

August 3, 2026

MINUTES

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF HENDERSON**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2026**

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a regularly scheduled meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Historic Courthouse on Main Street, Hendersonville.

Present were: Chairman William Lapsley, Vice-Chair J. Michael Edney, Commissioner Rebecca McCall, Commissioner Sheila Franklin, Commissioner Jay Egolf, County Manager John Mitchell, Assistant County Manager Chris Todd, Public Safety Director Jimmy Brissie, Financial Services Director Samantha Reynolds, County Attorney Russ Burrell, and Clerk to the Board Denisa Lauffer.

Also present were: Budget Manager Sonya Flynn, Cooperative Extension Director Dr. Terry Kelley, Director of Public Health David Jenkins, Infrastructure Manager Mike McKinney, Parks and Recreation Director Bruce Gilliam, Social Services Director Lorie Horne, Deputy DSS Director Debbie Dunn, County Engineer Marcus Jones, Director of Human Resources Karen Ensley, Tax Assessor Kevin Hensley, Tax Collector Luke Small, Strategic Behavioral Health Director Jodi Grabowski, Sheriff Lowell Griffin, Social Media Coordinator Tiffany Lucey, and Finance Director Randal Cox. Deputies Matt Covil and Jesse Blankenship provided security.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Commissioner Lapsley called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

INVOCATION

John Mitchell provided the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Alyssa and Airley Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT (*Comments are the views and opinions of the speaker*)

1. Eva Ritchey addressed the Board regarding the condition of the Carl Sandburg Home dam and bridge. She stated that the property has deteriorated, expressed concern about the availability of funding for repairs, and requested that previously appropriated tax funds be used for those repairs.
2. Austin Rhodes urged the Board not to fund Flock cameras. He expressed concerns regarding privacy, questioned whether the reported arrests justified the estimated \$123,000 expenditure, and stated that some North Carolina counties have removed the cameras.
3. Tiernan Turner spoke in opposition to Flock cameras, describing them as an AI-powered mass surveillance system operated by a private company. He expressed concerns regarding potential misuse of the technology by law enforcement officers, including allegations of improper personal use.
4. Bruce Pryor, a fourth-generation farmer in Henderson County, stated that the County has lost approximately 8,000 acres of farmland over the past five years. He encouraged the Board to support farmland preservation efforts in Henderson County.
5. Stanley Livingston spoke in support of paving John Delk Road and installing a four-way stop intersection. He stated that approximately 40 homes are located on the road and that two school buses travel the route.

Approved:

6. Tom Matthews, a resident of John Delk Road, also spoke in support of paving John Delk Road. He further requested the installation of a four-way stop at the intersection of Lamb Mountain Road and Sugarloaf Road and encouraged the Board to take a proactive approach to addressing transportation safety concerns.
7. Billy Scott spoke in support of paving John Delk Road. He noted that three minor subdivisions are located along the road and expressed the need for the roadway to be improved.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA

Commissioner Lapsley moved to approve the agenda as presented. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Edney made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes

Draft minutes were presented for Board review and approval for the following meeting:

July 15, 2026

Motion: I move the Board approve the minutes from July 15, 2026.

Tax Collector's Report

The following report from the office of the Tax Collector was provided for the Board's information.

Please find outlined below collections information through July 22, 2026 for 2026 real and personal property bills created and in mailing process. Vehicles taxes are billed monthly by NC DMV.

Henderson County Annual Bills (Real and Personal Property):

2026 Beginning Charge:	\$114,758,297.60	
Discoveries & Imm. Irreg.:	\$167,169.14	
Releases & Refunds:	(\$35,369.88)	
Net Charge:	\$114,890,096.86	
Unpaid Taxes:	\$114,619,089.78	
Amount Collected:	\$271,007.08	

Unpaid
99.76%

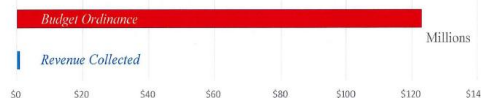
Paid
0.24%

Henderson County Registered Motor Vehicles (As Collected by NC DMV):

