

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, August 18, 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 August 18th, 2025 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 Killen led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Powers offered the opening Prayer.

III. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Greene made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice Chairman Powers 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 25-25](#) August 4th, 2025 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [8-18-2025 August 4th, 2025 Regular Session Minutes](#)

[MISC 25-28](#) Longevity, sick leave, and annual leave accrual rate reinstatement for Justin Manganelli

Attachments: [8-18-2025 Employment History for Justin Manganelli](#)

[APP 25-11](#) Reappointment of Michael Lea to the Recreation Advisory Board

[APP 25-12](#) Reappointment of Rick Price to West Jefferson EJT Board

[MISC 25-29](#) Monthly Tax Report, July 2025

Attachments: [8-18-2025 Monthly Tax Report for July 2025](#)

IV. Adoption of Agenda

With the removal of PRES 25-108 to be heard at the September 2nd, 2025 Commissioner meeting, Commissioner Killen made the motion to adopt the agenda as amended. 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

VI. Presentations**PRES**
25-105

9:05 AM - PUBLIC HEARING - Judson Blevins, HCCOG Planner/Housing Coordinator - 2025 Community Development Block Grant Neighborhood Revitalization

Attachments: [8-18-2025 Notice - 2025 Community Development Block Grant Neighborhood Revitalization](#)

At 9:23 am Chairman McNeill opened the public hearing to solicit citizen input on the submission of an application for the 2025 Community Development Block Grant funds in the Neighborhood Revitalization category. The CDBG funds will be to help rehabilitate low-income households in Ashe County.

Charles Stafford from the Fleetwood area took the podium and asked if this grant could be used for handicap improvements that would help minimize falls for seniors. Judson Blevins and Chairman McNeill both answered stating that the High Country Council of Governments does have a program in its Aging Department that is specific to fall prevention and repairs such as that.

No more comments were offered by those in attendance. Chairman McNeill closed the Public Hearing for the 2025 Community Development Block Grant funds in the Neighborhood Revitalization at 9:26 am.

PRES
25-106

9:10 AM - PUBLIC HEARING - Nick Farmerie, Community Development Director & Assistant County Manager - Resolution Regarding Applying for Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Supplemental Grant

Attachments: [8-18-2025 Resolution Regarding Applying for Economic Development Administration \(EDA\) Disaster Supplemental Grant](#)

Nick Farmerie, Community Development Director & Assistant County Manager presented the Board with the Resolution Regarding Applying for Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Supplemental Grant. After some discussion Chairman McNeill opened the Public Hearing on the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Supplemental Grant at 9:28 am. Seeing no movement from the citizens in attendance, Chairman McNeill closed the Public Hearing on the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Supplemental Grant at 9:29 am. Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the Resolution Regarding Applying for Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Supplemental Grant. 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
25-107

9:15 AM - PUBLIC HEARING - Nick Farmerie, Community Development Director & Assistant County Manager - Resolution Regarding a Building Reuse Grant for Project Pandora

Attachments: [8-18-2025 Resolution Regarding a Building Reuse Grant for Project Pandora](#)

Chairman McNeill opened the Public Hearing for the Resolution Regarding a Building

Reuse Grant for Project Pandora at 9:29 am. Nick Farmerie, Community Development Director & Assistant County Manager explained the resolution saying that this is a disaster specific grant, focused on economic development that we would like to apply for. Nick explained that the county is eligible for a \$250,000 grant from the department of commerce's Building Reuse Program in association with the Project Pandora. He said part of that requires a 5% match which totals \$12,500. The project is proposed to create 44 new jobs as a result of expanding the production in a existing building and those jobs will have a higher averaged area median income then what we have here.

Judy Bare from Jefferson took the podium and asked if this grant was to "repurpose" a building. Nick and Chairman McNeill explained that it was to "expand" a building.

Seeing no further movement from the citizens in attendance, Chairman McNeill closed the Public Hearing for the Resolution Regarding a Building Reuse Grant for Project Pandora at 9:32 am.

Commissioner Greene made the motion to approve the Resolution Regarding a Building Reuse Grant for Project Pandora. 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](#)
[25-108](#)

9:18 AM - Allen Foiles, Asheville Tennis Association - Presentation

[Attachments:](#) [8-18-2025 Asheville Tennis Association](#)

Presentation rescheduled for the September 2nd, 2025 Commissioner Meeting.

