

**TENTATIVE AGENDA & MEETING NOTICE  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2022  
5:30 P.M.**

**WATAUGA COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
COMMISSIONERS' BOARD ROOM**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
5:30	1	CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER		
	2	APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 15, 2022, Regular Meeting February 15, 2022, Closed Session		1
	3	APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 1, 2022, AGENDA		13
5:35	4	APPALACHIAN THEATRE UPDATE	MR. KEITH MARTIN	15
5:40	5	CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE	MS. JENNIFER GREENE	17
5:45	6	STATE OF EMERGENCY (SOE) DISCUSSION	MR. DERON GEOUQUE	19
5:50	7	2022 REVALUATION UPDATE	MR. LARRY WARREN MR. RYAN VINCENT	21
5:55	8	REQUESTED ALLOCATION FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT	MR. JOE FURMAN	23
6:00	9	ANCIENT OAKS PRESERVE SUBDIVISION PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE	MR. JOE FURMAN	29
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6:10	11	MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS A. Habitat for Humanity Road Request B. Boards and Commissions C. Announcements	MR. DERON GEOUQUE	37 39 41
6:15	12	PUBLIC COMMENT		50
7:15	13	BREAK		50
7:20	14	CLOSED SESSION Attorney/Client Matters – G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3)		50
7:30	15	ADJOURN		

**AGENDA ITEM 2:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

February 15, 2022, Regular Meeting

February 15, 2022, Closed Session

**DRAFT****MINUTES****WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022**

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:34 P.M. The following were present:

**PRESENT:** John Welch, Chairman  
 Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman  
 Carrington Peralion, Commissioner  
 Larry Turnbow, Commissioner  
 Charlie Wallin, Commissioner  
 Andrea Capua, County Attorney  
 Deron Geouque, County Manager  
 Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 1, 2022, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Peralion, moved to approve the February 1, 2022, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5  
 Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Peralion, moved to approve the February 1, 2022, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5  
 Nay-0

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 15, 2022, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add the proposed donation of a K-9 under Sheriff's Office matters.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested to add an announcement prior to the Library's Report.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the February 15, 2022, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

### **APPALACHIAN REGIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM (ARHS) ANNOUNCEMENT**

Vice-Chairman Kennedy announced that the Appalachian Regional Healthcare System (ARHS) had performed a strategic study and a press release was released which stated that explorations were ongoing for future relationships allowing access to expand healthcare services and information technology.

### **WATAUGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT**

Ms. Monica Caruso, County Librarian, presented the Watauga County Public Library Annual Report. Ms. Caruso reported on continuing pandemic changes, youth and adult services, activities at the Western Watauga Branch, volunteer activities; and gave an overview of revenues and expenses, statistics, and grants received. The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

### **WATAUGA COUNTY SCHOOLS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) AND LOTTERY FUNDS REQUEST**

Ms. Ly Marze, Watauga County Schools Director of Finance, requested the release of \$300,000 from the State Education Lottery Fund and \$685,000 from the County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) reserve. The funds would be used for the following:

<b>Lottery Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Carpet & Tile Replacements	\$ 45,000
Replace Kitchen/Cafeteria Equipment	\$ 55,000
Gym Floors – Refinishing	\$ 20,000
Door/Window Replacements	\$ 20,000
Roof Renovations/Replacements	\$100,000
Retaining Wall -Bethel	\$ 50,000
Boiler System -Hardin Park	\$ 10,000

<b>CIP Reserves Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Pavement Repair/Resurface	\$160,000
Security Cameras	\$ 50,000
Mobile Unit - Hardin Park	\$150,000
HVAC/Sewer Pumps	\$ 25,000
1:1 Devices	\$300,000

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Peralion, moved to approve and release the State Education Lottery and County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) reserve funds as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

## **SHERIFF'S OFFICE MATTERS**

### ***A. Mobile Radio Purchase Request***

Major Redmon with the Watauga County Sheriff's Office requested authorization to purchase seven (7) new Motorola APX hand held dual band radios. The cost per radio was \$8,926.65 for a total cost of \$62,486.55. Two (2) of the seven (7) radios would be paid for by the County's insurance company from claims related to the April 28, 2021, incident. Adequate funds were included in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget to cover the remaining five (5) radios.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to authorize the purchase from Motorola Solutions for seven (7) new Motorola APX hand held dual band radios in the amount of \$62,486.55.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

### ***B. Radar Purchase Request***

Major Redmon requested the acceptance of a grant from the North Carolina Crime Commission for twelve (12) new Kustom Eagle 2 speed radars in the amount of \$19,140. No County match was required for the grant.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to accept the grant from the North Carolina Crime Commission and award Kustom Signals, Inc. the contract for twelve (12) new Kustom Eagle 2 speed radars in the amount of \$19,140.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

### ***C. Acceptance of K-9 Donation***

Major Redmon stated that Mr. Tim Fox wished to donate, to the Watauga County Sheriff's Office, a German Shepard puppy in honor and memory of his son, K-9 Handler Deputy Logan Fox. The K-9 was named "Fox" in memory of Deputy Fox. The K-9 would be deployed in the Patrol Division after the completion of training.

