

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
SPECIAL MEETING OF JUNE 17, 2025.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Special Meeting on June 17, 2025, in the First Floor Conference Room at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 12:30 p.m. to hold interviews for Boards and Commissions.

Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Parker Sloan; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball.

Absent: Vice-Chair Moore and Commissioner Wells.

The following applicants were interviewed for the Affordable Housing Committee and Woodfin Water District Board of Trustees:

Affordable Housing: Cassidy Moore; Reginald Jones; Jennifer Hampton; Joe Decredico; Joel Henderson, Marty Benson; Meaghan Austin; Tatyana Edwards.

Woodfin Water District Board of Trustees: Hannah Rice and Adam Carr.

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
BRIEFING MEETING OF JUNE 17, 2025.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Briefing Meeting on June 17, 2025, in the Commission Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Vice-Chair Moore; Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Parker Sloan; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball.

Absent: Commissioner Terri Wells.

The following items were reviewed.

Helene Update

Dane Pedersen provided an update on debris removal. He explained that the Right of Way Debris Removal mission is complete; with a total of 1,557,232 total cubic yards for the mission and 151,198 Tons, 6,530 loads of Soil/Sediment/Silt. He further explained that the Private and Commercial Debris (PPDR) mission has been extended until August 1, 2025, and that there are 5,292 active applications received. Pedersen requested that the community help the County with this debris removal task by refraining from placing additional debris in the right of way, including private contractors and volunteers that may be assisting with property clean up. This debris is no longer eligible for removal and enforcement of illegal dumping fines may be necessary in the future. Ryan Cole provided an update on the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). He explained that to this date, a total 337 applications have been received and 9 interests. Cole provided the HMGP acquisitions project timeline. Matt Evans provided an update on current Helene spending. He explained that ~\$24M in spending as of today, June 17, 2025. The County is pursuing FEMA Public Assistance for Emergency and Permanent Work and Pursuing Insurance for Permanent Work. Jonathon Jones provided an update on Housing. He explained the FEMA temporary unit program and that 74 FEMA temporary units have been placed (manufactured homes and travel trailers). These units are installed under emergency housing temporary permits and that 50 FEMA temporary units remain occupied: (11 private sites, 39 parks). He also covered the new RenewNC Single-Family Housing Program and explained that \$860,734,000 has been designated for owner-occupied Helene-related home repairs under North Carolina's CDBG-DR Action Plan. The North Carolina Department of Commerce Department is administering the program across 29 Helene-impacted counties (no direct county role). He explained that the application process opened yesterday and that eligible community members can apply online: <https://www.RenewNC.org/>. Taylor Jones provided an update on the Buncombe County State of Emergency (SOE). He explained that the SOE was originally declared on September 25, 2024, and extended on September 29, 2024. The County activated the County Emergency Operations Center which was deactivated on June 4, 2025. Jones explained that staff is requested to deactivate the Buncombe County SOE to align with the State on June 30, 2025, at the regular meeting today, June 17, 2025. Rafael Baptista provided an update on the landslide pilot in Buncombe County. He explained that complex slides are large slide that impacts at least two parcels with residential structures and will require substantial work across multiple private properties. He explained that there are Two distinct projects to each landslide. Project 1: Engineering and Design Study and Project 2: Based on

engineering and design study, begin construction of stabilization solution. He then provided a detailed process for the pilot at the Grovemont Slide.

Southside Healing Space

Dr. Noreal Armstrong provided an update on the Southside Healing Space. She explained that the Opioid Settlement for FY24-26 has a dual approach: 1) prioritize life-saving and harm reducing measures today; and 2) invest in prevention and longer-term planning to address root causes of substance abuse. She noted that NC reported a 22% increase in overdose deaths. The Fatal Overdose Emergency Response Team was created with the objectives to: 1) Increase points of access to connection, building relationships, meeting people where they are.; 2) Increase awareness and education to address the harms of stigma and community resources; and 3) Increase education, awareness, and technical support to decrease barriers to the intake process and access to MOUD through provider agencies. There is currently a Hope and Healing Campaign with enhanced video and audio advertising to communicate stories of substance use disorder and recovery. The Dogwood Health Trust Grant awarded \$510,000 for 2 years for Southside Healing Space. Funds will be used to staff and build a community located place for individuals to seek support; combat negative stereotypes and connect individuals and families to treatment providers. The Southside Healing Space will have peer support, psychoeducation and wellness activities and access to local support resources. The soft opening is on June 24 Brown Temple CME Church. The Grand opening will be later this summer.

