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\$27,490,136, total operation and maintenance costs of \$13,185,951, a net income of \$3,685,498, a total number of customers residential and commercial at 51,192, and an overall debt value of \$118,810,054, which is down about \$550,000 since last reported at the end of January.

Following a brief question and answer session with the few in attendance, addressing everything from the sale of the old headquarters – no one is biting yet – to when the board might allow open board meetings – the directors are still looking into possibly live streaming the meetings – Board President Steven Phillips addressed the room.

“A lot of good things going on at the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC,” said Phillips. “It seems like it’s taking a long time, and the wheels are moving slow, but we really are making progress, and everybody on the board’s working together for the good of the employees and the membership.

“When (Mickey) talked about some of the policies, he just talked about the ones that have kind of stood above the rest of them, but we’re making policy changes, and it takes a long time to make sure you get it all right.

“We’re doing that, the general manager search, the forensic audit. So everything that we said we were going to do we’re doing, and like I said, it’s a slow go, but we’re making

Tune in to Regina Allison’s new TV show



Blairsville’s own Alan Kay talks survival with Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Regina Allison. Kay will be featured as Allison’s first ever guest on the new Windstream Channel 4 TV show “The Chamber Connection.”

**By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer**

Regina Allison, president/CEO of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, is excited and grateful to be part of a new Windstream Channel 4 TV show called “The Chamber Connection.”

The whole thing started a couple months ago when Mark Mote, a communication specialist with Windstream, reached out to Allison and two other area chamber executives, Candace Lee of Towns County Chamber of Commerce and Pam Roman of the Clay County Chamber of Commerce in North Carolina.

“What he wanted to do was give us the opportunity to have our own TV show,” said Allison. “It’s a 30-minute show, and he said it’s whatever format, whatever we want to do – he even let us come up with the name.”

Mote said that his vision for the show – thereafter dubbed “The Chamber Connection” by those involved – was to highlight people and events from around this area, and that it was up to Allison and her counterparts to take that idea and run with it.

All three chamber directors have taped their debut shows – Roman’s has already

aired on Channel 4, while the Towns County show will be available through the end of this week.

Allison’s first show, featuring guest Alan Kay, a survival instructor and winner of the History channel’s first season of the “Alone” survival TV series, will debut on Tuesday, June 21, airing in multiple time slots starting at 10 a.m. that Tuesday.

“I decided when we started talking about this that I wanted Alan Kay to be my first guest,” said Allison. “I thought, this would be a great person to have on. Everybody is familiar with Alan and his stint on ‘Alone.’ He’s a local hero for us, going through what he did and coming out on top as the winner – that was huge.”

In her debut episode of “The Chamber Connection,” Allison and Kay discuss his experiences as a survival expert, a teacher, a competitor and a lifelong lover of the outdoors and simple living.

Tobie Chandler, tourism director for the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, makes an appearance at the end of the show, and moving forward, Allison hopes to utilize “The Chamber Connection” as a venue to spotlight various upcoming community activities within the county.

The schedule of the show will be as follows: Tuesday, June 21, and Thursday, June 23, at 10 a.m., 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.; and on Saturday, June 25, at 11 a.m., 5:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

Viewers will get another week’s worth of chances to view the show, as it will also be playing the week of June 27, starting that Tuesday, June 28, and playing also on Thursday, June 30, as well as Saturday, July 2, airing the same times as the respective days from the previous week.

Allison, who is now several months into leading the Blairsville-Union County Chamber, said that she has been thrilled with the experience thus far, and is thankful to everyone who has cheered her on in the position, especially those closest to home.

“I could not do this job without the love, prayers, help and support of my family,” said Allison. “They are such a rock for me. I am grateful to them for everything and love them very much.”

She also added that she is thankful to Windstream and Mr. Mote for “The Chamber Connection” opportunity, and to Alan Kay for being the first guest on her show, saying that “our community is blessed that he and his family are a part of it.”

Council...from Page 1A

The report is conducted by an outside company to ensure that all city government activity is in compliance with federal and state laws. It is also used as a means to formally balance out all financial inputs and outputs from the last fiscal year, like monies earned by the city, as well as through state and federal programs.

The audit proved to be a good one for the city, one of the best to date, according to Jennings.

“Overall, you had a very good report,” said Jennings. “Everything looks good, and I encourage you all to keep at it. It’s obvious, looking around downtown, that a lot of development is going on, and that’s a wonderful thing.”

Blairsville Downtown Development Authority Program Manager Darren Harper shared big news for the city: two new retail shops and a restaurant are soon to join the league of businesses on the square.

According to Harper, this is just the beginning of re-vamping the historic downtown area, allowing room for more tourist opportunities and an economic boost for the city.

The Fourth of July fireworks have been big talk around town as of late, city council not excluded. This year’s ceremony at Meeks Park is scheduled to be 30 percent larger than last year’s event, promising a night of fun and enjoyment for the whole family.

Lake Nottely Marina will also be offering a fireworks show the Saturday before the Fourth of July.

Bids were acquired for the 6,000 gallon water tank on Ross Ridge. The tank supplies more than 50 homes and is in desperate need of replacement. Three bids were given to the council, one of which – a quote from Tampa Tank – was voted on and approved.

The city hopes to move forward with this bid and begin work on replacing the old tank as soon as possible.

The council also entertained an idea to re-do some crosswalks and sidewalks around the square, specifically those adjacent to Cabin Coffee. The brick is unstable and loose, according to the council, and councilmembers hope to further discuss the logistics of construction needed to have repairs completed before

winter and ice becomes an issue.

Toward the end of the meeting, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Ken Smith announced his early retirement.

“I would like to thank the board and the mayor,”

said Smith. “Without your support, your help and your understanding on things that need to be done, and always finding the money to do the things that need to be done, we wouldn’t be where we are today.”

The council is hosting a retirement farewell luncheon at Monet’s on Tuesday, June 14, at 11:30 a.m. Smith’s last day at the Wastewater Treatment Plant will be June 20.