Commissioner Peralion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to accept the donation of K-9 "Fox" to the Watauga County Sheriff's Office.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

## **PROJECT ON AGING MATTERS**

### ***A. Additional Funds and Revised Allocation of FY 2022 Home & Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) Funds***

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, request the revision of the original allocation of the Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) due to additional funds available. The FY 22 allocation was \$294,548, which required a local match of \$32,728. The Project on Aging received additional H&CCBG funds with the final allocation of \$313,642 (+\$19,094) which required a local match of \$34,849 (+\$2,121). The current budget included funds for the local match. Ms. Boitnotte stated that the additional funds would be used for In-Home Aide Level II.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Peralion, moved to accept the additional funds and approve the revised Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) allocations as presented by Ms. Boitnotte.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

### ***B. Acceptance of the FY 2022 Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) Grant/Contract***

Ms. Angie Boitnotte requested acceptance of a Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) Grant from the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP). The grant was in the amount of \$4,007 with no local match required.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept MIPPA Grant funds in the amount of \$4,007 to expand low income subsidy outreach and supplies.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

## **TAX MATTERS**

### ***A. Monthly Collections Report***

County Manager Geouque, on behalf of Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of January 2022. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

### ***B. Refunds and Releases***

County Manager Geouque presented the Refunds and Releases Report for January 2022 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for January 2022 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

***C. Tax Lien Report***

County Manager Geouque reviewed the Tax Lien Report which was provided to the Board prior to the meeting and requested approval of the report and authorization to advertise the liens.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to accept the report listing delinquent tax bills that were liens on real property and to authorize the advertisement of such liens.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

**SOCIAL SERVICES LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIEAP) FUNDS**

County Manager Geouque, on behalf of Mr. Tom Hughes, Social Services Director, requested approval of additional funding from the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). The original authorization was \$200,000 with an increase of \$117,623 for a total amount of \$317,623.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the additional funding in the amount of \$117,623.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

**FINANCE MATTERS**

***A. Proposed Audit Contract for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022***

Ms. Watson requested approval of the Fiscal Year 2021-22 audit contract and engagement letter with C. Randolph CPA, PLLC. The contract amount of \$47,800 covered the annual audit. The amount was an increase of three percent for the third year of the agreement as was in the estimate. Adequate funds were available to cover the expenditure.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to accept the contract with C. Randolph, CPA, PLLC for the County's Fiscal Year 21-22 audit in an amount not to exceed \$47,800.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

***B. Proposed Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) Conflict of Interest Policy***

Ms. Watson stated that the County was awarded State Construction Infrastructure Funds (SCIF) grants for several projects in the County. As part of the award the County was required to adopt a Conflict of Interest Policy. Ms. Watson presented the proposed Policy.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the attached Conflict of Interest Policy as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

***C. Proposed Grant Project Ordinance Establishment and Maintenance of OSBM State Capital Infrastructure Fund***

Ms. Watson present a proposed project ordinance for the establishment and maintenance of OSBM state capital infrastructure funds in the amount of \$662,500.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to approve the project ordinance as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

**EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS**

***A. Proposed Sampson Tower Lease & VIPER Lease***

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, requested approval of a lease with the State of North Carolina for the Sampson Tower site. The State would utilize the site for VIPER communications and be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the equipment and tower.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to execute the lease with the State of North Carolina for the Sampson Tower site for VIPER communications.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

***B. Proposed Acceptance of Communications Grant on Behalf of NCEM***

Mr. Will Holt requested acceptance of the FY21 HSPG Grant as a subrecipient on behalf of North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) for improving the School Emergency Response Application (SERA) for use in all 100 Counties and the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. The grant was in the amount of \$144,011.10 and would be executed by NCEM.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to accept the HSPG Grant as a subrecipient on behalf of North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) in the amount of \$144,011.10.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0



## **MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

### ***A. Appointment of Finance Director***

*[Clerk's Note: This item was considered at the meeting under Finance Matters.]*

County Manager Geouque stated that, per the County's Other Post-Employment Benefits Agreement and North Carolina General Statutes, Ms. Misty Watson needed to be officially appointed as the County's Finance Director which served as the Trustee for the agreement. Ms. Watson's date of hire was June 2018.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to officially appoint Ms. Misty Watson as Watauga County Finance Director effective June 2018.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

### ***B. Announcements***

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Annual Pre-Budget Retreat was scheduled for Thursday, February 17, 2022, beginning at 12:00 P.M. and Friday, February 18, 2022, beginning at 9:00 A.M.
- Budget Work Sessions were scheduled for Thursday, May 12, 2022, beginning at 12:00 noon and Friday, May 13, 2022, beginning at 9:00 A.M.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Maria Matarazzo, a graduate student in social work, and Alice Salthouse, CEO of High Country Community Healthcare, both encouraged the Board to consider mental health issues when allocating funds received through the opioid lawsuit settlement.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

At 6:33 P.M., Commissioner Pertalion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:40 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

**POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION**

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the purchase of the property where the County's current Hwy 421 Container Site was located which was approximately 14.1 acres from Daniel Adam Doyle and Amena Aziz with funds for the \$125,000 purchase price and \$6,000 back lease payments to be allocated from the Sanitation Retained Earnings fund.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

**ADJOURN**

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Peralion, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5  
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:  
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

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**AGENDA ITEM 3:**

**APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 1, 2022, AGENDA**

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**AGENDA ITEM 4:**

**APPALACHIAN THEATRE UPDATE**

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

Keith Martin, Appalachian Theatre of the High Country (ATHC) Chair, will update the Board on the capital campaign for the ATHC.

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**AGENDA ITEM 5:**

**CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE**

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, will provide an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

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



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**AGENDA ITEM 6:**

**STATE OF EMERGENCY (SOE) UPDATE**

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

Mr. Deron Geouque, County Manager, will review the County's current State of Emergency (SOE).



**DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY**

**WHEREAS**, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has mutated with the variants more virulent causing rapid rises in cases placing pressure on the local healthcare system; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of the above-described emergency, I have determined that there is an imminent threat of, or existing conditions have caused or will cause, widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property, and public safety authorities will be unable to maintain public order or afford adequate protection for lives or property; and

**WHEREAS**, declaring a State of Emergency and imposing the restrictions and prohibitions ordered herein is necessary to maintain order and protect public health, safety, and welfare, and to secure property.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me as the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Watauga County under Article 1A of Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Watauga County Code of Ordinances:

**Section 1.** A State of Emergency is hereby declared within Watauga County as more particularly described in Section 2.

