

# Haywood County “Toeprints”

September 14, 2010

Vol. #1 Issue 15 (\* **SPECIAL EDITION** \* **Johnson-Bumgarner-Forga - Misleading or Misrepresented?** )

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## What’s Happening?

This is a **SPECIAL EDITION** of Toeprints... The purpose of this newsletter is to inform Haywood County Taxpayers of what transpires at the bi-monthly County Commission Meetings. This newsletter will be written from the perspective of a casual observer, myself. Any opinions expressed will be mine.

## Draft Transcript from County Commission Meeting.

The following are draft transcripts from the last County Commission Meeting, held on 9/7/2010, for the following agenda item:

### VII. Old Business

5. The General Education Building, the construction of a new Professional Creative Crafts Building, the extension of water lines, and parking improvements. Julie Davis, Finance Director and Chip Killian, County Attorney.

The speakers were **Mark Bumgarner**, Chair of HCC Board of Trustees, **Donna Forga**, Vice-Chair of HCC Board of Trustees (running for District Court Judge in Nov.), and **Rose Johnson**, President of HCC, in addition to Julie Davis, and Chip Killian.

[**Editors Note:** This picks up after Julie Davis and Chip Killian have explained the mechanics of the loan to the commissioners, and **Kirkpatrick** is ready to ask **Johnson** questions. The first dialog with **Kirkpatrick** speaking is transcribed from my recorder which is not as clear as the audio recorded directly from the county microphones. I’ve noted an instance of [unintelligible], which means it was unintelligible. The second paragraph (in bold) is the county’s **verbatim** draft transcript. Minutes have not been approved.]

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**Kirkpatrick:** Okay. Dr. **Johnson**, It’s my understanding, I believe, that you had several meetings over the last week with the entire Board ... and our [unintelligible] believe that some of the concerns that we had with the fact that you had a board that was relatively split making this request, for financing this project. Would you bring us up to date, and actually I have not spoken to you, I have just has heard that this has happened, so if you can bring us up to date over the meetings you have had in the last week.

**Dr. Johnson:** I’d be glad to do so. The board is very committed and actually wanted to keep working through the project until it could bring to you an unanimous decision. So, that’s what we’re here to do today. The board actually made a decision on August the thirtieth that we would keep our base bid and contingency would be the \$8,397,057, with the contingency at \$627,375 to keep to total of that at the \$9,024,432. Now, this is the building itself, not the other projects. That actually was a unanimous vote of the board that basically is saying to you

as County Commissioners, that we are staying at the same loan amount that we had talked to you about before, the same cost figures. That was again, the additional meetings were about value engineering on the project itself to make sure that the board had an opportunity to review and select the items to be deducted from the project so that it would stay at that cost item. That again was unanimously approved on September the second. So the board brings to you a unanimous decision to honor the values that we have presented to the Commissioners.

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**Kirkpatrick** then opened the questions from the commissioners.

Johnson’s last sentence is the money line. **“So the board brings to you a unanimous decision to honor the values that we have presented to the Commissioners.”**

## Misleading or Misrepresented, or Both?

The board of commissioners obviously felt the Board Of Trustees was unanimous from Johnson’s statements, based on their quotes in the two local papers:

Quotes from the [Smoky Mountain News article by Becky Johnson on 9/8/2010:](#)

- “If you had come in here today and it was still a 6-5 decision, I would be uncomfortable that you didn’t have a stronger consensus,” said Commissioner Chairman **Kirk Kirkpatrick**. “I don’t want to be in the position as a commissioner to stop a project another board wants to go forward with. If they are all in consensus now with the project, I would feel comfortable approving it, but not because I am sold on it completely.”

and from the [Mountaineer’s article by Vicki Hyatt on 9/8/2010:](#)

- “Several commissioners said it made a difference that the college’s governing board has come together to unanimously support the project. An earlier 6 to 5 vote on whether to proceed with the solar elements of the project as well as other indications of internal board divisions was a problem, commissioners indicated.”

The Board of Trustees had not even seen the HCC contract with FLS, let alone vote on it. [re: Toeprints, Issue #14, [HCC Board of Trustees agenda for 9/15/2010](#), last item in closed session tomorrow: [G.S. §143-318.11(a)(1)] – Legal Advice in Regard to Solar Contract & Lease Negotiations].

Full transcript to be printed when available.

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