

# 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*

January 18, 2013

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

## Weekly Report Items Week Ending January 18, 2013

### General:

This is a highlight of items from the previous week. Can you believe all this rain?! It is not meant to be exhaustive but to inform the Commissioners and Department Heads.

### Board of Elections:

The Elections office has had a busy week with staff attending the IT training and the Director attending a District Meeting in Concord. During this week, staff has processed 28 new voters, 975 duplicates, 38 changes of information, and have mailed out 657 voter verification and confirmation cards.

### Building Inspections:

Building Inspections has had a slower inspection week with all of the rainy weather, but administratively the office has been busy. Inspectors have had several meetings throughout the week with architects regarding several upcoming projects. These projects include; Isothermal Community College's renovations of the remaining unused portions of the Old Rutherfordton Elementary facility, the new Mi Pueblito Mexican restaurant in Rutherfordton, and the Arcade Apartment project. Permits were issued for the Arcade Apartments and construction has begun. The Fire Inspector has been working in conjunction with the County Schools to inspect and reclassify several classrooms in multiple schools to meet NC requirements for Day Care classification. The Director has also had meetings with Horsehead regarding a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy on a portion of their Administrative building. The Director met with the County Manager for his Department Head evaluation. Our department has issued permits for 6 new houses thus far in January.

### Clerk to the Board:

The County Commissioners' Office has helped prepare for the luncheon/reception for newly-appointed Secretary of the Department of Commerce Sharon Decker that will be held on January 22. Chairman Owens has attended meetings of the Social Services' Board, the Cluster Meeting of DSS Board Members in Hendersonville, and a ribbon cutting at Steve's Cleaners in Spindale. Chairman Owens and Vice Chairman Eckler attended the Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Comprehensive Transportation Plan Meeting and also the Aging Advisory Board meeting. Chairman Owens and Commissioner Lovelace attended the Technology Use Policy meeting. A special meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held on January 18 with Senator Hise and Representative Hager to discuss legislative goals for the upcoming legislative session.

### **Cooperative Extension:**

**The County Extension Director** continues to provide technical assistance for clients through email, office visits, and telephone calls. The Director met with other Directors from Polk and Buncombe Counties to plan a staff development retreat. **The Family and Consumer Sciences Agent** attended a county technology policy training, conducted orientation for new ECA members and annual training for all members, attended the Smart Start Executive Board meeting, began a "Steps to Health" nutrition program for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students at Pinnacle Elementary, attended a joint meeting with Grandparents Raising Grandchildren with Cleveland County, and prepared a nutrition display for the cub scout event. **The Agriculture Agent** networked with Extension Master Gardner volunteers to plan programs for 2013 and met with the Spring Garden School Committee. The Agent also assisted with the Pinnacle Elementary Farm-to-School Project-Soils Program. The agent made 87 contacts. **The 4-H Youth Development Agent** continues preparing for the annual 4-H Achievement recognition program. The agent and secretary are working on certificates, ribbons, awards, invitations and programs. 4-H members completed and submitted a total of 105 4-H 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. County 4-H council met and elected new officers for the 2013 year.

### **County Manager:**

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. Mr. Classen began the week with a meeting with EDC Director Matt Blackwell and the Clerk to Board regarding event planning for two upcoming events, met with James Kilgo on the weekly project update, met with Danny Searcy regarding Public Works project updates including Queens Gap and Greyrock, and attended the Comingled Recycling meeting. Continuing, Mr. Classen met with TDA Director Michelle Whitaker, met with Soil and Water Specialist Missy York regarding grants, met with John Carroll and DSS staff reference NC Fast, met with Clerk to the Board regarding Public Records, met with Rhonda Owens, IT Director, and met with Chris Braud, Town Manager Lake Lure regarding the Carolina Mountain Land Project. Chairman Owens and Vice-Chair Bill Eckler also attended the meeting with Chris Braud and attended a meeting along with Mr. Classen for the Lake Lure Comprehensive Transportation Plan Review. Mr. Classen attended the EDC Board meeting, met with Paula Roach and Richard Pettus regarding the EMS budget, and attended the Rutherfordton STEP committee meeting. On Thursday, Mr. Classen participated in the Western Highlands Special Board meeting in Asheville, and began to meet with Department Heads for their performance evaluation reviews. Mr. Classen attended a breakfast with the Legislators, attended the Managers meeting, met with Wilbur Burgin and Roger Hollifield regarding the Hollis/Polkville fire contract, and met with Richard Williams regarding legal issues.