**Section 2.** The emergency area covered by this state of emergency shall be (*check box*):

- All areas within the jurisdiction of Watauga County
- The following specific areas within the jurisdiction of \_\_\_\_\_:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3.** The following restrictions and prohibitions are imposed:

- Evacuation:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Curfew:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Restricted Access:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Business Operations:** Private businesses are highly encouraged to follow current NC Department of Health and Human Services guidance.

**Alcohol:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dangerous Weapons & Gasoline (Except for lawfully possessed firearms and ammunition):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:** Face coverings are required in all County buildings and shall be required in areas where space or operations require close contact. Additional restrictions shall be enforced as imposed by the Governor of North Carolina by Executive Order 117 and subsequent Executive Orders as applicable.

**No restrictions or prohibitions are imposed at this time.**

**Section 4.** I hereby order all Watauga County Sheriff’s Office law enforcement officers and employees and all other emergency management personnel subject to our control to cooperate in the enforcement and implementation of the provisions of this Declaration, all applicable local ordinances, state and federal laws, and the Watauga County Emergency Operations Plan.

**Section 5.** I hereby order this declaration: (a) to be distributed to the news media and other organizations calculated to bring its contents to the attention of the general public; (b) to be filed with Clerk to the County Commissioners; and (c) to be distributed to others as necessary to ensure proper implementation of this declaration.

**Section 6.** This declaration shall take effect on August 18, 2021 at 5:00 PM and shall remain in effect until modified or rescinded.

**DECLARED** this the August 17, 2021 at 6:00 PM



\_\_\_\_\_  
*John Welch*  
*Chairman, Watauga County Commissioners*

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**AGENDA ITEM 7:**

**2022 REVALUATION UPDATE**

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

Mr. Warren and Ryan Vincent, Vincent Valuations, will provide an update on the 2022 Revaluation process. Mr. Vincent will provide a PowerPoint presentation that was not available at the time of the preparation of your packet.

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

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**AGENDA ITEM 8:**

**REQUESTED ALLOCATION FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT**

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections/EDC Director, will request the Board approve \$10,000 for the inaugural "Boonerang Music and Arts Festival," planned for June 18, 2022. The EDC Board approved the request at their meeting. The funds would come from the Economic Development Capital Reserve Account.

Board action is required to approve the release of \$10,000 from the Economic Development Capital Reserve for the "Boonerang Music and Arts Festival."





030122 BCC Meeting  
PO Box 404

Boone, NC 28607

(828)264-3082 (p)

(828)265-8080 (f)

TTY – Use 711

[www.WataugaEDC.org](http://www.WataugaEDC.org)

## Memorandum

Date: February 22, 2022

To: Board of Commissioners, County Manager

From: Joe Furman 

RE: Allocation from Economic Development Capital Reserve account

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On February 10th, the Economic Development Commission voted to provide seed money in the amount of \$10,000 for the inaugural "Boonerang Music and Arts Festival", planned for June 18, 2022. Information is attached. The EDC requests that the source of funding be the Economic Development Capital Reserve account. The funds will not be used for personnel expenses. Approval of the Board of Commissioners is required. Additional funding support is being provided by the Town of Boone, the Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA), and the Boone TDA.

**APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM WATAUGA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

Organization: **Town of Boone, along with Watauga County Arts Council**

Date of application: **February 2, 2022**

Primary contact: **Mark Freed**

Phone: **828.268.6282**

Email: **mark.freed@townofboone.net**

Mailing Address: **PO Drawer 192 – Boone, NC 28607**

Physical Address if different: **604 W. King St. – Boone, NC 28607**

Project name: **Boonerang Music & Arts Festival**

**Timeframe for the Project with estimated date of completion: Preparations are in place now and will continue until the event, scheduled to be held June 18, 2022. Some promotional aspects of the project will continue after the festival, as we prepare materials for Boonerang 2023.**

Total Amount of the Project (attach budget): **\$70,000**

Amount requested from Watauga County EDC (attach budget): **\$10,000**

- I. Approved projects must improve the local and regional economy in one or more of the following ways:
  - attracting or creating investment to expand the tax base;
  - increasing jobs, wages, and personal incomes; and
  - increasing the overall economic impact of the activities or programs; while preserving the heritage and enhancing the quality of life of Watauga County's citizens.
- II. Describe how this project meets one or more of the priorities listed above.

**Boonerang Music & Arts Festival, scheduled for June 18, 2022, will bring thousands of people to downtown Boone for a celebration of Boone-focused art. The endearing term "Boonerang" is used for people who leave Boone, only to find themselves returning. With this theme in mind, Boonerang will focus on bands and artists with Boone connections, and the festival will provide great opportunities for Boone-based businesses and organizations to get involved. We will invite citizens and visitors alike to Boonerang for a weekend in the High Country; a community homecoming.**

The official Boonerang festival will take place on June 18, from noon to 8 p.m., and it will be free for people to attend. In addition to the official festival happenings, we will promote events happening on Friday, June 17 (like the Jones House Summer Concert); events happening before and after the festival hours on June 18 (like the Watauga County Farmer's Market in the morning, and all of the nightlife after the festival); and Juneteenth events happening on June 19. It will make for an excellent weekend.

Because we are planning for the festival to be an annual event, Boonerang will create a number of opportunities for investment and expanding the tax base. For example, as you will see in the attached letter, Booneshine plans to can a new beer called "Boonerang." Their commitment to can the new beer speaks to the potential longevity of opportunities around this event. This is also a time of year when hotels and rentals are not typically at full occupancy. The university is on summer break and the summer-to-fall tourism season has not yet hit its stride. The festival will offer hotels, restaurants, and retail shops an extra late-spring boost ahead of the summer.

