

**THE ANSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS** convened at 5:00 P.M. on Tuesday, October 7, 2014 at the Cooperative Extension Office, McLaurin Street, Wadesboro, North Carolina for the Annual Report to the People.

Commissioners present: Anna H. Baucom, Chair  
Ross Streater, Vice Chair  
Bobby Sikes  
Dr. Jim Sims  
Harold C. Smith  
Jarvis Woodburn

Staff members present: Lawrence R. Gatewood, County Manager  
Bonnie M. Huntley, CMC, NCCCC, Clerk to the Board  
Rita James, Data Processing  
Tiffany Randall, CPA, Finance Officer  
Sheriff Tommy Allen

Others: Scott Forbes, County Attorney

Mr. Lee Roy Lookabill, Chair of the Anson Extension Advisory Council, welcomed board members, Representative Brody and others to the meeting. Mr. Lookabill shared that extension staff had some very interesting facts and figures to present tonight. Mr. Lookabill asked those present to join him in giving them a round of applause for the wonderful meal. Mr. Lookabill updated those present on the Agri-Civic Center saying they got started about the second week of August trying to raise money and to date \$877,800 has been contributed towards the endeavor. Mr. Lookabill stated that in that period of time they have raised in cash and pledges \$480,500. Mr. Lookabill added that even though they were just getting started they have been well received. Mr. Lookabill then shared with those present the funding received and pledged to date and those they have met with or intend to meet with. Mr. Lookabill stated that everyone present was given a packet that includes a pledge sheet and they feel it is important that board members consider making a contribution to this endeavor. Mr. Lookabill feels it is important that everybody gets behind this project if they are going to make it work. Chairman Baucom asked Mr. Lookabill to give Representative Body a packet.

Ms. Rywak thanked everyone for being here tonight and taking time out of their busy schedule to be here. Ms. Rywak then introduced her staff starting with Aimee Colf, the Horticultural Agent, Dustin Adcock, Local Foods Agent, adding that he is housed in Union but works Anson, Union and Stanly counties, Pam Layfield, Administrative Assistant, Yolanda Mitchell, Case Manager for the After School Program, 4-H Youth Promise, Roshunda Terry, 4-H Agent, Erin Dempsey, Program Director for 4-H Youth Promise, Richard Goforth, Area Poultry Agent covering seven counties and

Jessica Morgan, Livestock Agent. Ms. Rywak stated that she could not ask for a better staff as she is one of the most lucky county extension directors in the state. Ms. Rywak added that she would put this staff up against anybody in the county too. Ms. Rywak voiced appreciation for all they do. Mr. Rywak also thanked Mr. Lookabill for serving as Chair of the Advisory Council and Chair of the Resource Development Committee for the Ag Center. Ms. Rywak then recognized past chairs present as Eloise Harrington and Betty Garris along with advisory board member Beth Rogers and Evelyn Capel, a member of the Anson Agricultural Advisory Board that oversees the Voluntary Ag District program. Ms. Rywak thanked Representative Brody for coming all the way from Raleigh.

Ms. Rywak pointed out that before each one present was a packet of information telling all they do at Extension. Ms. Rywak noted that also included was a copy of their Report to the People for the second part of this year and a handout highlighting the different programs and what they have done over the past year. Ms. Rywak stated that staff felt in tonight's presentation it would be a good idea to talk about money and how extension is able to raise money, leverage money and make a dollar go a little bit further because of the programs they are able to provide. Ms. Rywak added that each report will be how they have impacted the county monetarily with the programs they've been involved with.

Aimee Colf: Ms. Colf stated that she was the horticulture and forestry agent and one of the primary ways she assists forest landowners is by helping them develop individual forestry management plans. Ms. Colf presented the following report: Often it is a landowner applying for the North Carolina present use tax deferral program through the office. The Anson Tax office refers landowners to me who need assistance. Some landowners recently inherited property, recently purchased it or have limited experience managing timber. This offers an opportunity for me to inform clients on resources to help them manage their land. We identify short term and long-term forestry goals and I talk to them about what they can do to maximize the productivity and profitability of their woodland. Then I conduct a site visit and speak to the landowner about their forest health and quality and we develop a timeline of management activities to report in their forestry plan. Anson Cooperative Extension has assisted landowners with 9 forestry management plans over 400 acres, qualifying these landowners for a tax saving totaling \$5,600. As recently as August of this year, the North Carolina Forest Service is no longer writing free forestry plans for the public. On average we receive about 30 requests for forestry plans each year. Because Anson Cooperative Extension does not charge for this service, we can expect more citizens to request technical assistance through our office. Based on their new schedule of fees, the value of service we provided just on these 9 plans is \$1,590. The North Carolina Present Use Value Program benefits Anson County in that it helps keep private land intact as conserved natural areas or as working farms and forests. Participating landowners play an important role in maintaining green space, water quality, connecting natural areas for wildlife and providing habitat. The tax savings farms and

