



November 23 2015

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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At this time of Thanksgiving, we pause to count our blessings. To each county employee, on behalf of the County Manager, Commissioners and staff, we express our sincere appreciation for your investment and service to the county. We are deeply thankful for you and extend our best wishes for a happy and healthy **Thanksgiving Day**.

A Brief History of Thanksgiving

A small ship called the Mayflower set sail from Plymouth, England, on September 16, 1620. The passengers spent 66 days in the hold of the ship arriving on November 21. Most of them were Puritans who had been persecuted for their religious beliefs in England. After sailing for more than two months, the Mayflower finally reached land near what is now Provincetown on Cape Cod. They founded the Colony of Plymouth in December 1620.



Most of the Pilgrims had suffered terribly from the long voyage. They immediately began to build shelters, but soon they were overcome by a general sickness. Through the course of the winter 46 died, nearly half their original number. Some who became ill on the voyage and who were too sick to be moved stayed on the Mayflower, which was anchored in Plymouth Harbor for the winter. The Mayflower had been a cargo ship and had to be refitted to handle the Pilgrim passengers. No one is sure of what happened to the original Mayflower after it returned to England the following April. A replica of the original Mayflower was built in England in the mid-1950's. This ship, Mayflower II, sailed across the Atlantic in 1957 to commemorate the Pilgrim's voyage. It is now anchored in Plymouth Harbor, Massachusetts. The first American Thanksgiving probably took place in New England. It was celebrated by the Pilgrim settlers, who established Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts in 1620. The Pilgrims had struggled bravely through a grim winter with much sickness and little food. The following spring, friendly Indians helped the settlers to plant corn, and in the autumn, the first crop was harvested. Governor William Bradford proclaimed three days of prayer and thanksgiving. The Pilgrims gave a huge feast and invited Indian Chief Massasoit and 90 of his people. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the first national Thanksgiving Day on the last Thursday in November.



Thanksgiving is now a national holiday in the United States. It is celebrated each year on the fourth Thursday in November. On this day, families gather together, and many people say prayers of thanks for the year's blessings. In many homes, a big dinner of roast turkey and dressing is served. Thanksgiving is traditionally a harvest festival.

Agriculture/Cooperative Ext.

Pictures below are from Farm City Breakfast/Tryon International Equestrian Center held on November 13, 2015.



Family and Consumer Sciences

- attended training for Speedway to Healthy project.
- attended McDowell Health Coalition annual meeting as a representative of Rutherford County's Community Health Council.
- assisted Extension & Community Association in their 2016 planning.
- presented nutrition program at Spindale Elementary for Parent Night.
- presented at Spindale Elementary Career Fair.

4-H Youth Development

Five 4-H youth and the 4-H agent attended NC 4-H State Council Conference in Raleigh on Nov. 14-15. They were among 250 youth and adults from across the state to participate in workshops on healthy living and diversity. Each of these young ladies, along with one additional 4-H member who could not attend received recognition for completing their Silver level of the 4-H Ambassadors program. The 4-H Agent and FCS agent attended a training in Alexander County on assembling the Speedway to Healthy exhibit. Rutherford County will be hosting this exhibit in April for all the fourth graders in the county. Rutherford County 4-H will host an Open House on Thursday, December 3. Prospective families are invited to attend and learn more about the 4-H program. The open house will be from 5:30-6:30 at the Cooperative Extension Center on Callahan Koon Road in Spindale. Call 2897-6190 to register to get more information.



Agriculture

- Master Gardener Volunteer Recognition Program
- Attended Farm-City Program
- Media: Radio Program with WCAB/WGTM, Daily Courier news column
- Private & Commercial Pesticide Applicator Trainings
- Networking with commercial & consumer horticulture clients

Airport

The airport sold 482.0 gallons of 100LL to 12 aircraft and 871.0 gallons of Jet A to 4 aircraft last week.

PHOTO:

A Pilatus PC-6 Porter takes off after getting fuel on an overcast day at the airport.



Board of Elections

The election staff had a busy week processing all the registrations, changes of information and election paperwork since October 9th. All of these documents had to be held until the municipal election was completed.

Certificates of Election have been submitted to all the winning candidates and abstracts have been sent to all the towns and the Clerk of Courts office.



