetings with the department heads from Solid Waste, Planning and Public Works, and Economic Development. These were followed with final preparations and meetings leading up to the night's Board of Commissioners' monthly meeting. With Tuesday being Election Day, the County Manager and his staff worked together in making sure the final day of voting went as effortlessly as possible. Tuesday also included several conference calls and a long night assisting the team working at the Board of Elections as the polls came to a close and results were tallied. The fast pace was maintained on Wednesday as the County Manager worked with the Clerk to the Board and other staff in planning for the transition for the three newly elected County Commissioners. He also met with the 2-1-1 Advisory Committee, visited the Solid Waste Department, held a department head meeting and met with the County Attorney. On Thursday, the County Manager toured the Thermal Belt Rail-Trail to see the recent clearing and maintenance completed over several miles under the leadership of the Solid Waste Department. He attended the Ameridial Grand Opening and attended the County Commissioner Advisory Council Meeting in Asheville. The week was wrapped up on Friday with several interoffice staff meetings a conference calls.



Cooperative Extension

The Family and Consumer Sciences staff conducted the "extension update" radio program on WCAB and WGTM; chaired the Community Health Council monthly meeting; attended the Preschool Health Advisory Committee meeting; participated in Food Safety Update webinar; and prepared for upcoming programs.

The annual 4-H Fall Fest and Bake Off was held in October. Participants submitted their home-baked foods for competition. Then, they participated in workshops on the dangers of smoking and cultural games. They also participated in a roadside clean-up project on Callahan Koon Road. Finally, they participated in field games and enjoyed a taco bar for lunch before adjourning.



The 4-H agent and volunteers traveled to Raleigh to gather items and prizes won by 4-H members at the NC State Fair. Rutherford County placed third in the statewide county sweepstakes, based on points earned for each award-winning entry.

Economic Development

The Executive Director met with an existing industry considering expansion plans in an effort to evaluate opportunities to secure the expansion in our county; participated in the regular meeting of the Rutherford County Board of Commissioners; prepared responses for recruitment efforts for Duke Energy and the Economic Development Partnership of NC (EDPNC); attended a Department Head Meeting; attended the Rutherford County Town Council Meeting; participated in the Ameridial Ribbon Cutting event; and, developed materials for upcoming prospect visits to Rutherford County.

The Project Administrator networked with existing industry via phone calls and email, provided feedback and scheduled upcoming industry visits; conducted existing industry visits; followed up with several existing industry to provide relevant information such as an introduction to the new NC Veterans at Work newsletter through the Division of Workforce Solutions; collaborated with Isothermal Community College Applied Science and Engineering Technology team (Dr. John Kinlaw, Mark Franklin and Dr. Kim Gold) to seek ways to establish additional interaction with existing industry; participated in a North Carolina New Schools event to learn about the NC iRIS education initiative and Rutherford County Schools' long-range local education planning and development; finalized plans for a visit to the SC Inland Port; participated in the Ameridial Ribbon Cutting event; and worked on Resource Guide for Work, Grow, Thrive!

The Economic Development Assistant continued to work with company officials, both local and out of state, to organize the Ameridial ribbon cutting event; attended the Ameridial event; worked with company officials to gather documentation for final submission of a Building Reuse grant application for a proposed expansion; and worked with Trelleborg's accounting department to assemble documentation and proof of payment to prepare a payout request of grant funds.

The Part-Time Economic Development Assistant entered numerous NC Broadband lack of service surveys received from local schools; finalized and distributed an e-blast for an available office building on behalf of the Executive Director; began preparations for an event next week; aided with final preparations for the Ameridial Ribbon Cutting event; and attended the Ameridial Ribbon Cutting.

Finance

The Director and Assistant Director attended several interdepartmental meetings and the Commissioners Meeting. The Finance Office Staff continues to work closely with the external auditors who are now onsite. The Finance Office has processed accounts payable this week.

Fire Marshal/Emergency Management

The Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Director worked with Wireless Communications on completing building radio templates for various agencies 800MHz radios, began work on a long term emergency shelter plan, and attended emergency management response team meeting.

Human Resources

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. The Director attended the County Commissioners' Board meeting, worked Election night results, met with Library trustees regarding the Library Director position, attended a staff meeting, attended a JCPC meeting, met with a TDA Board member and met with Transportation Director Kerry Giles. The HR Specialist conducted employee orientation. Current job openings are Library Director, Transit Van Driver, Lead Airport Service Specialist, and Library Assistant. View county website to apply.