As part of the festival budget, we are planning to work with many local businesses, including Haynes Productions for sound engineering; MPrints for apparel; GoPostal for some printing needs; Jump Boone for inflatables; Boone Rent-All for some grounds needs; local restaurants for hospitality, and local establishments for lodging. We are also planning to utilize several thousand dollars of the budget to directly pay local people to work the event. And, there are several Boone-area bands that will be included on the performance schedule.

In addition to the economic impact of Boonerang, the focus of the festival is on Boone and Boone-based artists and traditions. The inaugural festival is taking place as part of Boone's Sesquicentennial celebration. All of the performing bands are from Boone or have a Boone-based connection, and we will work to celebrate our local artists in the handmade market.

When we talk with the public, people are very excited about a new street festival, and people smile when they hear the name "Boonerang." The festival will be free for the public to attend. We will have a Kids Zone at the library, beer gardens near the stages, and fun activities for people of all ages. Boonerang will help add to the quality of life in Boone, Watauga County, and the High Country, and we anticipate it coming around year after year.

III. Provide a list of other funding sources beyond the Watauga County EDC

Boonerang brings a number of agencies, businesses, and organizations together for support, including the following:

- The Town of Boone is contributing \$30,000 from the Cultural Resources Department.
- The Boone Tourism Development Authority (TDA) is contributing \$10,000.

- **The Downtown Boone Development Association (DBDA) is contributing \$10,000.**
- **Private sponsorships have been secured for \$5,000 to date.**
- **We anticipate another \$5,000 from individual and business sponsorships.**
- **In addition to direct funding, we have had planning support from many partners, including the Watauga County Arts Council, The Boone TDA, Watauga County Public Library, Boone Chamber, Appalachian State University, High Country Press, Booneshine, Lost Province, and the Downtown Boone Development Association. We will be reaching out to more local agencies, organizations, and businesses as planning continues.**

If applicant is a Start Up, the EDC requires a business plan & 3 year pro-forma, financial statements and/or other pertinent financial documents and information

If applicant is an existing business, the EDC requires financial statements and/or other pertinent financial documents and information.

Please submit relevant documents to substantiate information provided above.

Thank you for your interest in supporting the economic growth of Watauga County.

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**AGENDA ITEM 9:**

**ANCIENT OAKS PRESERVE SUBDIVISION PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE**

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

Pursuant to Chapter 18, Article VIII, Section 3 of the Planning & Development Ordinance, the developer of Ancient Oaks Preserve is requesting Board of Commissioners' approval of a cash deposit of \$5,040.00, which is the estimated cost of gravel needed to finish the road, plus 20% as specified in the ordinance.

Board action is required to accept the cash deposit of \$5,040.00, which is the estimated cost of gravel needed to finish the road, plus 20% as specified in the ordinance.



# WATAUGA COUNTY

126 Poplar Grove Connector, Suite 201 Boone, NC 28607

Department of  
Planning & Inspections

Phone (828) 265-8043  
TTY 1-800-735-2962  
Voice 1-800-735-8262  
or 711  
FAX (828) 265-8080

## Memorandum

Date: February 22, 2022  
To: Board of Commissioners, County Manager  
From: Joe Furman   
RE: Subdivision performance guarantee

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On February 21<sup>st</sup>, the Planning Board gave final plat approval for Ancient Oaks Preserve, a small subdivision located on Laurel Branch Road. Pursuant to Chapter 18, Article VIII, Section 3 of the Planning & Development Ordinance, the developer proposes to provide a cash deposit of \$5040.00, which is the estimated cost of gravel needed to finish the road, plus 20% as specified in the ordinance. The ordinance states that the guarantee must be satisfactory to the Board of Commissioners. Accordingly, I request approval of the Commissioners on March 1, 2022.

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**AGENDA ITEM 10:**

**PROPOSED AGREEMENT ON POTENTIAL VALLE CRUCIS SCHOOL BORROWING**

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

The County will need to approve the engagement letter with Parker Poe for services provided for the financing of the debt for the new Valle Crucis Elementary School. The County Attorney has reviewed the engagement letter. The County has utilized Parker Poe for previous financing projects and was satisfied with the services provided.

Staff recommends the Board approve the engagement letter with Parker Poe for the financing of debt for the new Valle Crucis Elementary School.





# WATAUGA COUNTY

## FINANCE OFFICE

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814 West King St., Room 216 - Boone, NC 28607 - Phone (828) 265-8007 Fax (828) 265-8006

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Deron T. Geouque, County Manager  
**FROM:** Misty Watson, Finance Director  
**SUBJECT:** Agreement on potential Valle Crucis School Borrowing  
**DATE:** February 17, 2022

Attached please find an agreement for the potential Valle Crucis School borrowing to name Bond Counsel to represent the County specifically in the borrowing process.

Scott Leo with Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP has served as Bond Counsel for Watauga County's previous public borrowings. The County has received excellent service and staff requests approval of the attached contract for a lump sum payment of \$60,000. This fee is inclusive of all incidentals and travel expenses.

Adequate funds for these agreements have been identified as part of the Valle Crucis School Project budget. Board approval is requested.



Atlanta, GA  
 Charleston, SC  
 Charlotte, NC  
 Columbia, SC  
 Greenville, SC  
 Raleigh, NC  
 Spartanburg, SC  
 Washington, DC

February 9, 2022

**Via E-mail**

Misty Watson  
 Finance Director  
 County of Watauga, NC  
 Misty.Watson@watgov.org

***Limited Obligation Bonds, Series 2022  
 (County of Watauga, North Carolina)  
 (the “Bonds”)***

Dear Misty:

Thank you for asking Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein, LLP (the “*Firm*”) to serve as bond counsel for the County of Watauga, North Carolina for the above-described Bonds.