[PRES](#)
[25-109](#)

9:23 AM - Andrew Downs, Executive Director, New River Conservancy - New River Conservancy Land Donation

Andrew Downs, Executive Director, New River Conservancy discussed a land donation with Commissioners. He stated that last year they were presented with the opportunity to purchase a 3 acre parcel on West Deep Ford Road just south of Lansing for a public access point to the North Fork of the New River. He said that right now the North Fork really doesn't have any public access points and as one of the pillars of the mission of the new river Conservancy we want to support the communities use of the river for recreation, economies, and for general enjoyment quality. He stated that about a month after they had that initial meeting Hurricane Helene hit and we launched a community action fund to help communities impacted from Helene. And so in partnership with Lansing area development organization, and others were able to receive donations and working with our real estate partners and County Manager Adam we were able to purchase the 3 acre parcel. We are beginning to process the transfer of the property to the county. We've had an environmental assessment and survey completed on it. Andrew stated that he wanted to appear before the Board today and just provide an update on that project as we prepare a resolution for a future meeting. We are committed to making it an outstanding resource for the people in Lansing area and Ashe County in general. After further discussion Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to accept the donation of the property. (parcel # 16215267) Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Approved

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

[PRES](#)
[25-110](#)

9:28 AM - Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator - Tax Collector Settlement FY 2024-2025 (Action Required)

Attachments: [8-18-2025 Tax Collector Settlement 24-25](#)

Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator presented to the Board the Tax Collector Settlement FY 2024-2025. After some discussion Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the Tax Collector Settlement FY 2024-2025. 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](#)
[25-111](#)

9:31 AM - Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator - Tax Collector Charge FY 2025-2026 (Action Required)

Attachments: [8-18-2025 Tax Collector Charge](#)

Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator presented to the Board the Tax Collector Charge FY 2025-2026 for their approval. After some discussion Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the Tax Collector Charge FY 2025-2026. 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](#)
[25-112](#)

9:35 AM - Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator - Untimely Application – Homestead Exclusion

Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator presented to the Board an Untimely Application for Homestead Exclusion. He stated that the application was late. Vice Chairman Powers stated that the Board has traditionally not approved an exclusion for that purpose. Commissioner Killen stated that if you approve one application then all applications would have to be reviewed for approval. Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to deny the untimely application. 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](#)
[25-113](#)

9:38 AM - Tracie McMillan, DSS Director - DSS Statistics for June 2025

Attachments: [8-18-2025 DSS Statistics June 2025](#)

Tracie McMillan, DSS Director presented the DSS Statistics for June 2025 to the Board for information purposes, highlighting the number of foster children and adults they are serving.

No Action Taken

[PRES](#)
[25-114](#)

9:41 AM - Tracie McMillan, DSS Director - Rylan's Law Dashboard

[Attachments:](#) [8-18-2025 Rylan's Law Dashboards Info](#)

Tracie McMillan, DSS Director presented to the Board the Rylan's Law Dashboard. She stated that Rylan's Law is a North Carolina law, also known as the Family/Child Protection and Accountability Act, that mandates stricter oversight and requirements for child custody and reunification cases within the state's child welfare system. The law requires social workers to conduct at least two formal, hour-long "successful" trial home visits, separated by at least seven days, where they observe the parent-child interaction and home environment to ensure safety and readiness before recommending a child's return to the home. The law was enacted to prevent tragedies like the death of Rylan Ott, a toddler who drowned in April 2016 after being returned to his mother despite pending child abuse concerns.

[PRES](#)
[25-115](#)

9:46 AM Zack Shepherd, VAYA - VAYA Update

[Attachments:](#) [8-18-2025 VAYA Update](#)

Zack Shepherd, Community Relations Regional Director with Vaya Health gave the Commissioners an update on VAYA Health. He stated that VAYA is a public managed care organization (MCO) that prioritizes whole person health. We manage Medicaid, federal, state, and local funding to connect the people we serve to health care services and supports. Vaya Total Care: Manage mental health, substance use, I/DD, TBI, physical health, and pharmacy services, as well as Long-term Services and Supports, for Medicaid beneficiaries. Medicaid Direct, North Carolina's health care program for Medicaid beneficiaries who are not enrolled in managed care plans. Vaya is responsible for managing mental health, substance use, I/DD, and TBI service. Tailored Plan, Manage mental health, substance use, I/DD, and TBI services for individuals without insurance – or too little insurance – who are eligible for care funded by the state of North Carolina or other public funds. He also spoke on Regional and County Projects and Network Development.

[PRES](#)
[25-116](#)

9:50 - AM Adam Stumb, County Manager - Project Updates

Adam Stumb, County Manager presented the Board with update to several County projects such as the Animal Shelter, Recreation Center, Environmental Services Building, Landfill, DSS Building, Courthouse renovations, NW Recreation and Community Center and the Law Enforcement 3rd floor completion. Topics discussed were budget and funding sources.

GENERAL SESSION

Chairman McNeill stated that the Board needed to appoint a Voting Delegate for the upcoming NCACC Conference. Vice Chairman Powers made a motion nominating Commissioner Wes Greene as the voting delegate. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements**IX. Executive Session**

Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to enter into Executive Session at 10:45 am. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to return from Executive Session at 11:47 am. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

[ES 25-12](#) Legal - G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(3)

[ES 25-13](#) Property - G.S. 143-318.11 (5)

X. Adjournment

Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adjourn the August 18th, 2025 Regular Session meeting at 11:47 am. 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

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.