

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: July 15, 2026

SUBJECT: Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce Bylaws

PRESENTER: Natalia Santana-Pollard, Response & Recovery Director

ATTACHMENT: Yes
1. Proposed HNG Recovery Taskforce Bylaws

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners is requested to approve the bylaws for the newly chartered Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce. This Taskforce is an extension of the Community Partners Group that was instrumental in generating feedback on the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Plan.

The purpose of this Taskforce is to advise the Board of Commissioners and staff regarding the community's priorities for implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Plan and any other issues that the Board of Commissioners requests they take up for discussion. The attachment provides the proposed bylaws for the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

The Board is requested to approve the establishment of the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce and related bylaws.

Suggested Motion:

I move the Board approve the establishment of the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce and related bylaws.

HICKORY NUT GORGE RECOVERY TASKFORCE

CHARTER

The Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce shall assist and advise the Board of Commissioners on matters regarding long-term recovery and community resilience in the Hickory Nut Gorge. This may include community guidance and input, coordination, and collaboration to implement the recommendations outlined in the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Plan and such other matters as the Board of Commissioners deems appropriate.

BYLAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

- I. NAME: Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce (HNG Recovery Taskforce).
- II. CHARTER. On the 15th day of July, 2026, the Henderson County Board of Commissioners approved the revised charter for the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce (hereinafter referred to as "Taskforce") and subsequently appointed members to the Taskforce. The terms of the charter shall govern the activities of the Taskforce, and to the extent that these bylaws conflict with the charter, the terms of the charter shall control. This charter will expire two years from the adoption date unless renewed by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners.
- III. PURPOSE. The purpose of this Taskforce is to advise the Board of Commissioners and staff regarding the priorities for implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Plan and any other issues requested by the Board of Commissioners.
- IV. MEMBERSHIP
 - a. **Selection of Membership.** The Taskforce shall consist of 7 members. All appointments will be made by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners. Members will serve up to a 2-year term at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners. These members shall reflect the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of the citizens of Henderson County and shall have interest and knowledge of recovery in the Hickory Nut Gorge. Members may represent, but are not limited to, individuals who live, work, or attend school in the Hickory Nut Gorge.
 - b. **Duties of Members.** Duties of Taskforce will be assigned by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners. All members shall serve the Taskforce on a solely voluntary basis and shall receive no compensation for their service.
 - c. **Terms of Service.** The term of service shall be 2 years. Members may not serve for more than 2 consecutive terms.
 - d. **Ex-Officio Members.** A Commissioner may serve as non-voting Member of the Taskforce.
 - e. **Vacancies and Reasons for Dismissal.** All members serve at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners. Members may be dismissed for any reason without cause including but not limited to failure to attend meetings. Vacancies in the Taskforce

shall be filled by the Board of Commissioners at their earliest convenience. A vacancy of the Chair shall be filled by the Board of Commissioners. A vacancy in the Vice Chair shall be elected by a majority of the Taskforce at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

V. MEETINGS

- a. **Open-Meetings Law.** It is the public policy of North Carolina and Henderson County that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of this Taskforce be conducted openly. Except as allowed by N.C.G.S § 143-318.11 each meeting of the Taskforce shall be open to the public, and any person is entitled to attend such a meeting. The public's right to attend such meeting does not necessarily entitle the public to participate in the meeting.
- b. **Regularly Scheduled Meetings.** The Taskforce shall hold meetings on a quarterly basis on the third Tuesday of the corresponding months at 3:30pm in the 100 North King Street office building. A schedule of meetings shall be kept on file with the secretary of the Taskforce and the Clerk to the Henderson County Board of Commissioners. The Taskforce shall have the authority to change the schedule of regular meetings, and/or to change the date of a particular regularly scheduled meeting without the necessity of approval of the Board of Commissioners. If the Taskforce changes the schedule of regular meetings, the secretary shall forward a copy of the new schedule to the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners at least seven (7) days prior to the first meeting held pursuant to the new schedule. If a particular regularly scheduled meeting date is changed, the secretary shall comply with the notice provisions of the Special Meetings section below.
- c. **Special Meetings.** The Chair of the Taskforce or the majority of the members of the Taskforce may at any time call a special meeting of the Taskforce by signing a notice stating the time and place of the meeting and the subjects to be considered. Such notice must:
 - i. Be posted and advertised according to the rules for special meetings as utilized by the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners.
 - ii. Delivered to all members of the Taskforce at least 48 hours before the meeting.
 - iii. Only the business that is specified in the notice of the meeting may be transacted during a special meeting.
- d. **Public Input.** Public input may be allowed during Taskforce meetings or solicited via e-mail. All Taskforce meetings in which public input is allowed, each speaker shall have a 3-minute limit.
- e. **Attendance.** All members of the Taskforce are expected to attend the regular and/or special meetings of the Taskforce. Any member not able to attend must notify the secretary in advance of the meeting. Any member missing more than 25% of meetings in a calendar year will be subject to an appointment review by the Board of Commissioners.
- f. **Voting.**
 - i. **DUTY TO VOTE.** It is the duty of each member, including the chair, to vote unless otherwise excused. The Taskforce may excuse members from voting on any matter involving their own financial interest or official