County Manager and Commissioners

The County Manager's week began in a business meeting with the Interim Economic Development director, Tom Johnson. The day continued with several individual Department Head meetings and a tour of the Old Harris School property with Planning and Projects director, Danny Searcy.

Vice Chairman Toney spoke at the 'Salute to Veterans Celebration' at R.S. Middle School on November 14th honoring our veterans (**pictured to right and below**).

The County Manager was engaged in the Winter Exercise Emergency Management class with Fire Marshal, Roger Hollifield at the end of last week.

The Mayor/Manager quarterly meeting was hosted by Town Manager Doug Barrick and staff this quarter and met Thursday, November 19 at the Rutherfordton Country Club. Commissioner Benfield, Chairman King, and Manager Garrison, were in attendance, along with 12 to 15 other managers and mayors in the county.

Manager Garrison and Commissioners were involved with additional duties, including numerous luncheons, meetings, including interoffice, various boards, and one-on-one meetings. A number of calls were addressed, as well as conference calls. All departments remain diligent and full of activity.

The County Manager ask that you please join him in welcoming two new members to our Rutherford County leadership team. Steve Hill has been named Interim Director for Building Inspections. Mr. Hill has served Rutherford County Building Inspections since March of 1996. During his tenure, Mr. Hill has earned Level III certifications in all areas. Mr. Hill has served as Assistant Director of Inspections under the direction of Hicks Owens and he has served as the Senior Inspector under Jason Ruff. Mr. Hill has a total of nineteen years with Rutherford County.

Janene McGee has accepted the position of Veterans Service Officer. She will begin employment with Rutherford County on December 14, 2015. Ms. McGee comes to Rutherford County with eight years of experience with the NC Division of Veterans Affairs where she served for seven years as a Veterans Service Officer and one year as Region I Manager. Ms. McGee also served in the US Air Force for five years and as a reserve for one year.

We welcome Mr. Hill and Ms. McGee to our team.



Economic Development

This week, the Economic Development Department attended various internal meetings with county departments and industry allies, as well as an NCEDA event in Raleigh. Staff continues to be busy following up with multiple industrial recruitment and expansion prospects, and reaching out to industry representatives to meet grant reporting deadlines. This week's agenda also included the official launch of the newly designed Rutherford County Economic Development website and the newly created Gateway West Commerce Park website. Check out our websites at:

www.rutherfordncedc.com

and

www.gatewaywestcommercepark.com.

We're also excited to share [our latest advertisement](#) in the November 2015 issue of Site Selection Magazine (**pictured right**)!



Finance Department

The Finance Office has processed accounts payable this week and began to work on payroll. The Director has attended several interdepartmental meetings.

Fire Marshal/Emergency Management

The Fire Marshal and staff:

- participated in NC Emergency Management planning group meeting.
- worked on fire investigations.
- assisted Hudlow Fire Department with a structure fire.
- attended meetings regarding the reorganization of the Rutherford County Firefighters Association.
- conducted a table top exercise focused on winter weather events.

Human Resources

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. The HR Director began the week meeting with staff at Building Inspections. Congratulations to Steve Hill who has been named Interim Director and Shane Dotson on his promotion to Senior Inspector. We also look forward to Janene McGee joining the County staff as Veterans Service Office in December.

The Director also attended the HR Association lunch meeting and attended a webinar hosted by the Town of Forest City regarding 1094/1095 reporting. Interviews were conducted for Deputy Finance Director and part-time TDA. Current vacancies are: Economic Development Director. Applicants can apply at www.rutherfordcountync.gov.

Library

Grand Opening / Ribbon Cutting Rutherford County Foothills EMS and Haynes Branch Library

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
Tuesday, December 1, 2015
4:30 p.m.



Join our supporters and local dignitaries for the big event as we officially open our new facilities.



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. The Director and Project Manager were involved in multiple meetings including a projects update report, preparation and meeting with the Planning Commission. Updates on Greyrock, Queens Gap, solar development, Community Projects Grants and communication tower/ antennae were presented. Plans were received this week for the extremely large proposed solar farm off Chase Highway and Ferry Road. A thorough of the plans for both watershed protection and solar development will be conducted prior to any permits issued. Meanwhile, progress continues while construction draws near to a close at the new EMS and Library facilities. Today We will be participating in a Purchasing by NC Law workshop in addition to preparing for the meeting on Comprehensive Transportation Planning with NCDOT and neighboring communities.

