

TENTATIVE AGENDA AND MEETING NOTICE

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 5:30 PM



Watauga County Administration
Building, Commissioners' Board Room

TIME	#	TOPIC	PRESENTER	PAGE
5:30	1	Call Regular Meeting to Order		
	2	Approval of Minutes - December 17, 2024, Regular Meeting Correction - April 21, 2026, Regular Meeting - April 21, 2026, Closed Session		2
	3	Approval of the May 5, 2026, Agenda		18
5:35	4	Public Comment Limited to a maximum of one hour, with time adjusted based on the number of speakers.	Chairman Braxton Eggers	19
5:40	5	Friends of Watauga County Library Renovation Grant Support Request	Ms. Barbara Perry-Sheldon	20
5:45	6	Miscellaneous Administrative Matters A. Presentation of the FY 2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) B. Presentation of the Manager's FY 2027 Recommended Budget C. Budget Amendments D. Board of Elections Delivery Truck Purchase Request E. Announcements	Mr. Deron Geouque	22 23 24 28 50
5:50	7	Commissioners' Comments	Chairman Braxton Eggers	52
5:55	8	Break		52
6:00	9	Closed Session - Acquisition of Real Property per G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5) - Personnel Matters per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6) - Attorney-Client Matters per G. S. § 143-318.11(a)(3)		52
6:05	10	Adjourn		

A G E N D A I T E M 2 :

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- December 17, 2024, Regular Meeting Correction
- April 21, 2026, Regular Meeting
- April 21, 2026, Closed Session

Proposed Correction to December 17, 2024, minutes:

C. Appointment of Tax Administrator

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Larry Warren, Tax Administrator, would retire December 31, 2024, as the County's Tax Administrator. A committee consisting of former Chairman Turnbow, Chairman Eggers, County Manager Geouque, and Human Resources Director Monica Harrison interviewed candidates to replace Mr. Warren. Upon completion of the interviews, the committee recommended John Tyler Rash as the new Tax Administrator. His appointment would be from January 1, 2025 to December 31, ~~2027~~ **2026**. Mr. Rash thanked the Board for his appointment, introduced his family, and stated that he looked forward to working for the County.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to appoint John Tyler Rash as Tax Administrator to be effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, ~~2027~~ **2026**.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

- Note – Due to Mr. Rash not meeting the eligibility requirements for a four-year term, he was appointed to a two-year term.

MEETING MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Commissioners' Board Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building in Boone, North Carolina.

1. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Eggers called the meeting to order at 5:30 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
 Madison Mathis, Clerk to the Board

[Clerk's Note: Commissioner Hodges arrived to the meeting at 5:34 p.m.]

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

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to approve the March 17, 2026, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
 Nay – 0

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to approve the March 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 April 21, 2026, agenda.

There were no additions or corrections.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to approve the April 21, 2026, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following people spoke during public comment:

- **Terry Oldham** – Expressed appreciation to the commissioners for continuing to address policies and issues despite challenges.
- **Heather Reaves** – Resident of Foothills Drive raised concerns about a nearby student housing development, including construction dust, erosion, and impacts on neighbors who rely on open windows for ventilation. Asked whether ordinances address these issues and suggested reviewing county zoning for high-density developments. Noted Planning & Inspections involvement.
- **Tyler Brown** – Spoke regarding the lawsuit over Watauga County voting maps and support for upholding the 2025 referendum.

5. PUBLIC HEARING TO ALLOW CITIZEN COMMENT ON DATA CENTERS IN WATAUGA COUNTY

Chairman Eggers stated that a public hearing was scheduled to allow citizen comment on data centers in Watauga County. The Planning Board and staff will work in coordination with county partners—including utilities, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ), the Division of Water Resources (DWR), the UNC School of Government, and the County Attorney—to develop appropriate standards for data centers within the High Impact Land Use (HILU) Ordinance, during the moratorium period.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to open the public hearing.

VOTE: Aye – 5

Nay – 0

The following people spoke during the public hearing:

- **Cindy Darcy** – Raised concerns about Watauga County as a water-stressed area, emphasizing resource protection, noise, and environmental impacts; requested consideration of a one-year moratorium and appropriate zoning ordinances.
- **Allison Blanks** – Noted experience in data center design; supported a moratorium to allow time for county planning and preparation.
- **Annie Woodford** – Supported a moratorium on data center construction and recommended high-impact land use policies to regulate such development.
- **Andy Hill** – Expressed support for a data center moratorium, citing environmental concerns.
- **William Tatum** – Raised concerns about air pollution from backup generators associated with data centers.
- **Sydney Iannelli** – Supported a moratorium on data centers, citing concerns about living conditions.
- **Heather Reaves** – Supported at least a one-year moratorium and expressed interest in a potential full ban.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to close the public hearing.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

Commissioner Marsh reported that local utility providers indicated insufficient power capacity to support data centers for the foreseeable future and expressed opposition. Commissioner Greene expressed appreciation for the information. Vice-Chairman Castle noted concerns regarding power availability and indicated opposition. Commissioner Hodges emphasized preserving the county's character and natural beauty.