Net Charge:	\$488,211.34	
Unpaid Taxes:	\$1,985.42	99.59%
Amount Collected:	\$486,225.92	

Henderson County FY27 Budget Analysis:

Budget Ordinance		Revenue Collected	
Ad Valorem:	\$121,916,161.00	Ad Valorem:	\$757,233.00
Prior Years:	\$1,045,000.00	Prior Years:	\$103,049.09
Budget Total:	\$122,961,161.00	YTD Revenue:	\$860,282.09



2026.081 Pending Releases and Refunds

The pending releases and refunds were reviewed by the Assessor. As a result of that review, the Assessor's opinion was that the findings are in order. Supporting documentation is on file in the County Assessor's Office.

Approved:

These pending release and refund requests were submitted to the Henderson County Board of Commissioners for approval.

Type:	Amount:
Total Taxes Released from the Charge	\$ 3,496.36
Total Refunds as a Result of the Above Releases	\$ 188.27

Motion: I move the Board to approve the Combined Release/Refund Report as presented.

Notification of Vacancies

The Notification of Vacancies was provided for the Board's information. They will appear on the next agenda under "Nominations."

1. Asheville Regional Housing Consortium – 1 vac.
2. Henderson County Zoning Board of Adjustment – 1 vac.

Home & Community Care Block Grant Funds - FY 2026 FINAL Funding Reallocations

At the Board of Commissioners' meeting held on August 4, 2025, the FY 2026 County Funding Plan for the Home & Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) was approved. Following the close of the fiscal year on June 30, 2026, some area providers had overspent their funding in certain categories while others had not utilized all of their allocated funding.

In an effort to balance the usage of funds for this area of Western North Carolina and thereby prevent the return of unused funding to the State, some funds were reallocated as needed by the Land of Sky Regional Council's Area Agency on Aging (LOS). The June 2026 LOS Units of Service Report lists all of the providers and the final net budgeted service costs for the fiscal year. As such, the HCCBG Advisory Committee would like to recommend the reallocation of unspent funding as shown on the attached forms.

Motion: I move the Board authorize the Chairman to execute the HCCBG County Funding Plan County Services Summary and the County Funding Plan Provider Services Summaries for FY 2026 as presented.

Rejection of Bids - Courthouse Elevator Refurbishment Project

The Board was requested to reject the sole bid of \$747,000 for the elevator modernization project. This project has a \$600,000 budget.

Staff's recommendation was to reject the bid and rebid in the fall or explore options associated with the current JCAR Construction Project as later directed by the Board.

Motion: I move the Board reject the sole bid of \$747,000 for the Henderson County Courthouse Elevator Refurbishment Project.

Approved:

Sole Source – ABI Ball Drag

The Board was requested to approve the proposal and authorize staff to proceed with the procurement of (1) ABI Force Z23slt with options via the sole source exceptions as allowed under N.C.G.S 143-129 (e)(6). As a sole source contract with County government, approval of this agreement by the Board of Commissioners is required.

The sole proposal was received from ABI Attachments, Inc, who is the sole source provider for this product, for a total pre-tax price of \$39,374.51.

The funding for this purchase was approved in the FY2027 budget for capital equipment, in the amount of \$38,349. The budget overage of this purchase was remedied from savings from other approved capital purchases.

Motion: I move the Board accept the sole proposal from ABI Attachments, Inc and authorize Henderson County staff to proceed with the purchase of (1) ABI Force z23SLT with options in the pre-tax amount of \$39,374.51 using the sole source exception as allowed under N.C.G.S 143-129 (e)(6).

2026.082 Updates to the Fire Prevention Ordinance

The proposed revisions to the Henderson County Fire Prevention Ordinance are the result of a collaborative effort between the local fire departments and the Henderson County Fire Marshal's Office. Three changes are being recommended: first, the formal adoption of all appendices of the North Carolina Fire Code; second, the requirement for secure building access systems that allow responders to enter in the event of an emergency while minimizing property damage; and third, updated ordinance language that aligns permit terminology with the County's annual fee schedule.

