

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 4, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending May 4, 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 completed processing absentee ballots sent by mail with the exception of medical emergencies which continue until Monday. Through Wednesday, we have issued 139 ballots by mail and 66 have been returned and we also have had 1630 early voters at the Board of Elections office and at the Annex. During the One-stop absentee period, to date, we have processed 41 Same Day registrants. Voters are allowed to register and vote at a One-stop location and then we are required to process their registration within 48 hours. Anyone interested in voting early can come to our office 8:30 – 5:00 or the Annex 10:00 – 6:00 through Friday and the last day will be on Saturday May 5th when both locations will be open from 8:30 until 1:00.

Building Inspections:

The Building Inspections Department issued a permit for a 63,000+square foot Administration building at Horsehead. We are excited to welcome our new Fire Inspector, Clint Houser, who started on Monday, April 30. The inspections office also issued a permit for Isothermal Industrial Laundry renovations in Spindale and issued a total of 38 permits for a total of \$17,821 in permit fees. Our inspectors have conducted 145 inspections.

Clerk to the Board:

Preparations were made this week leading up to the regular County Commissioners' meeting on May 7. A special meeting will also be held on that same date to hear the recommendations from the Department of Transportation for the secondary road program for 2012-2013. Commissioners have met individually with the Manager to discuss the 2012-2013 budget. Staff will travel this week to UNC-TV for a rough-cut screening of the Gold Fever and the Bechtler Mint documentary.

Cooperative Extension:

The County Extension Director hosted a tour for the Rutherford County Cattlemen's Association to the WNC Regional Livestock Center and to Everett Farms. 49 cattle producers attended. The Family and Consumer Sciences agent conducted site visits for preschool outdoor learning, met with the Community Health Council, facilitated an educational tour for extension volunteers, prepared upcoming programs on food preservation, cooking, and food safety. The 4-H Youth Development agent worked with Volunteer Rutherford to host the county's annual volunteer recognition luncheon.

Five youth, one teen, and three parents attended the Electricity workshop, where they learned to solder. The participants are making blinking robots from a circuit board and electronic components. Twenty-four participants proudly displayed and modeled over thirty entries in the 4-H Fashion Revue. Also, the 4-H Entertains program was held this week. Ten acts performed with two selected to represent the county at district in June.

County Manager:

The County Manager held several meetings with departments this week to discuss the FY2012-2013 budget. Many hours have been spent with Finance staff and County Manager preparing the Recommended Budget to present at the May Commissioners' meeting. In addition to the above meetings, the Manager has met with Judge Guinn and Robynn Spence at the Clerk of Court's Office, held several budget meetings with individual commissioners, met with Airport Authority Member Bob Howard, and held a Media Discussion. Other meetings held were with County School Superintendent and Board Member Dr. Mark Bennett. Mr. Classen, along with Commissioner Bill Eckler attended a Town of Rutherfordton Council meeting reference town parking. Lastly, the Manager attended a Western Highlands meeting

Economic Development:

The EDC staff submitted a large project proposal to NC Department of Commerce and spent two days looking at available buildings with a client who is interested in establishing a second business location in Rutherford County. EDC staff continue with EDC and NC Sites & Buildings website updates and was kept quite busy with phone calls and e-mails regarding economic development issues.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 167 calls. EMS staff assisted TransMed with their start up of providing ALS services. The Administrative staff attended an EAP presentation held by the HR Department and also worked closely with the HR Director as they continue to work to develop a 24 hour pay structure for EMS personnel that will better manage overtime hours. The staff also continues to meet with the County Manager and Finance Director in discussions for the FY12-13 budget. Lastly, the staff attended a Community Council meeting, attended an Emergency Management Response Team meeting, and continues plans and preparations for EMS coverage of Mayfest. **Emergency Management/Fire Marshal** staff continues to work on fire district resolutions and attended an Emergency Management Response Team meeting. The staff also continues to work on 501 © 3 reinstatements for three fire departments, as well as, work on revisions to the County Safety Policy.

Finance:

The Finance Department continues to work closely with the County Manager on current projects. The Finance Department is working with the County Manager on preparation of the FY2012-2013 budget including capital, line item requests and other budget information. The County Manager's Recommended Budget will be presented at the May 7th Board meeting.

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. The HR Director set on a selection committee for the McNair Foundation Scholarship that will be awarded to an RS Central student. Lastly, the HR Director sponsored two EAP meetings with Woodridge Psychological members to present an EAP program to County Employees. Both of these sessions were well attended.

Information Resources:

New check scanners are being installed at the Tax and Finance Office. Check 21 will soon be used for all check payments. Also, 911 CAD is currently upgrading their software and hardware. IT continues to support 645 desktops, laptops, and MDTs along with approximately 90 printers on our County network. IT also supports 16 Fire Departments, 3 Police Stations, 3 EMS Stations on the Emergency Services Fiber Network and we have 16 wireless hotspot locations.

Library:

The Library had a total of 91 children and parents attend story hour this week at the County, Haynes Branch and Mountains Branch libraries and our outreach program at Ellenboro Elementary School. Please check out and “like” the new photos on our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/RutherfordCountyLibrary>. The Director attended a department head meeting to learn about the new Employees Assistance Program that is being offered to county employees.

