

**HENDERSON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
January 15, 2026, at 5:30 PM**

Planning Board Members Present:

Hunter Marks, Chair
Rick Livingston, Vice Chair
Jim Miller
Jared Ownbey
Linda Bradley
Jason Davis
Trey Ford
Bill Lapsley, BOC Liaison

Planning Board Members Not Present:

Harvey Nix
Gary Griffin

Staff Present:

Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director
Janna Bianculli, Asst. Planning Director

Meeting called to order: Mr. Hunter Marks called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Roll call was taken.

Informal Public Comment: The Planning Board heard from seven members of the public about the Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Plan. Five of these were members of the plan's advisory committee. There was overwhelming support for the plan, and speakers discussed the process to develop the plan, the community input, and meetings, and were ready to get the plan adopted and moving on to the next steps for their future in the gorge. Below is a list of comments that the public made:

- More funding needed for fire departments for current trail response
- Need to plan for growth, gorge is a special place environmentally, with recreation and river
- Need further study on river redevelopment after the plan is adopted
- It was noted that the plan option for the community club will be different
- Community engagement throughout the process
- Future monitoring stations on the streams are needed with action steps during storm events
- Wait time on buyout property and how that will be incorporated into the plan

Adjustment of Agenda: None.

November 20, 2025, Meeting Summary: The Planning Board reviewed the revised summary and approved the meeting summary.

Draft Hickory Nut Gorge Recovery Plan: Ms. Janna Bianculli and Ms. Autumn Radcliff stated that the Board of Commissioners directed staff to develop a recovery plan for the Hickory Nut Gorge area and selected a consultant to assist in drafting the plan so that it could be completed within six months. Staff provided an overview of the plan process that included a community survey and two community input sessions. The first community meeting was to receive guidance on what should be included in the plan, community comments, and received over 200 input points on activity maps. This helped develop the plan themes and create the draft recommendations. The second community meeting updated the community of the plan and process and participated prioritized the draft recommendations. The recommendations represented the communities' desires, and the plan identified funding sources, estimated the cost range for the projects, and named key partners for each recommendation. The consultant

also included some visual renderings for buyout property along river with public access for recreational purposes, and a rendering option for redevelopment of the Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Community Club. It was noted that the community had hired an architect to design the rebuild of the community club that is different from the rendering, but that is just to show an additional option, the decision would be that of the community club organization.

The plan was drafted and expresses the community's wishes. The community partners group, which was the advisory committee for the process, voted to recommend the plan. The Planning Board is being asked to make a recommendation on the plan. The Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing before adopting the plan. Next steps, funding and implementation will be up to the Board of Commissioners following adoption of the plan. It was noted that not all recommendations may be implemented.

The Board discussed the plan and asked several questions of staff. Following this discussion, Mr. Jim Miller made a motion to table the item until the March meeting to allow the Planning Board more time to review the plan. Mr. Rick Livingston seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Staff Updates: Commissioner William Lapsley provided the Planning Board with an overview of how the fire department funding is allocated and explained that the Board of Commissioners is entering the budget cycle and the fire departments can make a request if additional funding is needed, specifically in the gorge. Commissioner Lapsley noted that the Board of Commissioners may hold a special called meeting in the gorge in addition to the public hearing for the plan.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.