



February 8, 2016

Weekly Report

Highlight of Departmental Activities

The Weekly Report showcases the activities and accomplishments of the many Departments within Rutherford County Government. Click on the directory lists, headings and text in blue to be linked to more information.

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Grady the Groundhog did not see his shadow at Chimney Rock State Park on February 2, Ground Hog's Day, predicting an early spring.

Panther fans at the Chimney Rock Ground Hog Day Ceremony were disappointed when Grady predicted that the Broncos will win Super Bowl 50 (pictured left).

GO NC PANTHERS!



Airport

The Airport sold 521.0 gallons of Jet A to 3 aircraft and 290.4 gallons of 100LL to 14 aircraft last week.

**Tim is topping off a
Bell Long Ranger as it was
passing through
Rutherford County last week
on its way to Alabama.**



Board of Elections

Board members and staff attended the State Board of Elections training in Durham on Monday and Tuesday (**pictured right**).

Logic and Accuracy testing has begun for the Primary Election and letters were sent to election workers to schedule their training.

Registration drives at the high schools will conclude this week with part-time staff going to Chase on Thursday.



Building Inspections

Building Inspections typically has fewer permits/inspections during the winter months, but building continued in January with 12 new house starts—at a total construction valuation of \$2,274,310 and total heated square footage of 20,189. County citizens continually ask us where building is going on and we're telling them it is scattered-not just one particular area. Of those 12 permits, 5 are in Lake Lure, 2 in Green Hill, 1 in Shiloh, 1 in Union, 1 in Gilkey, 1 in High Shoals, and 1 in Rutherfordton.

We have completed review on commercial plans for Pisgah Church's fellowship hall addition and continue to field questions on the Fair Haven addition coming up. We are also reviewing a new fire structure for Isothermal Community College's fire students to practice in. We are continuing to work with Planning to final the Innovative 18 solar farm on Piney Mountain Church Road, and are talking with developers on a new solar farm coming to Ferry Rd.

The Director is interviewing for a new building inspector this week and has had several meetings with homeowners, contractors, and other county departments.

County Manager and Commissioners

The County Manager, Commissioners, and staff were very involved in a number of meetings, luncheons, and various other events. Meetings with several department heads were on the schedule this week, including Planning and Projects, Revenue, and Economic Development. The County Manager also met with the County Attorney regarding various projects.

The Commissioners, County Manager and Clerk to the Board continued preparation on the agenda for the Board of Commissioners' meeting which was held Monday night, February 1. Several Department Heads presented information at the Commissioners' meeting and their presentations were very polished and professional. We express our appreciation to all Department Heads and their staff for their service to the county.

The RHI Legacy Foundation met with Steve Garrison (County Manager) and Danny Searcy (Planning and Projects director) to discuss wellness, health and recreation initiatives. Manager Steve Garrison attended the 'Main Street Program' hosted by Forest City on Tuesday which gave opportunity to leaders and citizens to be a part of the Main Street 'refresh' and to create a vision for Forest City that is based upon the town's assets and economic drivers.

County Manager and Commissioners continued from page 2

Chairman Bryan King enjoyed a tour of Rutherford Elementary with representatives from Senator Tillis' office **(pictured below)**. Chairman King also participated in the WCAB Commissioner Meeting Radio Review on Tuesday morning.



The Community Health Council met on Wednesday afternoon. Several town council meetings were held this week. Debra Conner and Kim Aldridge attended the JCPC board meeting on Thursday afternoon. County Manager Garrison attended the NC City and County Management Seminar in Durham on Wednesday through Friday. He continued to work from cell and email while out of town.

The County staff want to congratulate Captain William “Sonny” Chapman and Detective Philip Bailey for their retirement from Rutherford County Sheriff’s Department. **(Pictures on page 8.)**

As the week progressed, all of the Commissioners and Manager were involved with additional duties, consisting of calls, public relations, and preparation for various responsibilities and meetings.

Economic Development

This week, the Economic Development Department participated in numerous meetings and conference calls with county departments and industry allies. Staff continues to be busy following up with multiple industrial recruitment and expansion prospects, working with industry representatives to meet grant reporting deadlines and file the appropriate reports, as well as working on marketing and advertising efforts to promote Rutherford County and the economic development product. This week’s schedule also included updating unemployment figures on the EDC website using data from the NC Department of Commerce press release.

