

October 24, 2019 – Work Session

The Swain County Board of Commissioners held a work session on October 24, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Present were Chairman Bushyhead, Commissioner Parton, Commissioner Parsons and Commissioner Seagle. Vice-Chair Burns was absent.

Joe “Gunner” Vasquez led the Pledge of Allegiance.
Chairman Bushyhead called the work session to order.

Items for Discussion:

Department Reports:

-Recreation Department – Jim Brown reported the following:
SWAIN CO. RECREATION DEPT. OCTOBER 2019

YOUTH FB AND CHEER:

Our youth fb program is winding down at this time. Two teams made the playoffs this season. This past weekend was Cheer Jamboree, it was held in Jackson Co. We had 88 players and 27 girls and 30 volunteer coaches. The playoffs are on the 26 of October at Copper Basin and Murphy. Cracker bowl will be at Franklin on November 2.

PICKLE BALL :

Our Pickle ball program has been going on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 8 am to 11am at the Rec ctr. 4 to 6 have been playing on a regular basis.

POOL:

We are working to get pool renovations done. Renosys corp., Aquatics H2o pools have contacted about these renovations. Our pool is 41 seasons old this summer!! We're looking to do some renovations and changes to fix some liner and possible drain issues.

ANNUAL SANTA BREAKFAST:

Our annual Santa Breakfast will be held on December 7 at the BC First Baptist Church fellowship hall. 8Am

PLAYGROUND:

Our playground is a work in progress, we did a playground renovation in spring of 2019. We are getting more rubber mulch for the play areas at the main playground at this time. We have two other playgrounds on the property which we begin some renovations this spring. Mulch, border and play structures.

RECREATION ADVISORY:

The recreation advisory met last on September 17, we discussed handicap and Ada changes and any up grades to the playgrounds. We will be getting tree seedlings in November to plant on playground from county extension office.

BALL FIELD LIGHTS;

We are working to replace and upgrade lights at our Big field and our Little League fields, We have 14 poles and 32 fixtures on big field and 20 fixtures on the little league field. 13 of the 52 fixtures are in need of repair. We have contacted Duke Power and City Electric of Waynesville to get these repairs done.

The rec dept is working with travel baseball to drag and line fields for the practice and games.

ROLLER GIRLS:

The Swain Roller girls team continues to use the swain rec center for their bouts. The last on was held on Saturday, October 12.

Commissioner Seagle made a motion to accept the report as given. Commissioner Parsons seconded the motion. A vote was unanimous.

NC DOT Support Resolution – Highway 28: Wanda Austin relayed that NC 28, NC 143 and US 129 are currently not included on the Federal Highway Administration’s National Highway System and the purpose of this resolution is to add them on. By adding them on to the FHWA, would allow opportunities for grant funding for needed improvements.

This resolution will be included on the next Regular Session for consideration.

Swain County Schools Performance Contract/Resolution: Mark Sale gave an overview of the Performance Contract Plan and requested resolution which would allow leverage guaranteed energy savings for the next 15 years to get immediate upgrades to their HVAC equipment. Mr. Sale relayed the guarantee to pay for itself over the next 15 years. The resolution would confirm no intentions to reduce appropriations to the School Board based upon a reduction of energy costs in a manner that would inhibit the ability of the School Board to make required payments under the contract.

RENEW Bryson City: Kaye McConnell shared RENEW Bryson City is a volunteer, non-profit organization committed to addressing the devastating consequences of the opioid crisis in the community. Mrs. McConnell presented the following:

Swain County has a health outcome ranking of 93rd of 100 counties and a health rating of D due to barriers such as rampant addiction, poverty, teen pregnancy and more. 63% of our children who are in foster care are there due to drug use in the family.

As a teacher and addiction counselor, I have seen the results of trauma in my students. Teachers and others who work with kids, can almost see the future of those who experience trauma in their homes. They come to school seeking peace, refuge and a safe space. When the teacher calls on them, they aren't thinking about the question or the topic, they are only thinking about what happened last night or this morning. It may have been a physical or other abusive event or the child may have seen his parent shoot up an injectable drug just before school. Over time, their brain development is affected in different ways. They cannot learn, behave, feel or relate like other kids.