County Attorney Miller recommended that the motion include the necessary moratorium provisions.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to adopt a moratorium on data centers.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

Chairman Eggers moved to amend the motion to incorporate the following recommendations of County Attorney Miller.

1. Data centers and crypto mining facilities require substantial amounts of power and water usage that will severely strain the current capacity that exists within the unincorporated areas of Watauga County. Alternatives methods to solve these issues such as generators, or onsite power generators and various water supplies were considered but ultimately deemed not viable.
2. This moratoria will apply to Data Centers and crypto mining facilities and other similar uses.
3. This moratoria will terminate one year after adoption. This amount of time is reasonably necessary to allow appropriate review of the regulatory ordinances to be completed and for further authority to be given by the North Carolina General Assembly.
4. During the moratoria, the commissioners direct planning staff to develop a detailed development scheme to limit the impact of data centers and crypto mining operations in Watauga County. During the short session of the North Carolina General Assembly commissioners will contact members of the General Assembly to seek changes to the current law to allow Watauga County to develop ordinances to regulate data centers and crypto mining facilities.

The amendment was seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle and approved.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

6. PUBLIC HEARING TO ALLOW CITIZEN COMMENT ON WATAUGA COUNTY'S PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCES

Chairman Eggers stated that a public hearing was scheduled to allow citizen comment on proposed amendments to Watauga County's development ordinances, including Soil Erosion, Flood Damage Prevention, and Watershed Protection, as well as the addition of a new Chapter 24 – Administration to clarify development permit procedures.

The proposed amendments are intended to ensure consistency with revised state model ordinances. The Planning Board and Planning Staff have reviewed the ordinances and developed the proposed changes, which were approved by the Planning Board on November 17, 2025, along with a Statement of Plan Consistency.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to open the public hearing.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

No one signed up to speak.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to close the public hearing.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

County Attorney Miller noted that proposed amendments were reviewed for compliance with state law, including recent legislation affecting zoning and parking requirements, and indicated the amendments are believed to be compliant.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to adopt the required plan-consistency statement and approve the amendments as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

7. RECOGNITION OF STEWART SIMMONS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT ISO RATING IMPROVEMENT

Marcus Scott, representing the North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal, recognized the Stewart Simmons Volunteer Fire Department for achieving an ISO Class 4 rating, effective July 1, 2026. Several other county fire departments were acknowledged for recent rating

improvements. Mr. Shane Garland, Watauga County Fire Marshal, was also in attendance for the presentation.

Fire Chief Berry thanked the commissioners for their support. Commissioner Marsh commended the departments for their continued progress in improving ISO ratings across the county. Chairman Eggers also expressed appreciation to the department and community for their efforts.

No Board action was taken; this item was presented for information only.

8. FUNDING REQUEST FOR TODD COMMUNITY PARK RIVERBANK STABILIZATION AND REPAIRS

Ms. Lynn Caldwell requested the Board approve a funding request in the amount of \$45,000 to assist the Todd Community Preservation Organization with completion of Phase III of the riverbank stabilization project and repairs to Phases I and II at Todd Community Park. The Todd Community Park is in Ashe County.

Riverbank stabilization is critical to the continued restoration and future development of the park. The estimated cost for Phase III is \$207,300, with an additional \$67,000 needed for repairs resulting from storm damage, for a total project cost of \$274,300.

Mr. Jonathan Hartsell, Project Manager with Blue Ridge RC&D, has secured grant funding for prior phases and continues to pursue additional grant opportunities for this project, which will require matching funds. Any funds not utilized for grant matching will be applied directly to project repairs.

Chairman Eggers stated the request would be considered during upcoming budget discussions and that coordination would follow with the Ashe County Commissioners.

Commissioner Marsh also noted the item should be included in budget discussions, and County Manager Geouque confirmed it would be added.

No action was taken at this time to approve the funding request.

9. APPALCART CONTRACTS FOR FY 2027

Mr. Craig Hughes, AppalCART Director, presented contracts for transportation services for the Project on Aging and Social Services Departments for FY 2027. The proposed rate for the

Project on Aging (POA), Department of Social Services, and other County functions remained the same at \$2.85 per direct mile.

Mr. Hughes also presented a contract for POA meal delivery and that rate remained the same at \$2.00 per direct mile.

Additionally, Mr. Hughes provided an update on AppalCART, including a pending agreement for three electric buses and a charging station. He thanked the commissioners for their continued support.

Commissioner Marsh expressed appreciation for maintaining current rates and commended the organization's efforts to secure funding while keeping services accessible.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to approve the AppalCART contracts as presented by Mr. Hughes.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

10. BID AWARD REQUEST FOR MEDIC BASE I INTERIOR PAINTING AND COATING

County Manager Geouque requested, on behalf of Maintenance Director Robert Marsh, for the Board to award a contract to 4Ever Coating, LLC in the amount of \$39,880 (Option 3) for painting the interior of Medic Base I, including grinding and epoxy coating the ambulance bay. Six bids were received, with 4Ever Coating, LLC being the lowest responsive bidder.