Motion: I move that the Board authorize the adoption of the proposed changes to Chapter 78 Fire Prevention within the County Code of Ordinances.

Chronic Nuisance Property - Monteith

This item is back before the Board on the matter of chronic nuisance property, as that term is used in N.C. Gen. Stat. §153A-104.2.

- The Board was reminded of its previous finding, on July 16, 2025, that the property located at 0 Banner Farm Rd with geographical information system as PIN 9630751906, was on that date a chronic nuisance property, in that it had three times within the last year been cited as a nuisance property under the County's nuisance ordinance, found in Chapter 52 of the Henderson County Code.
- Since the Board's previous finding, the owner of the property was notified by certified mail and by posting on the property of the Board's finding.
- After the notification of the owner, County staff again visited the property, and found no improvement, such that the property still constitutes a nuisance under Chapter 52 of the County Code.
- Staff have obtained estimates on the cost of removing the items which make up the nuisance on the property. The lowest estimate obtained is for a cost of \$10,600.

Approved:

- The tax value of the property is \$161,500.

Motion: I move that the Board authorize staff to contract for the remediation of the nuisance on this property, obtain a lien on the property, and repayment for the cost of the remediation pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §153A-104.2.

Public Records Disposal Request – Animal Services

Staff requested the Board's approval to destroy the records identified in the Public Records Disposal Request and Destruction Log. This request was made in accordance with the County's Records Retention Policy and the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Records Retention and Disposition Schedule. The required retention periods for these records have expired, and they are eligible for destruction.

Motion: I move to approve the Public Records Disposal Request and Destruction Log submitted by the Animal Services Center in accordance with the County's Records Retention Policy.

Grant Application - Economic Development Agency FY 25 Disaster Supplemental Grant

Henderson County is pursuing grant funding for the Etowah Sewer System Wastewater Repair and Upgrades Project. The Economic Development Agency (EDA) FY 25 Disaster Supplemental Grant funds the rebuilding or repair of infrastructure damaged by Helene if that rebuilding or repair will also contribute to the area's economy. Staff requested the Board's permission to apply for \$9,742,400. An 80/20 match is required for this grant. Henderson County has successfully secured \$2,000,000 in matching funding from the Dogwood Health Trust. Henderson County is continuing to pursue grants for the remaining required \$435,600 match.

The EDA is accepting applications for this grant on a rolling schedule, but funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Motion: I move the Board approve the submission of an application for the EDA FY 25 Disaster Supplemental Grant for the Etowah Sewer System Wastewater Repair and Upgrades Project.

DISCUSSION

NCACC 2026 – 2027 Legislative Goals

The NCACC was soliciting input and proposals from all counties and has invited counties to submit their legislative proposals to the Association. Every two years, in the months preceding the long session of the North Carolina General Assembly, the NCACC begins a grassroots process to develop the Association's legislative goals, which guide its advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels of government. The process is designed to maximize participation by counties, build consensus among counties, and achieve a unified message on county priorities.

The submission deadline for 2026-2027 proposals is August 14, 2026. Proposed goals received prior to the deadline will be referred to the appropriate steering committee for review and consideration.

The NCACC Legislative Goals Conference will be held in November, and the NCACC legislative agenda will be finalized by early December, in advance of the 2027 short session.

Approved:

After discussion, the Board agreed to submit the following legislative goals:

- Seek legislation to allow fire department employees the ability to participate in the North Carolina Local Government Employee Retirement Systems (LGERS)
- Seek legislation to allow sheriff's deputies to return to employment following retirement while retaining retirement benefits
- Support and encourage North Carolina Schools, Military, and Detention Centers to purchase produce from North Carolina Farms for school meals
- Support an increase in North Carolina behavioral health facilities
- Repeal the downzoning restriction that was placed on county government.

General Obligation Bonds – Farmland Preservation

Samantha Reynolds presented information on the general obligation bonds process.