Fire Marshal/Emergency Management

Fire Marshal and staff:

- continued to assist fire departments with grant applications.
- Employees attended 32 hours of law enforcement training.
- began working on budget information
- attended County Commissioners meeting.

Finance Department

The Finance Office has processed accounts payable this week. The Director and Assistant Director attended several interdepartmental meetings.

Human Resources

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. The HR Director attended the County Commissioners meetings, conducted a phone conference with Becky Veazy, and held interviews along with Steve Hill and Shane Dotson for Code Enforcement Officer.

Rutherford-Polk-McDowell Health Department

Upcoming Events

The Rutherford-Polk-McDowell Health District will be closed on February 11, 2016 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. as we will be conducting an Emergency Preparedness exercise at the Polk County High School in Columbus, NC. This exercise is required by the state and will test our ability to respond to an incident that would require us to dispense medical counter measures to the public. All of the Health District staff along with other Community Partners will be participating in this full scale exercise. Planning, preparing and practicing are all critical components of ensuring our communities remain safe and healthy.



Clinical Updates

In an effort to raise Cervical Cancer awareness, the Rutherford County Health Department continues to motivate and encouraging women to have their Pap Test. At the Health Department, we offer free or low-cost cervical cancer screening and follow-up to eligible women up to 64 years of age.



Remember, EARLY detection is your BEST protection! According to North Carolina's State Center for Health Statistics, nearly 386 women in North Carolina were diagnosed with Cervical Cancer in 2015 and 125 died of the disease. It is estimated that half of those deaths are due to lack of screening. When cervical cancer is discovered early, it is one of the most treatable cancers.

Environmental Health

The Rutherford-Polk-McDowell Health District has partnered with the NC Radon program and is continuing to provide FREE short-term radon test kits while supplies last. A limited supply of radon test kits are still available locally at the Rutherford County Health Department Environmental Health Office at 221 Callahan Koon Road, Spindale, NC 28160 from 8:30a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Anyone who is interested in obtaining a kit is encouraged to come by. Should you need additional assistance please call 828-287-6317 or visit www.ncradon.org.

Each year upwards to 22,000 people die from radon-induced lung cancer. Roughly 54 percent of those diagnosed with early-stage lung cancer are expected to live no more than five years after diagnosis.



Library



Rutherford County Libraries Host Amnesty Month in February

Fees will be waived on all overdue books that are returned undamaged and shelf-ready to the library. For those who have already returned borrowed materials but owe outstanding fines, half of these fees will be canceled if payment for the other half is made during the amnesty period.

Mountains Branch Manager, Joy Maxwell met with the Friends of the Library at their monthly meeting to discuss fund-raising, programming and future goals. She began work on implementing two new grants the library recently received. Joy also worked with volunteers on creating displays and signage for African American History Month. Joy Maxwell and Angie Turner participated in online training from the state library for NC Live.

Rutherford County Library, Stephanie Long: The Library has received 1040 and 1040-EZ Forms and they are available in the lobby. 1040-A Forms are being mailed to us soon. To request other forms, please visit www.irs.gov or call 800-829-3676.

Rutherford County Library, Maria Davis: Please remember to let us know at the Library if there are programs that you would like to see happen. We are always on the lookout for what interests our patrons. Keep checking www.rutherfordcountylibrary.org or www.facebook.com/rutherfordcountylibrary for current programming.

Reminder: **February Book Sale!** Our back room is PACKED with books just waiting to go home with you, February 11 to 13, 2016. This is a GREAT time to stock your home or classroom library! Call 828/287-6115 if you have questions.

BOOK SALE

February Book Sale

Rutherford County Library

February 11, 2016 9:00 - 5:00
February 12, 2016 9:00 - 5:00
February 13, 2016 10:00 - 12:00

255 Callahan Koon Rd.
Spindale, NC 28160
828-287-6115

www.rutherfordcountylibrary.org
www.facebook.com/rutherfordcountylibrary

Public Works and Planning

The garage completed multiple preventative maintenance service calls, repairs, tire service calls and other repairs to the County's motor vehicle fleet. Maintenance has had a productive week in conducting repairs and preventative maintenance to the County's facilities. Meanwhile, Planning and Projects had a busy week with preparations for the Commissioners meeting. The Director and Project Manager have also been involved in multiple meetings including a projects update report, Rail to Trail meeting along with multiple site inspections for solar, watershed protection and community project grants. We plan to conduct inspections of the Queens Gap and Greyrock developments over the next week.