### **Economic Development:**

This week, the Executive Director planned and made preparations for two upcoming events; secured the Foundation for the events; prepared the agendas and arranged speakers for the events; prepared for a site consultant visit; attended the Advisory Board meeting; prepared for two upcoming site consultant visits scheduled for the beginning of next week, and coordinated and participated in a meeting to develop a student intern help desk associated with the NC Department of Commerce NC LITE UP Program. The Project Administrator worked with IPDC on 3 existing grants for local industry; discussed export training opportunities and formed connection with two new partners/allies; communicated with District 13 Transportation group on US Hwy 221 Bypass timeline and impact; set up and attended demonstration on Executive Pulse Business Retention and Expansion software; provided updated Master Existing Industry List to Western Region NC Department of Commerce; conducted three (3) existing industry visits for Work, Grow, Thrive! Business Retention and Expansion program; hosted monthly Business Advancement Team meeting to share information on existing industry visits and to get feedback and resource assistance to address identified issues and hosted a visit by a manufacturing prospect. The Economic Development Assistant created invitation lists and invitations for two upcoming events; distributed those invitations and began recording the responses, secured a location and caterers for each of those events; attended and recorded minutes at the monthly Advisory Board meeting; and assisted with the preparation for two prospect meetings scheduled for the beginning of next week.

### **Emergency Services:**

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 171 calls. The EMS Director met with the County Manager and Finance Director to review budget items, conducted assessment for Field Training Officer, participated in the interview process for the Assistant Fire Marshal, and attended a planning meeting for the EMS Training Department. Several members of the Public Relations Team presented information to school children on “When to call 911”. **Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:** The Fire Marshal attended the EM Forum, completed work on Fire Service District Contracts, and attended the Western NC Firefighters Association meeting.

### **Finance:**

The Finance Director met with Danny Searcy and Carl Classen for the weekly project updates. The Finance Director also met with Richard Pettus and Carl Classen regarding EMS revenues. Performance evaluations have been completed by the Finance Office. Finance staff continue to attend the Technology Use Policy training.

### **Human Resources:**

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues and retirements. Employees who have left the service of the County are Denise Rogers (DSS), and Nathan Eaves (EMS). The HR Department is working to compile the performance evaluation information. The Director held interviews for the Senior Center Director, the Veteran’s Secretary, and the Assistant Fire Marshal. Thursday, a representative from VALIC held a presentation for interested employees. On Friday, the Director attended the breakfast with Legislators.

### **Information Technology:**

Information Technology has been holding sessions all week to discuss the Technology Use Policy. County officials and employees need to attend one these sessions to make sure they understand and follow the policy. Please contact Rhonda Owens if you have not already reserved a space to attend the IT Policy Training Session. IT staff continue to provide support to all County Departments.

### **Library:**

The Director has spent the week getting ready for the quarterly Library Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The rainy weather has cut attendance by half for the pre-school reading programs. The theme this week has been “Bands and Parades” Children’s Librarian, Jeannie Smith, and her story hour children had a costume parade throughout each of the libraries. All on staff are involved in the updating and weeding of the collection.

### **Public Works/Planning:**

The garage had 12 preventative maintenance service calls, 18 repairs, 8 tire service calls and 3 other repairs along with reporting 1 accident. Maintenance completed service calls along with continuing the pruning of trees and shrubs around the County facilities. This is also the season for preventative maintenance on the mowers and equipment in preparation for the spring. Staff has had further talks on the subject of Queens Gap with legal counsel and the permitting agencies as well as Odom Engineering in preparation for construction activity. The Director also participated in multiple meetings with other contractors, Department Heads and the Manager on projects underway and/or pending issues.

### **Register of Deeds:**

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 416 transactions collecting \$11,809.00.