Revenue Department

- Several staff members attended the NC Assessors Fall Conference last week. They had very informative classes from Land Use to Motor Vehicle updates. All received a wide array of knowledge with great instructors.
- Staff is working on end of the year processes so everything will be ready for the New Year which is fast approaching.
- All employees who attended the Personal Property Appraisal classes have now received their certificates. Way to go!
- The Revenue Office will be **closed** Thursday 25th and Friday 26th of November to observe Thanksgiving. Hope everyone has a wonderful holiday.

Customer Service	
Phone Calls	352
Info/Data Requests	204
Website Hits	141,020
County Growth Indicators	
Building Permits Reviewed	109
Deeds Recorded	56
Collections Progress	
Deeds Certified/Prior Year Taxes	29
Total Taxes Collected	\$456,464.46

Senior Center

The “Living Healthy with a Chronic Pain” workshop continued this week on Tuesday. This 2 ½ hour class will be held weekly on Tuesday mornings for six weeks. Each session is facilitated by two trained leaders who follow a detailed manual, so that each workshop is highly consistent. This workshop is appropriate for people living or caring for someone with a wide variety of chronic health conditions. This week’s topic was “Medication Usage”. In recognition of Alzheimer’s Awareness Month, the Senior Center designated November 16-20 as Alzheimer’s week with speakers and activities focused on Alzheimer’s. On Tuesday, our seniors worked on a community outreach project by making “fidget aprons” for Alzheimer’s patients. These aprons will be donated to a local facility who serves patients with dementia-related disorders. These aprons are decorated with attached trinkets, textured fabrics and other items that provide a busy distraction for individuals who suffer from dementia. On Wednesday and Thursday we had special speakers from Laurel Hurst and Laurel Woods and the Alzheimer’s Association to talk about the basics of Alzheimer’s. Finally, we ended the week with an Alzheimer’s Walk on Friday morning.

Upcoming:

Zumba at 6:00 p.m. on November 23 and 30

Social Services

The Director and staff have attended several regular meetings this month including the Department Head meeting, the Statewide Director's call, and the Community Health Council. The Director attended the Rutherford County EOC Table Top Exercise on Friday. Rutherford DSS, along with eleven other counties, has been selected for a site visit as part of the State audit of the Medicaid program. Senate Bill 14 requires the Office of the State Auditor to conduct the review, and the onsite visits will occur during December 2015 and January 2016.

The DSS Board held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, November 18. In addition to their regular agenda items, the Board heard a presentation regarding Adoption Awareness Month and about the agency's recruitment efforts for more foster homes; discussed technology equipment needs for the Board; and were updated on the follow up to the Employee Satisfaction Survey.

The Income Maintenance Division had a day of training for supervisors and lead workers on November 6 with the theme "Back to the Future" (**pictured below**). The meeting allowed the team to look back at practices and



processes before NC Fast and evaluate ideas and practices that were productive in our old world and apply the same concept to our electronic world. The leadership team was very creative in their new ideas of training new employees, as well as, keeping seasonal employees motivated as well.

The Family and Children's Services Division had their annual Thanksgiving meal on Friday. Welcome new employees Linda Waters, Susan Wilson-Taylor, Heather Wright, and India Generette.

Soil & Water

The Admin/Education Specialist:

- worked on information for grant funding for Outdoor Environmental Learning Center survey.
- worked on District and Farmland Meeting Minutes and Meeting Notices.
- worked with Jeff Bradley with Cooperative Extension for the 4th grade Farm City Assemblies to present a lesson on the Importance of Agriculture in our Everyday Life and to present award checks and Certificates to school poster winners.

The Ag. Cost Share Technician:

- spent the week working on BMP contracts
- attended two days of technical training with NRCS.

