

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*

October 26, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items Week Ending October 26, 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.

A big thank you is extended to all employees for their part in helping make the One-Stop Early Voting run smoothly. Board of Elections staff continue to do a great job keeping up with the massive amount of voters. **Voting is already 40% above where it was at this stage of the voting process in 2008.** IT staff have been great in providing IT support and a thank you to all employees who are parking in alternative locations to help provide parking spaces for voters, as well as, providing directions to voting sites.

Board of Elections:

Early voting is in full swing with 6,260 voters processed through Wednesday. Early voting is being held at the Board of Elections office, the County Office Building and the Ellenboro Fire Department. In addition, in total, staff have mailed out 1140 ballots and received 637 back to be approved by the Board. During this week, staff processed 144 new registrations, 290 duplicate registrations, 264 changes of information and mailed out 388 verification cards.

Building Inspections:

Building Inspections conducted 170 inspections this week and issued 30 permits totalling \$3,775 in fees. The Director and the Fire Inspector began conducting bi-annual public school inspections and completed three elementary schools this week. The Director met with the Field Investigator for the North Carolina Electrical Contractors Licensing Board regarding unlicensed contractors. Frequent inspections continue at Horsehead as they follow an aggressive building schedule with completion still scheduled for 2013. The Director also received and investigated a complaint from NCDENR regarding concerns over a building in Chimney Rock that has had illegal plumbing work with no permits or inspections and is causing water quality issues that are leading to health problems of the occupants. Staff are working with Finance as we move towards implementing a credit/debit program for permit payments.

Clerk to the Board:

The County Office Building has had a lot of traffic this week as “One-Stop Voting” began at this location. County employees at the Office Building are parking at alternate sites to allow voters easier access to the building. Commissioner Holland attended a meeting regarding economic development as it relates to Cliffside Sanitary. Several County Officials attended the WNC Beef Cattle Commission Meeting in Canton, NC. The Clerk participated in a webinar on Novus Agenda and its Boardview option. Commissioners and staff participated in the ribbon cutting at the Bechtler Mint Site and the following event at the Bechtler House which highlighted the coin press. The agenda for the November 5 meeting of the County Commissioners is being prepared this week.

Cooperative Extension:

The County Extension Director continues to assist clients with technical information through phone calls, office, and field visits. The Director attended a training on “How to Use Brewer’s Grain as Feed for Dairy and Beef Cattle.” The 4-H Agent attended ASPIRE (ACT Supplemental Preparation In Rural Education) training at the Princeton Review in Durham for three days. ACT Prep classes will be offered to all high school juniors next semester. 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, improve self esteem, promote healthy decision making skills, and promote overall healthy living. The agent also worked with the Poultry and Livestock clubs to encourage and assist them with their project record completion. The Family and Consumer Science Agent taught Give Your Heart a Healthy Beat class, attended New Choices Advisory Board meeting, attended a Community Engagement Team meeting, judged 4th grade poster contest and attended a West District meeting. The Agricultural Agent was out of the office this week.

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, a weekly update meeting with Danny Searcy and Paula Roach on ongoing projects was held, as well as, an update on legal issues with County Attorney Richard Williams. The Manager represented the County at the Rutherfordton STEP meeting Monday night at the hospital. Richard Pettus, EMS Administrator met with the Manager and Finance Director. The Manager attended a Rutherford-Polk-McDowell Health Department and Manager meeting and attended a Broad River Water Authority meeting Tuesday night along with a meeting in Lake Lure on the U/CR Community goals study. The Manager attended a meeting in Mecklenburg County with Bob Pearson. The Manager met with IT Director Rhonda Owens, met with Jeff Bradley and Vice-Chair Bill Eckler regarding the Farm Fresh Market, attended the Ribbon Cutting for the Bechtler Mint Site, attended a WNC Beef Cattle Commission supper, attended a Lake Lure Chimney Rock marketing assessment meeting and attended a Western Highlands meeting in Asheville. The week wrapped up working on the Board package. Our office extends its deepest sympathy to the Odom family.