forest landowners receive by enrolling in this program helps many to keep agricultural and family land intact that may otherwise be unaffordable at market value. Chairman Baucom asked Ms. Colf to describe the health of our forestlands with Ms. Colf answering we have a lot of forest land in the county and a lot of planted loblolly pine and a lot of volunteer stands and overall they look really good. Ms. Colf stated that when she does the site visits she will tell the landowners if she sees any problems and talks with them on how to manage it. Ms. Colf added that she also encourages them to work with people so they have an advocate to help them manage it and so they are not selling their timber under value. Commissioner Woodburn asked how the growth was keeping up with all the logging that is taking place with Ms. Colf saying they do a lot of reforestation because with the present use value program in order to stay enrolled you always have to have trees so people generally do not let their land sit idle. Ms. Colf stated that there were lots of cost share opportunities through NRCS and the forest service for assistance and she doesn't think that is much of an issue. Commissioner Woodburn wondered because in reseeding it takes a few years before it can be harvested again and all the log trucks we see going up and down the roads every day. Ms. Colf reminded Commissioner Woodburn that they do a lot of thinning about every ten years or so and there will always be some type of harvesting going on.

Roshunda Terry, the 4-H Agent presented the following report: Anson County 4-H is Cooperative Extension's youth educational program that focuses on personal growth of youth. The structured learning, encouragement and adult mentoring that young people receive through their participation in 4-H plays a vital role in helping them achieve success in life. 4-H volunteer leaders are the keys to success in the Anson County 4-H program. They are truly the backbone of the 4-H program here and without them our 4-H program would not reach the number of youth that we do. These individuals work in the capacities of club leaders, giving of their time to teach a program or workshop, assisting youth with various projects or just lending a helping hand to the 4-H Agent with the 124 youth currently enrolled. This year, 18 volunteer leaders taught and assisted in various programs totaling 114 volunteer hours, which is \$2,570.70 in the dollar value. Volunteers have given these hours in the capacity of holding and assisting with 4-H club meetings, helping with summer programs, chaperoning youth to district leadership events and working with youth on projects for local, district and state competitions. Since Anson County 4-H does not receive any state or government funding for programming, all funds are raised through private support, grants and fundraising efforts. Total fundraising efforts this past year was \$21,247. The breakdown of the grand total is: \$16,647.00 from 4-H Clover Crawl which is our annual fundraiser in March, \$3,600.00 from our Chicken Plate Sale in May and \$1,000.00 was awarded from a Wal-Mart community grant. Funds raised all go back to the county program through school enrichment programs, materials for various programs, countywide youth programs, summer day camps, parent and volunteer workshops and deter cost for participants to attend programs and conferences offered on local, district and state levels. Our goal is to increase youth opportunities to have fun developing life skills through hands-on learning in a safe, healthy and enriching

environment. All of our efforts is good evidence that citizens believe in the educational and character building foundation of Anson County 4-H and are willing to invest in the future of the youth of the county.