Revenue Department

The final day for regular listing without a penalty was Monday due to the last day of January being on Sunday. Any listings now will be considered late, but if you still need to list, the staff will be happy to help you complete the forms.

Farragut is back in the office this week finishing up training with the GIS staff for the conversion of real data to the new NCPTS system. The go-live date will be on the 15th of February.

Collections staff has been busy. The staff worked three employee lists, resulting in twenty-two garnishments. Also, seventy-four balance-remaining notices were sent out.

Customer Service	Totals
Phone Calls	707
<u>Information/Data Requests</u>	4
<u>Website Hits</u>	150,744
County Growth Indicators	
Building Permits Reviewed	38
Collections Progress	
Deeds Certified/Prior Year Taxes	21
Total Taxes Collected	\$261,480.89

Senior Center

The Senior Center hosted the fourth class of “Living Healthy with Diabetes” on Tuesday. This is a six week series of workshops that help participants take control of their diabetes rather than it controlling them. Topics include: managing symptoms, communicating more effectively with your doctor and other health care professionals, lessening your frustration, eating healthier & reading nutrition labels, fighting fatigue and pain, making daily tasks easier, and getting more out of life.

On Wednesday we had an activity called “Who Am I” in recognition of Black History Month. In this activity, they discussed well know African Americans throughout history and gave clues to see if the seniors could guess who it was.

We provided an opportunity for seniors to write Valentines to our legislators on Thursday. Hundreds of seniors from senior centers across NC will be mailing Valentines to our legislators to thank them for funding senior centers and what the Center means to them.

Lastly, on Friday we had Carolina Panther’s Pride Day where the seniors wore Panther’s colors to show their support for the Super Bowl game.

Upcoming:

Zumba at 6:00 p.m. on February 8

The AARP Foundation Tax Aide Program began on Thursday, February 4th. This is a free tax preparation service for low to moderate income individuals, with special attention to those 50 and over. The trained volunteers will be available, by appointment only, on Thursdays and Fridays, through April 15th. Remember to bring the following:

Picture ID

Proof of Social Security number(s) for yourself and ALL dependents

Copy of 2014 tax return(s)

All 2015 tax documents

Bank account information for direct deposit-will need to see an actual check

Health insurance information-proof of insurance, Form 1095 if received

Sheriff's Department



The Rutherford County Sheriff's Office honored Detective Philip Bailey and Captain William "Sonny" Chapman with a reception on Friday, January 29, 2016, to acknowledge their retirement. Detective Philip Bailey completes 30 years and Captain Sonny Chapman completes 43 years of faithful service in law enforcement. Sheriff Chris Francis presented each of them an engraved crystal, their badge, and service weapon. Sheriff Francis thanked them for their dedicated service to the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office and the citizens of Rutherford



County. He expressed that they will be truly missed as well as the services they provided.



"In God We Trust"

The Rutherford County Sheriff's Office is in the process of displaying our Nation's motto, "In God We Trust", on all of its marked patrol vehicles.

Sheriff Chris Francis has been considering the display of this motto on the patrol vehicles for the last several months. However, funding this project has been an obstacle.

Pastor David Ledford, of Fairview Baptist Church, in Golden Valley, informed Sheriff Francis that the church wanted to support this project by funding the purchase of the decals. Pastor Ledford also stated that the church would continue to fund this project as new marked vehicles were added to the fleet.

"I am very appreciative of the church's donation that has allowed this project to get underway," said Sheriff Francis. On a more personal note, Sheriff Francis shared "I whole heartedly believe in our Nation's motto and am proud that it will be displayed on the Rutherford County Sheriff's vehicles."

Pictured are:
Lt. Leon Godlock,
Lt Warren Sprouse
Sheriff Chris Francis



Soil & Water

The Admin/Education Specialist:

- worked on District Meeting Agenda and Meeting folders.
- worked on presentation and plans for the District Awards Banquet..

