

**MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’
SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2025.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Special Meeting on March 4, 2025, to hold interviews for the Community Entertainment Facilities Commission in the Commission Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 2:45 p.m.

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

The following applicants were interviewed:

Ashlynn Freestone; John Delaloye; Corey Atkins; Mark Tishman; Jim Fulton; Samuel Schuster. Two applicants, Robert Owens and Meghan Noel were unable to attend the interview but requested to still be considered for appointment.

**MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’
BRIEFING MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2025.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Briefing Meeting on March 4, 2025, in the Commission Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3:30 p.m.

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

The following items were reviewed.

- [Helene Update](#)

Avril Pinder, County Manager introduced staff to provide the following updates. Stacey Wood gave an update on Recovery Resources; she explained that over 400 community members attended the four Buncombe Resources for Recovery Series and provided call center data. She said that there have been 1.7K (46.2%) calls for Private Property Debris Removal calls: and 1.8K calls regarding General debris questions. Kristy Smith, Solid Waste provided an update on debris. She explained that over 1 million cubic yards have been collected from the right of way in City of Asheville, unincorporated Buncombe County, and Town of Black Mountain and said that residents have been asked to place debris at right of way by March 1 for pickup during March. She also stated that 264 private property debris removal applications have self-reported demolition needs throughout the county and that Tetra-Tech is the consultant firm handling removal. Jonathon Jones, Community Development, provided an update on housing and case management; he explained that there are currently 468 Resident Households in FEMA TSA and that number continues to decrease as people exit from TSA. He explained that staff is coordinating with Tetra Tech to provide resources to TSA users regarding eligibility deadlines and resources. E.B. Odderstol provided an update on the Community Development Block

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Grant; she explained that CDBG-DR: grant funds appropriated by Congress and allocated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to rebuild disaster impacted areas and provide crucial seed money to start the long-term recovery process and that eligible activities: include: Housing, infrastructure, and economic revitalization. She explained the timeline and that the State and City Action Plans due to HUD April 15th, 2025.

- [Coxe Avenue Update](#)

Matt Card and Sarah Odio provided an update on 50-52 Coxe Avenue and explained that this project started in 2022 with a County partnership with DFI to conduct an Affordable Housing Feasibility Analysis. He then explained the solicitation process and staff's recommendation to move forward with Harmony Housing, based out of Raleigh, because they are highly qualified, have relevant experience, and the ability to deliver in a timely manner. He explained that this project is for 206 new units that are 100% affordable at 80% AMI. The Estimated Total Project Cost is \$74.5 million and noted that the County commitment is \$9.8 million, County ground leases property at nominal rate and finally that the developer qualifies for property tax exemption.

- [Reappraisal Planning and Update](#)

Eric Cregger, Interim Tax Assessor provided an update on the 2026 Reappraisal planning process. He explained that the Reappraisal 2025 was delayed on 10/15/2024 and that 70% of the reappraisal work was completed. The new Reappraisal date is set to 01/01/2026 and the County is currently pivoting temporarily to performing damage assessments and collecting data. He noted that over 5,500 real estate parcels affected and that 2025 real estate value notices related and unrelated to Helene will be in the mail to residents next week. Cregger explained the various recommendations from the ADHOC Reappraisal Committee, Kevin Keene Reappraisal Equity Study, and the county appraisal team. He summarized that these recommendations fall into outreach and education and improvements in data quality and highlighted the various improvements that will be implemented for the upcoming Reappraisal. He stated that there is an RFP to work with a Reappraisal Consultant to help with these goals. To close he have the 2025-26 timeline.

- [Front-facing Department Offices Move to 35 Woodfin](#)

Scott Metcalf, provided background on the Comprehensive Facilities Plan which was conducted in 2020 by Clark Patterson & Lee. The Facilities Plan that was adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 15th, 2021 with the goals of conducting building conditions assessments; establish a 15-year Plan for scheduled maintenance and capital improvements; Conduct space management assessments; and identify opportunities to combine operations, increase building utilization, and reduce costs. Metcalf further explained that the County partnered with UNC School of Government Development Finance Initiative (DFI) to review County-owned sites to determine suitability for Affordable Housing Development as facilities planning was underway and that the downtown sites currently in active use considered in the process included: • 35 Woodfin (Family Justice Center) • 46 Valley Street (Planning/Permits Inspections/Parks & Recreation) • Coxe Avenue (various parcels; County Storage, leased parking, etc.). Metcalf provided an update on the projects that have already been completed and then updated the 35 Woodfin project planning and process. He explained that the following County Departments would be moving to the newly renovated 35 Woodfin: Family Justice

Center, Permits, Planning, Air Quality, Environmental Health, Tax Assessment, Tax Collection, Register of Deeds, ID Bureau, and Board of Elections in the coming months. He then provided updates on 182 College Street, where Tax Collections & Assessment would be moving to. He then provided a timeline for tentative moving of the departments.

**MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’
REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2025.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Regular Meeting on March 4, 2025, in the Commission Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 5:00 p.m.

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

Consent Agenda

1. [Approval of the February 18, 2025 combined Briefing and Regular Meeting Minutes](#)
2. [Approval of the January 2025 Tax Collection Report](#)
3. [Approval of Construction Manager at Risk Contract for the Asheville High School Arts Building HVAC Project](#)
4. [Resolution Awarding a Service Firearm to a Retiring Deputy of the Buncombe County Sheriff’s Office](#)

Commissioner Moore made a motion to add an appointment to the Vaya Board under Board Appointments on the agenda. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to approve the Consent agenda with the amendment. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Susan Schiemer – Chair of the Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee, reiterated her support for maintaining funding for the Buncombe County Supplemental Aging Fund in the FY26 budget. She emphasized the importance of these funds, which support services for seniors, helping them age in place and recover from the storm's impact. Susan urged the County Commissioners to consider the needs of the county's older residents, who make up 29% of the population, when making budget decisions.

Laura Tompkins – a parent and volunteer with the AC Reynolds PTSA, urged the County Commission to prioritize funding for schools, emphasizing that recent grant applications have shifted toward basic supplies due to financial strain. She called for the reinstatement of \$3.8 million to the Buncombe County Schools operating budget, stressing that adequate funding is essential for supporting students' education, closing achievement gaps, and meeting the commission's stated goals for a thriving community.

Mary Morgaine Squire – representing members of the Beach Community in District 2, requested the County Commission's help in restoring the Beach Community Center's governance. She highlighted that the center, a county-owned facility, has been under the control of an unelected

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individual for 20 years, undermining its democratic processes and excluding many community members.

Christine Aiken – Vice President of Student Advocacy for the AC Reynolds High School PTSA, expressed concern about the \$3.8 million cut to the school's operating budget. She called for greater transparency regarding Article 39 funding and urged the County Commission to reaffirm its support for schools, stressing the importance of maintaining public trust in decisions related to education funding. Christine acknowledged the challenges in budget decisions but asked for transparency and for the Board to support schools.

Hollie Johnson –expressed pride in living in Buncombe County and praised the integrity of its election services. However, she raised concerns about a planned move and the lack of communication between the County Commission and the Board of Elections, noting discrepancies in the information she receives from both parties. Holly urged the Commission to work with the Board of Elections to resolve the issue and ensure the continued effectiveness of the county's election services.

LC Clemmons – volunteer with the Swannanoa Grassroots Alliance, expressed gratitude for the inclusion of the small area plan, noting its importance to the community. She raised concerns about permit fees being charged to financially impacted residents, urging the Commission to find ways to alleviate this burden. Additionally, they requested that the county continue its roadside debris removal efforts as Swannanoa works through ongoing recovery and building demolitions

Presentations

1. [School Resource Officer Proclamation](#)

Commissioner Moore read the Proclamation to Captain Summey from the District 1 School Resource Officer. Captain Summey thanked the Board and acknowledged the work that School Resource Officers do.

2. [Ag Awareness Proclamation](#)

Commissioner Wells read the Proclamation to Jackie Gilibisie and the students present from FAA. Jackie thanked the Board and the support provided. The students provided the Commissioners with a bag of local goods.

3. [Continuum of Care Update](#)

Lacy Hoyle, Homelessness Program Manager provided an update on the Continuum of Care (CoC). She explained that the Point in Time (PIT) Count; Code Purple; CoC board activity; and the Within Reach report. Hoyle explained that the National Alliance to End Homelessness was engaged by the City of Asheville in partnership with Buncombe County and with funding support from Dogwood Health Trust, to identify needs and develop the Within Reach Report. The report includes recommendations to guide homelessness work within Buncombe County and the City of Asheville including 5 strategies and 112 action steps. Currently, the Lead Agency Staff (City of Asheville) and HUD TA will develop initial draft for presentation to Board. The Board will then assign committee to oversee and work on action plan once adopted.



Public Hearings

1. [2025 LOBS - Findings Resolution and Public Hearing](#)

Mason Scott, Assistant Finance Director, provided the background information. He explained that the County intends to issue Limited Obligation Bonds (LOBs) in an amount not to exceed \$70 million to refinance the remaining debt related to bonds issued in 2015. The proposed resolution authorizes the County Manager and Finance Director to carry out this financing transaction, to make certain application to the Local Government Commission concerning the debt, and to retain certain professional organizations to serve in various capacities to complete this debt transaction.