Jessica Morgan, Agricultural Extension Agent, noted she covers both livestock and row crops. Ms. Morgan noted that beef prices have risen lately as there has been a lot of weather related incidents in the mid-west including drought and big snow storms in the Dakota's and that has left the cattle population in the United States at its lowest point since the 1940's. Ms. Morgan stated that this means cattle on the east coast are in high demand because we did not have the same weather related incidents. Ms. Morgan noted that part of their marketing campaign is part of cooperation between the North Carolina Department Agriculture and North Carolina Cooperative Extension and the stock yards in the area are the state graded feeder calf sale programs. Ms. Morgan noted these programs have been going on for at least 20 years and our local stock yard is in Stanly County at Norwood and that is where most people in the region take their cattle to sale. Ms. Morgan shared that the state graded feeder calf sales were first put together because it is easier to ship a truck load of calves together to the Midwest. Ms. Morgan stated that they had trouble organizing everybody's calves into these truck load lots so folks started taking their cattle to a centralized place, which is the stock yard in Norwood, and they grade them for them so members of the Department of Agriculture, Ms. Morgan and another local agent help grade the cattle. Ms. Morgan shared that M5A was the typical grade for a calf and that means that M is a medium framed animal, 5 means it was a five weight – it weighed from 500 to 595 pounds and it was an A which means it was an angus type breed cattle. Ms. Morgan added that feeder calf sales cut down on transportation cost because the buyer can sit and say I have a load and a half of cattle here and how much will that cost me to get to Nebraska. Ms. Morgan noted that she grew up on a small farm. Ms. Morgan noted that they have 4 feeder calf sales a year and on average these calves get eleven cents per pound more than the ones that are just rustled up and taken to the weekly sale. Ms. Morgan stated that over the scale of their sales they have 3,296 head of cattle so that is an additional income generated of \$212,000 and that is just over the weekly sales. Ms. Morgan noted that they let producers take it a step further so the requirements for the regular feeder calf sale are just dewormed, castrated and one shot but if you are a progressive thinking producer and you want to have the best quality product you will take the extra step and become beef quality assurance certified. Ms. Morgan shared that the certification is offered through Cooperative Extension and if you pass the exam you become BQA certified. Ms. Morgan added then you have the opportunity to participate in the upgraded sale twice a year and you have to follow a stringent health protocol and other certain requirements. Ms. Morgan noted that these sales get twenty-three cents per pound more than the average weekly sale. Ms. Morgan stated that for these two sales the additional income generated is \$216,000 for the area. Ms. Morgan added that 29% of the producers that participate in the feeder calf sale program are Anson County producers and 23% of the producers that produce in the BQA are from Anson County. Commissioner Sims stated that he was told by a friend that he had a very

large adult healthy cow that he got \$5,000 for and asked if this was possible. Ms. Morgan answered that it was possible. Ms. Morgan shared that they have 1500 head in the BQA sales every year and they see that number increasing. Ms. Morgan added that extension's role was mainly education to make sure the producers know about the sales, the requirements and so they can get their cattle there during the sale so they can make a premium from the sale. County Attorney Forbes asked if there was some type extra money cows raised in Anson County get over cows raised elsewhere with Ms. Morgan wishing there was. County Manager Gatewood stated that some years ago he took a course on line on feed lots and during that time the main large feed lots were located in Texas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Kansas and western part of Iowa and a few other states and asked why we don't have a developed feed lot industry in the southeast. Ms. Morgan answered that it revolves around one thing and that is corn. Ms. Morgan noted that we are known as a corn deficient state. Ms. Morgan stated that we have so many chicken houses and hog houses that we always have to import corn. Ms. Morgan stated that we do not make enough corn on the entire east coast to provide what we need for our animals here. Ms. Morgan noted the expense of trucking corn would be more expensive than trucking the animals to the Midwest because that is where all the corn is and that is where most of the packing houses are located where they will be slaughtered.

Dustin Adcock, local foods for Anson, Stanly and Union counties, stated that he plans to talk about three program areas and they are farm fresh ventures, Rocky River Local Foods and general assisting new and venturing farms. Mr. Adcock stated that we talked a lot about the money behind Farm Fresh Ventures but in two years, Farm Fresh Ventures, which is our local food cooperative and a food hub among six counties and housed here, has brought in a little over \$100,000 of economic impact with just 10 growers, 2 contract growers and members. Mr. Adcock added that members were sharing other great experiences and in a recent survey 75% of members said that they would participate again and more importantly 2/3 of those had never participated in a local foods cooperative or program. Mr. Adcock felt this meant they were acquiring new people into local foods. Mr. Adcock stated that over 60% of their membership stated that they were eating healthier and buying more local foods and would likely do so in the future. Mr. Adcock stated that just under \$3500 was paid back to their volunteer and non-profit organizations that help to pack and distribute the boxes. Mr. Adcock shared that Rocky River Local Foods is a small group of growers that started to try and brand local products to create some community amongst growers and get them to try and share cost, increase their efficiency and brand our regional products. Mr. Adcock noted that they have had a lot of success but it was slower than hoped but they have been recognized by the state and they are filing for 501(c)(3) non-profit status and in the spring they will begin to market more to our restaurants. Mr. Adcock stated that they were also working with the Piedmont Growers Association, which is a larger model of what they are doing and housed out of Greensboro/Winston Salem, so they will be able to co-brand under that organization. Mr. Adcock stated that they have had a lot of new growers through some work he's done at the Union County Farmer's