Planning/Parks and Recreation:

The Maintenance Department is thrilled to have their manning back to numbers that allows the handling of daily demands of County maintenance. The new personnel hit the ground running with a full load of mowing and groundskeeping at County buildings and parks. The Planner met with the Manager and Commissioner Crowe to establish a written agreement clarifying what services Little League provides on the County’s behalf and how the County will support Little League efforts. The Planner also met with the Manager and Clerk of Court Robynn Spence to walk through the courthouse and establish priorities for building needs and requests. The Recreational Planner attended a recreational workshop planning meeting and has prepared for his meeting with Rutherfordton’s Historic Preservation Committee regarding the courthouse ramp and tree. Also, this week began the Spring preventative maintenance and testing of all County generators for back-up power to key facilities. The garage and maintenance staff had a safe and routine week completing multiple repairs and service work. The maintenance staff has found two failed HVAC units, one at the Annex and the other at the Mountains Library, and are taking appropriate steps to replace these units. Lastly, the staff has shown the vacant space at the Rutherford Center multiple times to prospective tenants. If any parties are interested, they will submit lease offers to the County Manager.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 313 transactions collecting \$12,181.

Soil and Water:

The Admin/Education Specialist served on a selection committee to interview students for the State Employees Credit Union scholarship. The Specialist also attended the Employee Assistance Program workshop sponsored by the Human Resources Department, continued work on the Annual Report, Strategy Plan and Plan of Work, and completed the Agenda and folder information for the May 3rd District meeting. The Water Quality Specialist gave technical advice to landowners/farmers and inspected ongoing projects. Staff also consulted with the County Planner/Contractor to complete the Rutherford Walking Trail with a projected start date of May 10.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department has had a very busy week. The landfill served 370 customers, hauled 58 loads from convenient centers, and shipped 34 loads to Lenoir. The staff has continued working on the safety program. The Solid Waste Director is working with the Probation Office to establish a contract to use community service workers and also is working with the County Manager on extending hours of operation until 5:00 pm. Steve Nanney, Litter Control Officer had two reports of litter. The Director met with Finance and County Manager several times to discuss budget matters. Wes Scarlett came to the Landfill to take the water samples for the well testing. Power Secure is preparing the pad for the arrival of the generator for the gas to green project. Lastly, the grant application to DENR for the concrete pad that will be used for the recycling of metal and white goods was submitted and interviews for Convenience Center floaters were conducted with the assistance of the HR Director.

Tax:

The Tax Collections month end shows current real property collections at 92.44% which is slightly above last year. Everyone is working hard to optimize this year’s collection percentage and our office issued 14 bank attachments already this week. Seven judgments have been filed on properties for tax foreclosure and two are at the execution stage. Five properties were paid out to stop the foreclosure action. Fourteen cases have been dismissed from bankruptcy and nine new cases have resulted in fifteen bankruptcy claims. The collections office answered 149 phone calls Mon – Wed. The staff is continuing to work on updating files on over 38,000 delinquent motor vehicles. Billing and listing has completed

listing on approximately 1/3 of the business abstracts. They are also in the process of assisting with merging accounts on the delinquent motor vehicles. Evidence is prepared and ready for the Board of E&R for a motor vehicle value appeal. **The Appraisal Department** received 6 new informal appeals bringing the total informal appeals received to 2641. We also received 1 formal appeal. The staff answered 19 phone calls and assisted 1 citizen in the office. Staff also mailed 461 informal appeal notices and 8 Board of Equalization and Review appeal forms. **GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing** answered 156 phone calls, assisted 65 taxpayers, issued 2 pre-permits, and reviewed 1 plat. Three projects are currently in progress. Land Records printed 51 newly recorded deeds, transferred 52 deeds, and set up 23 new accounts. GIS completed, 3 acreage adjustments, and created 14 new maps and filled 3 data requests. The addressing department assigned 2 new addresses and installed 7 new road signs and maintenance on 1.

Tourism:

The Tourism's VIN program has been an ongoing project for most of our week, as well as budget meetings. The TDA is also working on the staffing of volunteers for both the Lake Lure and Bechtler House Visitor Centers. The VIN/Eagle Scout Sign Project is underway with a fundraiser to be scheduled soon.

Transit:

This past week Transit drove 9,082 miles, transported 1,051 passengers and collected \$12,531.45 in revenue. There were no safety violations. Transit worked with EMS, IT and Communications to begin receiving current weather updates by a variety of key sources. This has allowed us to keep drivers updated on weather issues within a one hour radius of Rutherford County. The Director also submitted grant reimbursement requests to NCDOT for \$42,750.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 220 veteran contacts this week. They also had 127 telephone interviews, with 45 mail-outs for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Veterans Office handed out 6 bags of food to needy veterans.

Special Recognition Highlights

Kudos to Alice Barber of the Tax Office who single handedly cleaned up over 3,000 records that were identified as having erroneous information from years ago. Thank you Alice! Also, Alice's daughter, Amber Barber earned her Gold Award in Girl Scouts, way to go!