The Ag. Cost Share Technician:

- prepared and presented a presentation for District banquet.
- worked on preparing contracts for district meeting.
- worked on the WNC Stream Initiative project.



Staff attended the District Board Meeting and held the District Awards Banquet.

Pictured above is 4th and 5th Grade Poster Winners and 6th Grade First Place Power Point Winner.

Pictured left is Recognition of Conservation: A Way of Life Farm (Standing to right is Director Brandon Higgins.)



Solid Waste

Customers served 349

Loads hauled from convenience centers 62

Loads shipped to Lenoir 35

Recycling loads shipped to Conover 3

Tire customers 28

Community service workers 5

Community service reports 1

The director has been busy this week receiving price quotes for the new budget, calling other landfills about their policies and meetings with Human Resources. The office staff worked with state reports and the closing of the current grants. Also, they have worked on writing new grants for the next budget year. The transfer station staff are processing the MSW and recycling tonnages that are coming in. Also, a major cleanup was performed around the transfer station this week. The C&D staff has been processing all the tonnages coming in while hauling dirt for cover. The airport staff sowed grass at the south landfill and fix drainage at the central landfill. The shop staff has been busy with repairs this week. The track hoe parts have arrived so we are fixing it while repairing the track loader. A couple of compactors at Gilkey and Greenhill convenience centers had to have some repairs.

Please continue to recycle!

Transportation Services

Emergency Medical Services:

Director spoke at the February County Commissioners meeting to recommend that Billing stay as an out-sourced operation. Staff interviewed personnel for Supervisors positions. EMS is pleased to have two new full-time paramedics (John Kosmeh and Brian Wittenburg) and three new part-time employees start this week (Mark Hudson, Terri Carswell and Megan McAuliffe). Employees are also in the process of a personal fitness goal for 2016 in conjunction with EMS' new fitness program.

TYPE	CURRENT WEEK	WEEKLY AVG
Emergency Calls	153	168
Convalescent Calls	34	59

Transit Department:

Transit staff completed interviews for prospective part-time drivers. Operations Manager has tendered tentative job offers to three (3) applicants pending drug screen and physical results. They have been scheduled to start orientation on February 15th. Operations Manager contacted an outside consulting firm to conduct required safety training with Transit employees and scheduled the tentative training date in April.

TYPE	CURRENT WEEK	WEEKLY AVG
Total Miles	10,064	9,566
# of Local Trips	1,063	881
# of Out of County Trips	85	66
# Unduplicated Passengers	214	238
Total Revenue	\$15,876	\$14,549

Veterans Services

Mail In	52
Mail Out	30
Fax	100
Phone Calls In/Out	60
Veteran Contacts	160



County News



Saturday, February 6th

Help ROC install a new trail in the Donald Ross Nature Park in Lake Lure. Meet at the Donald Ross parking lot at 12:30 pm. ROC will provide tools. Contact trails@rutherfordoutdoor.org to sign up to help.

Sunday, February 14th

ROC Race Series: Run for your Valentine 8k in Forest City. Register online at <http://rutherfordoutdoor.org/outdoor-activities/raceseries/valentine>.

Saturday, February 20th:

ROC hike to Bearwallow Mountain. This is a 2-mile round trip hike with amazing views of the surrounding mountains at the top. Meet at the County Annex (589 N. Main Street, Rutherfordton) at 11 am or the Ingles in Lake Lure at 11:30 am to car pool. Bring some water and a lunch with you. Contact trails@rutherfordoutdoor.org or call (828) 625-9983 ext. 505 to register for this hike.

Rutherford County Senior Center

~ North Carolina Certified Center of Excellence ~ United Way Member Agency

~Our Mission: Rutherford County Senior Center provides opportunities for senior adults to help them maintain and enhance their quality of life.~

FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

193 Callahan Koon Rd, Suite 132 Spindale NC 28160

Telephone: 828-287-6409

Hours: Monday: 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday – Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Valentine's Day will be here soon! It is a time to think about how much we love each other and a special day to bring joy to others. We know you spread kindness on Valentine's Day, but here's a designated week you can go all out – **Random Acts of Kindness Week – February 14 - 20, 2016.**

I challenge you to look for ways you can be kind. Kindness is contagious! Our random acts of kindness can make someone's day. Everyone is busy and it's easy to give the excuse of not having enough time. But just being nice to people you interact with each day or saying hello to someone you pass can go a long way.