Market and he is happy to say he's brought some Anson growers who were going through Union County to sell in Charlotte a little bit closer to Union County. Mr. Adcock stated that they currently have 4 vendors from Anson County and the rough numbers have been about \$7,500 a month just for Anson County growers. Mr. Adcock stated that many newcomers were purchasing land in Anson County and they want to start small farms. Mr. Adcock stated that another area that by default he fell into is a lot of them are calling asking for advise and he feels it more important to tell them what he thinks will not work. Mr. Adcock stated that these people are reaching out for a business management feasibility education and they balance ideas off each other for marketing the farms. Mr. Adcock stated that he was working with two growers with the potential to land a deal with a very large retailer who is looking to source products from this area. Mr. Adcock added that he is serving as a mediator between the brokers and retailer which would be in excess of about \$120,000 a year in purchasing if it goes through. Representative Brody asked if there were any issues with GAP certification holding them back with Mr. Adcock answering it had gotten better. Mr. Adcock shared that he and Ms. Colf were working together to hold a training the first of December that will walk them through the process of getting GAP certification. County Attorney Forbes asked what he qualifies as a small farm with Mr. Adcock answering \$250,000 or less but when he says small farmer he is looking at people buying five to twenty acres.

Richard Goforth, Area Poultry Agent working seven counties, works with poultry, especially the commercial growers, working primarily on their waste and nutrient management plans to deal with their poultry litter. Mr. Goforth stated that litter has a great deal of value and he helps them utilize it in the proper way. Mr. Goforth stated that this year he worked with 8 management plans on either new or expanding farms in Anson County for a total of about 16,157 tons of litter to be produced each year from these farms. Mr. Goforth stated that the increase value of the litter as a natural fertilizer over what it would cost them to buy a nitrogen fertilizer is about \$97,000. Mr. Goforth stated that other funds raised through his programs are \$600 in donations for his advisory poultry meeting. Mr. Goforth stated that he also earned about \$150 worth of volunteer time from volunteers that help him produce some of his programs and added that the chicken served tonight was donated by Tyson. Mr. Goforth added that he also works with small producers that have issues with diseases and understanding the concept of biosecurity to protect the commercial poultry industry. Sheriff Allen asked the number of new poultry houses being constructed in the county with Mr. Goforth answering 8 farms this year with roughly 30 houses. Mr. Goforth stated that some were currently under construction and some will begin construction shortly and feels next year we should see another 30 new houses. Sheriff Allen asked if these houses were larger than the traditional houses with Mr. Goforth answering that a majority are a little larger than they were 10-15 years ago and most being built in Anson County are Tyson and each should house around 24,700 chickens. County Manager Gatewood stated that he was talking with a local farmer a few weeks ago and they estimated there were approximately 750 poultry houses located in Anson County and predicted there would be 1,000 over the next several years and asked if these

numbers were close to reality. Mr. Goforth stated that years ago there were about 6,500 houses in North Carolina and because of transportation cost there will always be a cluster of houses. Mr. Goforth feels with the new growth that is somewhat accurate although he would have to stop and figure that some of the older houses have been decommissioned or still standing and not being used. Mr. Goforth felt there would be some increase in active growing but some houses will be decommissioned and replaced. Commissioner Sims stated that he is hearing there is a large company hiring mainly foreigners and they are going to build 60 to 80 houses and they have already started near the river. Mr. Goforth was not sure this was a company but we have a good number of Laotians and Hmongs that like the poultry industry and they make good farmers because they keep to themselves and have a tight knit family to manage the farms.