**Scope of Engagement.** Our understanding is that the County intends to enter into an installment financing and cause the Watauga Public Facilities Corporation (the “*Corporation*”) to issue approximately \$35,000,000 principal amount of the Bonds in Fall 2022 to assist the County in financing the costs of the construction of an elementary school. The Bonds will be publicly sold pursuant to a negotiated underwriting and the County plans to use Robert W. Baird & Co. Inc., as underwriter for the Bonds. As bond counsel, the Firm will provide certain legal services for the Bonds and, assuming certain requirements are met, provide an opinion as to the validity of the Bonds and the federal and state tax treatment of the interest on the Bonds, subject to usual and customary exceptions. Specifically, our services include:

1. participation in meetings with County staff and, to the extent deemed necessary by the County staff, with the Board of Commissioners, in structuring the legal aspects of the financing;
2. preparation of the Indenture of Trust, Installment Financing Contract and Deed of Trust, as necessary, related to the issuance and security for the Bonds and various resolutions relating to the authorization, execution and delivery of the Bonds;
3. preparation of all other papers required as a condition precedent to the execution and delivery of the Bonds;

Misty Watson  
February 9, 2022  
Page 2

4. assistance to the County with respect to matters before the Local Government Commission and the rating agencies;
5. participation with underwriter's counsel and the underwriter in the drafting of the documents for the sale of the Bonds; and
6. delivery of an opinion as to the validity of the Bonds and the federal and state tax treatment of the interest on the Bonds, subject to usual and customary exceptions.

The County and the Corporation will be represented by the County Attorney with respect to all material matters, if any, as between the underwriters of the Bonds, the County and the Corporation. The Firm does not represent to any other party involved in this transaction with respect to the Bonds. The scope of the legal services that Parker Poe will provide may be expanded during the course of this engagement pursuant to communications establishing a specific mutual understanding of the services the Firm is to perform.

**Advance Waiver of Conflicts.** The Bonds are expected to be sold on a negotiated basis to Robert W. Baird & Co. Inc., as underwriter for the Bonds, pursuant to the terms of a bond purchase agreement. We want to make you aware that our firm has represented, may currently represent and could represent in the future, the underwriter for the Bonds. Because the County is represented in this transaction by the County Attorney, and the County Attorney shall serve as the County's counsel with respect to all material matters, if any, as between the underwriter, the County and the Corporation, we do not consider our role as bond counsel to the County to create a conflict of interest. However, we are requesting that the County waive any potential conflict of interest that may arise. If any issues arise that we believe create a genuine conflict of interest, we will immediately inform you and work with the County Attorney to resolve the matter consistent with our ethical responsibilities.

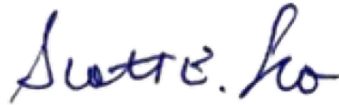
**Staffing and Legal Fees.** I will be the County's primary contact for our Firm's work on the Bonds with support from Kristen Provenza and our tax partner, Mike Larsen. The Firm will provide services as bond counsel for the Bonds for a fee of \$60,000.

**Standard Terms of Engagement.** Additional information regarding fees and other important matters is set forth in the enclosed Standard Terms of Engagement, which are incorporated as part of this letter. Please review this letter and the Standard Terms of Engagement carefully.

Misty Watson  
February 9, 2022  
Page 3

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to serve as bond counsel for the County of Watauga for the Bonds. **If the provisions set forth above are consistent with your understanding, please sign below, keep a copy of the letter for yourself and return a scanned original to us for our records.**

Sincerely,



Scott E. Leo

Accepted:

County of Watauga, North Carolina

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name:

Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PARKER POE ADAMS & BERNSTEIN LLP**  
**STANDARD TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT REGARDING LEGAL REPRESENTATION**

1. Scope of Work and Limitations. The scope of our work and the limitations on the services to be performed will be in accordance with the Engagement Letter.
2. No Guaranteed or Contingent Outcome. While we will perform our professional services on behalf of the client to the best of our ability under the circumstances, we cannot and have not made any guarantees regarding the outcome of our professional efforts. Any expressions about the possible outcome of the matter or the results achievable are our best professional estimates only, and are limited by our knowledge at the time they are expressed.
3. Communications. As requested, we will send to the client copies of pertinent correspondence, documents and other materials prepared or received by us in the course of the representation. The client is encouraged to contact us as to any questions or comments regarding the services, fees, or status of the matter or as to any pertinent facts or considerations which may come to the attention of the client. Material information and documents received by the client should be forwarded to the firm without delay.
4. Attorney Assignment. Each client will have an attorney who shall have primary responsibility for the client's matters. When appropriate, work on the client's matters may be assigned to other attorneys in the firm who have a sufficient level of experience and time availability to handle competently and efficiently portions or all of the client's matters. In addition, assistance of non-attorney support personnel under the direct supervision of firm attorneys may be required, as appropriate.
5. Confidentiality. The firm will protect the confidence of the client and will not divulge confidential information concerning the client's business or legal matters, as required by the Rules of Professional Conduct. However, we understand that, unless you advise us to the contrary, you do not object to our mentioning to others our representation of you or our listing of your name as one of our clients in professional literature or in material published about this law firm.
6. Conclusion of Representation: Retention and Disposition of Documents. Unless previously terminated, our representation of the client in this matter will conclude upon our sending the client our final statement for services rendered in the matter. At its request, the client's documents and property will be returned to it, although we reserve the right to copy any documents we deem appropriate. Our files and documents pertaining to the matter will be retained by the firm. For various reasons, including the minimization of unnecessary storage expenses, and consistent with applicable professional conduct rules, we reserve the right to destroy or otherwise dispose of any such documents or other materials retained by us 5 years after the termination of the engagement, without further notice to the client.
7. Termination. The firm reserves the right to withdraw from representing the client upon written notice at any time, with or without cause. Likewise, the client may terminate the firm's services prospectively upon written notice to the firm. If the client terminates the firm's services or elects not to consummate the financing, the firm and the client will mutually agree at that time on appropriate compensation based on the amount of time the firm has spent on the matter to that date.

