

MEETING MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room located in the Watauga County Community Recreation Center in Boone, North Carolina.

1. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Eggers called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. The following were present:

PRESENT: Braxton Eggers, Chairman
 Todd Castle, Vice-Chairman
 Emily Greene, Commissioner
 Tim Hodges, Commissioner
 Ronnie Marsh, Commissioner
 Nathan Miller, County Attorney
 Deron Geouque, County Manager

Vice-Chairman Castle offered the prayer and Commissioner Greene led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Eggers presented the February 17, 2026, regular and closed session meeting minutes.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to approve the February 17, 2026, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to approve the February 17, 2026, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Eggers called for additions or corrections to the March 3, 2026 agenda.

The County Manager requested to add Personnel Matters under closed session.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to approve the March 3, 2026, agenda with the requested addition.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following spoke during public comment:

1. Linda Byrd – spoke in support of the Commissioners defending the redistricting lawsuit.
2. David Henry - spoke on redistricting lawsuit.
3. Kate Cahou – spoke on redistricting lawsuit.
4. Misty Mayfield - spoke on redistricting lawsuit.
5. Alana Baird - spoke on redistricting lawsuit.
6. Tim Wilson - spoke in support of the Commissioners defending the redistricting lawsuit.
7. Rick Woods - spoke in support of the Commissioners defending the redistricting lawsuit.
8. Diane Nilan - spoke on redistricting lawsuit.

5. FY 2025 AUDIT PRESENTATION

Ms. Cindy Randolph with C. Randolph, CPA, PLLC presented the Fiscal Year 2025 County audit. The County's financial position remained strong.

The audit was presented for information only; and therefore, no action was required. However, due to strong fiscal management and the increase in the unassigned fund balance, staff recommended the Board commit \$2,220,989 to offset the expenses related to the transition of ambulance service from Watauga Medics to the County.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to commit \$2,220,989 to offset the expenses related to the transition of ambulance service from Watauga Medics to the County

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

6. LUCKY DOG VINTAGE MARKET – USE OF HUMAN SERVICES LOT

Trevor Shue, organizer of the Lucky Dog Vintage Market, has submitted a request to use the grassy area and parking lot at the Human Services Center for market events on select dates from March 2026 through September 2026. The proposed dates did not conflict with the ASU football and the Watauga County Farmers' Market schedules. The rate to be charged was \$200 per event; which was the same as last time.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve Mr. Shue's request to use the grassy area and parking lot at the Human Services Center for market events on select dates from March 2026 through September 2026.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

7. REQUESTING APPOINTMENT OF HOME & COMMUNITY CARE BLOCK GRANT (H&CCBG) ADVISORY COMMUNITY AND LEAD AGENCY

Each year the Board is required to appoint a lead agency and advisory committee to make recommendations on how to best expend the County's allocation from the Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) funds.

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, requested the Board to approve the Watauga County Project on Aging as the Lead Agency and the list of nominations for the Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee for FY 2027. Ms. Boitnotte further requested the Board to waive the first reading and appoint the members to the Advisory Board as presented.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to approve the Watauga County Project on Aging as the Lead Agency and waive the first reading and appoint the list of nominations for the Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee for FY 2027.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

8. EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS

A. Request to Purchase APX Consolettes

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director requested the Board approve the purchase of 2 Consolettes for the current 911 Center. Total cost was \$21,655 and is part of the 725G State contract for Motorola. Board approval is required to formally approve the purchase of the APX Consolettes with Motorola in the amount of \$21,655.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the purchase of the APX Consolettes with Motorola in the amount of \$21,655.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

B. Request to Purchase Uninterrupted Power Supply

Mr. Holt requested Board approval for the purchase of an additional UPS for the current 911 Center in the amount of \$26,919.35. The UPS will provide uninterrupted power to the radio equipment rack which currently was served by the generator only.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the purchase of an additional UPS for the current 911 Center in the amount of \$26,919.35.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

C. Request to Purchase PowerPro 2 Cot for Ambulance

Mr. Holt requested the Board approve the purchase for an additional PowerPro 2 Cot for the ambulance arriving from AEV/NWEV. Total cost was \$45,018.32 including the ProCare which covers all equipment at 100% warranty; including parts, labor, technician travel, battery replacement, and annual preventative maintenance for the service life of the equipment.

Board approval is required to formally approve the purchase of the PowerPro 2 Cot in the amount of \$45,018.32.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the purchase of the PowerPro 2 Cot in the amount of \$45,018.32.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

9. 2025 CARRY-FORWARD PURCHASE ORDERS

Mr. Deron Geouque, County Manager/Finance Director, presented the carry-forward purchase orders for 2025. Board action is required to approve the carry-forward purchase orders as presented.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to approve the carry-forward purchase orders as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

10. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Hardin Park School SUE (Level B) Survey

The Watauga County School System facility study inventoried all of the systems facilities. Hardin Park School has been identified for years as needing to be replaced. Discussions have determined the most cost-effective path forward would be to build on the existing site. In order to determine if the construction on the site is feasible; soil, boundary, and utility studies will need to be conducted. As part of that process, a contract for a Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) Level B survey which is used to identify and map underground utilities before excavation or construction is attached.

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-64.32, the Board must exempt the project from the Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) process, as the professional services fee was less than \$50,000.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to exempt the project from the Qualifications-Based Selection process pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-64.32,

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to award the contract to JMT for a Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) Level B survey in an amount not to exceed \$32,350.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

B. Field Lease with High Country Soccer Association

County Attorney Miller presented a field lease with High Country Soccer Association.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to approve the lease as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

D. Announcements

Budget Work Sessions were scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2026, beginning at 12:00 noon and Friday, May 8, 2026, beginning at 9:00 A.M.

11. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

There were no Commissioner comments.

12. BREAK

13. CLOSED SESSION

At 6:25 PM, Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to enter Closed Session pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) to discuss matters protected by attorney–client privilege, including Case No. 5:25-cv-157; and pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5) to consider matters related to the acquisition of real property and pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) personnel matters.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

At 8:29 PM, Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to resume the open meeting.

14. ADJOURN

At 8:30 PM, Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

Braxton Eggers, Chairman

ATTEST: Deron Geouque, County Manager