### **Senior Center:**

The Senior Center did a blood pressure clinic on Monday, January 14 with 55 clients taking advantage of this service. The Center keeps blood pressure history cards on file and referrals are made by the R.N., when necessary. That was followed by “Batters, Splatters, and Platters”—the recipe club. Everyone was to bring a soup recipe. On Thursday, the seniors enjoyed the interaction with Spindale Elementary by being Pen Pals and corresponding each month. Staff not only stresses physical fitness, but also has a book club to stress mental stimulation. Numbers keep increasing for the congregate meals, and home delivered meals, the Center now has two new routes serving 97 in-home clients.

### **Social Services:**

State staff are at DSS this week conducting training for the hard launch of NC FAST which will begin on January 23. Staff from Polk and Haywood Counties are also participating in the training. Thus far wait times and a delay in benefits have not increased as much as expected. However, with the hard launch and the conversion of cases this may increase. The DSS Board held it's regular monthly meeting on Wednesday with all board members present. Among the regular agenda items, the board approved changes to the DSS General Operating Procedures; discussed possible revisions to the Board Operating Procedures; received updates on NC FAST, Medicaid Transportation, Personal Care Services, and IMD. Three board members, Maxie Jolley, Julius Owens, and Steve Wright, attended the Region I meeting of the NC Association of County Boards of Social Services held in Henderson County earlier this week. Social Work Program Manager, Lorie Horne, attended a called meeting of the Rutherford Community Health Center Board on Thursday.

### **Soil and Water:**

The Admin/Education specialist worked on submitting contract paperwork between the Division of Soil of Water Conservation and the Rutherford Soil and Water Conservation District for the February Commissioners Meeting. Also, the Specialist is working on the District Poster Contest awards and the District Awards Banquet and program. The Water Quality Specialist is on vacation this week.

### **Solid Waste:**

The Solid Waste Department served 275 customers, shipped 32 loads to Lenoir and hauled 58 loads from convenience centers. The Director attended the weekly project update meeting with Carl Classen and Paula Roach. Jacob Searcy, Recycling Intern, presented the first part of the recycling internship study on Monday. Equipment has arrived for the start of the transfer station project; however, the rain has delayed the installation. Congratulations to Alma Resendiz (part-time scale operator) on the birth of a baby daughter. The Solid Waste/Litter Control Officer is working on two open cases of littering, one on Frog Creek Road and one on Ellenboro/Henrietta Road.

### **Tax:**

**The Appraisal Department** answered 45 phone calls, assisted 8 citizens with the present use program and 5 citizens who came in to the office. Staff printed 82 Forest City finalized permits and mailed 4 informal appeal forms. Appraisers worked 46 permits and 17 reviews. **GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing** assisted 48 taxpayers, answered 142 phone calls, issued 1 pre-permit, and completed 1 project. Land Records printed 63 newly recorded deeds, transferred 66 deeds and set up 20 new accounts. GIS completed 8 splits, 2 merges, 4 acreage adjustments, created 16 new maps and sent 4 data requests. The addressing department assigned 2 new addresses, and updated 4 addresses.

**Sign Maintenance** installed 15 signs, had 1 new report of a missing sign, have 78 signs waiting to be installed, and have a total of 88 missing signs.

### **Tourism:**

The TDA has received approval from the Town of Lake Lure on the renovation designs for the Lake Lure Welcome Center. Renovations will begin in the next week or so. Work has begun on the 2013-2014 budget. Marketing continues with January ads placed. Work on the 2013/2014 Media Plan is underway and work is underway on the GIS mapping project integrations with the mobile app.

### **Transit:**

Transit drove 9,917 miles, transported 1,097 passengers and collected \$14,571 in revenue. Transit held their monthly safety meeting and County Attorney Richard Williams spoke to drivers about liability issues. Congratulations to Lemuel Jimerson who was named Employee of the Month. Transit began publicizing the new route to free food distribution sites. This new route has been well received and trip reservations have already been made. Procurement is also underway for a new state vehicle, office equipment, database software and vehicle radios. Transit received a new state purchased 22' LTV bus which will be used for shuttle service to Shelby.

**Veterans Office:**

The staff made 148 contacts this week. Staff also had 78 telephone interviews, with 33 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer continues to help veterans with food from the food pantry. The Service Officer also attended a Veterans Organization meeting.

**Special Recognition Highlights**



**Lemuel Jimerson, Transit Employee of the Month**