

RUTHERFORD COUNTY MANAGER

County Commissioners

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Eddie Holland
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Carl Classen, *County Manager*
Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*
Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

September 27, 2013

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items Weeks Ending September 27, 2013

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.

Airport:

The Airport sold 90 gallons of 100LL fuel and 1150 gallons of Jet A fuel. Chris Roach gave Commissioner Eckler, George Ronan, and Carl Classen a tour of the Airport and hangars on Tuesday.

Board of Elections:

This week the election staff continued the required registration drives at high schools in the county visiting Chase, R.S. Central and East. Staff began the logic and accuracy testing of the voting equipment and staff has been busy recruiting the poll workers and preparing training materials.

Building Inspections:

The Building Inspections Department conducted 116 inspections and issued 30 permits, 2, of which, are for new houses. Clint Houser is continuing fire inspections on the county schools.

Clerk to the Board:

Commissioners were invited to attend Conservation Field Day on Wednesday, but the event was postponed due to the weather. It has been re-scheduled for October 8. Chairman Owens attended the United Way 2013 Campaign Kick-Off Luncheon at Florence Baptist Church. Vice Chairman Eckler attended the Enhanced Recycling Committee meeting on Tuesday. He is Chairman of this committee. The meeting was held at the new Transfer Station at the Solid Waste Department. Vice Chairman Eckler also had a meeting at the Airport with the County Manager to discuss projects at the Airport. Commissioner Eckler attending a meeting on Thursday at Big Springs Baptist Church regarding water in the Hollis area. Commissioners have been invited to attend Rutherford Connect on Friday at the West End Grill.

Cooperative Extension:

The **Director** assisted producers with value added calves, participated in Conservation Field Day, assisted with a tour of a beef cattle operation for the Cook Smart, Eat Smart class and continues to assist clients with technical problems through office visits, phone calls, email, and farm visits. The **Family and Consumer Sciences Agent** taught a Stress and Time Management workshop, served as a judge at Ellenboro fair, and taught Cook Smart Eat Smart. The **Agricultural Agent** continues networking with the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project with Intern for several of Extensions outreach

programs. The agent attended a Consumer Focus Group for the Farmer's Market and Grower/Vendor, attended a Farm Tour with Eat Smart/Cook Smart class, and networked with Caldwell and Burke Counties regarding Nourishing NC Community Garden Grant Project. 189 Contacts. **4-H Youth Development Agent** continues to service clients.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. Beginning the week, Mr. Classen met with the Revenue Department, attended the weekly update meeting with Solid Waste, attended a meeting with Richard Williams and John Carroll, and attended the weekly ED update meeting with Matt Blackwell. Continuing, Mr. Classen met with Rhonda Owens regarding IT, attended a lunch meeting at the Airport with Commissioner Eckler and George Ronan, met with the Finance auditors, attended a Broad River Water meeting, met with EDA Representative. Hillary Sherman, attended a United Way Kickoff Luncheon, and attended a community meeting regarding Hollis Water System.

Economic Development

This week, the Executive Director met with the County Manager to review economic development activities; prepared a response to a NC Department of Commerce industrial prospect RFI; continued follow up activities on industrial recruitment opportunities; attended an IPDC event to meet EDA representative, Hillary Sherman; met with Town of Forest City and engineering services to collect water/sewer information for recruitment efforts; and conducted staff meeting with NC LITE UP Help Desk Technicians. The Project Administrator did follow up on existing industry visits with a number of partners; reached out to set up new appointments; worked with the Director on a site request; followed up with existing industry to receive updated information on possible expansion and worked with tax office to get updated industry information. The Economic Development Assistant collected and tabulated timesheets for the NC LITE UP help desk technicians and office staff; worked with finance to resolve some questions for the auditor regarding existing grant funding; prepared the monthly work schedule for the help desk; attended the monthly help desk staff meeting; continued reviewing and updating information in our data base; and updated some building listings on NC Access.

Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

The Fire Marshal attended meetings with Western Area Fire Chief's to make decisions on radio purchases related to the recent Assistance to Firefighters Grant received by Rutherfordton Fire Department. Both employees attended firearms qualification. The Fire Marshal also prepared fire safety house for tour to schools beginning next week and continued work on Firefighters Association Bylaws revisions. The Deputy Fire Marshal attended Incident Command training.

Finance:

Auditors are here and will be here periodically for the next 3-4 weeks. The Finance Office is working closely with departments and vendors to update vendor files with E-Verify data as required by new legislation. The Director and Assistant Director attended a NCVTS training this week.

