

**Henderson County**  
**Farmland Preservation Taskforce: April 14, 2025**

The Farmland Preservation Taskforce held a meeting on April 14, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the King Street Meeting Room located at 100 N. King Street.

Taskforce Member	Present	Absent
Commissioner Rebecca McCall, Chair	✓	
Commissioner Sheila Franklin, Chair	✓	
Jason Davis – Henderson County Planning Board	✓	
Danny McConnell – Soil & Water Conservation District	✓	
Gary Steiner – NC Cooperative Extension	✓	
Jimmy Cowan – NC Farm Bureau	✓	
Joffrey Merrill – AgHC	✓	
Randy Newman – Hendersonville Board of Realtors	✓	
Jason Edney – At large	✓	
Justin Patwin – At large	✓	
Linda Pryor – At large	✓	
Alan Ward – At large		✓
Danielle McCall – At large	✓	

**Also present:**

Chris Todd, Assistant County Manager  
 Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director  
 Liz Hanson, Planner I  
 April Hoyt, Henderson County Soil & Water  
 Jonathan Wallin, Henderson County Soil & Water  
 Dr. Terry Kelley, NC Cooperative Extension

*R = attended remotely*

Commissioner and Taskforce Chair Sheila Franklin called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

**Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance:**

Dr. Terry Kelley led the invocation and pledge after the meeting was called to order.

**Adjustment and Approval of Agenda:**

Taskforce member Randy Newman motioned to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Taskforce member Jason Edney seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public comment for this meeting.

**Adjustment and Approval of March 10, 2025, Meeting Minutes:**

Taskforce Chair Sheila Franklin noted that the date for the meeting minutes was incorrect. Taskforce member Danielle McCall motioned to approve the March 10, 2025, meeting minutes with the corrected date. Taskforce member Danny McConnell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Farmland Preservation Donation Fund Discussion**

The Taskforce discussed various ideas to solicit donation funds for the Farmland Preservation Program. One idea included the creation of a flyer with existing and future Farmland Preservation programs and efforts. The Taskforce discussed what important information should be included in the flyer, such as agricultural statistics and information on existing Farmland Preservation efforts, such as the Voluntary Agricultural District Program. The Taskforce also discussed the possibility of inserting an informational flyer in this year's property tax bills, in order to reach as many residents as possible and increase awareness of Farmland Preservation efforts in the County. Assistant County Manager, Chris Todd, shared that the County is planning to hire a Social Media coordinator, who could potentially assist in advertising the Farmland Preservation program(s). Staff is working to put together an informational flyer, as well as creating a webpage on the County website dedicated to the Farmland Preservation program and other preservation efforts.

### **Farmland Preservation Informational Meetings & VAD Expansion Discussion**

The Taskforce discussed the idea of hosting several informational meetings regarding future and existing Farmland Preservation Efforts, specifically focusing on expanding the Voluntary Agricultural District program and the Present-Use Value program. The Taskforce suggested presenting or having information available at several different agricultural events/meetings, such as Farm City Day, AgHC Listen and Learn, Mills River Day, and others.

### **House Bill 729 – Solar Farm Taxation Discussion**

Commissioner and Taskforce Chair Rebecca McCall requested staff to present information on House Bill 729; *an act to phase out the property tax exclusion for solar energy 2 electric systems*. This bill would gradually decrease the property tax exclusion for Solar Energy Electric Systems from 60% to 20% by 2028.

### **Staff Updates**

#### **AGZ Grant Interview**

Staff informed the Taskforce that they attended an interview with NC ADPTF staff for the Agricultural Growth Zone Grant. The interview presentation was led by April Hoyt, with additional Soil & Water staff, Planning staff, and Dr. Terry Kelley in attendance as well. Staff stated that the interview went well and grant awards should be announced in the Fall.

#### **Chapter 45 Amendments & Land Development Code Re-write**

Staff informed the Taskforce that Staff will be presenting the amendments to Chapter 45 – Farmland Preservation, to the Board of Commissioners at their April 16, 2025, meeting, for final approval and adoption. Staff also informed the Taskforce that they would be presenting the Agricultural Advisory Board bylaw amendments at the April 23, 2025, AAB meeting. Additionally, the Taskforce briefly discussed the County's Land Development Code re-write, and what agriculture-specific changes could/should be included.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next Taskforce meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 12, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the King Street Meeting Room.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 PM.

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Commissioner Rebecca McCall, Chair  
Commissioner Sheila Franklin, Chair  
Henderson County Farmland Preservation Taskforce