4Ever Coating, LLC was able to start work on April 1, 2026. Because of time constraints and the pending delivery of furniture, the County Manager authorized moving forward with the work.

- Note – Only two bidders responded to the initial bid request. The County Manager directed staff to rebid the project. The rebidding caused the time constraint issue.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to award the contract to 4Ever Coating, LLC for the Medic Base I interior painting and coating project in the amount of \$39,880.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

11. EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS

A. Request to Purchase Communications Tower

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, requested the Board approve the purchase of a communications tower for the new Emergency Services Facility from Engineered Tower Solutions (ETS) in the amount of \$31,501.80. Engineered Tower Solutions (ETS) holds the state contract for this work and is currently performing construction at other County tower sites. In order to prevent a delay in the construction, the County Manager approved the purchase. Funds have been budgeted for this portion of the project.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to approve the purchase of the communications tower in the amount of \$31,501.80.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

B. Request for Zoll X-Series Surplus

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, requested the Board approve the surplus and sale of four Zoll X-Series monitors to CoroMed in the amount of \$5,500 each. This transaction of durable medical equipment was coordinated through Zoll as an extension of the trade-in previously approved with the purchase of new monitors.

Commissioner Greene, seconded by Vice-Chairman Castle, moved to approve the surplus and sell the four Zoll X-Series monitors to CoroMed at the stated amount.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

12. ACCEPTANCE OF NORTH CAROLINA HELENE RECOVERY RECYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE (HRRI) GRANT AWARD

County Manager Geouque requested, on behalf of Operations Services Director Chris Marriott, for the Board to accept a grant award from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in the amount of \$280,000 for recycling infrastructure improvements under the Helene Recovery Recycling Infrastructure (HRRI) Grant Program.

The grant will fund roll-off containers, a metal pre-crusher, a mini-excavator, and associated installation and electrical services to enhance recycling operations. The program is federally funded through the EPA and is intended to support counties impacted by Tropical Storm Helene.

The HRRI grant is a reimbursement-based program. Staff recommended utilizing Sanitation Department retained earnings for initial expenditures, with reimbursement upon grant payment.

Staff also requested authorization for the County Manager to execute the grant agreement with DEQ for a term beginning July 1, 2026, for two (2) years.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to accept the HRRI grant award in the amount of \$280,000 and authorize execution of the grant agreement.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

13. TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Mr. Tyler Rash, Tax Administrator, presented the Monthly Collections Report for March 2026, and was present for questions and discussion.

The report was for information only; therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Tyler Rash, Tax Administrator, presented the Refunds and Releases for March 2026, and was present for questions and discussion.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to accept the Refunds and Releases Reports, as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

C. Request to Advertise Tax Liens

Mr. Tyler Rash, Tax Administrator, presented the 2025 report of unpaid property taxes, which represent liens on real property, to the Board of County Commissioners. Upon receipt of the report, the Board was required to order the Tax Collector to advertise the tax liens in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes.

State law requires that the advertisement occur between March 1 and June 30. Staff proposed a single publication in the Watauga Democrat.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to order the Tax Collector to advertise the 2025 unpaid tax liens as required by statute.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The Board recessed at 6:47 p.m. and reconvened at 6:51 p.m.

14. MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. *Change Order Request #8 for Valle Crucis School*

H&M Constructors has submitted Change Order Request 8 for the Valle Crucis School Project. The change order reflects multiple project adjustments including owner-requested changes, field conditions, and design modifications. The net effect of Change Order 8 is a decrease to the contract sum in the amount of (\$376,874.42).

Commissioner Marsh inquired about the status of the Test and Balance (TAB) report. County Manager Geouque indicated the report contained incomplete data and that the engineer had made modifications, with additional clarification expected later in the week.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve Change Order 8 with H&M Constructors for the Valle Crucis Elementary School project as presented.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

B. *Change Order Requests #12, #13, #15, #16, #17 for Emergency Services Facility*

Greene Construction, Inc. submitted Change Order Requests 12, 13, 15, 16, and 17 related to modifications for maintenance, plumbing and utility adjustments, site and access revisions associated with NCDOT delays, and drainage improvements. The total amount of the change orders is \$43,716.70. Adequate funds remain within the project budget.

Commissioner Marsh acknowledged the purpose of the change orders but expressed concern regarding costs associated with NCDOT-related work and the impact on taxpayers.

Commissioner Hodges inquired about communication with NCDOT, and County Manager Geouque stated no updates had been received.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to approve Change Order Requests 12, 13, 15, 16, and 17 with Greene Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$43,716.70.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

C. Department of Social Services Out-of-State Travel Request

Kelly Stroud, Department of Social Services, requested approval to travel out of state to attend The Carolinas' Seaside Symposium on Child Abuse and Neglect, May 26-29, 2026. All expenses will be covered by the Department of Social Services budget.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to approve the out-of-state travel request.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

D. Proposed Audit Contract for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

Mr. Deron Geouque, Finance Director, requested the Board approve the Fiscal Year 2025-26 audit contract and engagement letter with C. Randolph, CPA, PLLC. The contract amount of \$52,000 covers the annual audit. Adequate funds are available to cover the expenditure.

