

# Ashe County

150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640



## Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, March 2, 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**

*Chairman McNeill called the March 2nd, 2026 Regular Session meeting of the Ashe County Commissioners to order at 9:00am.*

**Present:** 4 - Chairperson Todd McNeill, Vice Chairman Jerry D. Powers, Commissioner Mike Eldreth and Commissioner Russell Killen

**Absent:** 1 - 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 Killen made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice Chairman Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 4 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth and Commissioner Killen

[MIN 26-4](#) February 16th, 2026 Regular Session Minutes

**Attachments:** [3-2-2026 February 16th, 2026 Regular Session Minutes](#)

[MIN 26-5](#) February 16th, 2026 Executive Session Minutes

**IV. Adoption of Agenda**

*With the removal of PRES 26-26 Cemetery Ordinance Discussion as advised by County Manager, Adam Stumb for placement on a future agenda. The change was prompted by the need to include the Sheriff for review of the ordinance. Also, the need for a required public hearing and a newspaper advertisement regarding the cemetery ordinance. No other agenda changes were made. Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adopt the Agenda as amended. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Adopted**

**For:** 4 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth and Commissioner Killen

**V. Public Comment**

*Chairman McNeill opened the floor for the Public Comment portion of today's meeting at 9:03 am. No comments were offered by those in attendance. Chairman McNeill then closed the Public Comment portion of today's meeting at 9:04 am.*

**VI. Presentations**

[PRO 26-1](#) 9:04 AM - Lori Hensley, Partnership of Ashe - Prevent Child Abuse

## Awareness Month Proclamation

**Attachments:** [3-2-2026 Proclamation Child Abuse Prevention Month 2026](#)

*The Partnership and Ashe County Children's Advocacy Center attended to present the Child Abuse Awareness Month proclamation. Lori Hensley introduced herself as part of the Partnership of Ashe and explained April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. The presentation emphasized the role of strengthened families in supporting children and enabling them to reach their potential. This year's theme is "Positive Childhoods Start With Us," highlighting the importance of communal responsibility. Positive childhood experiences are linked to better adult mental health outcomes. Megan Hudson from the Children's Advocacy Center read the formal proclamation, underscoring the significance of community-wide collaboration. Commissioner Killen made the motion to adopt the Child Abuse Awareness Month proclamation. Vice Chairman Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Adopted**

**For:** 4 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth and Commissioner Killen

**PRES 26-25** 9:07 AM - Adam Stumb, County Manager - EMS Base Site Selection Team Proposal Recommendation

*Adam stated that the team advertised for qualifications to assemble a group to assist with EMS base site selection about a month ago. Two potential sites in Jefferson have been identified for evaluation, requiring assessment of geotag, utilities, transportation, and existing buildings. The scope of work includes scoring and evaluating both sites to determine suitability for an EMS base, as well as providing recommendations. Additional work will involve space programming, including specifications for sleeping quarters, bay and drive configurations, and overall building size estimation for future construction. Four proposals were received from BREC, Bolton & Menk, McGill & Associates, and WithersRavenel; WithersRavenel previously won the animal shelter project. The review team included personnel from emergency management, fire marshal, finance, and HR. McGill & Associates has been selected to proceed, based on relevant project experience such as the Wilkesboro Fire Station and Lincoln County Emergency Services Center. The scope for McGill & Associates will cover evaluation and recommendations for the two identified sites. During interviews, teams confirmed that adding more sites would be manageable if communicated early. Staff requested a motion to move forward with contract negotiations with McGill & Associates, aiming to bring a contract back to the board in approximately two weeks. A motion to approve the selection of McGill & Associates was made by Commissioner Killen and seconded by Commissioner Eldreth. All were in agreement.*

**Approved**

**For:** 4 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth and Commissioner Killen

**PRES 26-26** 9:17 AM - Adam Stumb, County Manager - Cemetery Ordinance Discussion

**Attachments:** [3-2-2026 Cemetery Ordinance Summary](#)

*This presentation is to be rescheduled for a future meeting.*

**MISC 26-4** 9:23 AM - Patty Gambill, Emergency Management Director - Request for

### Budget Amendment

*Emergency Management Director Patty Gambill requested approval for a budget amendment of \$31,909.03 for a FEMA-approved project. Funds are designated for debris removal from trails and the disc golf course at Ashe Park. FEMA has approved the project and the funds have already been received. The amendment would increase the Parks and Recreation budget from \$1,234,496 to \$1,266,405. Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to approve the budget amendment. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

#### Approved

**For:** 4 - Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Powers, Commissioner Eldreth and Commissioner Killen

## GENERAL SESSION

### VII. Commissioner Comments

### VIII. Announcements

[PRES 26-24](#) Commissioners and staff will recess to the 2nd floor conference room behind the Register of Deeds office for a Mid-Year Budget Review presented by Sandy Long, Finance Officer. Immediately following Commissioners will enter into Executive (Closed) Session in the same location.

*Chairman McNeill called a recess at 9:26 am announcing that Commissioners and staff would reconvene at 9:36 am on the 2nd floor in the conference room behind the Register of Deeds Office for the Mid-Year Budget Review. Chairman McNeill stated that the Mid-Year Budget review is open to the public and the public is invited to attend.*

*Sandy Long, Financial Officer for Ashe County presented to the Board the Mid-Year Financial Review. Sandy spoke on Cash & Investments, General Fund Expenditures, General Fund Revenues, Environmental Services Expenditures & Revenues, Sales Tax Received VS. Budgeted, Sales Tax Receipts VS. Previous Years', Debt Service FY2025-2026, Debt Services Projects, Article 40 and 42 Required Sales Tax Set Aside, Property Tax Rates, Ad Valorem Tax Comparison, Occupancy Tax Comparison, and Fund Balance. Meeting was informational and no decisions were made.*

#### No Action Taken

[PRES 26-23](#) At 1:00pm on March 2nd, 2026 Commissioners and staff will tour a local commercial property.

### 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. Commissioner Killen made the motion to exit Executive Session at 11:21 am. Commissioner Eldreth seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

[ES 26-5](#) 143-318.11(5) Property

[ES 26-6](#)

143-318.11 (a)(3) Legal

**X. Adjournment**

*Vice Chairman Powers made the motion to adjourn the March 2nd, 2026 Regular Session meeting at 11:21 am. Commissioner Killen seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

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