

RUTHERFORD COUNTY MANAGER

County Commissioners

Julius Owens, *Chairman*
William Eckler, *Vice Chairman*
Susan G. Crowe
Eddie Holland
Roger Richard

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

August 24, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending August 24, 2012**

General:

This is a highlight of items from the previous week. It is not meant to be exhaustive but to inform the Commissioners and Department Heads.

Board of Elections:

The Election office spent this week preparing for poll worker training on the Election Day software. A crew came in on Thursday and Friday to perform annual maintenance on our voting equipment to insure everything is ready for the General Election. The office is seeing an increase in voter registrations and changes as interest in the election grows.

Building Inspections:

Building Inspections issued 32 permits this week totaling \$22,705 in permit fees including over \$7 million dollars worth of additional construction at Horsehead. Inspectors have conducted 147 inspections this week as well. The Director met with the License Investigator for the NC Plumbing, Heating and Air Board to investigate local contractors working with no permits. Inspectors also investigated several complaints regarding construction with no permits. The Fire Inspector has been working with the Rutherford County Schools to inspect all Pre-K and More at 4 classrooms for state compliance prior to the start of the school year. The Fire Inspector is also currently taking the 2 week course for his Plumbing Level I Certification.

Clerk to the Board:

The September regular meeting of the Commissioners will be held on September 10 rather than September 3 as this is Labor Day. Agenda information will be needed by August 30.

Cooperative Extension:

The County Extension Director continues to assist clients with technical information through phone calls, office, and field visits. The Family and Consumer Sciences Agent met with the coordinator for the Community Transformation Grant, facilitated the ECA Leadership Team discussion for 2013 plans, attended the Extension Advisory Council meeting, met with the Grillin' & Chillin' committee to plan an upcoming event night, and taught a "Give Your Heart A Healthy Beat" class. The Agricultural Agent continues preparations for the 20th celebration of the Master Gardner Volunteer Program, assisted with the Local Foods Demonstration at the Rutherford County Farmer's Market, and networked with the Grillin' & Chillin' workshop committee. This year's focus is Youth in Agriculture. The agent made 79 contacts.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. The week began with a conference call reference Greyrock. The Manger also attended the weekly conference call regarding the Transfer Station, as well as, the weekly project update with Danny Searcy and Paula Roach. Matt Blackwell, ED Director and County Attorney Richard Williams met with Mr. Classen to discuss current ED matters. The Manager and Finance Director attended a pre-bid hearing at the Horsehead site on Tuesday. The Manager also met with Bob Howard, Judy Toney, and Beth Miller regarding the Airport, attended a Western Highlands meeting in Asheville, met with Brad Davis from Facebook, attended a conference call with Roger Hollifield and AC Daniels, and attended a Lunch and Learn sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

Economic Development:

Economic Development staff has continued working with IPDC, Town of Forest City, and Valley Fine Foods to finalize documentation for a NC Rural Center Grant Application due for submission on August 24, 2012 requesting a Building Reuse Grant in the amount of \$480,000. Staff also assembled a comprehensive response to a RFI from the NC Department of Commerce as a data gathering exercise on potential data center sites in NC, and responded to requests for information on a data center and mental health facility project. The Executive Director met with the County Manager and Attorney regarding an existing recruitment opportunity, attended an existing industry meeting with IPDC and Isothermal Community College regarding workforce training needs and possible expansion, contacted the NC Department of Commerce regarding local project needs and attended a Facebook grant update meeting. The Executive Director also attended Keystone training provided by the Finance Department.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 163 calls. EMS Administration conducted meetings with Administrative staff from local nursing homes to discuss the new convalescent services and implementation. EMS continues to conduct documentation training for staff that will be involved in convalescent services to ensure maximum revenues. The EMS Director attended the EMS Supervisors meeting. EMS coverage was provided for the Hot Nights Cool Rides Event in Forest City. **Emergency Management/Fire Marshal** investigated one fire death, attended the Safety Committee meeting, met with insurance representatives regarding proposed fire districts and completed the Emergency Management Performance Grant activities for the current year.

Finance:

The Finance Director attended the weekly project update meeting with the County Manager and Danny Searcy. The Director also attended the pre-bid hearing at Horsehead. The Finance staff continues to work on the Fiscal Year End closeout reports and preparing for the auditors to come in September.

Human Resources:

The Human Resources Department would like to welcome new employees Michelle Smith (p/t Senior Center) and Lemuel Jimerson (p/t Transit). Employees who have left Rutherford County are Patsy Gordon (Senior Center). The HR Office held meetings to discuss personnel issues and retirements. Also, this week the HR Director conducted interviews for the Solid Waste Scale Operator.

Information Technology:

The IT Department has been working on the on-line orientation for HR, training on MDT equipment in the Sheriff's Department, webcasting the Board of E & R meeting, training department heads on how to use the Keystone Financial system, and assisted with visual aid during the Solid Waste transfer station pre-bid meeting. Several offices have been moved around at DSS, between their three departments, so many computers and printers have been moved and set up.

