

# **Ashe County**

*150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640*



## **Meeting Minutes - Final**

**Monday, May 15, 2023**

**9:00 AM**

**Commission Meeting Room**

### **County Commission**

*Chairperson Todd McNeill*

*Vice Chair Chuck Olive*

*Commissioner William Sands*

*Commissioner Jerry D. Powers*

*Commissioner Mike Eldreth*

**BUSINESS SESSION****I. 9:00 AM - Meeting Called to Order at the Ashe County Courthouse**

*Chairman McNeill called the May 15th, 2023 Regular Session Meeting in session at 9:00 am.*

**Present:** 5 - Vice Chairman Chuck Olive, Chairperson Todd McNeill, Commissioner William Sands, Commissioner Jerry D. Powers and Commissioner Mike Eldreth

**II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer**

*Commissioner Eldreth led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Powers offered the opening prayer.*

**III. Approval of Minutes**

*Commissioner Eldreth made the motion to approve the April 17th, 2023 & the May 1st, 2023 Regular Session Minutes. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

[MIN 23-10](#) April 17th, 2023 Regular Session Minutes

**Attachments:** [5-15-23 April 17th, 2023 Regular Session Minutes](#)

[MIN 23-11](#) May 1st, 2023 Regular Session Minutes

**Attachments:** [5-15-23 May 1st, 2023 Regular Session Minutes](#)

**IV. Adoption of Agenda**

*Commissioner Sands made the motion to adopt the May 15th, 2023 Agenda. Vice Chairman Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Adopted**

**For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

**V. Public Comment**

*Chairman McNeill opened the floor for public comment at 9:04 am. John Cope with Ashe County Reading Initiative took the podium and spoke about their "Ashe County Summer Reading Adventure" and said that the Ashe County Reading Initiative was granted \$50,000 to assist with reading issues in Ashe County. He stated that 24 children that have been identified by Ashe County Public Schools as at risk will participate in this summer program. Carla Straun also with the Ashe County Reading Initiative took the podium and spoke on the budget needs and concerns for the program as they go forward. Tonya Robinson a member of Down Home and Ashe County Resident took the podium and spoke on the need for Housing Standards in Ashe County. This in regard to landlord responsibilities and rentals. Dolly Reeves also with Down Home took the podium to also speak on Housing Standards. Three other Down Home Members also took the*

podium to speak on Housing Standards including Julie Smith from Glendale Springs, who read a letter from Nancy Shannon from Fleetwood. They also stated that 27 counties in North Carolina have enacted such a standard. Chairman McNeill thanked them all for their comments and seeing no further movement from those in attendance he closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting at 9:20 am.

## VI. Presentations

[PRES 23-80](#) 9:05 AM - PUBLIC HEARING- regarding proposed text amendments to Ashe County Code of Ordinances, Title XV: Land Usage, CHAPTER 152: MANUFACTURED HOMES and CHAPTER 153: PLANNING

**Attachments:** [5-15-23 Public Hearing Notice Planning-Land Usage](#)  
[5-15-23 Chapter 152 Manufactured Homes](#)  
[5-15-23 Chapter 153 Planning](#)  
[5-15-23 Approval of Amendments Letter](#)

At 9:20 AM Chairman McNeill opened the PUBLIC HEARING regarding proposed text amendments to Ashe County Code of Ordinances, Title XV: Land Usage, CHAPTER 152: MANUFACTURED HOMES and CHAPTER 153: PLANNING. No citizens in attendance had any comments in reference to the text amendments. At 9:21 AM Chairman McNeill closed the Public Hearing. David Phipps, Planning Board took the podium briefly and spoke on the changes. He stated that manufactured housing had changed dramatically in the last 20 years and updates were needed to bring the ordinance into compliance with state law. Commissioner Powers made the motion to approve the text amendments. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

[PRES 23-81](#) 9:07 AM - Tracie McMillan, Director, Ashe County Department of Social Services - Monthly Statistics Report and Letter to Secretary Kody Kinsley, NC-DHHS

**Attachments:** [5-15-232 DSS Statistics Report March 2023](#)  
[5-15-23 NCACDSS Letter](#)

Tracie McMillan, Director, Ashe County Department of Social Services presented to the Board the DSS Monthly Statistics Report. Tracie also shared with the Board a Letter written to Secretary Kody Kinsley, NC-DHHS expressing appreciation for his reiteration of the Department's goal to improve the way children and families are supported when a crisis brings them to the attention of child welfare services. The letter discussed working together to build a strong network for kinship care for children and reduced institutional placements and other issues being faced today. The letter requested a meeting with NCDHHS, DHSR Officials, NCACDSS and the LME/MCOs with the goal of working collaboratively on these and many issues. No action taken.