Library

From the Director

Martha presented a program to senior adults at Life Services on the history of Veterans' Day. A special thank you to Maye Pruitt for the loan of a World War I helmet and to the D.A.R. for the donation of 25 American flags. She began work on employee evaluations, compiled the October monthly statistics, and attended a Department Head meeting.

From the Children's Librarian

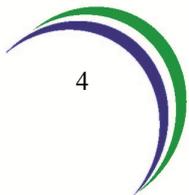
Miss Jeannie's story hour was all about feet this week. She will be attending the YallFest Festival on Friday in Charleston. Read all about it: <http://yallfest.org/2014-festival-info/>

From Library IT

Over 1,000 ebooks were checked out during the month of September! This is the highest circulation of ebooks to date. Over 120 new ebook titles were added to the library's catalog during the month of October. Visit the North Carolina Digital Library web site to browse our entire collection: <http://ncdigital.lib.overdrive.com/>

From the Mountains Branch

Friends of the Mountain Branch Library will have their annual meeting this Saturday, Nov 8th from 12:15 until 2p.m. There will be information about joining the Friends and a review of how the Friends have helped the library over the year. The Lake Lure Cloggers will entertain the audience and a light lunch will be provided by the Friends. The Lake Lure Lions will host a Diabetes Screening at the Mountains Branch Library on Thursday, November 13th from 12-3 p.m. This is a free event.

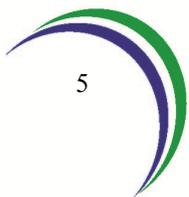




Martha Schatz presents a program on the history of Veterans Day.

Public Works and Planning

As our clocks and seasons have changed over the past week Fall is clearly in the air and our Maintenance crews have been busy with groundskeeping and pruning the County's properties. In fact, we've been busy with Fall preventative maintenance on HVAC with changing filters, cleaning coils and more. As the County's fleet of vehicles continues to grow, our garage stays extremely busy working on vehicle repairs, tire service calls, accidents and the routine maintenance issues along with vehicle safety inspections. In addition, the garage is increasing inventory of filters, oils, and supplies to bring oil changes in-house. Meanwhile, planning and projects has been extremely busy in negotiating the necessary savings to meet the budget approved by the Commissioners for the Southeastern EMS construction project. The Commissioners approved the bid tab along with TC Strickland Construction Co. to commence construction. We also continue to coordinate with NCDOT on implementation of the comprehensive transportation plan, as well as, the clean up of the Henson Rd. property. We hope to wrap up the Gilbertowne grant with American Battlefield Protection Office of National Parks Services this month. The artifacts will be donated to the State's office of Archeology Research. Lastly, onsite inspections were conducted of the Queens Gap development and GreyRock bonded improvements. Both projects are making very good strides of progress and the Planning Board is pleased with this progress.



Revenue

The Revenue Department completed 4,898 motor vehicle renewal and handled 51 VTS assists. The office answered 578 phone calls and assisted 269 customers. We completed 1 plat review, 3 pre-permits, and answered 1 Data Request. Appraisers completed 75 building permits and 470 field reviews. A total of 12 new documents were recorded. Transfers consisted of 100 straits, 32 new accounts, 5 merges, 8 splits, and 2 acreage adjustments. The GIS website had 154,266 hits and 107,032 successful searches. E911 addressing assigned 7 new addresses, and updated 87 addresses with new owner information. 2 informal appeals were received and 15 appeal letters were mailed. 3 listing forms were received, and 10 listing letters went out. The PUV program mailed 3 letters, and assisted 2 program members. Staff processed 17 exclusions/deferments. We had 2 refunds, 6 releases and 7 discoveries. Collection enforcement consisted of 11 attachments, 2 payment plans, processed 658 items mailed in, and 8 bankruptcy issues. In person taxpayers at the counter brought in 352 tax payments. 26 new deeds were certified for recording purposes.

Senior Center

In recognition of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, the Senior Center hosted an Alzheimer's "Purple" Walk on Monday. We had a special program on Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) on Tuesday. Our special guest speaker was Nancy Hogan from Land of Sky Regional Council. On Thursday, the seniors enjoyed craft time by making Thanksgiving cards. Lastly, on Friday, several of the seniors took a trip to the WNC Farmer's Market and Moose Café.

