

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, September 15, 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 September 15th, 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 Eldreth led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Powers offered the opening Prayer.

III. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Killen 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 25-27](#)

September 2nd, 2025 Regular Session Minutes

IV. Adoption of Agenda

With the addition of an Executive Session requested by Adam Stumb, County Manager, Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adopt the September 15th, 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 today's meeting at 9:02 am.

Steve Trinkle from the Todd community took the podium. He stated that he was there in his capacity as a Board of Directors member for the New River Conservancy. He also stated that the New River Conservancy offers solutions and consultative services to land owners that have land along the riverfront to make sure that any activities that take place are in compliance with flood plane mitigation. Steve said that the Conservancy understands that there's an item on the agenda for later in the day and that the county has issued a violation. He stated that the Conservancy works closely with Planning Director Matthew Levi and fully supports protocols and regulations of the flood plane management. He stated that if they could be of service in anyway to help with any homeowners they would be happy to do that, but we do stand fully and support the county's decisions regarding this particular notice of violation.

Richard Sullivan from Lansing also took the podium. He stated that he was here with his wife Nancy. We split our time between Lansing and Winston Salem. Our family has

owned property up here since 1964. We are directly across the river from the violation that has been noted and we watched this happen. There's a jetty in the river, which does alter the flow of the river and we watched the property owner build that jetty and put the concrete into the river. He relocated rocks from the river, cemented it in place to create a jetty which has repercussions and impact along the river, that has been exacerbated during the heavy flooding that we have had, not only in Helene, but in some of the heavy rains after. The jetty has adversely affected and ultimately destroyed riverbank stability and habitat on both sides of the river, as well as affecting adjacent down river properties. The damage created by this jetty and the altered flow of the river has caused significant land and structural repairs for land owners adjacent to and across from the jetty. The necessary repairs caused by the damages have demanded significant financial expenditures for the impacted landowner's. Last, but certainly not least there is a safety hazard created with this protrusion hazard that is present at all times for floaters, canoes, and kayaks that have to navigate around the structure, but the hazard is greatly increased when the water level is elevated and covers the jetty. It is an impossible for people to see the damage on the river and the danger ahead, which could result in serious injury. We fully support the immediate removal of this structure for the above reasons. Our hope is that the commissioners of Ashe County will set forth a ruling that forbids the alteration of the river and its banks in anyway, including the creation of any structure or jetty from this day forward. Thank you.

Kathy Gorton (Turner) took the podium and stated she was the one who filed a recent complaint and provided a video of the May flooding that had nothing to do with Helene. She said they have since had an environmental engineer out to their property. She stated what is happening with the wall is the jetty is causing turbulence in the river. There's nothing to slow it down. She gave a lengthy description of how the jetty built by Mr. Russo has caused turbulent destruction on her property. She stated she did see a concrete mixing machine on Mr. Russo's property when he was constructing the jetty. She stated that her engineer told her that to repair her property would cost \$38,000 to offset for the future, and that also includes trying to save trees that Helene did not take. And the damage caused by the jetty is a safety issue.

Seeing no movement from those in attendance Chairman McNeill closed the Public Comment portion of the September 15th, 2025 meeting at 9:11 am.

VI. Presentations

[PRES 25-121](#)

9:05 AM - Tracie McMillan, DSS Director - DSS Statistics July 2025

Attachments: [9-15-2025 DSS Statistics July 2025](#)

Tracie McMillan, DSS Director presented to the Board for information purposes the DSS Statistics July 2025.

[PRES 25-122](#)

9:10 AM - Tracie McMillan, DSS Director - Rylan's Law Statistical Report

Attachments: [9-15-2025 Rylan's Law Statistical Report](#)

Tracie McMillan, DSS Director presented to the Board a more detailed presentation on the Rylan's Law Statistical Report. This was a quarterly report which included July, August and September to date.

[PRES](#)
[25-123](#)

9:15 AM - Tracie McMillan, DSS Director - South Mountain Children's Home and CAC Lease

Attachments: [9-15-2025 South Mountain Children's Home and CAC Lease](#)

Tracie McMillan, DSS Director presented to the Board for their approval the South Mountain Children's Home and CAC Lease. After some discussion Commissioner Greene made the motion to approve the South Mountain Children's Home and CAC Lease. 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](#)
[25-125](#)

9:18 AM - Jennifer Richardson, Ashe County Volunteer Coordinator - Ashe County Volunteer Initiative Update