Vice-Chairman Castle inquired whether the contract amount reflected an increase from prior years, and Mr. Geouque indicated the increase was minimal.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to accept the contract with C. Randolph, CPA, PLLC for the County's Fiscal Year 2025-2026 audit in the amount not to exceed \$52,000.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

E. Rocky Knob Park FEMA Award

Rocky Knob Park received FEMA funding for trail repair associated with storm-related damage.

It was recommended to award the quote to Round Rock Design & Earthworks for completion of the necessary repairs. The scope of work includes trail repair, culvert installation, culvert materials, geotextile fabric, and related services. The contractor's estimate totals \$17,275.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to accept FEMA funds and authorize a contract with Round Rock Design & Earthworks in the amount of \$17,275 for trail repairs at Rocky Knob Park.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

F. National Apprenticeship Week Proclamation and Small Business Week Recognition

Mr. Joe Furman with the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce requested that the Board consider adoption of a proclamation recognizing National Apprenticeship Week. The proclamation highlights the importance of Registered Apprenticeship programs in developing a skilled workforce and supporting local and regional economic needs. Mr. Furman has also requested that the Board recognize May 3–9, 2026 as Small Business Week. No proclamation or formal Board action is requested for Small Business Week; this item is for recognition only.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to adopt the proclamation declaring April 26–May 2, 2026 as National Apprenticeship Week in Watauga County.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

G. Boards and Commissions

Mr. Geouque presented a volunteer application from Ms. Annette Ward of Sugar Grove expressing interest in serving on the Watauga County Social Services Board. Ms. Ward is currently employed at Appalachian State University as a Senior Lecturer in Clinical Social Work and is a Clinical Addictions Specialist. She has significant volunteer and professional experience in the social services field, including serving as a shelter manager for OASIS and as a medical social worker for Watauga Medical Center. She has also worked collaboratively with the Department of Social Services during her time with New River and Daymark.

The Department of Social Services Advisory Board recommended the appointment of Ms. Annette Ward to fill a vacancy created by the departure of Ms. Tiffany Christian.

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Chairman Eggers, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Ms. Annette Ward to the vacant position on the Social Services Board.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

H. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Trustees of Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute invited the Board of Commissioners to a meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Student Services Center on the Watauga Campus.
- Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2026, beginning at 12:00 noon and Friday, May 8, 2026, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

I. Approval of N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund's Helene Recovery Fund Project Agreement and for High Country Council of Governments to Administer the Agreement

Watauga County was recently awarded a grant in the amount of \$494,000 from the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund's Helene Recovery Fund for renovation, rehab, and repairs to the Old Cove Creek facility. The grant is effective May 1, 2026 through April 30, 2029. Funds can be utilized for site preparation, trail, walking, fitness equipment, creek access, fishing pier, benches, wildlife viewing area, stage, multipurpose field, playground, basketball and pickleball courts, picnic shelter, restroom, and parking facilities. The grant does require a match of \$494,000 which will be provided by the FEMA and insurance funds.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to accept the grant in the amount of \$494,000 from the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund's Helene Recovery Fund and to approve High Country Council of Governments to administer the grant at no cost.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

15. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

- **Chairman Eggers** provided comments regarding ongoing discussions at the state level related to property tax and a potential constitutional amendment, noting concerns and the County's position within state authority. He also expressed appreciation to those in attendance.
- **Vice-Chairman Castle** thanked those in attendance.

16. BREAK

17. CLOSED SESSION

At 7:50 p.m., Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Greene, 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; 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) to discuss personnel matters.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

At 9:11 p.m., Chairman Eggers, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to resume the open meeting.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

18. ADJOURN

At 9:20 p.m., Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Chairman Eggers, moved to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

Braxton Eggers, Chairman

ATTEST: Madison Mathis, Clerk to the Board

A G E N D A I T E M 3 :

APPROVAL OF MAY 5, 2026, AGENDA

A G E N D A I T E M 4 :

PUBLIC COMMENT

Manager's Comments:

Public Comment is limited to a maximum of one hour, with time adjusted based on the number of speakers.

A G E N D A I T E M 5 :**FRIENDS OF WATAUGA COUNTY LIBRARY RENOVATION GRANT
SUPPORT REQUEST****Manager's Comments:**

Ms. Barbara Perry-Sheldon, Friends of the Watauga County Library Board Member, will request the Board to endorse a grant application to the Cannon Foundation in the amount of \$100,000 for the Library Renovation Project. The Foundation has invited submission of a full proposal, which is due at the end of May 2026.

As part of the application process, the Foundation has requested a formal endorsement from the Board of Commissioners, along with a letter of support from the County Manager confirming that the County will not be submitting a competing proposal for funding during this cycle.

If awarded, grant funds would be used to update furnishings and equipment in support of the planned renovation improvements. Award announcements are expected in September 2026.