Library:

The Library continues to see increased use in eBooks and downloadable audiobooks through their affiliations with the North Carolina Digital Library. Check outs have risen from 516 in May to 603 in July. Purchasing of additional eBooks using funds from the LSTA grant has begun and we welcome any suggestions and requests. Please email purchase

requests or questions about this service to Kenneth Odom (Kenneth.odom@rutherfordcountync.gov). Please keep in mind the Library's other online services: music downloads from Freegal, online language learning from Rocket Languages, genealogy research through Ancestry.com, HeritageQuest, and many more.

Planning/Parks and Recreation:

Maintenance completed 25 service calls this week. Increased rains continue to really push the groundskeeping crew to keep up with the growth rate. The garage had 6 preventative maintenance service calls, 15 repairs, 9 tire service calls and 11 state inspections/other repairs. There was one accident involving a DSS vehicle that was backed into by a client, the estimated repair cost is \$357.00. The weekly project update meeting was held with Paula Roach, Carl Classen, and Planning Director Danny Searcy. Several meetings were held involving Planning on the Biggerstaff Hanging Tree property, Rails to Trails, Bechtler Mint Site construction and planning, Health Communities project, Paddle Trail Access Points, and the Frank West Restrooms contract and park improvements.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 464 transactions collecting \$15,218.50.

Social Services:

The Department of Social Services, specifically Income Maintenance staff, continues preparation for North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST), which is a program designed to improve the way the NC Department of Health and Human Services and county departments of social services do business. It will introduce new technological tools and business processes that will enable workers to spend less time on administrative tasks and more time assisting families. While this will be of great benefit, there will be a big learning curve for staff, and much work involved in the conversion of data. The management staff is evaluating how best to utilize staff to make the transition as smooth as possible. Wilbert Morris, NC FAST County Readiness Liaison, was in the office on Thursday working with supervisors and the IT Analyst on the upcoming implementation. The next and final rollout for Food and Nutrition Services will be in November and includes Rutherford County. In early 2014 the state will begin the implementation process for other services. The monthly agency supervisor's meeting was held on Wednesday.

Soil and Water:

The Admin/Education Specialist has been working on news releases, education lessons and Field Day planning. The Water Quality Specialist gave technical advice to landowners/farmers and inspected ongoing projects. He is still entering contracts into the IBEAM system for the NC Department of Agriculture. The Specialist also drove the FSA, CED to areas in the county inspecting wind damage.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 330 customers from Rutherford County, hauled 60 loads from convenience centers and shipped out 33 trucks to Lenoir. Interviews are being held for the part time scale operator position. The Director attended the weekly conference call on the transfer station, as well as, a mandatory pre-bid meeting on the transfer station. The Director has also been working with Building Inspector Jason Ruff and Broad River Water Authority on items that pertain to the transfer station. The concrete has been poured for the white goods pad as that project is nearing completion. Staff continues to work with Duke Energy on getting the correct three phase power to the Gas to Green Project. The Solid Waste Department is also in the process of looking for a maintenance vendor to service Gas to Green once it's operational.

Tax:

The Appraisal Department answered 49 phone calls and assisted 14 citizens with the present use program and 12 citizens who came in to the office. Staff continued assisting taxpayers with questions concerning their tax bills. There were 39 Board of Equalization and Review Notice of Decision letters.

GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing assisted 75 taxpayers, answered 170 phone calls, and reviewed 3 plats. Three projects are currently in progress. Land Records printed 56 newly recorded deeds. They transferred 60 deeds and 37 new accounts were set up. GIS completed 10 splits & 2 merges. No acreage adjustments, created 8 maps and filled 0 data

requests. The addressing department assigned 1 new address, updated 59 addresses, and installed 6 new road signs. There were 3 permits issued. **Tax Collector** Real property bills are being paid at a steady pace. Tax staff expects to begin receiving mortgage company payments next week. Staff is working on several properties that will be finalized for foreclosure and expect to go to sale in September. Telephone calls are beginning to slow down. Jessica Garrett is now situated in Alice Barber's old work space and Alice has moved to the area behind mapping. Jessica's direct number, for questions about tax certification, is 287-1235. Alice Barber has begun training to be the primary person responsible for filing bankruptcy claims and maintaining those files. She will also be the primary assistant in tax foreclosures. Cross training continues in other work areas as well. Rheba, Linda and Jessica attended a public records seminar at IPDC.

Tourism:

The TDA has followed up on state sign requests, developing satellite information sites in Forest City and other wayfinding projects. Work has also continued at the Bechtler Mint site. Also, TDA staff participated in three on-air radio interviews, hosted a two-day media tour with writers from the Irish Times and managed four network crews and two print journalists at weekend events. TDA continues to promote tourism for Rutherford County through image marketing on an electronic billboard, with 8 digital screens, in Uptown Charlotte and surrounding Democratic National Convention venues. Design and development continue on outdoor kiosks and a Mobile App.

Transit:

This week Transit drove 9,406 miles, transported 1,048 passengers and collected \$13,840.98 in revenue. There were no safety violations. Marilee Scruggs retirement party will be August 24th at 2:00 pm at Transit. Welcome new part time driver Lemuel Jimerson to Transit. The Transit Advisory Board met for their quarterly meeting on August 17th. Ongoing interviews were held for an additional part time driver position to be filled, preferably someone with a CDL.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 193 veteran contacts this week. They also had 120 telephone interviews, with 47 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer met with a VA representative regarding a homeless veteran this week, as well as, provided food to veterans from the food pantry.

Special Recognition Highlights