**AGENDA ITEM 11:**

**MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

*A. Habitat for Humanity Road Request*

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

The Board previously had discussions with Habitat for Humanity regarding assistance from the County with a new road to provide additional housing sites for construction. The discussion focused around the use of County forces as was previously done in lieu of a monetary contribution. Due to staffing shortages the County was/is unable to provide an in-kind services match. Habitat is requesting a \$20,000 match for assistance with the road construction.

Staff seeks direction from the Board.

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**AGENDA ITEM 11:**

**MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

***B. Boards and Commissions***

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

***Tourism Development Authority (TDA)***

The terms of Mr. Tony Gray and Ms. Kim Rogers will expire February 28, 2022. One of these seats must be occupied by someone representing a business that collects occupancy tax in Watauga County. The other seat does not have a restriction. Both are willing to continue to serve an additional three-year term if reappointed. These are first readings and, therefore, no action is required.



**Volunteer Application  
Watauga County Boards And Commissions**

If you are a Watauga County resident, at least 18 years old, and willing to volunteer your time and expertise to your community, please complete the application below and click on Print Form. Please sign and mail or fax to:

*Watauga County Commissioners' Office  
814 West King Street, Suite 205  
Boone, NC 28607  
Phone: (828) 265-8000  
Fax: (828) 264-3230*

Name: Kim J. Rogers  
Home Address: 404 Heritage Drive  
City: Boone Zip: 28607  
Telephone: (H) 828-262-9999 (W) 828-295-9888 (Fax) 828-295-6241  
Email: kim@jenkinsrealtors.com  
Place of Employment: Jenkins Realtors, Inc.  
Job Title: Owner/Broker

In Order To Assure County wide Representation Please Indicate Your Township Of Residence:

- |                                     |                                    |  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Bald Mountain | <input type="radio"/> Stony Fork   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Watauga |
| <input type="radio"/> New River     | <input type="radio"/> Brushy Fork  | <input type="radio"/> Cove Creek         |
| <input type="radio"/> Beaver Dam    | <input type="radio"/> Meat Camp    | <input type="radio"/> Shawneehaw         |
| <input type="radio"/> Blue Ridge    | <input type="radio"/> Blowing Rock | <input type="radio"/> Laurel Creek       |
| <input type="radio"/> Elk           | <input type="radio"/> North Fork   | <input type="radio"/> Boone              |

In addition, Please Indicate If You Live In One Of The Following Areas:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Foscoe-Grandfather Community   | <input type="radio"/> Valle Crucis Historic District |
| <input type="radio"/> Howards Creek Watershed        | <input type="radio"/> Winklers Creek Watershed       |
| <input type="radio"/> South Fork New River Watershed | <input type="radio"/> Extraterritorial Area          |

We Ask Your Help In Assuring Diversity Of Membership By Age, Gender, And Race, By Answering The Following Questions

- |   |  |                                |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                           | <b>Ethnic Background</b>                   |                                |
| <input type="radio"/> Male              | <input type="radio"/> African American     | <input type="radio"/> Hispanic |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Female | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Caucasian | <input type="radio"/> Other    |
|   | <input type="radio"/> Native American      |                                |

Please List (In Order Of Preference) The Boards/Commissions On Which You Would Be Willing To Serve.

1. Watauga County Tourism Development Authority
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



Volunteer Application  
Watauga County Boards And Commissions

If you are a Watauga County resident, at least 18 years old, and willing to volunteer your time and expertise to your community, please complete the application below and click on Print Form.  
Please sign and mail or fax to:

Watauga County Commissioners' Office  
814 West King Street, Suite 205  
Boone, NC 28607  
Phone: (828) 265-8000  
Fax: (828) 264-3230

Name: ANTONY GRAY (TONY)  
Home Address: 524 HARRISON ROAD  
City: BOONE Zip: 28607  
Telephone: (H) 264-9123 (W) N/A (Fax) N/A  
Email: GRAYAI@BELLSOUTH.NET  
Place of Employment: APPALACHIAN STATE UNI. (RETIRED)  
Job Title: DIR. CONFERENCES AND INSTITUTES

In Order To Assure County wide Representation Please Indicate Your Township Of Residence:

- |   |                                    |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Bald Mountain         | <input type="radio"/> Stony Fork   | <input type="radio"/> Watauga      |
| <input type="radio"/> New River             | <input type="radio"/> Brushy Fork  | <input type="radio"/> Cove Creek   |
| <input type="radio"/> Beaver Dam            | <input type="radio"/> Meat Camp    | <input type="radio"/> Shawneehaw   |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Blue Ridge | <input type="radio"/> Blowing Rock | <input type="radio"/> Laurel Creek |
| <input type="radio"/> Elk                   | <input type="radio"/> North Fork   | <input type="radio"/> Boone        |

In addition, Please Indicate If You Live In One Of The Following Areas:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Foscoe-Grandfather Community   | <input type="radio"/> Valle Crucis Historic District |
| <input type="radio"/> Howards Creek Watershed        | <input type="radio"/> Winklers Creek Watershed       |
| <input type="radio"/> South Fork New River Watershed | <input type="radio"/> Extraterritorial Area          |

We Ask Your Help In Assuring Diversity Of Membership By Age, Gender, And Race, By Answering The Following Questions

- |                                       |  |                                |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Gender                                | Ethnic Background                          |                                |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Male | <input type="radio"/> African American     | <input type="radio"/> Hispanic |
| <input type="radio"/> Female          | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Caucasian | <input type="radio"/> Other    |
|                                       | <input type="radio"/> Native American      |                                |

Please List (In Order Of Preference) The Boards/Commissions On Which You Would Be Willing To Serve.

1. Watauga County Tourism Development Authority 
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Application  
Watauga County Boards And Commissions  
(Continued)

Please list any work, volunteer, and/or other experience you would like to have considered in the review of your application.

