

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 5, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending October 5, 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 Election staff has completed the testing of all the equipment for the General Election. During this week, we have issued 99 absentee ballots by mail or email. The Director is still recruiting the last workers for the election and is preparing training materials and PowerPoint presentations. During this week, we processed 161 new registrations, 147 duplicate registrations, 103 changes of information and mailed out 341 verification cards. The Director issued a press release to the media to remind voters that now is the time to verify their voter information and make any changes before October 12th. The Elections Office also asks that all County employees check their voter registration by going to the County website and clicking "Verify Your Voter Information". If any changes need to be made, the Registration/Change form is also on our website.

Building Inspections:

This week, Building Inspections has issued 24 permits totaling \$19,246 in fees. Building inspectors have conducted 112 inspections, and issued permits for 8 storage tanks at Horsehead and a gypsum filter building. For the month of September, the Department closed with 147 permits issued. Of those permits, staff issued 11 new construction houses, 9 residential additions, 7 remodels and 8 commercial building permits. A final inspection was conducted on the Isothermal Community College renovations to the Admissions Office. The Director met with representatives from the Town of Lake Lure and the Lake Lure Classical Academy regarding expansion of the school into part of the Lake Lure Arcade Building. The Director also met with the TDA Director at the new Visitors Center, to be located in the old Hickory Nut Gorge Chamber of Commerce building, regarding the proposed construction project. Lastly, the Director met with the Public Works and Planning Director regarding space needs considerations and attended the dedication ceremony for the new Courthouse Lawn accessibility ramp.

Clerk to the Board:

289 N. Main Street, Rutherfordton, NC 28139 ♦ 828-287-6045 ♦ 828-287-6262 (FAX)
www.rutherfordcountync.gov

On Monday, October 1, the Commissioners held a Special Meeting at 4:00 pm that allowed the County Commissioners to review and discuss the revised version of the Rules of Procedure for Rutherford County Commissioners, and held a Second Special Meeting, at 5:00 pm, that was a closed session for consultation with legal counsel. Following the closed session, the Board voted to authorize a settlement with Lexon and Bond Safeguard related to the Phase 1 Bonds for the Queen's Gap Development. The regular monthly meeting was then held at 6:00 pm. Chairman Julius Owens and Vice-Chair Bill Eckler attended the Handicap Ramp ribbon cutting at the Courthouse. Staff assisted with the preparation for the ribbon cutting.

Cooperative Extension:

The County Extension Director continues to assist clients with technical information through phone calls, office, and field visits. The 4-H Youth Poultry judging team participated in the Cleveland County Poultry Judging Contest, placing 2nd overall. This was against all other FFA teams. Great Job!! The 4-H Health Rocks TRY (Teens Reaching Youth) team met and planned their instructional sessions at the Forest City Dunbar afterschool program. The staff continues working on building a Vermicomposting bin to teach fifth graders about using worms to make compost. The Family and Consumer Science Agent attended a Smart Start Board meeting, submitted a news column to the Daily Courier, attended a Community Health Council meeting, taught Give Your Heart a Healthy Beat class, and facilitated a educational tour for Extension volunteers. The Agricultural Agent participated in the Grillin & Chillin, networked with East Rutherford and Chase High Schools' FFA Chapters, spoke with Pinnacle Elementary students, and Farmer's Market Vendors. Contacts made 240.

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. The Manager met with Danny Searcy and Paula Roach on the project updates. Monday evening started with a meeting with Richard Williams to review the Board agenda packet and was followed by two Special Board meetings and the regular monthly Board meeting. Mr. Classen met with Boyce Abernathy, held the weekly media discussion, and met with Richard Pettus. The County Manager, along, with Chairman Owens, Vice-Chair Bill Eckler, staff, town officials, Clerk of Court, and other invited guests held a ribbon cutting for the new handicap ramp at the Courthouse. The Manager also attended a Community Health Council meeting, met with Captain Burgin ref water line extensions, and met with Gene Booth. Lastly, the Manager met with Kerry Giles and Debbie Bedford regarding election day transit, and attended the Western Highlands meeting in Asheville.

Economic Development:

This week the Executive Director prepared and submitted informational packages for NC Department of Commerce and AdvantageWest industrial projects; attended the Board of County Commissioners meeting; met with an engineering consultant to review a proposed site for a NC Biofuels Center national marketing and industry recruiting campaign; and continued work with the NC Department of Commerce on an existing industry expansion project. The Director also met with the owner of the Caldwell Banker Building regarding marketing efforts; developed and delivered a presentation to the Isothermal Community College faculty; attended a training session provided by NC Department of Commerce; and attended the job fair at Isothermal Community College. The Project Administrator continued systematic development of collateral materials and additional details for the Business Expansion and Retention program including the design and printing of informational rack cards; created a matrix of existing industry and categorized them according to employee numbers for visitation schedule development; followed up on NC Rural Center and CDBG Grant status for multiple existing projects; worked with an existing industry on some proposed community events; attended a training session provided by NC Department of Commerce; and attended the job fair at Isothermal Community College.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 187 calls. The EMS Public Relations Team attended and provided standby at the Jamie Johnson Concert at McNair Field. The Director attended an Emergency Management Resource Team meeting, evaluated personal protective equipment for staff, met with the training team to develop the next quarterly in-service schedule, and continues to develop vehicle specifications for new ambulances. **Emergency Management/Fire Marshal** conducted a missing person search, conducted fire investigation training, attended firearms training, and participated in an Emergency Preparedness PSA for Health Department.

Finance:

The Finance staff continues to work on the Fiscal Year End closeout reports. The County auditors are here and are being assisted by the Finance Director and Assistant Director. The Director attended the weekly project update meeting with Danny Searcy and Carl Classen. The Assistant Director continues to work on the Vehicle Fleet and the re-bid for the roll off-truck for Solid Waste. The Director and several staff members attended Keystone update training in Asheville.

Human Resources:

Welcome new employee Janice Ford (DSS). Employees who have left the service of Rutherford County are Sue Ellen Camden Lee (DSS), and Jeff Leach (EMS-transferred to p-time status). Congratulations to Sue Ellen on her retirement!! The HR Office held meetings to discuss personnel issues and retirements. The HR Director, along with James Kilgo conducted interviews for the Scale Operator position and the Director also assisted Faye Huskey in interviewing for the Register of Deeds part time position. The Director along with DSS staff and the County Attorney took part in an ESC phone hearing. Staff members attended a Keystone update training in Asheville. HR staff arranged the Flu Shot Clinic for October 8th from 10:00 am-2:00 pm. The Health Department will be administering the clinic at the County Office Building. Staff also scheduled the annual Open Season for Colonial and Flexible Benefit changes for the week of October 8-12. **Congratulations to Judy as she welcomes new granddaughter Harper Ann Bennett on October 3rd.**

Information Technology:

The IT Department is still working with the Planning Department on the camera installation and security at the Betchler Mint Site. IT staff continues to assist the Board of Elections as they prepare for the upcoming Elections. Staff members attended the Keystone Software updates in Asheville this week. Progress continues to be made with DSS on NCFASST and getting employees ready to start uploading information.

Library:

The County Library staff is in the final stages of setting up tables and moving furniture to prepare for the book sale that begins at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday and runs until noon on Saturday. There has been a heavy stream of computer usage this week, as well as, families in record numbers in search of materials for school assignments. This week's theme for the preschool story hour is "Leaves." This is "Banned Book Week" and the County Library is celebrating the right to read.

Planning/Parks and Recreation:

The garage had 8 preventative maintenance service calls, 11 repairs, 5 tire service calls and 2 state inspections/other repairs, while Maintenance completed 34 service calls and groundskeeping. Frank West Park restrooms got off to a slow start but now has the concrete forms built and underslab plumbing underway. It has been a huge week for the County with the UNCTV premiere of the Bechtler Mint documentary. The Bechtler house is in order and ready for visitors and the site is in good shape. Staff have held a couple of meetings with TDA and the County Manager regarding security options at the Bechtler site, and expect security lights along with the gates securing the mineshaft opening to be installed onsite very soon. The contractors are doing a fantastic job in Greyrock with great progress and no violations occurring. Other action items this week were prep and attendance of the commissioners meeting and held a dedication service for the courthouse handicap ramp. Jerry Stensland coordinated with County Historian Chivous Bradley on the OVTA reenactment at Historic Gilbertowne and met with Andrew Kota regarding trail and conversation options for Gilbert Town. Last, but not least, as highlighted in the Daily Courier, is the settlement with the bond company for the Queens Gap infrastructure. Congratulations to Bobby Burnett and his new wife Amanda – Married 9/22/12

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 419 transactions collecting \$24,029.00.