The survival behaviors that these kids learn, go with them into adulthood, unless they are addressed. Their negative behavior, along with the dysfunctional behavior of their family, become what they think is normal. When they have kids, they treat them the same as they learned and the cycle goes on. Drug use, sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect and more... intergenerational abuse....ACES. Adverse Childhood Experiences

We all knew that these kids didn't have a chance living in their current situations. I can tell you exactly what happened to my 4 worse behaved students, and this was in the 6th gr. We could tell when they were in 4th gr. John Murphy, DeGrazia twins and Bill Test

WE didn't have a name for these traumatic experiences back then. But today we call them ACES and they lead to severe mental health issues and physical health issues if not dealt with. Other factors lead to ACES such as poverty, lack of food or housing, loss of hope. Today, in schools across the country, staff is being trained to deal with kids who suffer at the hands of their families or other kids at school. NC recommendations are to increase the number of counselors, school nurses, social workers, psychologists and occupational therapists in schools. They address the trauma induced behaviors and find the appropriate help.

This is part of prevention, along with teaching our kids about using drugs to mask their pain from trauma. WE need to get to the root of their problems to reduce drug use, crime, sexual behavior and more. The CDC has declared ACES as a major health issue because it causes adult illness, which in turn costs our country \$124B in health costs yearly.

Research shows that two-thirds of Americans report experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences. But, if you look at the list of questions, most have experience at least one. These include sexual and physical abuse, as well as stressors that many consider to be normal -- growing up with divorced parents, living with a depressed or alcoholic mom or dad, having a parent who belittled or humiliated you - or simply not feeling as if your family cared. People who experienced four such categories of [childhood adversity](#) were twice as likely to be diagnosed with cancer and depression as adults.

One statistic surprised me... women who'd faced three types of childhood adversity had a sixty percent greater risk of being diagnosed with an autoimmune disease as an adult. Similar links exist between childhood stressors and adult [heart disease](#), diabetes, [migraines](#) and irritable bowel disease. Suffering six categories of early life stress shortened one's lifespan by twenty

[years.](#)

However, patients showed that when physicians acknowledged and discussed patients' childhood trauma openly, patients enjoyed a thirty-five percent reduction in doctor visits. Validating patient suffering invites patients to address it at last.

So, with schools and physicians cooperating to help in this prevention/intervention process, we should see a reduction in all sorts of social behavior, like addiction, crime, sexual behaviors and more.

Communities are forming “Systems of Care” meaning that every sector comes together to collaborate and provide needed services for families and kids. Mental health, juvenile justice, schools, child welfare, health, elected leaders, churches and more, are all stakeholders and have a responsibility to family/children outcomes by ensuring effective programs in the community and implementing the system of care effectively.

RENEW Bryson City, along with Vaya Health, Appalachian Community Services and the Great Smoky Mtn Railroad, is sponsoring a complimentary dinner program featuring Becky Haas, a nationally known trauma expert. When Becky realized how low our state health rankings were in Swain County, she offered to come help. WE have written an application for grant funding to bring Becky back next year for community training to become a system of care.

We are looking to you, our county leaders, to set a priority for recognizing our poor health outcomes and working to make our community a healthier place to live. We will be looking for you at the program November 12, 6-8 pm at the Presbyterian Church here in BC, where we will learn solutions for our low health grades.

Closed Session: Commissioner Parton made a motion to go into closed session at 6:45 pm under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) attorney/client privileges. Commissioner Parsons seconded the motion. A vote was unanimous.

7:29 pm Commissioner Parsons made a motion to adjourn the closed session. Commissioner Seagle seconded the motion. A vote was unanimous. Chairman Bushyhead noted no decisions were made at this time.

County Managers Report:

- The new Genealogy building has been dried in and the crew will start working on the inside.
- The Swain County High School Project is proceeding.
- The County Employee Annual Christmas/Holiday Dinner will be November 21, 2019 at Camp Living Water/Dining Hall.
- A Centenarian Celebration is planned for October 29, 2019, 11:30 am at the Senior Center.

Commissioner Reports:

-Commissioner Parsons: met with Senator Davis in Franklin, visited the Macon County Animal Shelter, discussed rural roads with Joel Setzer, attended a Four Square meeting, met with Kaye McConnell and plans to attend the Rural Broadband Summit at SCC.

-Commissioner Parton: none

-Commissioner Seagle: met with Scott Turpin at the Sanitation Department who currently has one employee out due to an accident where he cut his hand on metal but noted no other concerns at this time.

-Chairman Bushyhead: gave a shout out to Swain Clean, met with Joel Setzer regarding rural roads, and announced the 100th anniversary for League of Women Voters and asked for consideration of a resolution.

Public Comments: None.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss at this time, Commissioner Parsons made a motion to

adjourn. Commissioner Seagle seconded the motion. A vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindi C. Woodard,
Clerk to the Board
Swain County Commissioners

Ben Bushyhead,
Chairman
Swain County Commissioners