SEE ATTACHED

Work  
Experience:

SEE ATTACHED

Volunteer  
Experience:

SEE ATTACHED

Other  
Experience:

Other  
Comments:

I HAVE SERVED ON THE WATAUGA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT BOARD SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2006 AND AM VERY PROUD OF THE MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE PROMOTION OF OUR GREAT COUNTY AND THE PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR NATURAL RESOURCES THAT BENEFIT THE VISITORS WHO COME HERE TO STRENGTHEN OUR ECONOMY AND THE RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES OF THE TOWN AND COUNTY. I WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE THE PRIVILEGE FOR ANOTHER TERM

Signature:

*Antony L. Gray*

Date:

*2-16-22*

Print Form

Reset Form

Tony Gray  
524 Harrison Road  
Boone, NC 28607

**Education:**

1989 – Appalachian State University; ED.S. Adult Education

1967 – Appalachian State Teachers College; M.A. Degree, Major: Health Physical Education and Recreation; Minor: Junior College Administration and Supervision

1966 – Appalachian State Teachers College; B.S. Degree, Major: Health Physical Education and Recreation; Minor: Biology

**Experience:**

1972 – 2002 – Director, Office of Conferences and Institutes, Division of Continuing Education (Retired with 35 Years Service)

1971 – 1972 – Instructor of Health Physical Education and Recreation, Appalachian State University

1969 – 1971 – Assistant Basketball Coach and Instructor of Health Physical Education and Recreation, Appalachian State University

1967 – 1969 – Assistant Basketball Coach and Resident Manager of High Rise Residence Hall, Appalachian State University

1966 – 1967 – Assistant Basketball Coach and Resident Manager of High Rise Residence Hall as a Graduate Student, Appalachian State University

**Professional Organizations:**

American Camping Association, Association of Experiential Education, North Carolina State Employees Association, National University Continuing Education Association, North Carolina Adult Education Association, Association for Continuing Higher Education

Association of Collegiate Conference and Events Directors International 1980 – 2003  
Regional Director 1988-89; Board of Directors 1989 – 97 & 1998 – 2002; President Elect, President and Immediate Past President – 1992 – 95; Chairman Hospitality Committee 1992 Annual Conference; Chairman Education Committee 1989 – 1993 (Developed ACCED-I Certification Program); Chairman Scholarship Committee 1989 & 1995- 2002; Chairman Resource Center Advisory Committee 1994 – 95; Chairman Economic Impact Task Force Committee 1994 – 97; Committees served on: Scholarship Committee, Awards and Recognition Committee, Annual conference Site Selection Committee, Regional Development Committee, Annual Conference Committee, Future Directions Task Force, Publications committee, Electronic communication Committee, Foundation

Scholarship Committee, New Member Recruitment Project Team, and CCEP Advisory Committee

**Civic Activities:**

Member First Presbyterian Church of Boone 1967 – Present), has served on the Board of Deacons, Men of the Church, Church Council, and currently serving as a Ruling Elder Moderator of Capital Improvements Committee and Building and Grounds 2002-2005

Boone Area Chamber of Commerce 1974 – 2002 – Board of Directors, Vice President for Community Affairs 1984, Vice President for Business Affairs 1987 – 88, President and Chairman of the Board 1985 – 86, Chairman ASU Discover Boone Business Fair 1989 – 90, Chairman Ambassadors Program 1990, Member of the Travel and Tourism Committee and Business Affairs Committee 1989 – 90, Vice President for Tourism and Convention Development 1991 – 2001.

North Carolina High Country Host 1980 – 2001; Board of Directors 1985 - 2001; Chairman Advertising and Publicity Committee 1982-86; Chairman Area Guide Map Project 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990; participated in the 1984 North Carolina Trade Mission to Florida; Chairman of Hunting, Fishing, Hiking Guide and NCHCH General Brochure; Executive Committee Member at Large 1988-89; Treasure 1989 – 90, 1995 – 2001, Second Vice President 1990 – 91

Watauga County Recreation Commission from inception to 1982 and 1988 – 1994

Member Boone Jaycees 1972 - 1980 (Offices Held – Internal Director, Internal Vice President, President and two terms as Chairman of the Board

Appalachian State University Former Athletes Association member 1985 – 2007; Board of Directors 1988 –Present; Chairman of Alumni Basketball Game 1986 – 89, President and Chairman of the Board 1992- 93, Chairman of the Hall of Fame Committee 1999 – 2002; Chairman of Annual Major Fund Raiser 1992 – 2005

Appalachian State University Yosef Club 1967 – Present

Watauga High School Boosters Club 1985 – 1990

High Country Senior Games Board of Directors and Executive Committee 1989 - 90, Chairman of the Facilities Committee

Coach Junior Girls Softball 1985 – 89, All Star Coach 1986 – 88

Coach Women’s Recreation League Softball Team 1990 – 2001

Boy Scouts of America, sustaining Membership Drive 1985 – 1993  
Boone Jaycees and Watauga County Junior Champ Track and Field Day Event Coordinator 1982 – 1997

Habitat for Humanity Work Team 2003 – 2005

Watauga County Tourism Development Authority March 2006 to Present (Vice Chairman)

Watauga County Humane Society Capital Campaign (In-kind Contributions) 2004 – 2005

**Awards and Honors:**

Elected Mr. Appalachian by Student body 1966; Appalachian Basketball Awards – MVP 1966, All NAIA District 26 -- 1966, Honorable Mention Small College All American 1966, All Carolinas Conference 1965 & 1966, All Tournament 1966, Served as Co-Captain 1965 – 66