Economic Development:

This week the Director was invited to speak at the Rutherfordton STEP planning meeting to discuss strategic planning; attended a meeting to discuss the permit renewal for the Cliffside Sanitary District; presented an update of activities to the Economic Development Advisory Board; assisted Human Resources in conducting interviews for the Economic Development Assistant position; continued work on an existing industry project and upcoming new industrial announcement; met with County IT staff to review broadband concerns for Lake Lure; met with County Manager regarding transportation options; and assisted Project Administrator in preparation for the upcoming BR&E program. This week the Project Administrator attended one of the information sessions sponsored by Horsehead Corporation at ICC; updated Economic Development website and Facebook pages; provided administrative support to office; worked with IPDC on existing grants and projects; followed up on invitations to Work, Grow, Thrive! event to be held October 30, 2012 at Cool Springs Board Room; and researched and continued work on Existing Industry Survey instrument; attended the Economic Development Advisory Board meeting and took meeting minutes and presented details of the Business Retention and Expansion program (Work, Grow, Thrive!) to the board.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 193 calls. The Director attended the STEP meeting at Rutherford Regional Hospital, reviewed operational data with the County Manager and Finance Director, worked with the EMS billing company to better develop reporting processes, reviewed quality management data with the Assistant Medical Director, and continues to review applications and establishing guidelines for an assessment center for part time staffing.

Emergency Management/Fire Marshal provided a fire safety education class, worked with ICC on the Training Ground Project, provided fire extinguisher training, and planned a search exercise to be held Friday, October 26.

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. The Director met with Manager Carl Classen and EMS Administrator Richard Pettus. The Assistant Director continues to work on the Vehicle Fleet and the re-bid for the roll off-truck for Solid Waste.

Human Resources:

The HR Office held meetings to discuss personnel issues and retirements. Welcome new employees Ronnie Lail (p/t convenience center), James Henderson (p/t convenience center), Don Lynch (p/t convenience center), Alma Resendiz (p/t scale operator), Andrew Harris (p/t Airport) and Justin Cobaugh (p/t Airport). The HR Director and ED Director conducted interviews for the clerical position at the ED Office. The Director also had meetings with Airport member Bob Howard, Sedgwick James Charlie D'Angelo, and Senior Center Director Patsy Wilson. Staff is currently working on tenure awards and longevity pay for employees.

Information Technology:

This week has been filled with many meetings. The Director met with Broad River Water Authority about the possibility of including conduit for fiber as they run water trenches, took a look at the Lake Lure visitors center to see where fiber could be installed for the new Lake Lure office for TDA, met with the recyclers of the county to discuss the new recycling law that went into effect October 1st and how they can move information electronically to the Sheriff's Department, attended a PANGAEA board meeting, and lastly met with Economic Development about technology needs in Lake Lure.

Library:

The Director met with the CMC Consortium staff and the Rutherford County Library Board of Trustees this week. The Director is also working with the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center to get important books, documents and newspapers digitalized. The focus this week has been on "The Daily Courier". The Library Director and the NC Digital Heritage Center are working together with the staff from "The Daily Courier". Other newspapers across the state that have been digitalized can be viewed on this website: <http://digitalnc.org>. The County Library will host a GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) question and answer session with 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.

Planning/Parks and Recreation:

The Garage had 10 preventative maintenance service calls, 17 repairs, 6 tire service calls and 13 state inspections/other repairs, along with continuing the required replacement of all permanent license plates and registrations of County vehicles/equipment which must be accomplished by the end of this year. Maintenance completed 24 service calls and groundskeeping of multiple county properties. Staff also began winterizing the county's parks along with fighting the graffiti on the jail. Additionally, we continue to see improved numbers and effort regarding road sign maintenance and replacement. The Director received useful information from the Insurance/Risk management seminar sponsored by NCCAC. The contractor is nearing completion of the Frank West restrooms. Coordinated surveying activity of the proposed southern EMS station property along with making final preparations for the grand opening of the Bechtler Mint Site and house set for October 26. Also, as usual the Director met with Manager and other Department head's on County business and agenda items for the upcoming BOCC mtg.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 345 transactions collecting \$10,723.50.

Social Services:

Income Maintenance staff continue to prepare for the rollout of the first phase of Families Assessing Services Through Technology (NC FAST). The second and final week of training for the soft launch was completed last week. All Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) workers will be accepting and processing applications through NC FAST as of Monday, October 22. FNS supervisors and staff are holding brief meetings each morning to troubleshoot problems with the system. Supervisors and NC FAST County Champions participated in a conference call on last Friday. The DSS Board held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, October 17. In addition to regular agenda items, the Board heard a presentation on the Child Care Subsidy Program by subsidy staff Gregory Osborne, Beth Archer, and Michelle Padgett; reviewed the newly developed agency Core Values; and received updates on IV-E funding changes, NC FAST, Medicaid Transportation, Personal Care Services, and IMD status determinations. The Social Services Institute was held in Raleigh this week. Several staff members and the Director attended. The Director also attended the regular monthly Director's Meeting while in Raleigh.

