

**MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PRE-AGENDA MEETING**

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a pre-agenda meeting on Tuesday, August 2, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. in the County Board Room, Burke Services Building, 110 N. Green Street in Morganton, N.C. The meeting was streamed live on the County's YouTube channel, BurkeCountyNC, and it was broadcast on the local cable systems. The agenda, in its entirety, was posted to the County's website, www.burkenc.org, several days prior to the meeting as usual. Both Burke County and the state of North Carolina had previously declared a state of emergency which was ongoing as of this date due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Those present were:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Scott Mulwee, Chairman
Johnnie W. Carswell, Vice Chairman
Wayne F. Abele, Sr.
Jeffrey C. Brittain (Late)
Maynard M. Taylor

STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Steen, County Manager
Margaret Pierce, Deputy County Manager/Finance Director
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board

STAFF ABSENT: J.R. Simpson, II, County Attorney (Vacation)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mulwee called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended. Added a proclamation for Litter Sweep Week and removed a presentation from REASON (Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter).

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Maynard M. Taylor, Commissioner
AYES:	Scott Mulwee, Johnnie W. Carswell, Wayne F. Abele, Sr., and Maynard M. Taylor
ABSENT:	Jeffrey C. Brittain

PRESENTATIONS

BCCOC - PROCLAMATION FOR INAUGURAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S LITTER SWEEP WEEK

Tonia Stephenson, President, Burke Co. Chamber of Commerce, presented a request for the Board to approve a proclamation from the Chamber of Commerce declaring September 19-24, 2022, as "Inaugural Litter Sweep Week" in Burke County and encouraging all citizens to participate in this event to maintain the great beauty of our county.

Commissioner Brittain arrived at 3:05 p.m. and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

AS - PET OF THE MONTH (PLACE HOLDER)

Kaitlin Settlemyre, Animal Services Director, stated staff will present a dog and cat in need of its "forever" home at the regular meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

UNC HBR - PRESENTATION ON PROJECT FORWARD (PLACE HOLDER)

Chairman Mulwee reported, at the regular meeting, Kathy Bailey, President & CEO of UNC Health Blue Ridge, will present information on Project Forward.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

REASON - PRESENTATION OF REPORT ON ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RESULT: REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA.

BURKE RECOVERY - PROCLAMATION DECLARING SEPT. AS NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH IN BURKE COUNTY

Kim James, Executive Director of Burke Recovery, was unable to attend the meeting. On behalf of the organization, Vice Chairman Carswell presented a request to approve a proclamation proclaiming September as National Recovery Month in Burke County. He also highlighted some of the disturbing substance use statistics included in the proclamation.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

EMS - RECOGNITION OF RECEIVING THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION MISSION LIFELINE EMS GOLD PLUS AWARD

Nicole Hudson with EMS presented information related to Burke County EMS receiving the American Heart Association (AHA) Mission Lifeline EMS GOLD PLUS Award for the fifth time. This award is earned by providing state-of-the-art cardiac care over a 24-month period by meeting and exceeding the AHA's strict guidelines.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

COMM. DEV. - PRESENTATION ON THE NC FOOTHILLS EXPERIENCE WEBSITE

Alan Glines, Deputy Co. Manager/Planning Director, presented information on the new Foothills Experience website and stated Alison Adams from the WPCOG will make the presentation at the regular meeting.

Information from the agenda packet:

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments has completed a new interactive

website highlighting the many attractions found within the four-county area including Burke, Catawba, Caldwell and Alexander Counties. The website uses maps, photos, descriptions and drone footage of many activities, outdoor adventures, small businesses and places to eat and drink in the region. The tool is geared to help with workforce recruitment and retention since some job seekers may have limited exposure to our area. Local governments and businesses are encouraged to link the NC Foothills Experience site to their websites to share the information. The website is: www.expncfoothills.com.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

COMM. DEV. - WATERMILL ACCESS AREA - PROJECT UPDATE

Shane Prisby, Community Development Operations Manager, reported the Community Development Department has been working with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) to complete the upgrades to the boat launch at the Watermill Access Area. The project was initially funded through funding from Duke Energy as part of the Comprehensive Relicensing Agreement for the Catawba-Wateree Hydro Electric System. The project was further supplemented with funding from Burke County and WRC.

- **Comprehensive Relicensing Agreement** –The CRA is the agreement between Duke and Stakeholders for recreation projects and management along the Catawba-Wateree Hydro Project
- **CRA §10.27.4.3 Watermill Road Access Area** –In 2017, the County agreed to take on the responsibility of the CRA project and received \$70,200 in funding to complete the project
- **County Funding**– In 2018, The County partnered with Resource Institute to pursue a DEQ grant for the project. After an unsuccessful grant application, the County added additional funding to increase the match percentage. This brought the project funding total to \$84,200. The second application was ultimately unsuccessful.
- **Partnership with Wildlife Resources Commission** – In 2020, the County partnered with WRC for the engineering and construction of the project.