Eric Dempsey stated that she does 4-H Youth Promise, which is a program for our juvenile delinquents that are court ordered or through the court counselor's office. Ms. Dempsey noted that it was state mandated for each county to have a restitution program for youth. Ms. Dempsey added that JCPC, which is Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, is mandated in each county as well and with that they received a grant for about \$105,000 that requires a 10% match. Ms. Dempsey explained that the match comes completely from 4-H and in-kind expenses from Anson Cooperative Extension. Ms. Dempsey stated that they also receive \$5,500 from United Way and between the two grants, 4-H Youth Promise is 100% granted funded with no county dollars. Ms. Dempsey added that salaries are right at \$67,000 with fringe benefits of \$2800 and insurance alone is \$16,776. Ms. Dempsey stated that while the county pays insurance for all employees they save the county \$16,776 because their grant pays their insurance. Mr. Dempsey added that they are able to help with 4-H fund raisers and with the United Way Grant it helps to support their own programs.

Ms. Rywak called attention to the color success sheet pointing out the pie chart. Ms. Rywak noted that for every dollar they get from Anson County it is turned around to have \$2.56 worth of program funds to be able to run their programs. Ms. Rywak stated that they get \$196,000 from the University to pay part of their salaries, fringes, travel and postage and they get \$6,700 from federal. Ms. Rywak stated that the other benefit Anson County gets from 4-H Youth Promise is that Erin Dempsey's grant dollars pay 10% of their utilities. Ms. Rywak stated that they paid \$1200 towards their expenses last year for telephone, water, sewer, fuel and electricity. Ms. Rywak pointed out that the beautiful chairs everyone was sitting in tonight came from grant money in Erin's budget that was left over last year that was going to be returned to the state. Ms. Rywak stated that they kept the green chairs and sold the matching yellow chairs via GovDeals for \$220. Ms. Rywak stated that we were one of the few counties with Cooperative Extension that charges farmers to handle their soil and waste analysis and they don't mind paying so that is about \$550 user fees every year. Ms. Rywak stated that last year Anson Consumer Science and Community Rural Development volunteers gave about 986 hours which is equivalent to \$22,000. Ms. Rywak mentioned that

numbers from the Voluntary Ag District program would be coming from Brown Creek Soil and Water and NRCS. Ms. Rywak pointed out that the landowners that enrolled in the Enhance Voluntary Ag District program get an increased cost share benefit with the programs with Brown Creek SW and NRCS and they will provide the cost savings numbers. Ms. Rywak stated that this year their Ag Expo and Fair was a big week and they were able to raise \$14,000 from sponsors that paid for all events. Ms. Rywak stated that in addition to that Mr. Lookabill shared what has been raised so far with our Ag Center Campaign. Ms. Rywak noted that they were good at trying to figure out how to get things done and sometimes they get grants funds and sometimes they get people to do things for them without charging. Ms. Rywak added that they have a lot of volunteers that donate time and it takes all of that to get all things done in addition to the cost savings and the benefit that some of their producers and clients get from the educational programs they are able to offer. Ms. Rywak offered thanks to the County of Anson for funding them and keeping them here. Ms. Rywak stated that they enjoy working for the county and thanked those in attendance for being here tonight.

Ms. Rywak then called on Chairman Baucom for closing remarks. Chairman Baucom stated that she often wonders, particularly at budget time, why the numbers are pretty large but she can see and has always known that with our Ag Extension office and programs they add value to this community. Chairman Baucom voiced that they were very grateful and thanked them for the delicious meal. Chairman Baucom encouraged her colleagues on the board to get their check books out. Chairman Baucom stated that they did not have to pay it all at one time. Chairman Baucom felt this was an exciting project for our community and thinks when they go door to door dialing for dollars they are probably getting a very good reception. Chairman Baucom thinks there is a lot of excitement in this community about this facility. Chairman Baucom turned to Representative Brody saying she would be talking with him as she would like to see the state kick in and let us match to build some funds for this. Chairman Baucom asked if all the poultry houses pay taxes with the answer they may get present use value but they are not exempt. Chairman Baucom thanked the staff for all they do and sometime we may get up the nerve on the board to make a meal for them.

Respectfully submitted:

Bonnie M. Huntley, CMC, NCCCC  
Clerk to the Board

Meeting time: 1 hr.