Please Note:

The Rutherford Soil & Water and the USDA Service Center has moved to:
500 West Street, Suite 2
Spindale, NC 28160

Solid Waste

Customers served 378
Loads hauled from convenience centers 60
Loads shipped to Lenoir 33
Recycling loads shipped to Conover 2
Tire customers 32
Community service workers 6
Community service report 1

The office staff has been busy with billing and reports this week along with handling a high customer volume. The director attended an ordinance meeting with Steve Garrison and several others.

The director held a department meeting that is conducted every year around this time. The director has worked with the Human Resource director to set up interviews for Convenience Center floaters.

The transfer station staff has been busy this week handling all the tonnages coming in for MSW and recycling. We are also expecting to ship a load of electronics out this Thursday. The C&D staff has been busy handling the tonnages coming in while hauling dirt for cover.

Work continues to be performed at the south landfill with trimming and bush hogging. This crew will report back to the airport this week to cut grass around the terminal building and fuel pumps. The shop staff continues to fix equipment while performing preventative maintenance.

Please continue to recycle!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Transportation Services

Emergency Medical Services:

EMS Staff is continuing to work toward having the new Foothills EMS station ready for the grand opening on December 1st. Staff participated in the Winter Storm Exercise last week and was able to vet several different emergency scenarios. Employees are working on their annual Stuff the Ambulance campaign and are excited to provide toys to children in Rutherford County's child protective services again this year.

TYPE	CURRENT WEEK	WEEKLY AVG
Emergency Calls	154	168
Convalescent Calls	34	59

Transit Department:

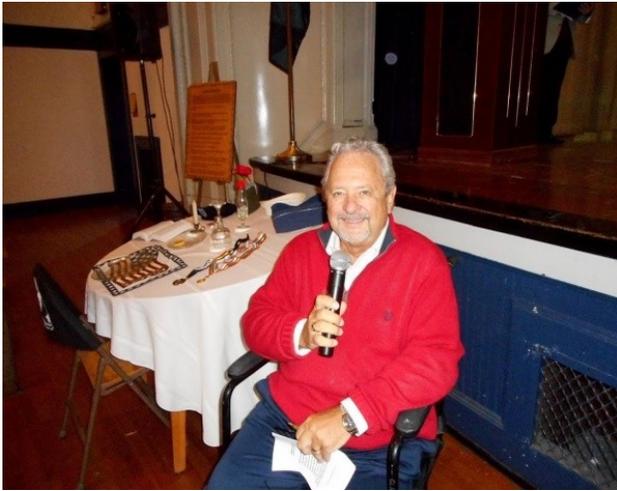
Transit has hired two (2) new part-time drivers to join our team: Donna Holland and Joe Walker. Transit Staff is conducting orientation and required safety training with both employees this week. We are excited to have them come work for Transit and we look forward to having them ready to start work next week transporting our citizens to their destinations. Operations Manager met with Clark Poole, Chamber of Commerce, regarding the upcoming Holiday Season and to discuss the continuation of the Christmas Shuttle that ran locally last year. We are awaiting decisions from the three (3) city planners who will discuss with their local merchants to gauge their interest in continuing this service this year. Transit would also like to encourage everyone to be safe traveling during the upcoming holidays and to be mindful of the increase in traffic both vehicle and pedestrian during the shopping season.

TYPE	CURRENT WEEK	WEEKLY AVG
Total Miles	9,582	9,566
# of Local Trips	881	881
# of Out of County Trips	64	66
# Unduplicated Passengers	205	238
Total Revenue	\$15,164	\$14,549

Veterans Services

Toys for Tots boxes have been put out in various places. Please help us fill the boxes this year for the local children.

Mail In	12
Mail Out	37
Fax	113
Phone Calls In/Out	91
Veteran Contacts	170



Pictures from the 'Salute to Veterans Celebration' held on November 14th at R.S. Middle School honoring our veterans. Commissioner Toney was one of the speakers (pictured on page 2).

Join the Discussion

Building a Stronger North Carolina



Hear an Overview of the North Carolina State Budget Economic Forecast, Issues Affecting Your Community and Add Your Voice

UNITED WAY will share the story of the economy and NC State and Federal budgets and legislation. Be prepared to answer a few questions and to learn a few facts that you can put into action. Here's a snapshot of what you will expect:

- Overview of the state budget decisions and how the state is addressing the areas of Education, Income and Health.
- Overview of federal legislation and budget decisions - what they mean for nonprofits and the people they serve.
- Regional and local data on the economy and impact of policy decisions
- Tools to make an impact on the issues you care about. Join with others to focus your local advocacy for the greatest result.

