Written by Gary Childers
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The Ashe County Commissioners took quick action on one item but due to split voting had to postpone final action on two other matters during their Monday afternoon meeting. The Commissioners unanimously authorized, on first reading, Patty Gambill's request to revise signage clarifying liability issues at the State Park. On two other matters action was stalemated due to split voting. The High Country Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and a recommended redrawing of property lines at the county owned Old Fields Property were both motioned for approval. However, on both motions, when the vote was called for, Commissioners Larry Rhodes and William Sands voted in favor and Commissioners Gary Roark and Gerald Price voted against. Since the Commissioner's Chairman, Judy Poe, was unable to be in attendance there was no tie breaking vote. When asked about the split votes, following the meeting, Commissioner Roark indicated he felt the need for more information before he could vote in favor of the proposals. In other business the Commissioners heard Adrian Tate, from the High Country Council of Governments, present a bit of good news on their Job Link efforts in Ashe County. He shared that even though the 11% unemployment rate for Ashe County was still higher than the state and region averages some progress had been made putting people back to work through a new data base they had made available that lets people know where jobs job openings are and by providing funds and/or actual on the job training for several companies who had employed Ashe residents. He also reported that they had been able to provide 77 people with scholarships for specific job skills training or increased education that would enable them to become more employable. Commissioner Price thanked him for the positive report and encouraged him to bring even better news in his next jobs report.