Chair Edwards opened the Public Hearing at 5:59 p.m. There were no public comments received. The Public Hearing was closed at 5:59 p.m.

Commissioner Whitesides made a motion to approve the LOBS 2025 Findings Resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried unanimously.

New Business

1. [Resolution for FY25 Vehicles Debt Issuance Reimbursement](#)

Mason Scott, Assistance Finance Director provided background information. He explained that the reimbursement resolution designates the Finance Director to declare on behalf of the Board of Commissioners their official intent to reimburse expenditures with proceeds of debt. In this case, the County anticipates spending up to \$4 million out of operating funds, then reimbursing the County from issuance of an installment financing. He explained that per the IRS regulations, counties must adopt a Reimbursement Resolution if they intend to spend currently available funds on capital projects or acquisitions that will be financed by the later issuance of certain types of debt. This allows the County to proceed with the purchase of these vehicles and related equipment, then use debt proceeds later in the fiscal year to pay ourselves back. This is possible if a County has sufficient fund balance to cash flow the purchases, then reimburse county operating funds when the debt is issued.

Commissioner Moore made the motion to approve the reimbursement resolution for debt financing vehicles and related equipment during fiscal year 2025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitesides and carried unanimously.

2. [Resolution to Accept North Carolina Cashflow Loan and Authorize Execution of Associated Agreements](#)

Melissa Moore, Finance Director provided background information. She explained that the State of North Carolina has authorized and funded a local government cashflow loan program to support disaster response activities related to Hurricane Helene. The loans are zero-interest with repayment required between one and five years following loan initiation. Buncombe County anticipates receiving \$8.45 million through the first round of loan allocations based on projects submitted to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for public assistance as of February 14, 2025. The State has indicated the possibility of multiple rounds of cashflow loan support. Local governments must execute a loan agreement, promissory note, and other associated

agreements with the State to participate in the cashflow loan program. The resolution considered today accepts the first round of loan funding from the State and authorizes the County Manager to execute necessary documents to participate in the loan program.

Commissioner Sloan asked what would happen if the State changed direction. Moore explained that forgiveness would only be given on items that were already approved by FEMA and could not be paid by another funding source. The Loan is for disaster activities that the County has already taken.

Commissioner Whitesides made the motion to approve Buncombe County entering a cashflow loan agreement with the State of North Carolina not to exceed \$8.45 million and to authorize the County Manager to execute the necessary associated documents. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ball and carried unanimously.

3. [Approval of the Legislative Agenda for 2025](#)

Tim Love, Assistant Manager and Whitney Smith with Governmental Relations Firm, Ward and Smith provided background information. Whitney participated virtually and walked through the proposed Legislative Agenda. She explained that the Legislative Agenda includes appropriations and policy priorities that will be pursued during the 2025 Biennium.

Top priorities included: Local Government Recovery and Stabilization Grants; Permanent Housing Solutions for Displaced People; Additional Support for Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program Administration and Management.

Policy priorities included: Legislation delaying the scheduled equalization of public service companies due to the deferred FY25 property revaluations; and Support Additional Resources for Mental and Behavioral Health including emergency responders, law enforcement and state employees.

Appropriations priorities included: Additional state funding for state employees, including K-12 and Community College education employee salaries; Business Recovery Loans/Grants; Water and System Expansion and Redundancy; State funding for emergency response infrastructure, equipment and vehicles; and Reimbursement for Local School Consolidation Study Mandated by S.L. 2023-128.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to adopt the Legislative Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horton and carried unanimously.

Board Appointments

[March 4 Appointments](#)

- Interviews were held prior to the regular meeting for the Community Entertainment Facilities Commission. The Commissioners held a vote in which four members, the majority, voted to appoint Ashlynn Freestone to the Commission.
- Commissioner Wells made the motion to appoint Sandra Kilgore to the Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates. The motion was seconded to Commissioner Horton and carried unanimously.

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- Commissioner Moore made the motion to appoint Commissioner Sloan to the Commissioner seat (to replace Commissioner Horton) on the Vaya Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horton and carried unanimously.
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Closed Session

Curt Euler, Interim County Attorney provided the motion for the Board of Commissioners go into closed session for the following reason:

1. To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged and give instructions concerning the handling of a lawsuit in Federal District Court, Western District of Buncombe County et al v. HCA Healthcare Inc., et al, 1:22-cv-147-MR. There will be no formal action taken at this time. The statutory authority is contained in G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

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

Meeting adjourned: 6:34 p.m.