Permits Obtained

- **Section 404/NWP-36** – US Army Corps of Engineers
- **401 Permit** – NC Division of Water Resources
- **Trout Buffer Variance**– NC Division of Energy, Mineral and Land Resources – Land Quality
- **River Buffer Permit** – Town of Glen Alpine
- **Driveway Permit** – NC Department of Transportation
- **Floodplain Development Permit** – Town of Glen Alpine; required a No-Rise Flood study of project
- **Temporary Access Easement**– Canoe Creek Properties



Mr. Prisby further reported that pavement striping will occur soon and the installation of the street light will occur in the next few months. He also responded to questions from Commissioner Taylor regarding access and the number of parking spaces. He also reported on other access improvements planned for the Catawba River and complimented all the agencies that worked collaboratively and cooperatively to improve the Watermill Access. Chairman Mulwee expressed his desire to hold a ribbon cutting in the fall when the weather is cooler.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

TAX DEPT. - RELEASE REFUND REPORT FOR JULY 2022

John Bridgers, Tax Administrator, presented the Release and Refund Report for July 2022 as follows:

Tax System Refunds and Releases				
	Report Amount	Rebilled Amount	Net Release	Refund Amount
Releases (TR-304)	\$30,200.18	\$214,218.96	\$30,200.18	0.00

VTS Refunds Over \$100	
	Refund Amount
VTS Adjustments	\$187.17

*Note: The net loss amount is a result of the report amount minus the rebilled amount.

He also introduced Namrita Nelson, the new Property Valuation Manager, and she briefly reviewed her employment history. The Chairman welcomed her to the organization.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

TAX DEPT. - TAX COLLECTION REPORT FOR JULY 2022

John Bridgers, Tax Administrator, presented the Tax Collection Report for July 2022 as follows:

Category	Annual Budget	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	\$45,800,000.00	\$24,275,772.77	53.00%	\$21,524,227.23
Motor Vehicle Tax	\$6,000,000.00	\$568,688.19	9.48%	\$5,431,311.81
Current Year Taxes	\$51,800,000.00	\$24,844,460.96	47.96%	\$26,955,539.04
Delinquent Taxes	\$700,000.00	\$177,206.87	16.74%	\$582,796.13
Late List Penalty	\$315,000.00	\$34,319.57	10.19%	\$280,680.43

The Tax Levy is the total property tax value not including motor vehicles times the tax rate. This amount changes monthly with the addition of discoveries, other changes, or corrections,

and when Public Utility Values are added, typically during September.

Category	Tax Levy	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	\$47,412,371.13	\$24,275,772.77	51.20%	\$23,136,598.36

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

TAX DEPT. - ORDER TO COLLECT 2022 TAXES (PLACE HOLDER)

John Bridgers, Tax Administrator, reported General Statute 105-321 requires the Governing Body to order the Tax Collector to collect the taxes charged in the tax records. This includes current taxes and any delinquent taxes and associated charges for the previous 10 years. The amounts charged back from prior years are:

· County Taxes and other charges	\$1,828,304.74
· All other jurisdictions taxes and other charges	\$ 186,944.14
· Total amount	\$2,015,248.88

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Brittain, Mr. Bridgers advised that the reappraisal process is approximately 90% complete for residential neighborhoods and the contractor is working on the commercial properties. He anticipated having the Schedule of Values on the Board's agenda in the fall. In response to additional questions, he reported after completing approximately 30% of the residential properties and not finding enough value to justify the expense, the contract was adjusted to focus solely on the commercial properties.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

ITEMS FOR DECISION - NONE

REPORTS

WPCOG - PRESENTATION ON RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR NEW COUNTY MANAGER (PLACE HOLDER)

Chairman Mulwee reported, County Manager Steen retires at the end of the year, and at the regular meeting, Anthony Starr, Executive Director of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, will discuss the recruitment process for hiring a new county manager.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Chairman Mulwee asked Board members to submit their reports to the Clerk as soon as possible for inclusion in the agenda packet. He reminded Board members that the NCACC Annual Conference is in Concord, NC, Aug. 11-13, and that the Waldensian Festival in Valdese is Aug. 12-13, 2023. He asked citizens to pick-up roadside litter and to cover their loads when going to the landfill or to one of the County's waste and recycling convenience centers. He encouraged citizens to foster or adopt a pet from Animal Services and to spay or neuter their pets. Lastly, he extended condolences to Commissioner Brittain's family for the death of his brother-in-law, Jesse Howard Crawley, and he announced the times of the services.

Due to time constraints and meetings being held outside Burke County, Vice Chairman Carswell announced that he resigned from the Friends of the Fonta Flora State Trail, effective immediately. However, Shane Prisby, Community Development Operations Manager, is also on that board and can represent the County. He also commented on the lack of project funding from the City of Morganton and Buncombe County.

FINANCE – HRC ROOF MEMBRANE REPLACEMENT CONTRACT - \$98,735

Brian Niefert, Senior Fiscal Analyst, advised that the winning bid for replacement of the roof membrane at the Human Resource Center came in at \$98,735, which means that the County Manager cannot execute the related contract because it exceeds his authority; therefore, Board action will be required. He asked to have this item added to the agenda and advised that the project was carried over from a prior budget year and it is within the budgeted amount. After a short discussion, the Board was in favor of placing the item on the consent agenda for the regular meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 16, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.

ADJOURN

Motion: To adjourn at 3:46 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Maynard M. Taylor, Commissioner

AYES: Scott Mulwee, Johnnie W. Carswell, Wayne F. Abele, Sr., Jeffrey C. Brittain and Maynard M. Taylor

Approved this 18th day of April 2023.

Scott Mulwee, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board