Helene Recovery Plan Update

Jeremiah LeRoy provided an update on the Helene Recovery Plan. He provided background information that included the importance and approach of the plan which guides to help a community rebuild and recover after a major disaster. He explained that the County issued Envision Buncombe a survey to the community regarding planning recovery, building resilience and creating a better Buncombe. The survey was open from April 10-May 31, 2025, and had 28 in-person events. There was 2,622 survey response that included representation from every area of the County. Jeremiah explained the community survey results:

Focus Area	Recovery Ranking
Community Health	1
Public Safety	2
Economic Development	3
Education	4
Energy & Environment	5
Growth & Development	6

QUALITATIVE ANSWER TRENDS

- **Need for Smart Recovery:** Calls for sustainable, climate-resilient rebuilding.
- **Equity in Recovery:** Prioritization of vulnerable populations, especially low-income households and rural communities.
- **Speed of Recovery:** Desire to increase the pace of aid from governments.
- **Resilient Infrastructure and Housing:** Emphasis on building for the future, not just restoring the past.

Additionally, he named the priorities by Recovery Support Function and then listed the Recovery categories with the percentage of the survey that respondents who selected that category as one of their top 10 recovery priorities, as seen below:

1. Investing in infrastructure: water, roads, bridges, telecommunications – 74%
2. Disaster preparedness and resiliency investments – 55%
3. Wildfire prevention – 53%
4. Floodplain management – 49%
5. Restoring streambanks – 48%
6. Rebuilding parks – 47%
7. Preserving flood-prone property from development – 46%
8. Landslide stabilization – 46%
9. Building more affordable housing – 45%
10. Funding to promote food security in food deserts or vulnerable areas in the community – 45%

Jeremiah asked the Board for feedback and their first impression of these survey results. Chair Edwards noted that she was surprised that economic development did not make the list given current unemployment rates. Commissioner Sloan noted that it's important to build back parks, so they are awesome and resilient for future disasters and to find the balance between building back swiftly to meet demands, but also in a productive way to ensure the project is done right. Commissioner Wells noted that this is reflective to what she is hearing in community; however, she is hearing more about food security now.

Jeremiah reviewed the next steps and timeline for completion, noting that a draft plan will be reviewed by the Board at an upcoming Briefing, followed by open public comment with the goal of adopting the plan in November.

Closed Session

Curt Euler, Interim County Attorney, read the motion to go into closed session for the following reasons:

1. To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged to receive legal advice regarding Executive Orders 14151, 14173, and 14287. There will be no formal action taken at this time. The statutory authority is contained in G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3).
- 2 To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease. The statutory authority is contained in G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5).

Commissioner Whitesides made the motion to go into closed session for the reasons stated. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 17, 2025.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Regular Meeting on June 17, 2025, in the Commission Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Vice-Chair Moore; Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Parker Sloan; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball.

Absent: Commissioner Jennifer Horton

Chair Edwards opened the meeting and provided opening remarks.

Consent

1. Approval of the June 3 combined Briefing and Regular meeting minutes
2. Approval of Amendment to State Cashflow Loan Agreement Round 1
3. Resolution Approving Pyrotechnic Experts for Firework Displays
4. Resolution Terminating the Proclamation of a State of Emergency for Buncombe County
5. Resolution Authorizing Application for the Green Growth Toolbox Grant to Support the Swannanoa Small Area and Resilience Plan

Commissioner Whitesides made the motion to approve the agenda as presented with the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Dr. Jackson thanked Board for the diligence in approving the Fiscal Year 26 budget.

Talia Wilson provided information about the MANNA food bank Healthy Opportunities Pilot and requested that the Board of Commissioners send a letter to the NC General Assembly in support of retaining the program.