General Obligation Bonds

- Security – pledged by the unit's full faith and credit. (LOBS are pledged by collateral of the asset being constructed.) Least expensive type of debt.
- Formal process is initiated by LGC application – submitted and accepted on July 27th.
- **Bond Order** (adopted on July 27th) – authorizes the issuance of the bonds, stating the purpose for which the proceeds will be spent and the maximum amount of bonds that may be issued.
- **Sworn Statement of Debt** – filed to the Board clerk on July 27th, reflecting the County's net debt compared to assessed value. That value cannot statutorily exceed 8%. (Ours is .10%)
- **Statement of Disclosure** – filed with the Board clerk and LGC on July 27th, contains (1) estimate of the total interest to be paid, (2) estimate of the increase in property tax rates, (3) the amount of 2/3rds bonds capacity the unit has available for the current fiscal year. (\$0 for Henderson County)

Funding Plan Options – Tranches

Number of Tranches	1	3	5
Amount per Tranche	25,000,000	8,334,000	5,000,000
Closing Costs	250,000	750,000	1,250,000
Total Interest Cost	14,028,000	13,988,722	14,028,000
Maximum Annual Debt Service	2,586,000	2,676,506	2,452,400
1 cent value	2,572,070	2,572,070	2,572,070
Impact on Tax Rate	0.01	0.0092	0.0092
\$100k Value	\$ 10.10	\$ 9.20	\$ 9.20
Term	20 years	20 years	20 years
Interest Rate	5.344%	5.344%	5.344%

Notes: A single tranche will be included in the referendum language as the intended method. This provides the worst case scenario for impact to the tax rate.

Once borrowing for tranche is completed, the funds must be spent **within a few years** to avoid interest rate arbitrage.

Once bond referendum passes, funds must be borrowed within **7 years**.

Program – Method of Selection and Distribution

- Application Process to coincide with tranches (issuance of debt)
 - Guarantees confirmation of willingness to participate
 - Requires BOC Approval
- Applicants are ranked based on approved rubric
 - Scoring criteria will be required
 - Ranking will be determined by committee of independent citizens/staff
- Easements will be conveyed to the County
 - Held on behalf of the public
- While debt is outstanding, easements must be periodically reviewed to confirm use is for the purpose of the easement acquisition.
 - Enables borrowing to be tax-free

Information

- **A County shall not use public funds to endorse or oppose a referendum. GS 153A-456.**
- Public entities are restricted strictly to providing factual, neutral, and balanced educational information.
- Governments may publish factual FAQs, host informational meetings, outline proposed project lists, and detail estimated property tax impacts.
- Informational materials must remain objective. Using persuasive buzzwords, such as calling a project "critical" or "necessary" risks illegal advocacy.
- Active advocacy – either in support or opposition – must be driven by independent, private citizen groups or political action committees rather than public offices.

County Website

- Statement of Disclosure, as read at the July 27th BOC - **REQUIRED**
- FAQs:
 - What is a General Obligation Bond?
 - What is a Bond Referendum?
 - Why issue GO Bonds?
 - How are GO Bonds Issued?
 - What is the purpose of a bond referendum?
 - When are bond referenda held?
 - How do I vote?
 - How will the County communicate with residents about GO bond details, timelines?
 - What is the County's role in communicating about (and not advocating for) bonds?
 - Will the use of GO Bonds increase the tax rate?
 - How much with the County borrow?
 - What happens if the bonds don't pass?

Henderson
County Website
hendersoncountync.gov



RESIDENTS
BUSINESS
VISITORS

CURRENT INTERESTS

FY 2027 Adopted Budget

Clear Creek Sewer System Historical Timeline

2026 General Obligation Bond - Farmland Preservation

Elbowah Sewer System Customers

Judicial Center Addition & Renovation (LCAR)

Farmland Preservation

Farmland Preservation Task Force Meeting Summary & Minutes

2026 General Obligation Bond - Farmland Preservation

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a General Obligation Bond?

What is a Bond Referendum?

Why issue General Obligation Bonds?