Soil and Water:

Admin/Education Specialist worked with Margaret Helton on selecting the school winners for the 4th grade Farm City Poster Contest. The contest judges were Bryon McMurry from the Farm Service Agency, Tracy Davis, Cynthia Robbins, and Jan McGuinn from the Extension Agency. The specialist attended the Farm City planning meeting held on Thursday, October 25th and sent out District meeting notices and Farmland Preservation meeting notices. The Water Quality Specialist took applications for assistance, gave technical advice to landowners/farmers and inspected ongoing projects. The Specialist also made payments (Request for Payments) for the completed projects and consulted with a contractor on one of Rutherford Counties last dairy waste lagoon closures. The Specialist discussed with farmers the importance of maintaining litter waste records to insure proper nutrient loads are being recorded on designated fields, and attended the monthly Mountain Valley RC&D meeting. A BIG shout out to Central Garage for locating a new/old vehicle for Soil & Water.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 191 customers, hauled 41 loads from convenience centers, and shipped 20 loads to Lenoir. The Director attended the weekly transfer station conference call with Carl Classen, Tony Bumgardner, Paula Roach and David Garrett. Staff is in the process of working on the erosion control for the transfer station. Work has begun on getting prices on maintenance contracts for both flare and generator for the gas to green project, also work continues on the convenience centers repairing compactors that have damaged slides and cylinders. David Garrett was on site 10-24-12 to discuss the transfer station project. Please welcome new part time scale operator Alma Resendiz, and new part time convenience center attendants Ronnie Lail, James Henderson, and Don Lynch. Staff continues to work with Finance on credit card and bad debt procedures. Steve Nanney is attending a Litter Control seminar at Wrightsville Beach.

Tax:

The Appraisal Department answered 52 phone calls, assisted 2 citizens with the present use program and 6 citizens who came in to the office. Appraisers worked 34 permits. A Board of Equalization and Review meeting was held with the final meeting being scheduled for November 19, 2012. **GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing** assisted 52 taxpayers, and answered 141 phone calls. Land Records printed 53 newly recorded deeds, transferred 56 deeds, and set up 25 new accounts. GIS completed 5 splits, and created 7 new maps. The Addressing Department assigned 9 new addresses, created 1 new road, updated 118 addresses and replaced 14 road signs. **Listing/Billing:** Listing has completed 10 discoveries and 1 rollback totaling \$342.67 this week. Our newest employee, Jennifer Whiteley, is in the process of looking for any new businesses that have opened in the county this year and getting new accounts setup for next year's listing in January. Staff has sent out 120 letters last week to unlisted existing businesses in the County and are in the process of answering questions, helping complete listings for 2012, and receiving the returns to discover the business personal property if necessary. **Tax Collections:** Staff has docketed one judgment and one execution for foreclosure.

Several others have paid to avoid foreclosure. David Hall attended a map reading seminar which will assist us in routing collection door to door efforts.

Tourism: The Grand Opening of the Bechtler Mint Park will be Friday, October 26th with a ribbon cutting at 12:30 p.m.; followed by an official unveiling of the Bechtler Press at the Bechtler House Museum and Visitor Center at 130 West Sixth Street. TDA is finalizing plans for the first annual Alliance Conference on Thursday, November 8th – 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Foundation at ICC. If you have not registered to attend this event please go to <http://allianceconference.eventbrite.com/#> and sign up today. Also, at this event, there will be an unveiling/ribbon cutting of the TDA's new Mobile Visitor Center. The framework and concrete is poured and construction of the brick base will begin soon for our Spindale Info Stand, a partnership between the TDA and Eagle Scout Tyler Moore. Work continues on other VIN site locations and Wayfinding Signage throughout the county.

Transit:

This week Transit drove 8,802 miles, transported 1,015 passengers and collected \$12,830.46 in revenue. There were no safety violations. The Transit Director attended the annual NCDOT conference in Raleigh and received updates on changes within the department. The Transit Department is also collecting quotes for new automated scheduling software to enhance Transit's ability to run more efficiently.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 137 contacts this week. Staff also had 99 telephone interviews, with 35 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.

<u>Special Recognition Highlights</u>
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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.

THE WEEK OF CARING ~ OCT. 20-27

For 11 years, United Way of Rutherford County and Rutherford Housing Partnership have joined forces to promote a week of helping those in need in Rutherford County as part of the national initiative Make a Difference Day.



It is an effort to meet both the urgent housing repair needs of qualified low-income homeowners and the more simple needs of yard work and light housekeeping for senior adults and nonprofit service agencies using volunteers who want to help neighbors in need.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER DURING THE WEEK OF CARING, CALL LINDA OR NELL AT 828-248-3431 or email resdev2@bellsouth.net

AND

Do you know a senior adult who could use some help?

APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE ARE AVAILABLE IN THE HABITAT RESTORE, 686 W. Main St., Forest City. RETURN APPLICATIONS TO THE RHP OFFICE inside the ReStore BY OCTOBER 3