New Business

Consideration of the Ferry Road Memorandum of Understanding with Urban Atlantic

E.B. Odderstol provided an update on the Ferry Road project. She explained that from May 2024 to September 2024, the School of Government's Development Finance Initiative (DFI) and Buncombe County conducted a solicitation for developer proposals to find a private development partner for the Ferry Road Community Development project. After reviewing proposals and conducting interviews with selected developers, County staff recommend Urban Atlantic as the development partner for the project.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to authorize the County Manager to enter negotiations with Urban Atlantic to develop a Memorandum of Understanding outlining each parties' responsibilities and establishing milestones which will ultimately support the execution of a Development Agreement. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2025

Consideration of the Tourism Development Authority Administrative Agreement

Melissa Moore, Finance Director, provided background information. She explained Per State law, Buncombe County is responsible for providing certain services to the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) related to collection, distribution, and fiscal oversight of occupancy tax revenues. The administrative agreement clarifies the terms of these statutory services and compensation to be received by the County. Per the proposed agreement, the County will continue to receive 5% of the gross occupancy tax collected each year; this is the maximum amount presently allowed by State law.

Commissioner Wells made the motion to authorize the County Manager to execute the administrative agreement with the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority. Commissioner Whitesides seconded the motion, and it passed 6-1 with Commissioner Sloan voting no.

Appointment of County Attorney

Karen Marshall, Interim Human Resources Director, provided background information. She explained that Curtis Euler has practiced law in Buncombe County since 2000. He has been the Senior Attorney II for Buncombe County Government since July 2017. Prior to that, he worked as an Assistant County Attorney for five and a half years and was an Assistant City Attorney at the City of Asheville for nine years. Mr. Euler has a Juris Doctor degree from Washington and Lee University and that his skills and experience make him the best candidate for the County Attorney position.

Vice-Chair Moore made the motion to appoint Curt Euler as County Attorney. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wells and carried unanimously.

State Disaster Cashflow Loan - Round 2

Melissa Moore, Finance Director, provided background information. She explained that on May 12, 2025, the State Treasurer's Office announced the second round of cashflow loans to support disaster recovery efforts related to Tropical Storm Helene. County staff have applied to the State for funding consideration up to \$10 million as of June 6, the deadline to apply for Round 2 loan consideration. Approximately half of the State's \$100 million disaster cashflow loan appropriation was distributed during Round 1 funding. It is anticipated that the remaining \$50 million will be distributed during Round 2, based on applications received by the State by June 6 and the most recent lists of public assistance projects which have been submitted to the State. Local governments must execute a new loan agreement, promissory note, and other associated agreements with the State to participate in the second round of the cashflow loan program. The resolution considered today accepts the second round of loan funding from the State and authorizes the County Manager to execute necessary documents to participate in the loan program.

Commissioner Wells made the motion to accept State Cashflow Loan Round 2 funding in an amount not to exceed \$10 million and to approve the resolution authorizing the County

Manager to execute the necessary documents related to the loan agreement. Commissioner Sloan seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Consideration of the updated Investment Policy

Melissa Moore, Finance Director, provided background information. She explained that Buncombe County's Investment Policy was adopted on 5/19/2020. The County's investment advisory consultants, Valleyview Consulting, and the Finance team have recommended changes brought forward for approval. The changes make the language clearer, adds a Collateral Policy section, edits details within the Investment Type section, and adds stocks and cryptocurrencies to the list of prohibited investments. A crosswalk to track the changes has been included.

Commissioner Wells asked about section 3.9 and asked if this is impacting the County's current investments. She also asked about collateralization. Moore explained that it's the State backing up the invest, similar to the FDIC program.