Human Resources:

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. Employees who have left the service of Rutherford County are Kenny Kempster (Detention). Welcome new hires Larry Jones (Airport). The HR Director attended a United Way Kickoff Luncheon and continues to work on the upcoming changes for the SHP.

Information Technology:

IT is moving forward very well with VOIP and staff have begun meeting with representatives from MacSource (reseller for Avaya). Each department will be contacted very soon to discuss individual phone needs per phone line that is necessary for your department. A form is being created that will assist you in answering questions to get your plan of action ready for your department. Please be thinking now about what features you need for your department on your phone and how EXACTLY you want them to work for you.

Library:

Four from the County Library attended the CMC meeting on Tuesday. There were twelve in attendance representing ten libraries. Among the topics of discussion was the new web-based circulation desk software that will require a training session for all staff in all CMC libraries. Also, up for discussion was the new health care law. For answers to any questions you might have go to: healthcare.gov. The County Library book sale is Thursday October 10th - Saturday October 12th. There are many adult, young adult, and children's books along with cds, dvds and videos. The doors open at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday. The Children's Librarian designed and manned a Story Time booth at the Baby and Children's Fair at Isothermal on Saturday. Hospital organizers estimated over 400 people in attendance. This week's Story Time is on "Hats" which is an introduction to a weekly series on people who wear different kinds of hats. Next week's theme is "Cowboys."

Public Works/Planning:

The garage had 11 preventative maintenance service calls, 20 repairs, 5 tire service calls and 4 other repairs. Maintenance completed 26 work orders and repairs along with preventative maintenance and groundskeeping. The Revenue Department renovation continues on schedule and is going well. TC Strickland Construction and Lancaster Electrical are doing a very good job. The County's Planning Commission met and confirmed they will present a solar farm ordinance to the Commissioners to consider adoption. Those points will be shared via email.

Greyrock Updates 1500' of Project 3B has been completed with stone. Another 1000' has been rough graded.

Additionally, another 1000' has been cleared. We anticipate finishing 3B in three weeks. Project 8 has been graded to the first intersection. It is matted and seeded and ready for stone. Project 9 (Cold Mountain Road) is finished with the exception of stone installation. Stone will be installed next week. Project 7 is completed. Project 4 Paving bids open tomorrow. We are advertising for paving for Project 7, part of 8 and part of 9 this week. Ideally all of that will be paved this year with all other paving after the first of the year.

Queens Gap Updates: Contract for Project 1 will be awarded at the October Commissioner's meeting. Project 2 pre-bid meeting is tomorrow. The PER for the water system is underway. The purpose of this is to establish the basis for a Special Tax District to offset the expenses BRWA will incur as the operator of this system with only one water customer. It will incorporate depreciation of mechanical equipment, flushing, and power bills. Work is continuing on Project 3 design.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 323 recordings and collecting \$14,343.00.

The Revenue Department answered 422 phone calls, and assisted 189 citizens who came in to the office (4 being PUV). 47 deeds were recorded and 82 were transferred. 14 estates were transferred and 37 new accounts were set up. Mapping completed 5 splits, 1 merge, 5 acreage adjustments and created 9 new maps and 2 new layers. 5 new E911 addressees were assigned. Ownership of 76 addressees was updated. The GIS website had 162,769 hits and 96,609 successful searches. Appraisers completed 54 field reviews and 200 building permits. Electronic payments consisted of 32 by credit/debit, 75 by website, and 6 by phone. 325 citizens came in to pay at the counter. Enforced collection action consisted of 3 Debt Setoff, 47 garnishments. 21 Deeds were certified. Staff worked 19 overpayments, 7 bankruptcy payments/issues, 5 discoveries, 39 releases, and 3 refunds. 404 pieces of mail were received and processed. 5488 June motor vehicles renewals were processed. November and July are currently being reviewed. Our move went smoothly and we hope to be back to our new home soon!

Senior Center:

The Senior Center had several guest speakers this week. Larry Bailey, Rutherford County Garage Supervisor, shared maintenance tips to be aware of for the upcoming winter months and what seniors need to know about their vehicles to prevent being taken advantage of when repairs are necessary. Dr. Peter Russ, a family practitioner at Chase Family Care, spoke on several medical topics and answered general questions. Lastly, Hazel Appling, a representative from Toney Tours, came to share some of the latest information about fun and exciting travel opportunities.

