

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*

December 14, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending December 14, 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 Elections staff has started the Post-General Election List Maintenance. Two staff members were in Raleigh Sunday thru Tuesday to attend the State Board of Elections training conference. Staff continues to process new registrations and voter changes.

Building Inspections:

Building Inspections had a busy week issuing 30 permits totaling \$9,287 in fees. Our Inspectors conducted 114 inspections. The Director, the Fire Inspector, and a Building Inspector met with several other individuals regarding a proposed apartment project in Lake Lure. The department is reviewing multiple sets of construction drawings for several additional proposed buildings at Horsehead.

Clerk to the Board:

Chairman Owens participated in his first meeting as a new member of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Board of Directors. He is the representative from District 15. Commissioners participated in the Tenure Awards presentation on Wednesday. Commissioners and staff attended the Veterans' Office Christmas luncheon on Thursday. Due to the Christmas holidays, the agenda will be prepared earlier this month. The deadline for submitting material for the agenda is December 18. Please let the Clerk know if you need assistance in getting your information submitted to us.

Cooperative Extension: The Director conducted the last of the 4th grade farm/city assemblies at Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy, met with Polk/Rutherford leaders to work on a solution to an on-line marketing system for farmers, held a Bull Selection workshop for beef cattle producers and continues to assist clients with technical issues through office visits, field visits, email, and telephone calls. The Family and Consumer Sciences agent attended a training for the 2013 nutrition programs, taught Give Your Heart a Healthy Beat class, hosted a Volunteer Appreciation reception for Extension volunteers, and attended the Extension Federation meeting. The 4-H Health Rocks TRY team finished the Health Rocks program. The team of five teen 4-H leaders taught two days a week at Forest City Dunbar's afterschool

program for the past 10 weeks. Approximately 35 youth participated in the program. 4-H Health Rocks is a drug prevention program that uses hands-on activities to create awareness on the effects of drugs, improve self-esteem, promote healthy decision making skills, and promote overall healthy living. The 4-H County Council members met to discuss year-end details and start planning events for 2013. 4-H members completed and submitted a total of 105 Project Record books for the year of 2012. Projects were done on topics such as turkeys, cooking, expressive arts, gardening, community service and science. Members will be recognized for their work in January. Three second grade classrooms at Rutherfordton Elementary are using the 4-H Bug-Out curriculum and kit to learn about the life cycle of insects. The Agricultural Agent attended a Polk-Rutherford landscape nursery workshop, attended Master Gardner training, and networked with the Farmer's Fresh Grower meeting. The agent made 75 contacts.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. Mr. Classen began the week attending a meeting regarding Medical Services, met with Rheba Ward, held the weekly Transfer Station meeting with James Kilgo and Tony Bumgardner, held the weekly project update meeting with Paula Roach and Danny Searcy and attended the Rutherford STEP meeting. Mr. Classen attended a Western Highlands meeting in Asheville, attended a meeting regarding Airport issues, and attended the annual Airport Christmas dinner. Additionally, Mr. Classen attended a meeting at the Hospital regarding Mental Health, participated in the blood drive at the Health Department, attended a meeting regarding Farm Fresh, attended the Tenure Award program for county employees, met with the Finance Director and auditors and met with Maria Honeycutt regarding Foothills Connect. Ending the week, Mr. Classen attended a RTR meeting, joined the fellowship at the Veterans Office at their annual Christmas luncheon, attended a meeting with Bob Howard, Keith Hunter, and Paula Roach, attended the Regional County Managers meeting, and met with Richard Williams regarding legal issues.

Economic Development:

This week, the Executive Director continued work on a NC Rural Center Occupied Building Reuse grant application; completed follow up interviews as part of the evaluation of firms for the Economic Development Strategic Plan project; attended the Tenure Award Event; met with Isothermal Community College regarding a NC Department of Commerce project; prepared a response to a NC Department of Commerce RFI for an available existing manufacturing facility; attended performance evaluation training; held a conference call with the finalist firm for the Economic Development Strategic Plan project; and assisted with the preparation and public notification of the upcoming Advisory Board Meeting. The Project Administrator researched sustainability issues through a conference call and updated website to reflect recent changes in contacts and opportunities in the field; promoted Work, Grow, Thrive! benefits to a group of HR professionals; followed up on a variety of issues with existing industry that had been identified during industry visits and scheduled visits to discuss; and attended the Tenure Award event at the Annex celebrating 10+ years of service to Rutherford County. The Economic Development Assistant continued updating the Building and Sites information on the webpage; processed invoices for payment; prepared and distributed the Advisory Board agenda and minutes; and researched and ordered new presentation cover books that will be used to construct marketing packages for site location consultants and industrial prospects.

