

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*

May 11, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending May 11, 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 survived another Primary Election!! Staff has worked long hours seven days a week in preparation of the election. Over 14,000 voters voted in this election which is a record number for a Primary Election over the last decades. All of our poll workers, rovers, IT and other county staff did a wonderful job and should be congratulated. Thanks to all the county employees who helped out on election night. Elections staff are busy auditing, processing provisional ballots, etc. to give a breakdown of the election numbers.

Building Inspections:

The Building Inspections Department issued a permit for a 94,000 sf building at Horsehead. The department also issued 24 permits, collected \$10,709 in permit fees and conducted 137 inspections. The department continues inspections of the private hangars at the airport and also completed the semi-annual school inspections of all public schools in the county. Two building inspectors attended a certification course in Asheville regarding residential fire sprinklers. The Director continues working on the bathroom facility project at the Frank West Park.

Clerk to the Board:

Commissioners held their regular monthly meeting on May 7 and also met with both the ICC Board of Trustees and the Board of Education regarding their respective budgets this week. The Board of Education met with the County Commissioners at the Sheriff's Department and took a tour of the Detention Center following the meeting. The Commissioners also held two additional budget workshops. The public hearing on the budget is scheduled to be held at the regular June 4 meeting with a meeting on June 7 for the budget adoption.

Cooperative Extension:

The County Extension Director worked with area cattle producers to put together tractor trailer loads of cattle for a special video sale in June. This sale will add value to their cattle and put more money back in their pockets as beef producers. The Director also held a meeting of the Rutherford County Cooperative Extension Advisory Council where discussion was held on local foods and other programs of the Extension Center. The Family and Consumer Sciences agent attended a Smart Start Executive Board and Child Care Committee meeting, conducted site visits for preschool outdoor learning, facilitated a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group, met with the Extension Advisory Council and taught a

food preservation workshop. The 4-H Youth Development agent is finalizing the 4-H summer program schedule. The agent participated in the poultry judging practice where participants and their parents learned how to grade a ready to cook chicken carcass based on USDA criteria. The agent is also coordinating a 4-H Embryology that will be held in 3 elementary schools.

County Manager:

The County Manager held several meetings with departments and outside agencies including Isothermal Community College and the Board of Education this week to discuss the FY2012-2013 budget. The Manager presented the Recommended Budget to the Board at the May 7th Commissioners Meeting, as well as, attended a DOT Public Hearing. Elections night was May 8th and the County Manager experienced his first election with Rutherford County. The weekly media discussions were held with staff from the Daily Courier attending. Also, a meeting was held with the Sheriff's Department and the Emergency Services Department to talk about how the county can improve public safety radio communications. In addition to these meetings, the Manager attended a meeting regarding updates on Horsehead and attended a teleconference with NCACC regarding Governmental updates. Ending the week were meetings with the Behavioral Health Committee, the Airport Board Chairman, and Foothills Connect.

Economic Development:

EDC Staff attended the Rutherford County Budget Review meeting, a Workforce Development meeting held at Isothermal Planning & Development and the Tanner Award for Excellence in Teaching luncheon. In addition, the staff continues to work on several very active projects as well as preparing for a client meeting scheduled for next week.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 192 calls. Training was held for EMS staff and other emergency personnel within the EMS System. The EMS staff participated in Mayfest activities by providing EMS personnel in case the need for medical care arose. The Administrative staff of EMS attended an EAP training held by the HR Department, as well as, attended and participated in budget workshops with the County Manager, Finance Office, and Board of Commissioners. Lastly, the staff assisted in the planning of events with system providers in recognition of National EMS week. **Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:**

The staff conducted two fire investigations, continued working on tower mapping, worked on Service District reports to the Commissioners and completed the fire departments budgets. The Fire Marshal attended an explosives class sponsored by Homeland Security and participated in a Asheville Airport disaster exercise.

