

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, June 2, 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 June 2nd, 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 Green led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Powers offered the Opening Prayer.

III. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Greene made the motion to adopt the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Adopted

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

MIN 25-15 May 19th, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [6-2-2025 May 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes](#)

ORD 25-1 Project Ordinances

Attachments: [6-2-2025 Agriculture Center Construction Project Ordinance](#)

[6-2-2025 Ashe County Middle School Project Ordinance](#)

[6-2-2025 Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery Project Ordinance](#)

[6-2-2025 Industrial Park Phase 3 Project Ordinance](#)

[6-2-2025 NC Opioid Settlement Project Ordinance](#)

PRES 25-80 General Fund Budget Amendments

Attachments: [6-2-2025 Budget Amendments General Fund](#)

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Killen made the motion to adopt the June 2nd, 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 the Public Comment portion of the meeting at 9:03

AM.

Caleb Marsh, Dean of Wilkes Community College Ashe Campus took the podium. He began by stating that he wanted to just take a moment to say thank you for the appropriations that are listed in the budget. He stated that he wanted to share a really great story that happened just last week. Caleb said that he was a member of a group called the National Association of Branch Camp Administrators and every year they have a national conference where they come together and talk about Branch campus stuff. They also award the "George Giacomakis Innovation Award" for the most innovative Branch camp. He stated that they were very thankful to the NAPA group that awarded this honor to WCC Ashe Campus and this is due in part to the support that we get from our County Commissioners, so he just wanted to say thank you. Commissioners congratulated Caleb & Wilkes Community College on this achievement.

Seeing no movement from the citizens in attendance Chairman McNeill closed the floor for the public comment portion of today's meeting at 9:07 am.

VI. Presentations

PRES 25-78 9:07 AM - Kim Barnes, Executive Director of Partnership of Ashe - Mt. Jefferson Child Development Center Update

Kim Barnes, Executive Director of Partnership of Ashe presented an update on the Mt. Jefferson Child Development Center. Kim spoke on the budget strain with the center, the difficulty in attracting teachers. She said they are short staffed and not running at full capacity due to staff shortages and that they have more than 250 children on the waiting list. She said that they could not impose any more fee increases on parents, stating parents cannot afford to pay more than they are now. They are also seeking additional Board members. Kim spoke on the grant funded new playground installation. Kim also shared concerns on recent changes from Governor Stein's task force on Childcare and their increase in class size. The possibility of a new facility in the future and a suggested merge with Ashe Developmental Daycare was also talked about. A lengthy discussion with commissioners took place.

PRES 25-79 9:14 AM - Patty Gambill, Emergency Management Director - Riverview Discussion

Steve Trinkle, Riverview Community Center Board member, Laura Dye, Chairman of the Board of Directors at Riverview Community Center, Dave Ahrens Executive Director Ashe Outreach Ministries, Allison Kemp-Sullivan, Riverview Board Treasurer were all present to give an update and to speak on the needs of the Riverview Community Center. They talked about the devastating condition of the Riverview Community Center following Hurricane Helene. Ashe Outreach Ministries is an extremely valuable part of the community center and the people it serves in the part of the county. Steve talked about the building being county owned but to keep costs down they work with private donations and grants. He said the estimated repair cost for the roof alone was \$105,000 not including the gym as it had a recent new roof. Steve said that the greatest risk to the Riverview community center right now is in the electrical system. The conduit is filled with mud and water and is rapidly corroding and dangerous. A lengthy discussion was held on the condition of the building, FEMA, the possibility of a new building in the distant future, and how much the community center means to that area of the county. Steve spoke on the insurance policies the county has on the building and that a policy had paid out \$500,000 that the county has in an account. Steve stated that he and Allison reached out to Clark Nixon and they gave them a proposal of \$38,000 to build out the electrical design. They are already here working on the new Middle School. Allison said that before

the flood that she actually requested other engineers to come up and do an assessment on the entire building mechanical & electrical. She said they were actually looking into advanced planning at that point to see what it would be to renovate the building, so they could actually do some fundraising. She said she couldn't get anyone interested. So she asked Clark Nixon. After some discussion Commissioner Greene made the motion to allocate \$38,000 from the insurance account, not to exceed \$45,000 for Clark Nixon to complete the electrical design. 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

[PRES 25-81](#) 9:20 AM - Sheriff Phil Howell - Retirement Recognition for Lt. Randy Lewis, Civil Division

Attachments: [Retirement Plaque Randy Lewis](#)

This presentation was rescheduled until June 16, 2025.

GENERAL SESSION

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

Chairman McNeill announced that the FY 2025/26 Budget Sessions will begin at the conclusion of today's meeting with a start time of 11:00 am. They will be held in the second floor conference room behind the Register of Deeds office. He also stated that the public is welcome to attend.

[PRES 25-82](#) Budget Notices 2025/2026

Attachments: [6-2-2025 Budget Notices](#)

IX. Executive Session

X. Adjournment

At 10:24 am Commissioner Greene made the motion to adjourn the June 2nd, 2025 Regular Session meeting. 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

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