Emergency Services:

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 164 calls. The EMS Director attended the Emergency Management Response Team meeting, conducted the quarterly Quality Management Peer Review meeting, attended the Tenure Awards Ceremony, met with staff from the NC Office of Emergency Services, and traveled to the ambulance manufacturer to discuss ambulance specs and details. **Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:** The Fire Marshal worked on the communications tower project, participated in the Emergency Management Program Committee activities, participated in the EMS Quality Management meeting, and responded to one search for a missing person.

Finance:

The Finance Director is working with auditors on the completion of the county audit. The auditors met with the Director and County Manager. The Finance Director attended the weekly project update meeting with the County Manager and Danny Searcy. The Director, along with IT and Keystone, rolled the grade/step table to reflect the salary adjustment and worked with HR staff on implementation of all hourly wage changes. The Director and staff attended the Tenure reception. Lastly, the Director met with James Kilgo and Carl Classen to discuss the Gas to Green project.

Human Resources:

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues and retirements. The HR Director attended a EMS mediation, held interviews for the Senior Center Custodian position, and met with Paula Roach and Richard Pettus. The HR Department organized the Tenure Reception honoring those receiving tenure awards, attended an ESC hearing, and met with the Senior Center staff. Congratulations to Brooke Watson for 5 years of service to the County. The Director held a training meeting for department heads and supervisors on performance evaluation. Welcome new employee Angelique Merrill (DSS). Employees who have left the service of Rutherford County are Bethany Fields (DSS), Andrea Power (DSS), Josh Pope (DSS), Emily Wood (DSS), Lindsay Alexander (DSS), and Toni Campbell (Transit). HR staff worked closely with the Finance office to make changes to the payroll system to implement the salary adjustment effective 12-28-12.

Information Technology:

Information Technology continues to support the hardware/software needs of the County. IT staff helped with the software needs to implement the salary adjustment. The IT Director went with the Sheriff's Department to Chimney Rock State Park tower site to evaluate the land for a viper tower. Three employees from the IT Department were recognized at the Tenure Reception for achieving five years of service—congratulations to Peter Gaulin, Vicki Edwards, and Jill Wilson. The IT Director met with Stan Duncan from the Tax Review Committee to discuss current tax software and future needs. The IT Director went to the Spindale House to review the meeting space for a Special Commissioners meeting to be held there next week.

Library:

Be sure and check the County Library's website at www.rutherfordcountylibrary.org for the sixth of the holiday recipes. This one is for a Two-Cheese Squash Casserole. "The Polar Express" program was a huge success. There were 79 in attendance. The session with Santa was very exciting for the children and their parents. Michelle Gillis was the winner of the County Library Kindle Fire HD raffle and Christy Roberson was the winner of the Haynes Branch Kindle Fire raffle.

Public Works/Planning:

The garage had 8 preventative maintenance service calls, 12 repairs, 2 tire service calls and 8 state inspections/other repairs. No accidents were reported this week. Maintenance completed service calls and continues gathering leaves along with pruning trees and shrubs with particular emphasis on the larger Bradford Pear Trees in front of the annex facility. Maintenance staff helped the HR Department set up for the Tenure Award Ceremony held at the County Office Building. Congratulations to Debra Blanton for 10 years of service, Jeremy Hill and Terry Byers for 15 years of service, and Shannon Spencer and Larry Bailey for 20 years of service to the County. The Director met with the Finance Director and County Manager regarding project updates and has attended numerous meetings. The pre-bid meeting was held at Greyrock with the bid opening scheduled for next week and those results will be on the January 2013 agenda.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 412 transactions collecting \$12,397.50. Faye Huskey was recognized for 45 years of service with Rutherford County at the recent Tenure Reception.

