

## Questions & Answers Regarding The Proposal To Have Dawson County Accept Upper And Lower Sassafras Into The County Road System.

- Who are we paying the \$105,600 for the road improvements?
  - *Dawson County will perform all road work and receive the funds to cover cost. All contributions will go into a special bank account with oversight by a committee of 3 property owners – one board member and two other property owners who are residents. Upon reaching the \$105,600 goal, the funds will be given to Dawson County.*
- If Dawson County doesn't use all of the \$105,600 on our roads, what happens to that excess money? Does the county keep it?
  - *The \$105,600.00 is based on an estimate of \$96,000 plus a 10% contingency. The \$96,000 is a firm quote; the contingency is for overruns. If all the funds are not used, then the unused balance will be returned and refunded on an equal basis to all contributors.*
- If Property Owners raise more than the county requires, what happens to the extra money?
  - *Any funds raised over and above what is needed will be refunded first to those who contribute more than the \$750.00. After that, any remaining funds will be refunded on an equal basis to all other contributors.*
- Can we give more than the recommended \$750?
  - *Yes, you can contribute as much as you like.*
- What happens if we don't raise the required funds by September 1?
  - *If we don't raise the required funds by September 1, the cost for the project may change, due to increases in the cost of asphalt and other expenses.*
  - *In order to have the work performed under the current asphalt contract, the work must be completed this fall, prior to cold weather setting in.*
- What maintenance/improvements need to be done to the roads?
  - *Dawson County has determined that the resurfacing of Upper and Lower Sassafras must be completed before they will accept them into the county road system.*
- If we go ahead with this, when will the county start construction?
  - *Dawson County has stated that if the required funds are received by September 1, they will complete the work this fall.*
- Will the road improvements and Dawson County's acceptance of Upper and Lower Sassafras help or hurt my property value?
  - *Real estate professionals have stated that property values are improved if the property is on a county road or within a community with an established road maintenance plan managed by an organized POA or HOA.*
  - *Property values are lower when roads are not maintained and there is no established road maintenance plan.*
- Will there be any extra fees or taxes beyond what we now pay the county?
  - *As a Dawson County resident, you are already paying property taxes that include a road maintenance component.*
  - *There will be no Special Tax associated with the transfer of Upper and Lower Sassafras to Dawson County.*
  - *Once Upper and Lower Sassafras are turned over to Dawson County, they will address the needs of those roads, except for mowing.*
- Who will cut the grass on the shoulders of Upper and Lower Sassafras?
  - *SMEPOA will continue to mow based on the level of voluntary contributions received.*

- Will the county remove ice and snow?
  - *Dawson County has a winter plan in place to address winter weather conditions and has stated that Upper and Lower Sassafras will be included in those plans.*
- Will the county consider our roads low priority for repairs and for removing snow and ice?
  - *Dawson County addresses maintenance of county roads within the available budget and on an as-needed basis.*
- Will someone here be responsible for notifying the county when repairs are needed or snow and ice need to be removed?
  - *Any Dawson County resident can call the Dawson Road Department to notify them of a road issue.*
- Why will the county not take over roads other than Upper and Lower Sassafras?
  - *Dawson County requires a 60 foot right-of-way and certain construction and grade requirements before they will accept a road into the county road system. The other roads do not meet these requirements. In addition, Cold Stream, Huckleberry and Falls Trail have property lines to the centerline of the road. All those property owners would have to deed right-of-way to Dawson County.*
- What about the maintenance of the other roads?
  - *They will remain part of the Sassafras Mountain Community.*
  - *Nothing prevents SMEPOA from soliciting voluntary contributions.*
  - *SMEPOA will continue to mow based on the level of voluntary contributions received.*
- Why should I support this effort, if my property is NOT on Upper or Lower Sassafras?
  - *Assisting with funding of the improvements to Upper and Lower Sassafras helps ensure that you will have quality and safe access to your property in the future.*
- What rights are property owners giving up?
  - *After Upper and Lower Sassafras are deeded over to Dawson County, all road maintenance, except for mowing, will be the responsibility of the county, not the property owners.*
- Will we have to move mailboxes out of the right-of-way?
  - *That will be up to Dawson County.*
- Will Dawson County raise our property tax rate based on the road maintenance? Or will we be on the same tax rate as the rest of Dawson County?
  - *Your taxes are now and will continue to be based on the assessed value of your home and the tax rate established by the county - county wide.*
- Will the maintenance (other than Mowing) for the all other roads still be supported by SMEPOA?
  - *To the extent that \$ can be raised on a voluntary basis in the community - yes, which is no different than where we find ourselves today.*

- Will DNR hunters have access to DNR property (where the roads met DNR property) if Upper and Lower Sassafras are maintained by the County?
  - *Board members have offered to set up a meeting with the DNR to discuss this issue.. If the vote is successful, they will set up a meeting with DNR and offer any concerned property owners the opportunity to participate in that discussion.*
  
- How will Dawson County benefit from taking over Upper and Lower Sassafras? Or why do they want to take over these roads? What is the county getting for this effort other than more liability?
  - *Current and past SMEPOA board members have been building a relationship with both Commissioners and key management employees of Dawson County for many years. The first sign of our efforts were realized several years ago when the 45,000 water tank (provided by Dawson County and installed by Pickens County) was installed at tower site on Monument Road. Move forward a few years and Dawson County approached Pickens County and us and said that they had a fire truck and tender (small water tanker) that they would like to have located on the mountain if we and Pickens County could provide a fire station. Wildcat Communities (our 7 community organization promoting FireWise) worked with Pickens County to find a site and share the cost of building a suitable fire station. We were able to secure a long term "free lease" on the tower site near the water tank, and raised the \$ necessary to co-fund the construction of the fire station - now known as Dawson County Fire Station - Number 8. The result this year has been a recent improvement in your fire ISO rating and a substantial reduction in your fire insurance cost. All this to say that we have worked hard to develop good working relationships with both Counties and they are now both willing and able to help us further improve services for this end of each county. Couple that with SMEPOA's efforts over the years to improve our roads, and you have local governments appreciating citizens working together with government to address the needs of the community. We approached Dawson County and asked them under what terms and conditions they would be willing take over Upper and Lower Sassafras. After an inspection of our roads they presented us the proposal that is the question before this community today.*