Board approval is requested regarding endorsement of the application and authorization for the County Manager to provide the requested letter of support.

To: Watauga County Commissioners

From: Barbara Perry-Sheldon, Member of Board, Friends of Watauga County Library

blpsheldon@gmail.com 828 964-5340

Re: Request to have an item on the May 5, 2026, Board Agenda

The Friends of the Watauga County Library submitted a grant inquiry to the Cannon Foundation requesting \$100,000 for the Library Renovation Project. The Foundation has given verbal permission for a full proposal to be submitted. It is due the end of May.

The Foundation has asked that the application be endorsed by the Watauga County Commissioners and include a letter of support from the County Manager. The letter would indicate that no competing proposal is being submitted to the Cannon Foundation by the County this year.

If any amount is awarded from the Foundation, the intent is that the funds would go toward updating furnishings and equipment to support the capital improvements of the renovation project. Awards will be announced in September, 2026. The Friends have been working on this application for over a year.

The Friends appreciate this opportunity to collaborate with the County on the Library Renovation Project and appreciate the support the County, individuals and others have given to this important endeavor.

A G E N D A I T E M 6 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Presentation of the FY 2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Manager's Comments:

The County Manager will present the FY 2026-2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for your review prior to discussion during the upcoming budget work sessions. A link to the FY 2026-2027 CIP and Budget documents will be provided on the day of the meeting.

A G E N D A I T E M 6 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

B. Presentation of the Manager's FY 2027 Recommended Budget

Manager's Comments:

The County Manager will present his recommended FY 2027 Budget at the meeting and review highlights. If you have questions, please feel free to call or discuss at the budget work sessions scheduled on Thursday, May 7, 2026 beginning at 12:00 P.M. and Friday, May 8, 2026 at 9:00 A.M.

The recommended Budget will be available for public inspection on the County's website and at the County Manager's Office.

A public hearing will be held on May 19, 2026, at 5:30 P.M. to allow citizen comment on the proposed budget.

A G E N D A I T E M 6 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

C. Budget Amendments

Manager's Comments:

Deron Geouque, Finance Director, will review budget amendments as included in your packet.

Board approval is requested.



WATAUGA COUNTY
FINANCE OFFICE

814 West King St., Suite 216, Boone, NC 28607 Phone (828) 265-8007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deron T. Geouque, County Manager
FROM: Deidre Guy, Assistant Finance Director
SUBJECT: Budget Amendments
DATE: April 28, 2026

The following budget amendment requires the approval of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners. Board approval is requested.

<u>Account #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Debit</u>	<u>Credit</u>
103839 343100	Donations-Sheriff		\$ 20,000
104310 451000	Capital Outlay-Furniture & Equipment	\$ 20,000	

Per Board action taken 7/15/25; to recognize the anonymous donation for the purchase of a K-9 from Avery County.

103300 358199	Veterans NCDMVA Grant		\$ 18,289
105820 437000	Advertising	\$ 11,750	
105820 426000	Office Supplies	\$ 2,200	
105820 449900	Misc. Expense	\$ 4,339	

Per Board action taken 6/17/25; to recognize the NC Division of Military Veterans Affairs Grant.

104170 451000	Capital Outlay-Furniture & Equipment	430,126	
213991 399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		430,126
219800 498010	Transfer to General Fund	430,126	
103980 398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		430,126

Per Board action taken 6/17/25; to transfer funds from Capital Reserve for Board of Elections voting equipment purchases.

554199 469500	Contracted Services	590,885	
553831 389999	Cash Flow Loan		590,885

Per Board action taken 6/17/25; to recognize receiving the Cash Flow Loan round 2 from NC State Treasurer.

554199 469500	Contracted Services	3,268,633	
553831 389999	Cash Flow Loan		3,268,633

Per Board action taken 9/2/25; to recognize receiving the Cash Flow Loan round 3 from NC State Treasurer.

<u>Account #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Debit</u>	<u>Credit</u>
103300 345000	ROAP Grant		181,556
104500 469845	Elderly and Disabled	74,414	
104500 469844	Employment Transportation	12,449	
104500 469843	Rural General Populations	94,693	

To recognize the acceptance of the NC DOT Rural Operating Assistance Program funds. No County dollars are required as a match.

593300 343111	Blue Ridge Conservancy MFG		1,635,000
593300 343112	Watauga County TDA MFG		1,480,000
593300 343114	Recreation Trails Program Grant		100,000
593300 343117	NC Division of Water Resources Grant		500,000
593300 361000	Parks & Recreation Trust Fund Grant		500,000
596130 457001	Capital Outlay-Land Improvement	4,215,000	

Per Board action taken 11/4/25; to setup the Middle Fork Greenway fund to track Boone Gorge Park expense.

663991 399100	Retained Earnings		1,906
669800 498067	Transfer to Capital Reserve	1,906	
673980 398066	Transfer from Landfill		1,906
679930 499306	Landfill Capital Reserve Requirements	1,906	

FY 26 funding for the Sanitation Capital Reserve fund per DEQ.