Finance:

The Finance Office would like to thank all the department heads and support staff that helped compile the information needed for the Budget and Budget Workshops. We are very grateful for your quick response and teamwork that we have had in helping us with our first budget season. I would like to also commend Chris Roberts, Deputy Finance Director, for the Vehicle/Capital Equipment Plan that has been developed for use with the County's Budget for the upcoming year and future planning. Our office staff helped keep the Finance Office's daily operations going without a glitch as we have been working on budget—Thank You!

Human Resources:

The Human Resources Department continues to update files for changes for the State Health Plan. The HR Director and the EDC Selection Committee have interviews scheduled for the EDC Director position, as well as, reviewing applications for other vacant positions. Two DSS staff members have been hired. Welcome Mary Wright and Louis Hill. The HR Department hosted the 2nd EAP meeting with Woodridge Psychological Associates. The HR Director attended several budget meetings with the County Manager, Finance Director, and other departments and agencies. Lastly, the HR Department hosted a well received blood drive. Thank you to all employees who gave their time to donate blood.

Information Resources:

The IT office is keeping busy with webcasting meetings, assisting with setting up computer equipment for election day, uploading votes for election night returns, all while continuing to support the needs of our departments.

Library:

The 2012 Summer Reading programs have been added to the County Library webpage. Six programs are available for school age children during the day and two teen programs in the evening. Check out the offerings at all of our county libraries and get detailed information on each performer at :www.rutherfordcountylibrary.org, www.haynesbranchlibrary.org or www.mountainsbranchlibrary.org. Another popular offering from NCLIVE is the up-to-date health information available at: <http://health.nclive.org>. You will need to have a library card and PIN number to access so many of the offerings available from your County Library. Drop by at your earliest convenience and let us help you set up an account.

Planning/Parks and Recreation:

The Planning/Parks and Recreation Department had a very busy week in all areas of responsibility. The week began in preparation for the Commissioners Meeting which resulted in several budget approvals which include the funding to obtain two HVAC units (Annex and Mtn. Branch Library), funding to proceed with further developing the Bechtler Mint site, the Frank West Park Restrooms, and the Farmer's Market that is a joint effort with the Cooperative Extension office. Staff has initiated the service for sedimentation erosion control planning/permitting for the Bechtler site, and have begun coordination with Building Inspections to jointly work toward construction of the Frank West restrooms. Also, staff has completed the final design and preparation for the improvements to the County's Walking trail among the Callahan Koon facilities. (Construction will begin next week.) A pre-construction meeting with Odom Engineering and Sisk Grading for the first project in Greyrock was held, as well as, finalizing the contract. In addition, maintenance completed 21 trackit work orders and the garage completed 18 repairs, 9 preventative maintenance matters, and installed 4 sets of tires. The groundskeeping staff are doing a great job on all county properties, parks and complexes. Staff is working with Little League to better support them and create a written agreement for services accordingly. The Cultural Planner attended the Move More Scholars Institute last week along with preparing for Rutherfordton's Historic Preservation Commission regarding the Courthouse ramp and tree. He and I also met with the arborist for details and a report on the future of this tree and its impacts on the lawn and adjacent structures and walkways. In addition, he also met with Marty Blackwell of State Energy Office for routine visit re methane grant and provided updates on all projects in consideration.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 563 transactions collecting \$16,390.

Social Services:

The DSS Director attended the NC DSS Director's Meeting in Waynesville. The DSS office hired two social workers for the Child Protective Services Unit. Welcome Mary Wright and Louis Hill. Two cases were pulled by Food and Nutrition Services Quality Control and both cases were found to be correct. DSS staff continues to work with the County Manager and Finance Director on finalizing the budget. Lastly, May is Foster Parent Appreciation Month. DSS mailed over 200 mailouts as a recruitment campaign for foster families.

Soil and Water:

The Admin/Education Specialist attended the overview of the budget meeting Monday morning. Staff continues to work on the Annual Report, Strategy Plan and the Plan of Work. Also, the specialist worked with NRCS staff for the NRCS State Civil Rights Committee meeting held at the USDA Service Center. The Water Quality Specialist took new applications, gave technical advice to landowners/farmers and inspected ongoing projects. He also consulted with the County Planner on a start date for the Rutherford Walk Trail and will be making the changes with the contractor. Also, he has completed spot checks with District supervisors, is preparing the Annual Report, Strategy Plan and the Plan of Work for the District.