Boone Jaycee – Freedom Guard 1973, Speak-up 1973, Presidential Award of Honor 1974, Keyman II 1976, Outstanding Young Men of America 1975, Spark Plug of the Year 1977, Jaycee of the Year 1976 & 1977, Nominee for Five Outstanding Men in North Carolina 1979, Watauga County Distinguished Service Award 1979

Watauga County Heart Association – Founders Award 1977, Achievement Recognition Award 1979, Bronze Service award 1981, Silver Service Award 1983

Watauga High School Booster Club – Distinguished Service Award for Fund Raising 1989

Boone Area Chamber of Commerce – Special Service Award 1992, Ben Suttle Distinguished Service Award 1994

Appalachian State University Athletic Department – Jackson A. Branch Volunteer Service Award 2002

Appalachian State University Former Athletes Association Special Service Award - 2005

Association Of Collegiate Conference and Events Directors International – Outstanding Individual Achievement Award 1990, Earned Collegiate Conference and Events Director Certification 1997, Jack Thornton Distinguished Service Award 1997, Accepted the Outstanding Institutional Achievement Award on behalf of Appalachian State University for its role in the Economic Impact Study 1998, Lifetime Honorary Membership in ACCED-I 2003

**AGENDA ITEM 11:**

**MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

*C. Announcements*

**MANAGER’S COMMENTS:**

A four-session series to discuss the safety, accessibility, and affordability of housing in Watauga County will be held in March and April 2022. Information on the series is included in the packet.

Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for Thursday, May 12, 2022, beginning at 12:00 noon and Friday, May 13, 2022, beginning at 9:00 A.M.





## **Watauga Housing Forum Series**

*Building a Resilient and Thriving Community for All*

*March 14, March 28, April 11, April 25*

**Boone, NC: February 1, 2022:** Recognizing the growing concerns around housing in Watauga County, a diverse group of community members and key agencies are hosting a four-session series to discuss the safety, accessibility, and affordability of housing in Watauga.

Each session will feature community members sharing their personal housing experiences, will review key local housing data among participants, and will involve the community in brainstorming, discussing, and planning action steps.

In order to provide adequate time to explore and discuss each specific housing issue, forum sessions will be held every two weeks, beginning at 5:30 p.m., to allow for anyone in the community to participate. The Watauga Housing Forum will take place on the second and fourth Mondays in March and April with a different focus during each session. The schedule is as follows: March 14, Safety of Housing; March 28 Accessibility of Housing; April 11, Affordability of Housing and April 25, Potential Solutions.

“The conversation around housing related issues has been going on for decades in Watauga County, and its impacts can be felt across the vast majority of our socio-economic landscape,” states David Jackson, Boone Area Chamber of Commerce president and CEO. “Simply said, it should be easier to live and thrive in this community.

Continues Jackson, “Many leaders have worked at this over time with the best of intentions, only to find the roadblocks too challenging to overcome. What excites me most about where we are now is that this conversation is not being driven by any one group, rather a collaboration of families, students, thought leaders, government officials, and concerned citizens. Kellie Reed Ashcraft has done an amazing job bringing together a couple of dozen groups that were all trying to tackle the same problem.”

The collaboration includes AppHealthCare, Q’Pasa Appalachia, Hospitality House of Northwest N.C., Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, Watauga County Schools, Western Youth Network, Appalachian Regional Healthcare System, Boone Fair Housing Task Force, Hunger and Health Coalition, F.A.R.M. Cafe, The Children’s Playhouse, Watauga County Parks and Recreation, The Mediation and Restorative Justice Center, W.A.M.Y., WCCI - Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative, Watauga Habitat for Humanity, The

“I have been a community member and community-practice social worker for twenty-three years and have had the privilege of working with many diverse organizations and staff over those years on different issues,” states series facilitator Kellie Reed Ashcraft. “I have always been proud of the collaborative nature of our community. Even so, I have never been more excited than I am now with the power of so many factions coming together to make a very real difference when it comes to the ‘wicked problem’ of housing.”

“Safe, healthy, and affordable housing is essential for a high-quality community to thrive,” adds Watauga County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. [Scott Elliott](#). “This Forum brings together all the different perspectives essential to understanding our needs and finding creative and sustainable solutions.”

Anyone who is concerned or curious about housing is encouraged to attend either in-person or virtually. The sessions will be held at the Watauga Community Recreation Center and will be streamed live via Zoom for virtual attendees.

There is no charge to attend; however, in order to prepare adequate space both in-person and virtually, registration is required. Registration is now open at [wataugahousingforum.org](http://wataugahousingforum.org) and individual registrations are necessary for each of the four unique sessions.

For those attending in-person a light box dinner from F.A.R.M. Café will be provided. Additionally, concessions will be open at the Recreation Center with snacks, candy, and soda available for purchase. In-person attendees will be required to show proof of up-to-date vaccination status, including the booster, and must wear a provided KN95 mask at all times when not eating or drinking. Anyone uncomfortable attending in person is strongly encouraged to register and attend virtually.

For local businesses and organizations looking to get involved, sponsorship opportunities exist to help underwrite the cost of the dinners. Sponsorships are 100% tax deductible and can be made at [wataugahousingforum.org](http://wataugahousingforum.org) or by texting WHF to (828) 332-5488. For additional information about sponsorship opportunities please email Hospitality House of Northwest N.C. chief director of development Todd Carter at [todd@hosphouse.org](mailto:todd@hosphouse.org)

Reed Ashcraft adds, “We have amazing community assets, deep relationships, and the long-term commitment of many here in the community to create transformative and lasting change related to housing for all of our residents--this truly will lead to a more resilient, vibrant and thriving community!”

For additional inquiries or information, please email Kellie Reed Ashcraft at [kellie@wataugahousingforum.org](mailto:kellie@wataugahousingforum.org)

**AGENDA ITEM 12:**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM 13:**

**BREAK**

**AGENDA ITEM 14:**

**CLOSED SESSION**

Attorney/Client Matters – G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3)