How are General Obligation Bonds Issued?

Who do I contact if I have questions?

For questions regarding the General Obligations Bond, email gobond@hendersoncountync.gov

Approved:

Timeline

Chairman Lapsley noted the tight timeline for the referendum and emphasized that any delays or disruptions to the schedule could be critical. Commissioner McCall asked about restrictions on the use of the funds. Ms. Reynolds explained that the funds must be used for “open space” within the county, and Mr. Burrell noted that there is a list of allowable uses. Commissioner McCall also asked about the timeframe for expenditure of the funds. Ms. Reynolds stated that funds from each borrowing must be spent within three years.

- July 29th - Publish Notice of Special Called Meeting
- August 6th - Special Called Meeting – Board holds public hearing on the Bond Order, adopt Bond Order, and adopts Resolution setting a Special Bond Referendum
- August 7th – Clerk to the Board delivers certified copy of Resolution setting a Special Bond Referendum to HC Board of Elections.
- August 8th – County sends Notice to Joint Legislative Committee to Local Government
- By September 25th – Public first Notice of Special Bond Referendum in newspaper.
- By October 2nd – Public second Notice of Special Bond Referendum in newspaper.
- November 3rd – Referendum
- December 7th – Board adopts Resolution Certifying and Declaring Results of Special Bond Referendum
- December 17th – Publish Statement of Results in newspaper
- February 2nd – LGC approval of bond order

NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. Cemetery Advisory Committee – 1 vac.

Commissioner McCall made a motion to nominate David Hill for appointment to Seat #7. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

2. Environmental Advisory Committee – 2 vacs.

There were no nominations, and this item was carried to the next meeting.

3. Fire and Rescue Advisory Committee – 1 vac.

Commissioner Franklin made a motion to nominate Jim Player for appointment to Seat #2. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

4. Henderson County Zoning Board of Adjustment – 1 vac.

Commissioner Egolf made a motion to move existing ZBOA member Mark Casoria from Seat #7 to Seat #4. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Egolf made a motion to nominate Linda Pryor for appointment to Seat #7. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

5. Henderson County Rail – Trail Advisory Committee - 1 vac.

Chairman Lapsley made a motion to nominate Nancy McKinley for reappointment to Seat #2. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

6. Hendersonville Business Advisory Committee – 1 vac.

Commissioner McCall made a motion to nominate Lewis Boyd for appointment to Seat #1. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

7. Hendersonville City Zoning Board of Adjustment – 1 vac.

There were no nominations, and this item was carried to the next meeting.

8. Henderson County Historic Courthouse dba/Heritage Museum – 1 vac.

Commissioner McCall made a motion to nominate Lauren Maybin for appointment to Seat

Approved:

#9. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

9. Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Committee – 7 vacs.

Chairman Lapsley made a motion to nominate Ann Albright for appointment to Seat #1, John Anderson for appointment to Seat #2, Patrick Barnes for appointment to Seat #3, Jeffrey Boudreaux for appointment to Seat #4, Paul Brock for appointment to Seat #5, Mary Jaeger-Gale for appointment to Seat #6, and Harvey Nix II for appointment to Seat #7. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

10. Juvenile Crime Prevention Council – 2 vacs.

Chairman Lapsley made a motion to nominate Jennifer Miranda for appointment to Seat #8. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Franklin made a motion to nominate the Honorable Judge Monica Gillette for appointment to Seat #14. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

11. Mountain Area Workforce Development Board – 1 vac.

Chairman Lapsley made a motion to nominate Amanda McFarland for appointment to Seat #2. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

12. Nursing/Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee – 11 vacs.

There were no nominations, and this item was carried to the next meeting.

COMMISSIONER UPDATES:

Commissioner Edney noted the passing of Judge Tom Hicks and local real estate appraiser John Norman.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

The County Manager had no updates.

Vice-Chair Edney made the motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(3) & (a)(5). All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

ADJOURN

Denisa A. Lauffer, Clerk to the Board

William G. Lapsley, Chairman

Approved: