

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, June 1, 2026

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**

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. Consent Agenda

Commissioner made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. 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

[MIN 26-14](#) May 18th, 2026 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [6-1-2026 May 18th, 2026 Regular Session Minutes](#)

[APP 26-3](#) Ashe County Airport Advisory Board Appointments

Attachments: [6-1-2026 Proposed Nominee Applications](#)

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adopt the agenda as presented. 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.

Michael Hartsog presented updated statistics for 2026, pointing out the poverty rate in Ashe County. He stated there are significant food insecurity affecting roughly 16% of residents, a situation that has worsened following Hurricane Helene. He sited percentages for the different areas in Ashe County

Joanne Kaszaj from Jefferson spoke regarding the upcoming budget hearing, drawing on her experience managing multimillion-dollar healthcare budgets. She noted that the proposed budget for App Health care was raised by \$21,720 (a 3% increase), while the overall budget rose by approximately 2.5%. Concerns were raised about the Ashe Human Services division budget, which increased by \$83,142 (4.8%), and whether those organizations are governed by the same state and federal mandates as App Health.

Joanne expressed support for the EMS system and APP Healthcare's sliding scale program, which allows residents in poverty to receive services at no cost. She cautioned that moving to a strictly county-run health department would likely be unaffordable due to various regulatory requirements.

No additional comments were offered by those in attendance. Chairman McNeill then closed the floor for Public Comment.

VI. Presentations

[PRES 26-87](#) 9:04 AM - Allison Kemp-Sullivan - Middle School Change Order

Attachments: [6-1-2026 Notice of Additional Services](#)
[6-1-2026 BOE Project Summary](#)
[6-1-2026 ACMS - Site Utilities and Generator Revisions](#)
[6-1-2026 M.S. Proposed Change Order #3 Exhibit #1](#)

Allison presented a change order for an ongoing construction project totaling \$382,937, which is being funded through existing project contingencies rather than adding to the total budget. The remaining contingency balance after this change order is \$1,757,742.49, which Allison noted is a healthy 3% for a project of this complexity. Specific adjustments included adding access control and placing telecom rooms on the generator for safety and system reliability. Cost savings of nearly \$68,000 were achieved by putting the field house on its own electrical service rather than the main building's system. A design change was made to remove ceilings in the field house to keep water lines exposed to heat, preventing them from freezing during the off-season. Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the change 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

GENERAL SESSION

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

[MISC 26-5](#) Reminder: A Public Hearing on the "Proposed" Budget will be held this evening Monday June 1, 2026 at 6:05 pm and Monday, June 15th, 2026 at 9:05 am.

Attachments: [6-1-2026 Budget Notice](#)

IX. Executive Session

Chairman McNeill asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session at 9:35 am. Commissioner Greene made that motion. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to return from Executive Session at 9:55 am.

Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

[ES 26-9](#)

Legal: G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3)

[ES 26-10](#)

Economic Development: G.S. 143-318.11(4)

X. Adjournment

Chairman McNeill announced that this meeting would be adjourned. Commissioners and County Staff will reconvene at 10:15 am on the second floor in the conference room behind the Register of Deeds office to begin the FY 2026-27 Budget Sessions. These sessions are open to the public.

Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adjourn today's meeting at 9:55 am. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Approved

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

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Todd McNeill, Chairman

**Missy Seivers
Clerk to the Board**