During **Random Acts of Kindness Week**, reach out to your neighbor and to someone you don't know and make them feel special. Resolve to spread kindness and understanding and to be the best person you can be by participating in simple and random acts of kindness. Some examples include:

- paying for someone else's meal
- volunteering or donating to a local charity
- smile at everyone you pass
- buy something for the person in line behind you
- visit someone who is lonely

The possibilities are endless to help others and to make a positive difference!

Angela Ezell, Director

rand  m
act of kindness

TJCA-CFA Students Paint 26 Panther's Logos; Ron Rivera responds!



Grammar school visual arts teacher, Ms. Patricia Kean at Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy in Forest City, NC, sponsors a canvas painting program on weekend nights for interested students at our school.

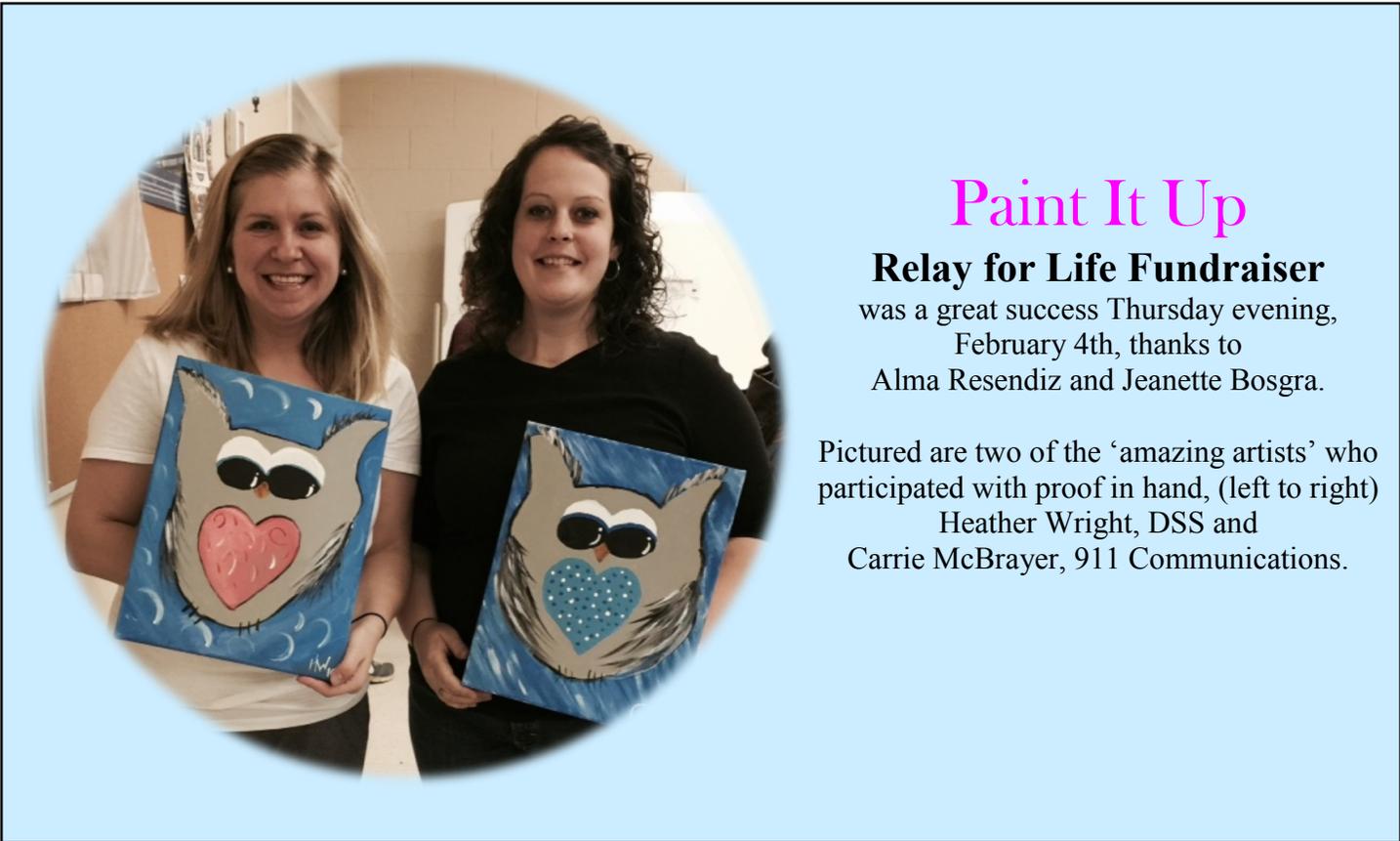
On a recent Friday night prior to the NFL playoffs, Ms. Kean had twenty-six students sign up to paint the Panther's logo on 16 x 20 inch canvases. She had two more classes scheduled in the following weeks to accommodate more students, and even teachers, who wanted to paint the logo as well to support our Panthers!