Jennifer Richardson, Ashe County Volunteer Coordinator presented the Board with an update on the Ashe County Volunteer Initiative. After some discussion Jennifer also stated that she would like the Boards approval of Ed Singly to the Ashe County Volunteer Advisory Board. She also shared information regarding Mr. Singly with the Board. Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the appointment of Ed Singly to the Ashe County Volunteer Advisory Board. 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](#)
[25-124](#)

9:23 AM - Ashe County Sheriff's Office - Budget Amendment (DAF)

Attachments: [9-15-2025 Budget Amendment & Documentation](#)

Sheriff Phil Howell presented a budget amendment to the Board for their approval. His request was to increase the appropriation for the department of Law Enforcement from \$4,480,450 to \$4,499,110. This increased appropriation of \$18,660 to be made from the Sheriff's State Controlled Substance Drug Fund which resides in the General Fund (Fund Balance). Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the budget amendment. 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

[RES 25-6](#)

9:27 AM - Lindsey Sullivan, MSW Health Strategist AppHealthCare
-Resolution By the County of Ashe To Direct the Expenditure of Opioid Settlement Funds

Attachments: [9-15-2025 Resolution Directing the Expenditure of Opioid Settlement Funds](#)

Lindsey Sullivan, MSW Health Strategist AppHealthCare presented a Resolution By the County of Ashe To Direct the Expenditure of Opioid Settlement Funds for adoption. After some discussion Commissioner Killen made the motion to adopt the resolution.

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

PRES
25-126

9:32 AM - Adam Stumb, County Manager - Landfill Finance Discussion and Engagement Approval

Attachments: [9-15-2025 Underwriting Engagement Letter](#)

Adam Stumb, County Manager discussed with commissioners the Landfill financing stating they were getting towards the end of the design work for the environmental services building and should have some preliminary budget figures soon. The landfill project is ready to go to bid once a decision is made a decision on the building. He stated that while the design work is being completed for the building, we can begin to line up the financing for both projects or just the landfill. Regardless of whether it's one or two projects, we will still have to finance the landfill. Adam spoke on the successful financing with Baird for the Middle School project, we are recommending them again to help underwrite the bonds we will need to sell to finance the project. After some discussion Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to engage Baird for financing of the landfill expansion and the environmental services building. Congregant on the building project being approved. 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
25-127

9:40 AM - Adam Stumb, County Manager - Agricultural Center Lease

Attachments: [9-15-2025 Ag Center Lease Agreement](#)

Adam Stumb, County Manager brought before the Board for discussion the Agricultural Center Lease. Adam stated that the draft lease for the Ag Center was the result of some back and forth over some of the conditions. There are a few items that have not been addressed and will require direction on such as length of lease, policies on use, access, governing policies, and termination & default. After some discussion Commissioner Greene made a motion to table the lease until the October 6th, 2025 meeting to allow staff to make necessary changes and to have the county attorney review. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Tabled

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

PRES
25-120

9:45 AM - Nick Farmerie, Community Development Director & Assistant County Manager - Appeal Of Notice of Violation

Attachments: [9-15-2025 Enforcement Actions - Timeline & Updates](#)

Nick Farmerie, Community Development Director & Assistant County Manager presented the Board with an Appeal Of Notice of Violation. He gave a brief overview of the timeline and the ordinance in question for the property located at 1228 Riverview Trail Road,

Lansing. On June 26, the Floodplain Administrator received a complaint regarding unauthorized fill material—including large rocks and a concrete jetty—altering the natural flow of the North Fork. An investigation conducted on July 3 and documented on July 21 confirmed the presence of fill material within the designated floodway. This constituted a violation of Ordinance 151.44(a), which prohibits encroachments such as fill, new construction, and other developments in the floodway. A formal Notice of Violation was issued on July 29.

A hearing was held with the property owner, attended by the Floodplain Administrator and the 911 Coordinator. The property owner appealed the violation, triggering adjudication by the Ashe County Commissioners. Despite the property owner having obtained a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers, the development remains in violation of local floodplain regulations, which must be upheld independently to maintain compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program. Witness testimony also indicated the presence of uncured concrete in the river, raising additional concerns under state water quality laws.

The situation poses potential risks to neighboring properties and could jeopardize flood insurance eligibility for Ashe County residents. Coordination with state agencies, including the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, is recommended to address broader regulatory concerns. Commissioner Eldreth made the motion to deny the appeal and to include any agency that has jurisdiction in the matter. 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

GENERAL SESSION

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

An Executive Session was added for Attorney Consultation G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3). They entered into Executive Session at 10:35 am and returned from Executive Session at 11:10 am.

X. Adjournment

Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adjourn at 11:10 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.