105911 470049	Roof Replacement	690,000	
103300 349909	Lottery		690,000

Per Board action taken 6/4/24; to recognize lottery funds requested and approved.

503120 449900	Misc Expense	\$ 717,884	
503831 349100	General Fund Interest		\$ 717,884

To recognize additional interest earned on the Valle Crucis School and interest paid to the Internal Revenue Service for arbitrage on the limited obligation bonds.

533839 389420	Opioid Settlement		\$ 628,269
533839 525405	Opioid disbursements	\$ 628,269	

To recognize Opioid settlement awards funded per the BOC meeting June 3, 2025.

105911 470001	Carpet and tile	60,000	
105911 470083	Oil tank	100,000	
105911 470056	Gym flooring	25,000	
105911 470005	Cafeteria upgrades	85,000	
103300 349909	Lottery		270,000

Per Board action taken 3/17/26; to recognize lottery funds requested and approved.

<u>Account #</u>		<u>Description</u>	<u>Debit</u>	<u>Credit</u>
103300	332004	Senior Center Grant		14,628
105550	449900	Senior Center Grant Expenses	14,628	

Per Board action taken 9/16/25; to recognize the acceptance of the Senior Center grant funds. County dollars required as match funds are already in the POA budget.

103300	332005	PEAS Grant		16,545
105550	449903	PEAS Grant Expense	16,545	

Per Board action taken 9/16/25; to recognize the acceptance of the Providing Elders Additional Sustenance (PEAS) funds. No County dollars are required as a match.

103300	351001	Tobacco Trust Grant		\$ 46,907
104950	451000	Capital Outlay-furniture & equipment	\$ 46,907	

Per Board action taken 11/4/25, to recognize the acceptance of the 2025 Tobacco Trust Fund Commission grant titled "Small Farm Equipment in NWNC." No County dollars are required as a match.

A G E N D A I T E M 6 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

D. Board of Elections Delivery Truck Purchase

Manager's Comments:

The Watauga County Board of Elections will request the Board approve the purchase of a 2024 Isuzu FTR box truck, to be reimbursed through North Carolina State Board of Elections Helene funds.

Due to challenges experienced with rental truck availability, including during the most recent Primary Election, staff have identified the need for a dedicated vehicle to ensure timely and reliable delivery of voting equipment. With the implementation of EZ Carts, which can weigh up to 500 pounds, a vehicle equipped with a lift gate is necessary for safe and efficient loading and unloading.

Staff have located an 18-foot box truck with a large platform lift gate, low mileage, and remaining warranty coverage at a cost of \$87,000 plus applicable taxes and tags. The larger lift gate is expected to provide increased stability and functionality for equipment transport in various weather conditions.

Board action is requested to approve the purchase of the 2024 Isuzu FTR box truck, and any costs associated with the delivery of the vehicle to Watauga County not to exceed \$800. The county will be reimbursed through the North Carolina State Board of Elections Helene funds.



WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

County Courthouse ♦ 842 West King Street Boone, North Carolina 28607

April 29, 2026

Delivery Truck Purchase Request

Commissioners,

The Board of Elections would like to request the purchase of a 2024 Isuzu FTR box truck to be reimbursed by the North Carolina State Board of Elections Helene funds. One of the first things to disappear in an event like Helene are rental trucks. Even if a truck is reserved, there is no guarantee that it will be available as scheduled.

This was the case in our non-emergent Primary this year. Although reserved, the lessee decided to keep the truck longer which meant we had to use an open trailer to deliver our Early Voting equipment.

Now that we use EZ Carts to store and transport our voting equipment, we must have a lift gate to get the 500-pound carts on and off the truck. We were able to locate an 18-foot box truck with a large platform lift gate that had 1,035 miles and was still under warranty. The price is \$87,000 plus tax and tags.

The large platform lift gate is much more stable than smaller lift gates. We feel that this will meet our needs for equipment deliveries in any type weather. Most importantly, we would be able to guarantee that voting equipment is timely delivered and would not have to rely on rental companies.

We appreciate your consideration and would be glad to answer any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

Matt Snyder

Watauga County Board of Elections, Director



Matthew.Snyder

From: Berot, Lisa <Lisa.Berot@ncsbe.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 11:37 AM
To: Matthew.Snyder; Chancellor, Sanford
Cc: LiVecchi, Brian P
Subject: RE: [External] RE: Delivery Truck for Watauga

Good afternoon Matt,

OSBM agrees that the truck is an allowable expense/eligible for reimbursement through the Helene fund; please move forward with the purchase.

Thank you for your patience and detailed information in your inquiry as it was helpful in our communications with OSBM.

Regards,

Lisa Berot-Marlowe, NCCM
 Business & Project Manager
 919.441.0108



From: Matthew.Snyder <Matthew.Snyder@watgov.org>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2026 3:27 PM
To: Chancellor, Sanford <Sanford.Chancellor@ncsbe.gov>
Cc: LiVecchi, Brian P <brian.livecchi@ncsbe.gov>; Berot, Lisa <Lisa.Berot@ncsbe.gov>
Subject: [External] RE: Delivery Truck for Watauga

You don't often get email from matthew.snyder@watgov.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless verified. Report suspicious emails with the Report Message button located on your Outlook menu bar on the Home tab.