The students decided to share pictures of the Panther logos with the team and coaches. The group then got a very pleasant surprise, as Head Coach Ron Rivera sent the personalized letter to thank our students for their support of the Panthers!

We are so proud of the students' work and we wanted to make sure the Panthers know that they have a strong fan base of students from our school rooting for them! **GO PANTHERS!**



Pictured above (left to right) Jeanette Bosgra, Finance; Holly Keever, Finance; Brooke Watson, HR; Debra Conner, HR; Kimberly Aldridge, County Office.



Paint It Up

Relay for Life Fundraiser

was a great success Thursday evening, February 4th, thanks to Alma Resendiz and Jeanette Bosgra.

Pictured are two of the ‘amazing artists’ who participated with proof in hand, (left to right) Heather Wright, DSS and Carrie McBryer, 911 Communications.



Duke Energy customers are being targeted by scam artists claiming to represent Duke Energy. Scammers are calling businesses and impersonating utility company staff, claiming to be collecting on late bills. They may even falsify their caller ID information to make it appear as though the call is coming from Duke Energy.

Because Duke Energy does occasionally contact their customers by phone, it can be difficult to tell a scammer from a real Duke Energy employee. Here are some tips:

- If a caller specifically asks you to pay by prepaid debit card, this is a red flag.
- Prepaid debit cards are like cash and the transactions cannot be reversed.
- If you feel pressured for immediate payment or personal information, hang up the phone and call Duke Energy at the number on your utility bill. This will ensure you are speaking to a real Duke Energy representative.

At Duke Energy, they will never:

- Call to demand immediate payment about money owed without first sending you a notification by mail
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone

If you have any doubts, HANG UP and call Duke Energy directly at 800.777.9898.

Occasionally, Duke Energy MAY call you to discuss your account. If so, they will provide you with information that only you and Duke Energy would know in order to validate that their call is legitimate.

RELAY FOR LIFE

Valentines

Cupcake Flower Bouquet

Raffle What better bouquet than one you can eat?



\$5

For yourself, your sweetheart, your team,
secretary, neighbor, mailman,
sidekick, partner in crime...



Valentine's Day is just around the corner and why not make it a sweet day to help ACS! Our Valentine Raffle for this year is a Cupcake Flower Bouquet! That's right, it's an edible bouquet! Twelve to fourteen cupcakes in each bouquet.

Enter as many times as you would like and 100% of the money raised will go to Relay for Life! Turn in all entries with money by the end of the day on Friday February 12, 2016! No need to be present to win!

Contact Alma 828-287-6125 or 828-980-1472 Jeanette 828-287-6211

Valentines
Cupcake Flower Bouquet

Name: _____
Dept: _____
Phone Number to be reached after 4:30pm: _____

Each Entry cost is \$5.

Valentines
Cupcake Flower Bouquet

Name: _____ Dept: _____
Phone Number to be reached after 4:30pm: _____

Each Entry cost is \$5.

County Manager
Steve Garrison

County Commissioners

Bryan A. King, *Chairman* Alan Toney, *Vice Chairman*
Michael Benfield, Eddie Holland, Greg Lovelace

County Office

Hazel Haynes, *Clerk to Board*
Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

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