Date: Tuesday, December 8th

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. (No Registration Necessary)

Location: Rutherford County Annex, Commissioner's Meeting Room

Participate through a Live Streaming Process

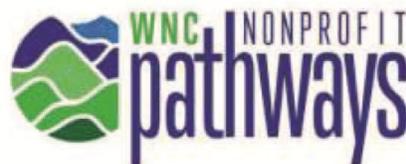
This goal of this event is to bring together community, business, and nonprofit leaders throughout WNC to hear how the State and Federal governments impact education, income, and health issues in our community.

Questions: Ron Katz at rkatz@unitedwayabc.org or 828 239-1045

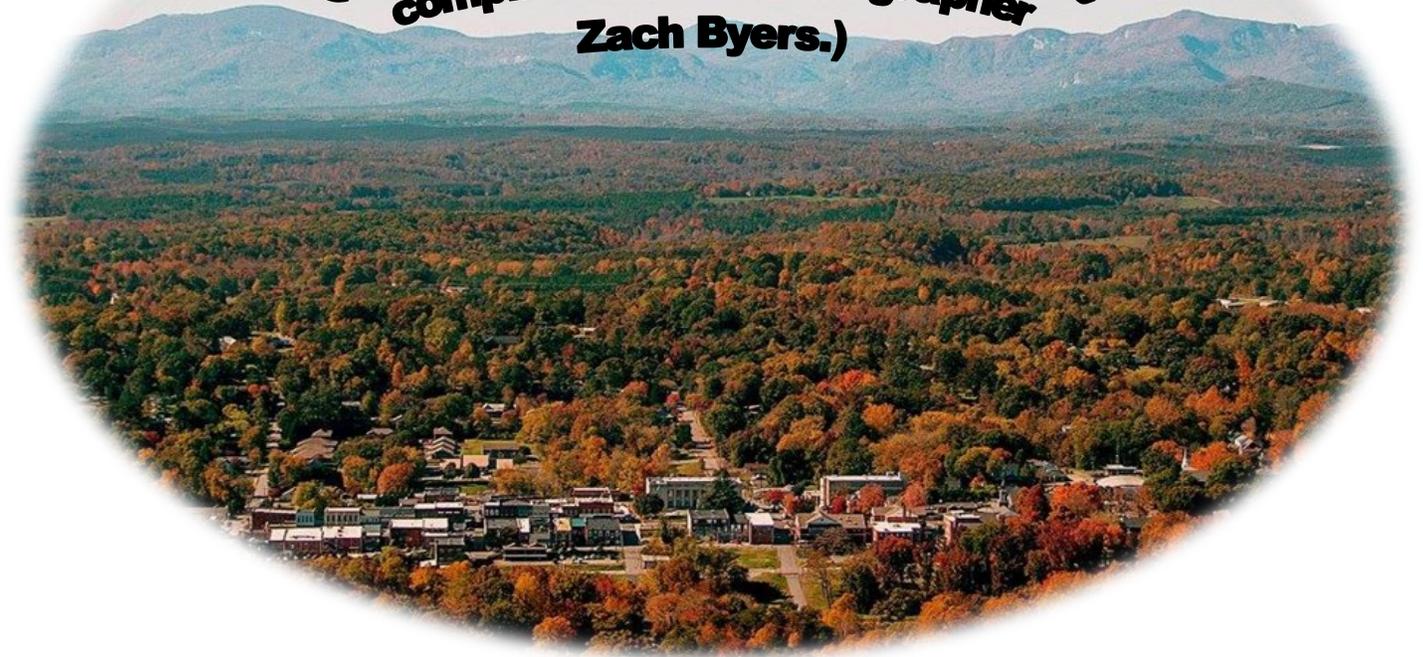
CO-SPONSORED BY:



United Way of Asheville
and Buncombe County



**Rutherford County
View from Chimney Rock
(Photo sent by Brooke Watson, HR,
compliments of photographer
Zach Byers.)**



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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