

# **Ashe County**

*150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640*



## **Meeting Minutes - Draft**

**Monday, March 17, 2025**

**9:00 AM**

**Commission Meeting Room**

### **County Commission**

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

**BUSINESS SESSION****I. 9:00 AM - Meeting Called to Order at the Ashe County Courthouse**

*Chairman McNeill called the March 17th, 2025 Regular Session Meeting to order at 9:00 am.*

**Present:** 5 - Chairperson Todd McNeill, Vice Chairman Jerry D. Powers, Commissioner Mike Eldreth, Commissioner Russell Killen and Commissioner Wes Greene

**II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer**

*Commissioner Eldreth led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chairman McNeill offered the opening Prayer.*

**III. Approval of Consent Agenda**

*Commissioner Killen made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Green seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth, Commissioner Killen and Commissioner Greene

[MIN 25-9](#) February 26th, 2025 Work Session Minutes

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 February 26th, 2025 Work Session Minutes](#)

[MIN 25-10](#) March 3rd, 2025 Regular Session Minutes

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 March 3rd, 2025 Meeting Minutes](#)

**IV. Adoption of Agenda**

*Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adopt the March 17th, 2025 Agenda. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Adopted**

**For:** 5 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth, Commissioner Killen and Commissioner Greene

**V. Public Comment**

*Chairman McNeill opened the floor for Public Comment at 9:03 AM. Riley Oates, Public Affairs Specialist took the podium and spoke on SBA disaster assistance for homeowners, renters, nonprofits, and businesses of all sizes affected by Hurricane Helene. He stated these loans are for homeowners or renters to repair or replace disaster-damaged real estate and personal property, including automobiles. Loans to businesses to repair or replace disaster-damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, inventories, supplies, machinery and equipment. Businesses of any size are eligible. Private, non-profit organizations such as charities, churches, private universities, etc., are also eligible. Working capital loans to help small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and most private, non-profit organizations of all*

sizes meet their ordinary and necessary financial obligations that cannot be met as a direct result of the disaster. These loans are intended to assist through the disaster recovery period. Riley encouraged citizens to apply.  
Seeing no other citizens wishing to make a comment, Chairman McNeill closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

## VI. Presentations

[PRES 25-34](#) 9:04 AM - Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator - Monthly Tax Report for February 2025

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 Monthly Tax Report February 2025](#)

*Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator presented to the Board the Monthly Tax Report for February 2025.*

**No Action Taken**

[PRES 25-35](#) 9:08 AM - Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator - Order the Tax Collector to Advertise 2024 Delinquent Real Property Taxes per NCGS 105-369(a)

*Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator presented to the Board for their approval the Order for the Tax Collector to Advertise 2024 Delinquent Real Property Taxes per NC General Statute 105-369(a). Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the order.*

*Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth, Commissioner Killen and Commissioner Greene

[PRES 25-36](#) 9:11 AM - Tracie McMillan, DSS Director - DSS Statistics for January 2025

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 DSS Statistics January 2025](#)

*Tracie McMillan, DSS Director shared with the Board the DSS Statistics for January 2025. Tracie highlighted the statistics for Disaster Case Management as of January 2025 discussing Housing Assistance for displaced families from Hurricane Helene. Tracie commended the Disaster Case Management staff for the incredible work they are doing.*

**No Action Taken**

[PRES 25-37](#) 9:15 AM - Tracie McMillan, DSS Director - Human Resources Resolution Revisions

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 Human Resources Resolution with Revisions](#)

*Tracie McMillan, DSS Director presented to the Board the Human Resources Resolution Revisions. Tracie is a member of the Ashe County Personnel Policy Committee which is requesting the following changes to the Human Resources Resolution:*

*1. Reduce the probationary period from 2 to 1 year.*

*Two years is not the norm for a probationary period and hangs over employees as they start a position. Most department heads work under the philosophy that an employee should know their job and be proficient enough to come off of probation.*

*2. Accept transfer of sick leave from all NC Retirement systems.*

*We began accepting sick leave from other local governments (City and County), and this will expand that to others that are part of the state retirement system (school system,*



community college, highway patrol).

3. Add the Step/Longevity Plan to the resolution.

*This was approved in the budget last year when we accepted the recommendations of the pay study but also need to be included in the HR Resolution. After some discussion Commissioner Greene made the motion to approve the Human Resources Resolution Revisions. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth, Commissioner Killen and Commissioner Greene

**PRES 25-38** 9:20 AM - Robin Nethery, Family Support Specialist, Partnership of Ashe and Megan Hudson & Rachel Winebarger from Ashe County Children's Advocacy Center - Child Abuse Prevention Month April 2025

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 Child Abuse Prevention Month 2025](#)

*Robin Nethery from Partnership of Ashe along with Megan Hudson and Rachel Winebarger from Ashe County Children's Advocacy Center presented to the Board a Proclamation proclaiming April as Child Abuse Prevention month. After some discussion Commissioner Killen made the motion approving the Proclamation. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth, Commissioner Killen and Commissioner Greene

**PRES 25-39** 9:30 AM - Zack Shepherd, Community Relations Regional Director Vaya Health - VAYA Health Update

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 VAYA Update Presentation](#)

*Zack Shepherd with VAYA Health gave a presentation/update on Plan/Medicaid Updates. This update included Tailored Plans, Network of Providers, Total Care Perks for Plan Member, Non-emergency Medicaid Transportation. Zack also discussed the Child & Family Specialty Plan. and Hurricane Helene Recovery. Zack then answered a few questions from commissioners.*

**No Action Taken**

**PRES 25-40** 9:36 AM - Adam Stumb, County Manager - State Cashflow Loans for Disaster Response Activities to Local Governments

**Attachments:** [3-17-2025 Loan Agreement-Department of the State Treasurer](#)

*Adam Stumb, County Manager stated that this loan offered to Ashe County is for \$468,677.52 is 0% interest and can be used for FEMA reimbursable expenses to help us maintain a healthy balance until we receive funds back from FEMA. After some discussion Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the State Cash Flow Loan. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth, Commissioner Killen and Commissioner Greene

**GENERAL SESSION****VII. Commissioner Comments****VIII. Announcements****IX. Executive Session**[ES 25-2](#)**G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney Consultation**

*The Executive Session meeting was called to order at 10:20 am in the conference room behind the Register of Deeds office. At 11:57 AM Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to return from Executive Session. Commissioner Eldreth seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**X. Adjournment**

*Vice Chairman Powers made the motion at 11:58 AM to adjourn the March 17th, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Eldreth seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth, Commissioner Killen and Commissioner Greene

Citizens with disabilities requiring special needs to access the services or public meetings of Ashe County Government should contact the County Manager's Office three days prior to the meeting by calling (336) 846-5501.