- conduct or when a member has indicated an inability to be impartial.
- ii. **ABSTENTIONS.** Should a member fail to vote on any matter before the Taskforce, without having been excused from such vote, such abstention will count as an affirmative vote.
 - iii. **TIE VOTE.** Tie votes at meetings shall be broken by the vote of the Chairman or acting Chairman.

VI. OFFICERS

a. Required Officers

- i. **PRESIDING OFFICER.** The presiding officer of each meeting of the Taskforce shall be the Chair of the Taskforce. In situations where the chair is unavailable or unable to participate in the meeting or preside over any particular matter before the Taskforce, the vice-chair shall preside. In the event that neither the chair nor the vice-chair is available, the members of the Taskforce, by affirmative vote of the majority, may appoint an acting chair who shall have all powers of the chair while acting as presiding officer.
- ii. **SELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR.** The chair shall be selected by the Board of Commissioners. The vice-chair shall be elected by a majority vote of the Taskforce.
- iii. **POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR.** The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Taskforce but shall also have the right to engage in discussion and vote on any matter before the Taskforce unless otherwise excused. The Chair shall have the power to call a special meeting, rule on procedural matters during a meeting, call a brief recess of a meeting at any time, and adjourn a meeting in an emergency. At any other time, adjournment shall be by motion, duly approved. The Vice-Chair shall have all powers and perform all the duties of the chair in his or her absence.
- iv. **DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.** The staff person assigned to the Taskforce shall serve as the secretary of the Taskforce and shall perform the following:
 - 1. The Secretary shall ensure that all meetings of the Taskforce are properly noticed.
 - 2. The Secretary shall maintain the sunshine list which is a list of those persons or entities that have filed a written request indicating a desire to receive notice of all special meetings of the Taskforce.
 - 3. The Secretary shall take and record the actions of the Taskforce and draft minutes of the meetings accordingly. Minutes shall be sent to Taskforce members one week prior to their next regularly scheduled meeting. The Secretary shall also forward a copy of the minutes as they are approved to the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners.
 - 4. The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate list of members of the Taskforce, submitting to the Clerk to the Henderson County Board of Commissioners a quarterly attendance report for its members and notifying the Clerk to the Henderson County Board of Commissioners of any resignations of any of its

members, or any other change in membership of the Taskforce.

- b. **Schedule for Elections.** Elections shall take place annually at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the fiscal year as needed.
- c. **Sub-Committees.** Sub-committees shall be formed based on the discretion of the Taskforce or at the direction of the Board of Commissioners.

VII. RULES OF CONDUCT. This Taskforce shall follow Roberts' Rules of Order.

VIII. REPORTS.

- a. **Annual Report.** The Taskforce shall make a report to the Henderson County Board of Commissioners at least annually. This report must be submitted no later than July 1st of each year. The Taskforce shall also make reports to the Board of Commissioners as needed or as requested.
- b. **Public Records Law.** The Taskforce shall abide by North Carolina's Public Records Law N.C.G.S. Chapter 132.

IX. ACTION BY THE TASKFORCE.

- a. **Quorum.** A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. No action of the Taskforce may be taken at any meeting where less than a quorum is present. Once a quorum has been established, it will not be defeated if members leave.
- b. **Projects.** The Taskforce may recommend projects to the Board of Commissioners for their consideration and shall take any direction requested by the Board.
- c. **Motions.** Action of the Taskforce may be taken upon a motion made by any member, including the Chair. A motion shall be adopted if approved by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and not excused, after full discussion of the motion by the members.
- d. **Minutes.** Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the Taskforce. The Secretary of the Taskforce shall present such minutes to the Taskforce for approval. Minutes of the meetings of the Taskforce shall be public records. The Secretary shall be responsible for sending a copy of all approved minutes to the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners.
- e. **Staff Support.** County Staff shall be assigned to the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Taskforce, acting as the liaison between the Taskforce, County Departments, and the Board of Commissioners and shall have the charge of correspondence, minutes, notifying members of meetings and other information.

X. AMENDMENTS. The Taskforce may amend these bylaws by action of the Taskforce; provided however, that amendments shall not be effective until they are approved by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners.

Approved by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners on this the 15th day of July 2026.

William Lapsley
Chair, Henderson County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Denisa Lauffer
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners