

# **Ashe County**

*150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640*



## **Meeting Minutes - Draft**

**Monday, June 2, 2025**

**11:00 AM**

**BUDGET SESSION**

**Second Floor Conference Room**

### **County Commission**

*Chairperson Todd McNeill  
Vice Chair Jerry D. Powers  
Commissioner Russell Killen  
Commissioner Wes Greene  
Commissioner Mike Eldreth*

**BUDGET SESSION****I. 11:00 AM - Meeting Called to Order at the Ashe County Courthouse****PRES 25-83 11:00AM - Jennifer Greene, MPH Health Director/CEO AppHealthCare**

*Jennifer Greene, MPH Health Director/CEO AppHealthCare was present today to discuss Ashe County Updates. Jennifer talked in length on organizational highlights such as Public health response team mobilization during Hurricane Helene, the Mobile Clinic launch in the near future, phase 2 of renovations at the Ashe County Health Department. She also spoke on Environmental Health, Communicable diseases, Clinical services and budget considerations for the FY 25/26.*

**PRES 25-84 1:00 PM - Tracie McMillan, Ashe DSS Director**

*Tracie McMillan, Ashe DSS Director presented a Program Overview and DSS Budget for FY 25/26. Tracie spoke on Provided Services, the effect of DSS funds on the community, the DSS staff, resources and funding streams. She talked about food and nutrition services, Medical Assistance, Medicaid, Adult Protective services and Adult services. She discussed Child Welfare Services, Child Support Services, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Emergency Assistance, Benefit Diversion, Work First Services and Energy Programs. Tracie discussed in detail with Commissioners continued funding for Disaster Case Management.*

**PRES 25-85 2:00 PM - Deaett Roten, Register of Deeds**

*Deaett Roten, Register of Deeds accompanied by Beth Brooke, Vital Records discussed with Commissioners her request for an additional position in the Register of Deeds office and possible future staff changes. She explained the increasing workload and importance of accuracy.*

**MISC 25-13 4:00 PM - Commissioners Meet with the Ashe County School Board**

*Commissioners recessed today's Budget Session at 3:30 pm to attend a joint meeting with the Ashe County Board of Education set to begin at 4:00 pm. Josh Roten BOE Chairman called their meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Those in attendance were School Superintendent Dr. Eisa Cox, Board of Education members Dianne Eldreth, Vice Chairman, Polly Jones, Teresa Calhoun, and Janet Ward. Ashe County Commissioners Chairman Todd McNeill, Vice Chairman Jerry Powers, Commissioner Russell Killen, Commissioner Wes Greene and Commissioner Mike Eldreth. Also present was County Manager Adam Stumb, Sandy Long, Ashe County Finance Officer, Nick Farmerie, Community Development Director & Assistant County Manager and Missy Seivers, Clerk to the Board of Commissioners as well as others. The purpose of this joint meeting was to discuss the current Middle School roof issues and to hear a presentation from Terracon representatives on their assessment of the MS roof. Dr. Cox began by saying that Terracon had been selected to navigate the roofing project. Giving the presentation was Vu Nguyen, Senior Project Manager, and Stewart Swing, Senior Project Manager with Terracon. An assortment of photos of the roof were shown and a lengthy discussion was held. Topics presented and discussed were an overview of Terracon's investigation of existing roof conditions and openings, options and benefits of roof replacement such as Single Ply vs Modified. Cost Estimates for the different options was also discussed by Commissioners with Vu Nguyen and Stewart S. Swing and the School Board. They discussed Project Considerations and the Design and Construction Timeline. Speaking*

to Vu Nguyen and Stewart S. Swing, Commissioner Greene asked about a timeline with Roof Option 1, Commissioner Powers asked about warranties and discussed 20 year and 30 year warranties. School Board Member Diane Eldreth stated she was through with delays and wants the work completed ASAP. Other School Board members discussed the project timeline and the bidding process. Commissioner Greene asked about the possibility of using mobile classrooms while repairs were being made. With the estimated cost of the roof repairs between \$1.5 million and \$2.1 million, Commissioners discussed the School Board paying half the cost of the repairs and they replied that they could not pay half. School Board voted to move forward. Commissioners exited the meeting to return to the Courthouse for a scheduled Public Hearing beginning at 6:00pm.

#### MISC 25-14

#### 6:00 PM - PUBLIC HEARING - 2025/26 Budget

Chairman McNeill called the June 2, 2025 Public Hearing on the 2025/26 Proposed Budget Ordinance to order at 6:03 pm. For this meeting a signup sheet was placed outside the courtroom and many signed up to speak.

Peggy Sturgill took the podium and spoke in length on the Animal Control Budget and the need for a new Animal Control facility. She also asked Commissioners what they were doing to attract Veterinarians to the county.

Charles Stafford, Fleetwood, an avid tennis player was present with several fellow tennis players and spoke on the poor condition of tennis courts in Ashe County. Stating they were somewhat unsafe. He spoke on options to consider, such as repairs, the addition of a multi-purpose indoor facility at WJ Library and 3-6 new courts either at Ashe Park or the High School property. Mr. Sturgill also spoke on the subject of Minimum Housing Standards saying that everyone should have a safe environment to live in. He suggested the county consider hiring a full or part time Grant Writer, he suggested the county build 50 units with 2 bedrooms and two baths and rent for \$800 a month. He also discussed discounts on land and utilities.

Debra Speas from Lansing took the podium and spoke in length on the poor conditions of the Ashe County Animal Shelter. Debra is a volunteer at the Animal Shelter and spends many hours per week there. She stated the county's animal control building is no longer meeting the needs or the state's requirements. She said it was never built to serve as an animal shelter and that the state inspector has cited numerous continuous violations, and could soon end up shutting it down. Also, local rescues have been helping with paying for medical bills on some of the strays. Partners Canines and Friends of Ashe County Shelter have been fostering and rescuing, providing puppy shots, de-worming and paying some medical bills.

Gay Walton from West Jefferson also spoke asking Commissioner's what they were doing to get a veterinarian in the county.

Jim Cocke from Fleetwood took the podium to also speak on the tennis courts in Ashe County.

Angela White spoke on the need for a veterinarian and suggested the county offer a space at the new Agricultural Center to attract a veterinarian.

Pam Garner from the Todd area also spoke on Animal Control/Shelter and the hazards of loose dogs.

Chris Stone from Fleetwood also spoke on the need for more funding for the Animal Shelter, building a new shelter closer to town, longer hold times before euthanasia, more

*spay and neuter assistance, and that animals are spay/neutered before adoption to cut down on the extreme issue of dog/cat overpopulation. He also spoke on Animal Control Ordinances.*

*Lansing Mayor Mack Powers took the podium and told Commissioners that he and his staff are moving into their new Town Hall and invited the Commissioners and County Manager Adam Stumb to come and see the new facility.*

*Chairman McNeill asked if anyone else in attendance wished to speak. Seeing no movement he asked commissioners for a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing at 7:03 pm. Commissioner Killen made the motion to adjourn. Vice Chairman Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

## **II. Adjournment**

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