Solid Waste:

The landfill served 326 customers, hauled 64 loads from the convenience centers and shipped 33 loads to Lenoir. The landfill has begun a few minor improvements in the shop area. The Director attended the Commissioner's meeting in which the safety budget amendment was passed and staff is currently working to get the safety program up and running. The shop staff are waiting on improved weather so they can close off an old well located on county property that the county leases to Mr. Conley. Wes Scarlett has finished his first round of water testing on the wells. Also, Colfax Convenient Center is in the middle part of construction on the new septic tank. The Director is still working on budget with a meeting on May 10th with Commissioners and David Garrett. The Litter Control Officer responded to three litter control calls.

Tax:

Tax Listing/Billing: Listing has completed 11 discovery bills this week, while still continuing to list personal property and business personal property. The listing section assisted collections with motor vehicle bill merges. **Tax Collections:** Collections has worked to consolidate 34,097 delinquent motor vehicle bills into 19,336 accounts in order to be able to issue debt set off notices. The overall form is at the printer's for layout. The IT staff are working with us and with Good Pickin' programming to insure our data selection is ready for the printers and for programming to maintain these records. Staff is negotiating with Lexus Nexus in order to be able to obtain current mailing addresses and social security numbers with our available funds. We have finished the testing phase and have gone live with Check 21, an automated bank deposit program. We continue to have some problems with our scanners and IT has continued to be very supportive in making this goal a reality. We have completed training with the bank as well. Staff issued 7 wage garnishments and 1 bank attachment. **The Appraisal Department** received 21 new informal appeals bringing the total informal appeals received to 2662. We also received 3 formal appeals. The staff answered 67 phone calls and assisted 1 citizen with the present use program and 10 citizens who came into the office. Staff also mailed 177 informal appeal notices and 8 Board of Equalization and Review appeal forms. We held our first meeting of the Board of Equalization and Review. **GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing** assisted 49 taxpayers, answered 161 phone calls, issued 3 pre-permits, and reviewed 1 plat. 2 projects were completed and 2 more are currently in progress. Land Records printed 43 newly recorded deeds, transferred 47 deeds, transferred 1 by will or estate and set up 24 new accounts. GIS completed 1 acreage adjustment, created 4 new maps and filled 5 data requests. The Addressing Department assigned 5 new addresses, updated 82 addresses, created 1 new centerline and installed 8 new road signs and did maintenance on 2.

Tourism:

The TDA has diligently been working on the new 2012-13 budget. In addition, May media tours have been scheduled with Asheville Citizen-Times and CBS Travel South. The TDA continues to work in coordinating volunteers for the Lake Lure Visitor Center and The Bechtler House Museum & Visitor Center in an effort to serve visitors to Rutherford County. VIN operations, in regards to Wayfinding, are moving forward as planned.

Transit:

This past week Transit drove 8,918 miles, transported 988 passengers and collected \$14,284.48 in revenue. There were no safety violations. The Transit Director began working on NCDOT's ROAP grant and was informed of an increase of \$14,079 in funding for 2012-2013. This funding is used for the deviated fixed route service through Rutherfordton, Spindale and Forest City. The Director also attended a rural operator's meeting in Stanley County and received updated information on Medicaid transportation changes. The Transit staff has also began vehicle inventory with NCDOT for new vehicle cameras. Installation of four cameras per vehicle should begin in late June.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 168 veteran contacts this week. They also had 107 telephone interviews, with 150 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Veterans Officer attended training and also a Veterans Officer meeting this week. The Veterans Office continues to assist needy veterans with donations of food.

Special Recognition Highlights

Thanks to the Board of Elections staff for their many hours in preparing for Elections night. You did a Great Job!!

Thanks also to the HR staff for hosting the annual blood drive--57 people presented to donate, 8 were first time donors and 49 productive units were collected. Way to Go!!