Senior Center:

The Senior Center has been busy this week. The Center has averaged serving 210 congregate meals and 90 home delivered meals. Two new routes for home delivered meals have been established, and shelf stable meals are ready to be delivered to ensure these participants have a meal for the holiday. Forty-nine participants received blood pressure checks, and 112 enjoyed our annual Christmas reception where each received a bag of Christmas treats and drinks donated by Pepsi. The ladies were shown how to create mesh Christmas wreaths. Chase Middle School Chorus and the Ellenboro kindergarten classes each came and entertained with Christmas music. These programs also served as part of our intergenerational program goal.

Soil and Water:

The Admin/Education specialist is working on the No-Till Drill Log and report, Enviroscape education lessons, and the District Poster Contest. The Water Quality Specialist consulted with a contractor on one of Rutherford County's last dairy waste lagoon closures with the intent to start the week of December 10th. The Specialist also entered application data in the IBEAM state system and attended the NRCS Cultural Resources training held in Morganton.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 332 customers, hauled 55 loads from convenience centers and shipped 30 loads to Lenoir. The Director attended a meeting at the landfill regarding the transfer station with David Odom, S&ME, Bernie Dilgert, Woody Kloesel, Carl Classen, Paula Roach and Tony Bumgardner. The Director also attended the weekly conference call. Additionally, the Solid Waste Director met with David Odom to review information needed to get permits sent in. The Solid Waste Department has used a large number of community service workers this week. The Gas to Green project is temporarily down until decisions are made on expenditures for the gas wells. Lastly, the dumpsters were emptied for the Biggerstaff project.

Tax:

The Appraisal Department answered 44 phone calls, assisted 8 citizens with the present use program and 6 citizens who came in to the office. Appraisers worked 163 permits, 70 reviews, 6 splits/merges and 1 acreage adjustment. Staff mailed 1 informal appeal form. **GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing** assisted 46 taxpayers, answered 154 phone calls and reviewed 1 plat. Land Records printed 44 newly recorded deeds, transferred 24 deeds and 5 estates. 50 new accounts were set up. GIS completed 5 splits, 4 merges, 4 acreage adjustments, created 8 new maps and filled 1 data request. The addressing department updated 44 addresses and completed a structure point project.

Sign Maintenance installed 15 old signs from inventory, had one new report of a missing sign, have 17 more old signs waiting to be installed, and have a total of 86 missing signs. **Tax Collections** has issued 147 garnishments this week. One foreclosure preliminary work has been completed and is being transferred to the County Attorney.

Listing /Billing reports will be forwarded soon. **Listing** has completed 12 discoveries this week totaling \$934.64 in levy. Staff continues work on the year end process for listing getting ready to mail abstract forms on or around December 28, 2012 for the 2013 tax year. Staff is working closely with Mike Peters at Good Pickin to prepare the database for the year end by running and proofing edit reports. Staff sent approximately 230 letters this week to mobile home park owners, marina owners, and the airport pursuant to NCGS 105-316.

Tourism:

The Executive Director met with Awen Marketing regarding future marketing changes and plans. Staff continues work on renovation plans for the Welcome Center in Lake Lure. Volunteer training sessions are scheduled and the first orientation for the Bechtler House will be this Friday, December 14th; with the next scheduled on Friday, December 28th.

Transit:

Transit drove 8,534 miles, transported 995 passengers and collected \$11,124 in revenue. The Director finished Transit's budget submittal for the annual NCDOT administration and capital grant along with supporting documentation. Collaborative marketing efforts also continue with several departments.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 157 contacts this week. Staff also had 73 telephone interviews, with 56 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer continues to help veterans with food from the food pantry. Currently, the Service Officer is working with four veteran families in providing food and arranging for toys for Christmas. The Officer is also helping 12 veteran women with gift baskets for Christmas. The Veterans office held the

annual Christmas luncheon. Toys for Tots was a great success. 15 large leaf bags full of toys were donated. This was approximately \$1,500 worth of toys donated that will bring many, many smiles this Christmas. Many thanks from the Veterans Office staff.

Special Recognition Highlights

Congratulations to Whitney Hoppes of DSS on the birth of a baby daughter.



"The Polar Express" night at the Library



Martha Schatz's granddaughter Elliot visiting Santa during "Polar Express" night.