Social Services:

On Monday, Director John Carroll and Social Work Program Manager, Amanda McGee, along with Social Workers Kaitlin Sloop, Andrea Denning, and Llioann Byers and Supervisor, Mary Cole, met with the county attorney and county manager concerning foster care issues. Staff from the state office have been at the agency this week conducting training for NC FAST Projects 2 and 6, which includes Medicaid and Work First, as well as, Project 7, which includes changes in the system due to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. There was two separate sessions held so that all staff could attend while consumers continued to be served. There was also Over the Shoulder Support in the agency this week. The soft launch will begin for Projects 2, 6, and 7 on October 1. As this is just a week away, the agency continues to prepare for the increased traffic in the agency that the ACA will create. Efforts are being made to ensure that the public is aware of the longer waits and possible delays that the additions to the system will create as they are implemented. On Tuesday, the Children Services staff held their regular monthly staff meeting; and the Director and IT Analyst, Peter Gaulin, met with HR Director, Judy Toney, and IT Director, Rhonda Owens, concerning the DSS IT position. The Director and IM Administrator attended a conference call on Wednesday which provided updates on NC FAST. The Director also attended a conference call for the state guardianship workgroup meeting. Also on Wednesday, the Children's Services Program Manager attended a meeting at the Forest City Housing Authority to discuss parenting classes and other educational resources for the families served by Child Protective Services and Foster Care. On Thursday, the Director held the monthly supervisor's meeting and also attended a meeting at the Health Department with Director, Jimmy Hines; Polk County DSS Director, Lou Parton; and Cathy Brooks, with the Partnership for Children to discuss the Family Nurse Partnership Program.

Soil and Water:

The Admin/Education Specialist worked on submitting a grant application packet for 2 schools to install an Outdoor Environmental Learning Center. Staff prepared for the Conservation Field Day for 5th Grade students which was scheduled for Wednesday, September 25th at R-S Central High School. Due to weather the field day had to be cancelled and moved to the scheduled Rain Date on Tuesday, October 8th. This week the Soil Technician worked with one farmer on taking soil samples and providing technical assistance on farm planning to reduce soil erosion. He also toured several of the watershed dams with members of the watershed committee and state NRCS engineering staff. Prepared for the Conservation Employee Training (CET) next week in Nags Head.

Solid Waste:

Enhanced Recycling began on schedule this week. The Solid Waste Department served 306 customers, hauled 59 loads from convenience centers and shipped 30 loads to Lenoir. The staff continues to work on picking up electronics and wrapping them for shipment. One truck has already been loaded with recyclables for shipment. The Director attended the weekly solid waste meeting with Carl Classen and Paula Roach, attended the ERPC meeting, met with Hazel Haynes and Roger Wilson about recycling at county buildings. The Director also continues to work with Kerry Giles on promotional materials for the Enhanced recycling and Rhonda Owens on getting the website up to date. The landfill staff continues to perform everyday operations while adapting to the new recycling program. Please remember October 10th is the ribbon cutting for recycling at 9:00 am.

Tourism:

TDA is continuing work on updates for the website, mobile app, and wayfinding program. Plans for the 2013 Alliance Conference on Tuesday, November 12th are underway. Note: TAF (Tourism Asset Foundation) will have a Fundraiser & Street Festival event, "Celebrate Rutherford County: The Bechtler Legacy" Thursday, October 17th 5 to 7 p.m. Make plans to come and support the TAF.

Transportation Services:

EMS: This week EMS Personnel responded to 134 emergency calls and 68 convalescent calls. EMS analyzed multiple reports from their billing company to determine better efficiencies. EMS was also highlighted in the Daily Courier on Tuesday with an article on the new ventilator. EMS also provided service for the Colfax Fair in Ellenboro. **Transit:** Transit drove 10,157 miles, completed 1,083 local trips and 77 out of county trips, transported 260 unduplicated passengers and collected \$17,814 in revenue. Transit was also highlighted in The Daily Courier for the recent ROAP

funding (see Special Highlights). The Director completed and submitted annual operating statistics to NCDOT. Transit has ended the last fiscal year with strong surplus that will be placed in capital reserve. The Director also assisted the Solid Waste Department on several marketing items for their new commingled recycling program.

