

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*

November 2, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending November 2, 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:

Even though the cold weather at the beginning of the week slowed down the early voting, we have already voted 14,314 voters. In 2008, a total of 17,801 people voted early. Tuesday was the last day we could receive requests for absentee ballots by mail and a total of 1238 ballots have been mailed. We are doing the last minute preparations for Election Day as we head into the final stretch. Early voting ends Saturday. The times are 8:30am to 1:00pm.

Building Inspections:

Building Inspections has seen a pleasant rise in revenue this month with more Horsehead projects started. Inspections have also been up with an average of 27 inspections daily during the month of October--including a sizable number of complaints. The Fire Inspector is still working on routine school inspections. All of the inspectors have started this week with their continuing education classes--in each field they are certified in. The new bathroom facility at the Frank West Park is continuing nicely—in fact, will likely be completed in the next 1-2 weeks. All approvals have been granted for the Duke Energy Spindale Operations site renovations and they should be beginning construction at the first of the week. We met with ICC regarding renovations designed to move some of their students to the old Rutherfordton Elementary campus. Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy has almost completed their concession stand.

Clerk to the Board:

The County Office Building has had a lot of traffic this week as “One-Stop Voting” continues at this location. County employees at the Office Building are parking at alternate sites to allow voters easier access to the building. The November Commissioners’ Meeting will be November 5 at 6:00 PM. A special Commissioners’ Meeting will be held at 5:00 PM on that day. Commissioners attended an EDC networking reception and introduction to “Work, Grow, Thrive” at the Cool Springs School Administration Office this week. The Vice Chairman had two meetings this week regarding the Farmers’ Market and agricultural economic development. The Chairman and the County Manager attended the mayor/manager meetings with town officials this week.

Cooperative Extension:

The County Extension Director continues to assist clients with technical information through phone calls, office, and field visits. Three Extension agents judged the Farm City Poster contests among fourth grade students in the county. The 4-H Agent visited Chase High School, along with an ASPIRE recruiter, to let students know about the upcoming ACT prep course. The 4-H Health Rocks TRY (Teens Reaching Youth) is teaching younger youth about the effects of drugs and alcohol. These teens teach two days a week at Forest City Dunbar's afterschool program. 4-H Health Rocks is a drug prevention program that uses hands-on activities to create awareness of the effects of drugs, to improve self esteem, to promote healthy decision making skills, and to promote overall healthy living. Fourteen youth decorated pumpkins for the 4-H Pumpkin contest. 4-H members expressed their creativity and skills by creating animals such as a bat, a rabbit, an owl, and a cat, among other ideas. The 4-H agent completed the ES-237 federal report. This annual report captures all the youth and volunteers reached by the Rutherford County Cooperative Extension Service. In 2011-2012, a total of 900 youth were reached through various Extension programs. The Family and Consumer Science Agent taught Family Strengths program for New Choice clients, attended Extension & Community Association State Conference, and prepared for upcoming programs. The Agricultural Agent assists on the 2013 Spring Garden School Committee and attended programs with WCAB and WGMA. The Agricultural Agent is involved in networking on the farm-to-market project for local/regional producers.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. The weekly conference call was held to discuss the Transfer Station progress with James Kilgo and David Garrett, as well as, the weekly update meeting with Danny Searcy and Paula Roach reference ongoing projects. Mr. Classen attended a telephone conference with the Finance Director, Assistant Finance Director, Teresa Spires, and Ted Lord with GoldenLeaf reference a Horsehead grant. The new intern for the Enhanced Recycling Program, Jacob Searcy, met with the Manager and HR Director Judy Toney. We welcome him aboard. The Manager attended the kickoff of the Business Retention and Expansion committee and met with Dana Whitehair and Brian Rathborne regarding Foothills Connect. County Attorney Richard Williams and David Lloyd met with the County Manager. Other meetings attended were with Jeff Bradley, Vice-Chairman Eckler and Jan McGuinn regarding the Farmers Market, the Mayor/Manager luncheon, and the Ag Economic Development Project meeting in Polk County. The Manager wrapped up the week by attending the Western Highlands meeting in Asheville. Best wishes to Patsy Wilson on her retirement.

Economic Development:

The Director continues work with an existing industry expansion prospect; continues work with a new industrial prospect on an anticipated formal announcement event for November; attended and presented an overview of the new business retention & expansion initiative *Work, Grow, Thrive!*; prepared and submitted a formal press release for the NC Rural Center grant award of \$480,000 for the Valley Fine Foods project; conducted research on sale comps for former industrial property; met with a local citizen interested in employment opportunities in Rutherford County; and met with IPDC to review the status of grant administration for Ameridial. This week the Project Administrator completed preparations and attended the kick-off event for *Work, Grow, Thrive!*; scheduled two company visits as a part of the new business retention & expansion program; updated the website to include information on the new business retention & expansion initiative; assisted Valley Fine Foods with planning for their welcome event to be held on November 3, 2012; worked with Horsehead Corporation in preparation for a 4th quarter community information event; and updated building and sites database.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

Finance:

The Finance staff continues to work on the Fiscal Year End closeout reports. The Director attended the weekly project update meeting with Danny Searcy and Carl Classen and also attended a telephone conference with the Manager, Assistant Finance Director, Teresa Spires, and Ted Lord with GoldenLeaf reference a Horsehead grant. The Assistant Director continues to work on the Vehicle Fleet.