Upcoming events:

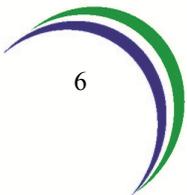
The Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period continues through December 7, and SHIIP, the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program, can help Medicare beneficiaries compare plans. The Senior Center has SHIIP counselors that are available to help. Call for an appointment to talk with our trained SHIIP counselors. The main number is 287-6409.

Social Services

The first week of hard launch for Medicaid implementation in NC FAST is keeping our Income Maintenance staff busy. Our State Over the Shoulder Support person, Matt Baker, is at our office all week. He is assisting with developing our conversion plan and conducting training. While some delays will be inevitable, due to issues on the State and Local levels, much planning has gone into this phase of NC FAST in order to minimize any delays or problems for Medicaid consumers. On Wednesday, the Director attended the 2-1-1 Advisory Committee Meeting at the United Way office. On Wednesday and Thursday, interviews were conducted for a vacant clerical position in Children's Services. Also, on Thursday the regular monthly Management Team meeting was held; and on Friday, the Director attended the Rutherford County Schools Preschool Health Services Advisory Committee held at the Carver Center; and the district DSS Director's Meeting in Morganton.

Soil and Water

The Admin/Education Specialist attended the Commissioners meeting, Farmland Preservation meeting, and a Farmland Preservation Ordinance Meeting. The Ag. Cost Share Technician spent the week overseeing construction at job sites.



Solid Waste

The Solid Waste Department served 360 customers, hauled 51 loads from convenience centers, shipped 30 loads to Lenoir, shipped out 2 recycling trailers and had 40 tire customers. The director attended the weekly solid waste meeting with Carl, attended the Commissioner's meeting and gave a presentation, had a hot dog luncheon, attended the department head meeting and took Carl on a tour of the rails to trails. Staff has been busy working on RFP for trash disposal and hauling. Also staff has continued to work inmates on the rails to trails project which is almost completed. The rest of the employees continue to perform their everyday job duties. The shop employees have been working on the dump truck this week and performing preventative maintenance on the equipment.

The Solid Waste Code Enforcement Officer report is as follows. Open cases - 10; Closed cases - 3; Pictures taken - yes; Letters sent - 3; Convenience center cases - 2; Community service workers - 4; and Community service reports - 1.

Please continue to recycle and remember if you have any question on recycling, please contact us at 828-287-6125.

Tourism Development Authority

This past week, the TDA Coordinated a press trip with Cosmosmariners blogger from Charleston, SC for Nov. 3rd-6th. There was a continuation of press trips pitches to Charlotte and Atlanta with Nov. 28th & 29th confirmed for Atlanta blogger. There was extensive Twitter scheduling. A discussion was held about possible holiday photography solutions within the tight budget, and the beginning of work on consumer email blasts. The TDA web designer conducted a virtual tour of TDA website improvements with some of the TDA staff. The VIN Wayfinding meeting time changed to 11/05/14 at 1:00 p.m. Tourism held a marketing meeting with Tryon International Equestrian Center. Other tasks included the coordinated removal of misleading signs on revised Cherry Bounce Trail; responding to media interview with Whisky Magazine; connecting with partners for upcoming media tour passes and the social media management of Facebook.

Transportation Services

EMS Personnel responded to 160 emergency calls and 56 convalescent calls. New hires participated in orientation this week with EMS staff. EMS is also in the process of transitioning to a new billing company and will work through this process over the next sixty days.

Transit drove 9,415 miles, completed 1,127 local trips and 68 out of county trips, transported 229 unduplicated passengers and collected \$13,291 in revenue. Transit launched their fixed route on Google Maps this week. We are the first rural transit system in the state to have their Deviated Fixed Route on Google Transit. Just go to www.maps.google.com, request directions and click on the bus icon. It will tell you what bus stop you can go to and at what time, to catch the next bus.

Veteran Services

The Veteran Services Office had 62 mail-ins, 128 facsimiles, 96 mail-outs, 134 telephone contacts and 227 Veteran contacts. Veteran's Day will be celebrated in Rutherfordton on Saturday, November 8.

County Commissioners

William Eckler, *Chairman*
Eddie Holland, *Vice Chairman*
Greg Lovelace
Julius Owens
Roger Richard

Carl Classen, *County Manager*
Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*
Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