Veterans Office:

Over the last two weeks, the staff made 332 contacts, received 222 telephone interviews, and had 56 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer continues to help veterans with food from the food pantry. As Christmas fastly approaches, the Veterans Office has the **Toys for Totes Box**. Please help in filling these boxes to give to local children in need at Christmas.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS



Revenue Department Renovation

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RUTHERFORD COUNTY
solid waste

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- Glass Food/Beverage Containers
- Paperback and Hardback Books
- Plastics #1-7 and Plastic Containers
- Aluminum Food/Beverage Containers

YOU MIX ... WE SORT

RELAY FOR LIFE 2013



In the very same week that we turned in our final Relay totals for 2013 on a Monday, that Saturday we held our first fundraiser for 2014. Our final total for 2013 at this point is \$10,150 and we made \$366 at our Fatz Pancake Breakfast fundraiser for 2014. **It may feel like we are always doing Relay fundraisers but in reflecting on this, we realize that our friends and family who battle this terrible disease never get a day off and never quit, therefore neither do we.** As the American Cancer Society slogan goes “Until there is a cure...”

We have done a large variety of fundraisers this year which include dress down, Relay store, T shirts, plants, valentine, luminaries, cookbooks, quilt raffle, auction, zumba, shooting tournament, 50/50, Belk sale, rada knife sale, spaghetti lunch, soup lunch, keychain sale, yard sale, Zaxby’s fundraiser and pizza lunch. We tried to be creative and appeal to all through these.

Our Relay Committee this year has worked hard and deserves a big thank you. Members are Chris Francis, Debra Conner, Jackie Wallace, James Kilgo, Jeanette, Bosgra, Jeff Buchanan, Paula Roach, RaeAnn Turner, Rhonda Owens, Robin Ensley, Sherry Lavender, Brooke Watson, Tammy Aldridge and Carl’s wife, Susan Classen. We are also very thankful to our employees for their continuous support in all these fundraisers. If you have not been to a Relay event, please think about attending next year. It was very touching to see Jason Ruff’s daughter, Madison, release a dove at the opening ceremonies then walk in the survivor’s lap. The luminary service is also very special in remembering loved ones who have lost the battle and ones who are still fighting cancer. We had a fun but busy time at our campsite serving hamburgers, hotdogs, grilled corn, chips and drinks. We not only had a good time playing Scavenger Hunt at the event but won first prize!

Submitted by Jeanette Bosgra

RUTHERFORD COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

Services receives funding increase

BY MATTHEW CLARK
MCLARK@THEDIGITALCOURIER.COM

RUTHERFORDTON — An overall increase in state funding may prompt Rutherford County transportation officials to expand services.

Kerry Giles, Rutherford County Transportation Services director said the state increased its Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) funding to the county in two of three areas.

The county received a \$6,000 increase for its Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance (EDTAP) Program. Giles said the program provides operating assistance for the public transportation of those 60 years of age and older as well as the disabled. The disabled are required to have a doctor sign their application.

The program provides four trips per month and is a mileage

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reimbursement for actual trips taken.

"You have to provide the service throughout the year so we manage it so we don't have to use any local funds," Giles said.

Giles said the program could expand the number of trips but it will depend on the number of applications the program receives.

"It will mean more trips but we are going to monitor it," Giles said. "Our base of people is growing so it may hold at four trips per month. If we are on target with our budget, we may increase to five trips per month."

Additionally, the county received the largest increase for its Rural General Public (RGP) Program which provides assistance for the general public transportation of persons living in non-urban areas of the county. Giles said the program is its new grocery shuttle service once a week on Thursday to Storehouse Pantry.

"We have gotten more good reviews from residents getting access to food than anything we have ever done," Giles said.

The county received an increase of \$13,565 for the fiscal year.

Giles said the additional funding will be used to expand the service from five months to the rest of the

year. The program services 20 people per week and is based on a first-come first-served basis.

"It was a new program last year and I was glad we got an increase because a lot of people rely on that service," Giles said.

She said the Transportation Services Department is continually looking for volunteers to help with the RGP.

"We are still looking for volunteers on Thursdays with a vehicle that can carry the food and follow the van," Giles said. "If we can find that, we can carry more people."

The one program the county saw a decrease in funding was its Employment Transportation Assistance Program which provides operating assistance for the public transportation needs of persons with employment-related transportation needs.

The county had a reduction in funding of \$843 for the year.

"We aren't taking any new applications for that until we can how things work in that area in the first quarter," Giles said.

The Department of Transportation increased the overall ROAP funding to the county by \$16,690 over last year. It makes the final total of funding \$197,809.

"It is very good because, two years ago we were cut dramatically," Giles said. "They brought us up last year and even more this year."

"We have gotten more good reviews from residents getting access to food than anything we have ever done."

— Kerry Giles
Rutherford County
Transportation
Services director