Human Resources:

The HR Office held meetings to discuss personnel issues and retirements. The HR Director and Senior Center Director conducted interviews for several positions at the Senior Center. The Director also attended a meeting with the County Manager and Enhanced Recycling Program intern Jacob Searcy. The HR Director attended the retirement reception for Patsy Wilson. Our office wishes you a Happy Retirement. Staff is currently working on tenure awards and longevity pay for employees.

Library:

The Director, along with April Young of the Mountains Branch, added the three county libraries to the United Way 211 system. Be sure and check the County Library's website at www.rutherfordcountylibrary.org for the first of the holiday recipes. This one is a breakfast casserole that is made the night before and cooks for 10 to 12 hrs. You can wake up to breakfast. You can print this recipe directly from the webpage. **Reminder:** The County Library will host a GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) program with a question and answer session, by speaker Samm Simpson, GMO educator and activist, on Thursday November 8th at 7:00 p.m. at the County Library on Callahan Koon Rd. The public is invited. The library has an assortment of books and DVDs on the health hazards of GMO's.

The Park Ranger Program on Friday Oct 26th at the Mountains Branch Library was well attended by children and adults. 25 participants learned interesting facts about bats, raccoons, and possums. Fall Fest at Mountains Branch Library was wonderful! Adults and children enjoyed bean bag games, cake walks, pumpkin contests, and several other activities. The Fest was attended by over 50 visitors!

Planning/Parks and Recreation:

The Garage had 17 preventative maintenance service calls, 18 repairs, 9 tire service calls and 79 state inspections/other repairs.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active month with 1679 transactions collecting \$58,746.25.

Soil and Water:

Admin/Education Specialist completed the Rutherford District and Farmland Preservation Board meeting agenda and information folders for the November 1st meeting, worked on numbers for the NRCS Contributions to Conservation Programs report, and completed and turned in the monthly Safety Inspection Report. The Department worked with 3 High School Agriculture Teachers to complete the judging to decide the winners for the 4th Grade Farm City Poster Contest and attended the Farmland Preservation and Rutherford Soil & Water District Board Meetings. The Water Quality Specialist took applications for assistance, gave technical advice to landowners/farmer, and inspected ongoing projects. The Water Quality Specialist made payments (Request For Payments) for the completed projects. The Water Quality Specialist consulted with a contractor on one of Rutherford Counties last dairy waste lagoon closures, attended the Soil & Water District monthly meeting, and has begun investigating a new Strategy Plan for 2014. They also entered application data in the IBEAM state system.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 323 customers, hauled 62 loads from convenience centers, and shipped 34 loads to Lenoir. The Director attended the weekly transfer station conference call with Carl Classen, Tony Bumgardner, Paula Roach and David Garrett. The erosion control part of the transfer station is almost complete. Work has begun on getting prices on maintenance contracts for both flare and generator for the gas to green project. Power Secure, CEC, Stan Steury, and David Garrett have been on site to work on the gas to green project. Staff has been working with Chris Roberts for truck recommendations for the Commissioners' meeting. Thanks to Larry Bailey for assisting with the new tags for each truck. The Department has received grant money from the state for the white goods pad project.

Tax:

The Appraisal Department answered 34 phone calls, assisted 2 citizens with the present use program, and 8 citizens who came in to the office. Appraisers worked 53 permits, 9 reviews, 10 merges, and 17 splits. **GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing** assisted 48 taxpayers, answered 145 phone calls, issued 1 pre-permit, and reviewed 1 plat. Land Records printed 54 newly recorded deeds, transferred 36 deeds and 1 estate, and set up 33 new accounts. GIS completed 2 splits, created 26 new maps, and filled 2 data requests. The Addressing Department assigned 5 new addresses and updated 34 addresses.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 190 contacts this week. Staff also had 94 telephone interviews, with 48 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer continues to help veterans with food from the food pantry. Also, the Veterans Office is collecting Toys for Tots for Christmas. Donations can be taken to the Veterans Office or dropped off at the County Office Building. Staff is working on VETERANS DAY SALUTE For Rutherford County Veterans.

Special Recognition Highlights

DRESS DOWN

October-December is dress down for Juvenile Diabetes. Annie Owens, daughter of Rhonda Owens, is also completing her Senior Project on this subject as she was diagnosed with this at the age of 5. If you wish to dress down on Fridays; help a worthy cause; and help Annie with this project, please see HR and complete the proper paperwork.

TOYS FOR TOTS

Veterans Office is collecting Toys for Tots for Christmas. Toys can be dropped off at the Veterans Office or at the County Office Building.

RELAY FOR LIFE



This week was the wrap-up breakfast for Relay For Life of Rutherford County which raised \$202,433 for the annual event. The Rutherford County Employees Relay For Life team was in the top 16 fundraising teams raising \$3,638 for this worthy cause. Thanks to all who helped and participated. Please mark your calendars for next year's event – September 6th & 7th at Forest City Park-Dunbar.

Thanks! Paula