Sanford,

Thank you for all your work on this! Should any additional information be needed, please let me know.

Have a good week,
 Matt

From: Chancellor, Sanford <Sanford.Chancellor@ncsbe.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2026 3:10 PM
To: Matthew.Snyder <Matthew.Snyder@watgov.org>
Cc: LiVecchi, Brian P <brian.livecchi@ncsbe.gov>; Berot, Lisa <Lisa.Berot@ncsbe.gov>
Subject: Delivery Truck for Watauga

Hey Matt,

Thank you for your patience in relation to the delivery truck question. I apologize it is taking some time to get this answered. We are going through a couple of state budget and procurement hoops to confirm if we can reimburse. We received an initial denial from DOA Motor Fleet to procure vehicles so we have now escalated to OSBM to see if they will permit us to reimburse a county due to your unique circumstance. That has also been escalated within OSBM to make sure I get all sign offs that it aligns with Helene Reimbursement requirements. I believe you have a solid reason but just need an additional approval. I have sent an additional email but have a scheduled conversation with OSBM reps this week. I hope to get a solid answer this week and will reach out to you directly.

Sanford Chancellor, SHRM-SCP
Chief Operating and Human Resources Officer
(919) 814-0739 – Office
430 N. Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27603



“Ability is what you are capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it!”

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Front Axle Weight	8,500 lb
Rear Axle Weight	17,500 lb
Tires	22.5
Tire % Remaining	95
Wheels	All Steel
Axle Configuration	Set Back Axle
Mud Flaps	Yes
Brake System Type	Drum

Interior

Drive Side	Left Hand Drive
Navigation	Yes
Power Steering	Yes
Tilt/Telescope	Yes
Cruise Control	Yes
Power Locks	Yes
Power Windows	Both
A/C	Yes
A/C Condition	New

Category Specific

Collision Mitigation System	Yes
-----------------------------	-----

Description

LIKE NEW TRUCK STILL HAS WARRANTY LEFT HAS 360 CAMERA SYSTEM BID ALUMMINUM RAIL GATE

Engine

Horsepower

260 HP

Engine Manufacturer

CUMMINS

Engine Model

ISB6.7

Fuel Type

Diesel

Exhaust Brake

Yes

Turbo

Yes

Powertrain

Transmission

Automatic

Transmission Manufacturer

ALLISON

Transmission Type

Allison RDS

Number of Speeds

6 Spd

Overdrive

Yes

Chassis

Suspension

Air Ride

Number of Rear Axles

Single

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating

Class 6: 19,501 - 26,000 pounds

Gross Vehicle Weight

26,000 lb

Seller Information

Phelps Truck Sales Inc

Contact: Chad Phelps

Phone: (910) 679-7018

Wilmington, North Carolina 28401

(910) 679-7018

Video Chat

FRB STAR Get Shipping Quotes

CURRENCY. *Apply for Financing

General

Year	2024
Manufacturer	ISUZU
Model	FTR
Mileage	1,035 mi
VIN	54DK6S1F4RSA02971
Odometer	Accurate / Verified
Condition	Used
DOT	Yes
Operating Condition	Operable



Photos (19)

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2024 ISUZU FTR

 Options

Cargo / Straight Box Trucks

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2024 ISUZU FTR

\$113,376.00

Stock #: 1207843

VIN: 54DK6S1F3RSA03691

Mileage: 350

Location: Hickory , North Carolina



Vehicle Specification

050526 BCC Meeting

Stock No:	1207843
V I N:	54DK6S1F3RSA03691
Make:	Isuzu
Model:	FTR
Category:	Trucks - Box Trucks - Cargo - Straight
Location:	Hickory, North Carolina
Mileage:	350
Year:	2024
Make:	ISUZU
Model:	FTR
Condition:	New
Cab Configuration:	Standard Cab
Driver Seat:	Air Ride
Engine Manufacturer:	Cummins
Engine Model:	ISB
Exhaust:	Single
Front Axle Weight:	12,000
Front Tires:	11R22.5
Fuel Type:	Diesel
G V W R:	25,950
Left Fuel Tank:	100
Passenger Seat:	Bench
Rear Axle Ratio:	6
Rear Axle Weight:	21,000
Rear Tires:	11R22.5
Rear Wheels:	All Steel

Stereo:	Bluetooth	050526 BCC Meeting
Suspension Type:	Spring	
Transmission:	6 Spd	
Transmission Type:	Automatic	
Transmission Manufacturer:	Allison	
Web Comments:	25,950 GVWR, 26' X 102" Morgan Dry Van Body, (2) Rows Of E-Track, Dhollandia 3300Lb Capacity Aluminum Lift-Gate. Lift-Gate Is 60"X85" Interior Measurements 103.2"H X 310.88" L X 98.13" W. Rear Door Opening 94"W X 97.25"H. Includes Back-Up Camera!	
Wheelbase:	224	