Vice-Mayor Moore made the motion to approve the Investment Policy as presented. Commissioner Whitesides seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Budget Amendments for year-end Accounting Compliance

Sam Riddle, Budget Analyst, provided background information. He explained that to comply with State law and governmental accounting standards, Finance makes certain accounting adjustments at the end of each fiscal year related to multi-year subscription-based information technology arrangements (SBITAs) and long-term lease agreements. Accounting standards require the County to recognize expenditure and corresponding revenue for the present value of the payments we are contractually obligated to make over the life of the subscription or lease -- i.e., the subscription or lease's value today, based on future payments. All subscription or lease payments made in the current year under these agreements must also be reclassified and treated as debt service (principal and interest payments). Budget must be increased to ensure each functional area can cover this required accounting treatment, but no new dollars are required. These are net-zero transactions. The amendments are for the General Fund and Solid Waste Enterprise Fund.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to approve budget amendments as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitesides and carried unanimously.

Budget Amendments for Debt Activity

Sam Riddle, Budget Analyst, provided background information. He explained that over the past two fiscal years, the County has closed multiple debt transactions to secure long-term savings on existing debt. These transactions required payment of certain upfront costs to secure the savings. The costs include escrow contributions for payoff of existing debt, professional services, and payments to the Internal Revenue Service for compliance with local government debt regulations. These costs are offset by revenues from issuance of the debt (bond proceeds) and investment earnings.

Vice Chair Moore made the motion to approve budget amendments as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sloan and carried unanimously.

Budget Amendment to Pay Woodfin PDF Debt Service

Sam Riddle, Budget Analyst, provided background information. He explained that The PDF Debt Service was first approved in 2006 and established in 2008, by the Board of Commissioners, in conjunction with the Town of Woodfin to establish more development in Woodfin and Buncombe County, created a new financing district in the town limits. This unique district required the County to issue Project Development Bonds, or what we might call New Revenue Bonds, while the Town of Woodfin would be responsible for the public infrastructure of the development. Those bonds would be pledged against increases in the district's assessed valuation over time. Additionally, as Buncombe County sought the bonds, the County would ultimately be responsible for debt service. Included in the creation of this district was a financing plan, which was also approved by the Local Government Commission. Like all debt instruments, we pay debt service on this, with the Town of Woodfin contributing any revenue, they would receive from the increases in the assessed value of this district. In prior years, excess ad valorem revenues have allowed the County to more easily account for this cost. However, this year does not contain excess ad valorem revenues. This year's calculated transfer is \$507,984. Therefore, this budget amendment brings forward that amount as a transfer from the General Fund to the Project Development Financing (PDF) Woodfin Special Revenue Fund.

The Commissioners had several questions about the background and reasoning for the debt, including how many years there were left. Riddle said he was unsure of the number of years left, but that it was more than 10 years. Manager Pinder explained that in prior years the County had an excess tax collection that allowed the County to pay the debt without any adjustment. Due to budget shortfalls and constraints this year and the County did not collect that level of tax collections, the \$507,984 is owed and that this is the County's debt portion to pay. Pinder noted that this is one of the only Tax Increment Financing (TIF) in the state of North Carolina.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to approve the budget amendment as presented. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Board Appointments

Chair Edwards motioned to reappoint Himanshu Karvir to the Asheville Buncombe Tech Community College Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Moore and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Moore motioned to reappoint Savannah Lamb to the HHS board. The motion was seconded by Chair Edwards and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Sloan motioned to appoint Janet Burhoe-Jones to the Home and Community Block Grant Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitesides and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Moore motioned to reappoint Justice Roger and appoint David Goble, Terrence Threadwell and Samantha Randolph to the Library Advisory Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sloan.

Commissioner Sloan nominated Commissioner Ball to fill the vacant Commissioner seat on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC). Commissioner Moore seconded the nomination, and it was carried unanimously.

Commissioner Sloan motioned to reappoint Susan Dotson-Smith and Angela Garner to the JCPC. Moore seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

The Chair conducted a roll call vote for the two at large appointments to the Affordable Housing Subcommittee, noting that interviews were held earlier in the day. With the majority of votes, Joe DeCredico and Meaghan Austin were appointed.

The Chair conducted a roll call vote for the appointment of the Woodfin Water District Board of Trustees in which Hannah Rice was selected 4-2. Commissioner Moore made the motion to appoint Hannah Rice to fulfill the remaining term of Ms. Edgerton; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Wells and carried out unanimously.

Commissioners made closing statements, and the meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.