**No Action Taken**

[PRES 23-82](#) 9:11 AM - Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator - Monthly Tax Report, April 2023

**Attachments:** [5-15-23 April 2023 Tax Report](#)

*Chris Lambert, Tax Administrator presented to the Board the Monthly Tax Report for April 2023. Commissioner Eldreth made the motion to approve the Tax Report for April 2023. Vice Chairman Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*  
**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

**PRES 23-83** 9:13 AM - David Graham, Transportation Planner - CTP Update  
(Attachments separate, too large to attach)

*David Graham, Transportation Planner with NCDOT presented to the Board the Ashe County Comprehensive Transportation Plan. (CTP) This plan is long term & long range. Mr. Graham stated that the Ashe County Comprehensive Transportation Plan has been a joint effort between Ashe County, the municipalities of Jefferson, West Jefferson, and Lansing, the High Country Rural Planning Organization, and NCDOT and was a year in development. This plan update evaluates current and future conditions for highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation modes. Commissioner Eldreth asked about several terminology clarifications. He also asked what the DOT budget for Ashe County was. At this time David Graham invited his DOT co-worker James Upchurch to come up to assist in answering Commissioner Eldreth's questions. Mr Upchurch stated that the budget for the counties is not really set up by county but is set up by the road systems. He also said that every division office does budget a certain amount of money that it has allocated to it to handle some of the on the ground projects such as the resurfacing, the paving, and construction. Commissioner Eldreth asked who made the final decision on what roads were repaired and resurfaced? Mr. Upchurch answered that the Board of Commissioners collectively with the municipalities of Jefferson, West Jefferson, and Lansing, the High Country Rural Planning Organization, and NCDOT all have input, with Division 11 having the final say. Commissioner Eldreth asked what is the consideration given to the worst road in Ashe County? David Graham stated that they have captured Commissioner Eldreth's Little Horse Creek road conditions comment and it's going to be included in the CTP under Other Community Interests. Commissioner Eldreth also stated there is a road hazard when you leave Lansing on Big Horse Creek Road, the DOT paved one side of the road, they did not pave the other side of the road. There is a ridge running all the way down the center of that road and I talked a lot of people and especially motor cyclists who say this is a real hazard and that it needs to be corrected. You need to put up signs "Danger Uneven Lanes". Commissioner Eldreth asked why would DOT pave one side of the road and leave the side? Commissioner Eldreth also stated that no one he has spoken to likes the idea of the Bike Path. Commissioner Eldreth also stated in reference to the proposed roundabout to be constructed in Warrensville in the future that no one he had spoken to liked that either. He felt it proposed dangers for large hauling trucks coming down into the roundabout colliding with smaller cars negotiating the roundabout. David Graham stated that roundabouts are designed for safety to make intersections safer. Commissioner Powers made the motion to approve the Ashe County Comprehensive Transportation Plan. (CTP) Vice Chairman Olive seconded the motion. Chairman McNeill and Commissioner Sands voted in agreement. Commissioner Eldreth voted against.*

**Approved**

**For:** 4 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands and Commissioner Powers

**Against:** 1 - Commissioner Eldreth

- [PRES 23-84](#) 9:18 AM - Patricia Calloway, Executive Director Generations Ashe -  
•2022-23 Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) Revision approval & 2023-24 Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) planning committee membership approval

**Attachments:** [5-15-23 HCCBG Committee Members - HCBG 732 Revision](#)

*Patricia Calloway, Executive Director Generations Ashe presented to the Board the 2022-23 Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) Revision for approval & the 2023-24 Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) planning committee membership for approval. Vice Chairman Olive made the motion to approve the presentation. Commissioner Eldreth seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

- For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

- [PRES 23-85](#) 9:23 AM - Don Church, Board of Directors Mt. Jefferson Child Development - MJCD Monthly Update

**Attachments:** [DCDEE States Visit Rpt 2023](#)

*Don Church, Board of Directors Mt. Jefferson Child Development along with MJCD Board members Suzanne Black, Kelly Hardy and Kim Barnes, Executive Director Ashe Partnership presented to the Board a MJCD Monthly Update. A budget for the next 18 months has been completed, staff training is up to date and interviews have been completed on the hiring of a new director. No action taken.*

**No Action Taken**

- [PRES 23-86](#) 9:28 AM - Adam Stumb, County Manager - Ashe County Health Department Update

*Adam Stumb, County Manager along with Jennifer Greene, MPH Health Director/CEO AppHealthCare, Appalachian District Health Department presented to the Board an update on the Ashe County Health Department. They stated that a temporary set up for the Health Department has been arranged with final approval from the Board. The cost includes roughly \$22,000 per month for the trailer plus additional set up cost. Through some existing grant monies, we can cover the cost but would limit it to 6 months for now. Commissioner Powers made the motion to approve supporting the Ashe County Health Department financially for 6 months at \$26,000 per month to rent temporary units. Vice Chairman Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

- For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

- [PRES 23-87](#) 9:33 AM - Adam Stumb, County Manager - Annual Budget Presentation

*Adam Stumb, County Manager presented (read) to the Board the Annual Budget Presentation FY2023-24.*

**No Action Taken**

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**[PRES 23-88](#)** 9:40 AM - Cathy Barr, Economic Director - Industrial Park Expansion

*Cathy Barr, Economic Director presented to the Board Industrial Park Expansion possibilities with the use of unused REDLG funds to do additional grading work at the industrial park to have ready building sites. Jason Bertoncino with WithersRavenel also shared with the Board proposed additional Industrial Park development. Commissioner Powers made the motion to go forward with the use of the unused REDLG funds to ready building sites at the Industrial Park. Vice Chairman Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

### **GENERAL SESSION**

#### **VII. Commissioner Comments**

#### **VIII. Announcements**

#### **IX. Executive Session**

#### **X. Adjournment**

*Commissioner Powers made the motion to adjourn the May 15th, 2023 Regular Session meeting at 11:22 am. Vice Chairman Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Vice Chairman Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Eldreth

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.

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**Todd McNeill, Chairman**

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**Missy Seivers**  
**Clerk to the Board**