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New ISUZU FTR Stock # 1215680 Mileage: 545 miles Location: Tucson Category: Trucks - Stake Trucks Year: 2025 Engine Make: CUMMINS	Call 520-791-0300	New ISUZU FTR Stock # 1215555 Mileage: 790 miles Location: Houston Category: Trucks - Box Trucks - Cargo - Straight Year: 2025 Engine Make: CUMMINS	\$129,999 281-677-2200	New ISUZU FTR Stock # 1217638 Mileage: 269 miles Location: Houston Category: Trucks Year: 2025 Engine Make: CUMMINS
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6

2024 ISUZU FTR

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Odometer 359

PRICE: \$113,376

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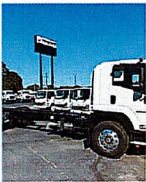
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\$70,000	\$71,066	\$72,740	\$71,254

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A G E N D A I T E M 6 :

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

E. Announcements

Manager's Comments:

The Board of Commissioners has been invited to attend the Valle Crucis School Dedication Ceremony to be held on May 16, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. The Watauga County community will gather on the new school campus to celebrate the completion of the project.

Scheduled events include guest speakers, a ribbon cutting ceremony, unveiling of the school plaque, and campus tours.

You're Invited!



VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL *Dedication Ceremony*

MAY 16TH, 2026

10 A.M.



*The Watauga County community will gather on the new school campus to celebrate.
Scheduled events include guest speakers, a ribbon-cutting ceremony, unveiling of the school plaque, and tours.*

SCAN THE QR CODE TO RSVP OR CALL THE WCS CENTRAL OFFICE (828) 264-7190.

A G E N D A I T E M 7 :

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

A G E N D A I T E M 8 :

BREAK

A G E N D A I T E M 9 :

CLOSED SESSION

- Acquisition of Real Property per G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5)
- Personnel Matters per, G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6)
- Attorney-Client Matters per G. S. § 143-318.11(a)(3)



SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

FROM BOARD MEETING



Watauga County
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-IN

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: May 5, 2026

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC COMMENT RULES

At the April 18, 2023, Watauga County Board of Commissioners meeting, the Board amended the policy for public comment before the Board as follows:

In accordance with North Carolina General Statutes 160A-81.1, the Watauga County Board of Commissioners establishes the following policy and rules regarding Public Comment.

- The Board does hereby establish a time period of up to sixty (60) minutes, for an open forum, at the beginning of each regular meeting to hear citizen comments.
- Persons who wish to speak must register on the sign-up sheet located on the information desk outside the meeting room. Sign-up sheets will be available one hour prior to the start of each meeting.
- Speakers shall provide their name and address at the start of their comments.
- Each speaker is allocated up to three (3) minutes to speak. No public comment period shall extend beyond one (1) hour. The Chair reserves the right to reduce the time limitation for individual speakers in order to meet the one (1) hour time limit and as necessary for efficient conduct of business.
- A speaker may not share or relinquish any remaining time they have not used to another speaker and shall only be allowed to speak once during the public comment period.
- Speaker substitutions at the meeting are not allowed.
- Comments are to be directed to the Board as a whole. The forum is intended to provide the Board of Commissioners an opportunity to hear citizens. It is not intended to subject the Board to answering impromptu questions. Citizens will be expected to be civil in their language and presentation and not to engage in slander or name-calling.
- Speakers shall refrain from personal attacks and/or threats directed towards County staff, elected Board members, or members of the public. Insults, profanity, use of vulgar language or gestures, or other inappropriate behavior are not allowed.
- Speakers shall limit their comments to matters that are germane to, or within the jurisdiction of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.
- Speakers shall address the Board with any, and all public comments. Comments, questions, jeering, or other interruptions from the audience are not allowed. Speakers shall likewise not address or respond to members of the audience.
- The Chair, or presiding officer, has the authority to enforce the Rules of Decorum. Failure to obey these Rules may result in the forfeiture of the remaining speaking time and possible criminal charges. Individuals who engage in egregious or repeated violations may be asked to leave the meeting.
- During the open forum, speakers should not discuss any of the following:
 - a. Matters which concern the candidacy of any person seeking public office, including that of the person addressing the Board.
 - b. Matters in current or anticipated litigation.
 - c. Advertising or promoting the sale of products, services, or private enterprise.
 - d. Promoting any contest or lottery.

Please **clearly** print your name. By printing your name, you **acknowledge** that you have read, understood, and agree to abide by the rules outlined above.

Please state your name before speaking.

SPEAKER LIST

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1. <u>DIGNE NILAN</u> | 6. _____ |
| 2. <u>RICK WOODS</u> | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

ADDITIONAL SIGN-UP SPACE AVAILABLE ON THE BACK.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 11. _____ | 31. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 32. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 33. _____ |
| 14. _____ | 34. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 35. _____ |
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| 20. _____ | 40. _____ |
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| 29. _____ | 49. _____ |
| 30. _____ | 50. _____ |