Soil and Water:

The Conservation Field Day scheduled for 5th Grade Students on October 2nd was canceled due to rain and has been rescheduled for October 9th. The Admin/Education Specialist completed the Agenda and information folders for the Farmland Preservation Board Meeting and the District Board Meeting for the October 4th meetings. The Water Quality Specialist was on leave for part of the week, inspected ongoing projects and gave technical information, submitted Contract Approval, and attended the District Board Meeting.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 344 customers, hauled 59 loads from the centers, and shipped 33 loads to Lenoir. The Director attended the weekly transfer station meeting with Carl Classen and David Garrett. The Director also attended a meeting with local municipalities, GDS, Rob Taylor, DENHR, and County Manager Carl Classen on expanding recycling efforts in Rutherford County. Interviews for the part time Scale Operator position with Judy Toney were conducted. The Director attended the Commissioner's meeting, applied for a Recycling grant from the State, and has begun the second bid process for the roll off truck. Solid Waste reported no accidents this week. Wes Scarlett continues performing water testing on the wells. The Solid Waste Code Officer is attending training this week.

Tax:

The Appraisal Department answered 43 phone calls, assisted 2 citizens with the present use program and 5 citizens who came in to the office. Appraisers worked 63 permits. The appraisers also worked 2 reviews & 14 road reviews. There were 73 Forest City permits that were finalized. GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing assisted 66 taxpayers, answered 157 phone calls, issued 2 pre-permits, and reviewed 6 plats. One project is currently in progress. Land Records printed 72 newly recorded deeds, transferred 39 deeds and set up 19 new accounts. GIS completed 5 splits, 1 merge, 3 acreage adjustments, and created 29 new maps. The Addressing Department assigned 7 new addresses, updated 69 addresses, and installed 8 new road signs. Tax Collections- received two in-rem foreclosure actions pay out over \$10,000 to stop action. Also, staff was presented with 98 deeds for the month of September to certify with 3 of those having delinquent taxes of \$3,011.41 of which \$1,881.09 was collected. \$22,506.00 delinquent taxes were due for July and September and of that, \$18,211.33 has been collected. Staff has issued 44 garnishments and had a few field visits. 4 new bankruptcy filings and 11 discharge/dismissals. An increase in payment and bank draft arrangements have been made this month.

Billing/Listing: Listing has answered 20-30 telephone calls, responded to 15-20 walk-in taxpayers, and completed 32 discovery bills totaling \$1216.93.

Transit:

This week Transit drove 8,868 miles, transported 1,041 passengers and collected \$13,014.79 in revenue. There were no safety violations. The Transit Director met with Rutherford County Schools to address transportation issues for exceptional students as they transition into work or college after graduation. Transit is analyzing ways to transport additional seniors to the Senior Center daily, as well as, additional opportunities to provide new forms of transportation to Rutherford County citizens.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 136 contacts this week. Staff also had 91 telephone interviews, with 35 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer attended a Veterans Day Ceremony meeting and a Veterans Organization meeting. The Service Officer also attended a Ribbon Cutting for the new Handicap Ramp at the Courthouse, and assisted with the Marine Corp golf tournament. The Veterans Office continues to assist veterans from the food pantry.

Special Recognition Highlights

Ribbon Cutting for the Handicap Ramp at the Courthouse











289 N. Main Street, Rutherfordton, NC 28139 ♦ 828-287-6045 ♦ 828-287-6262 (FAX)
www.rutherfordcountync.gov

Lt. Leon Godlock receives Advanced Professional Certificate.

On 10-3-2012, Sheriff Chris Francis and Chief Deputy Jeff Buchannan presented Lt. Leon Godlock with his Advanced Professional Certificate in a ceremony at Rutherford County Sheriff Office.

The North Carolina Sheriff's Education and Training Standards Commission awarded Lt. Leon Godlock with his Advanced Professional Certification.

The Advanced Professional Certificate is the highest level of professional certification issued by the North Carolina Sheriff's Education and Training Standards Commission to deputy sheriffs.

The Advanced Professional Certificate is awarded to deputies who have completed the required years of service, professional training and continuing education.

In Lt. Godlock's letter recognizing his accomplishment, Attorney General Roy Cooper, wrote, "I extend my most sincere congratulations to you on award of this Advanced Professional Certificate and the honor which it bestows upon you. As a recipient of this prestigious award, you have placed yourself among the "ELITE" of law enforcement officers in the state of North Carolina."

Sheriff Francis commented on Lt. Godlock's accomplishment, "It is an honor to present Lt. Leon Godlock with his Advanced Professional Certificate. Lt. Godlock continues to demonstrate dedication to his chosen profession. Lt. Godlock supervises the Animal Control Division, School Resource Officers, Courthouse Security, D.A.R.E. program, Are-U-Okay program, is a member of the Sheriff's Emergency Response Team (S.E.R.T.) and performs other duties as needed for the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office



Congratulations to employee Bobby Burnett (Maintenance) and new wife Amanda on their September 22, 2012 wedding. We wish you the best.



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