

**TENTATIVE AGENDA & MEETING NOTICE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025
5:30 P.M.**

**WATAUGA COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
COMMISSIONERS' BOARD ROOM**

TIME	#	TOPIC	PRESENTER	PAGE
5:30	1	CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER		
	2	APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 27 & 28, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes March 4, 2025, Regular Meeting March 4, 2025, Closed Session		1
	3	APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 18, 2025, AGENDA		11
5:35	4	PUBLIC COMMENT – Will last up to 1-hour dependent on number of speakers	CHAIRMAN EGGERS	13
5:40	5	PROPOSED RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE APPRECIATION OF THE WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE ASSISTANCE RENDERED TO WATAUGA COUNTY ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2024, AND THE WEEKS FOLLOWING	CHAIRMAN EGGERS	15
5:45	6	LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR FIRE ASSOCIATION	MR. SETH NORRIS	17
5:50	7	WATAUGA HERITAGE MUSEUM REPORT	MS. MARY MORETZ	25
5:55	8	MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY EASEMENT	MS. WENDY PATOPRSTY	27
6:00	9	BID AWARD REQUEST FOR GUY FORD ROAD RIVER ACCESS STORM DAMAGE REPAIRS	MR. ROBERT MARSH	37
6:05	10	HUMAN SERVICES ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM REQUEST	MR. DREW EGGERS	41
6:10	11	TAX MATTERS A. Monthly Collections Report B. Refunds & Releases	MR. TYLER RASH	45 47
6:15	12	MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS A. Boards and Commissions B. Announcements	MR. DERON GEOUQUE	55 59
6:20	13	BREAK		59
6:25	14	CLOSED SESSION Attorney/Client Matters per, G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Personnel Matters per, G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6)		65
7:00	15	ADJOURN		

AGENDA ITEM 2:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

February 27 & 28, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2025, Regular Meeting

March 4, 2025, Closed Session

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025, & FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2025

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Thursday, February 27, 2025, and Friday, February 28, 2025, in order to conduct a budget retreat to review goals and objectives for the County. The meetings originated in the Commissioners' Board Room at the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: Braxton Eggers, Chairman
Todd Castle, Vice-Chairman
Emily Greene, Commissioner
Tim Hodges, Commissioner
Ronnie Marsh, Commissioner
Deron Geouque, County Manager/Finance Director

Lunch was provided at 12:00 P.M. Chairman Eggers called the meeting to order on Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 1:30 P.M., welcoming those in attendance. Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director Liaison, joined the meeting for both sessions.

The following topics were discussed:

Opening Remarks

Mr. Deron Geouque

FY 2024 Review and Discussion of FY 2025 Budget

Major Kelly Redmon, Captain Preston Russell, & Captain Brian Bumgarner

A. Sheriff's Report –

Ms. Misty Watson

B. Revenues

C. Expenditures

D. Debt Service Report

E. Budget Calendar

F. Special Appropriations

Review of Current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Mr. Deron Geouque & Mr. Robert Marsh

A. Current CIP Status Report

B. Valle Crucis Elementary School

C. County Facilities Assessment Update

D. Board of Elections Storage Needs

E. ARPA Projects/Funding

1. Broadband \$7,750,000

2. Kill/Chill Water/Sewer \$500,000

Mr. Jim Hamilton

- F. 911/Medic/Emergency Services Facility
- G. Library
- H. School Facilities

Break from 3:28 P.M. to 3:38 P.M.

Sanitation Facility Upgrades

Mr. Chris Marriott

- A. Facility Upgrades
- B. Recycling

Tax Matters – 2027 Revaluation

Mr. Tyler Rash

Appalachian District Health

Ms. Jennifer Greene & Ms. Lindsay Sullivan

- A. District Matters
- B. Opioid Plan

Watauga County Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Jason Walker

Watauga Medics

Mr. Craig Sullivan

- A. Annual Report
- B. Future Needs

County Manager's Summary

Mr. Deron Geouque

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to recess the meeting at 6:02 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Chairman Eggers, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to reconvene the meeting on Friday, February 28, 2025, at 9:01 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

EDC/Chamber Foundation Report

Mr. Joe Furman & Mr. David Jackson

Middle Fork Greenway Update

Ms. Wendy Patoprsty

Watauga TDA

Mr. Wright Tilley & Mr. Matt Vincent

Break from 10:14 A.M. to 10:22 A.M.

Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute

Dr. Mark Poarch

School Board Funding Issues

Superintendent Dr. Leslie Alexander, School Board Chairman Dr. Gary Childers, Board Member Ms. Allison Idol, as well as Staff members Dr. Chris Blanton, Assistant Superintendent and Human Resources Director, and Ms. Joe Nash, Chief Finance Officer

- A. FY 2026 Funding Needs
- B. Schools' Capital Improvement Plan

Public Safety and Emergency Communications Matters

Mr. Will Holt

- A. EMS Updates
- B. Communications Updates

Miscellaneous & Commissioner Matters

Mr. Deron Geouque

- A. State Issues
- B. Commissioner Matters

Wrap up, Goals, Objectives, and Board Directives

Budget Work Sessions are set for May 8, 2025, from 12:00 – 8:00 P.M. and May 9, 2025, from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

The County Manager concluded the retreat by reviewing the issues discussed and seeking direction from the Board for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 P.M.

Braxton Eggers
Chairman, Watauga County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:
Deron Geouque
County Manager

DRAFT**MINUTES****WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025**

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Eggers called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. The following were present:

PRESENT: Braxton Eggers, Chairman
 Todd Castle, Vice-Chairman
 Emily Greene, Commissioner
 Tim Hodges, Commissioner
 Ronnie Marsh, Commissioner
 Nathan Miller, County Attorney
 Deron Geouque, County Manager
 Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Hodges opened with a prayer and Commissioner Marsh led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Eggers presented the February 18, 2025, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to approve the February 18, 2025, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to approve the February 18, 2025, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Eggers called for additions and/or corrections to the February 18, 2025, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add the following items after public comment:

- A Proposed Letter Welcoming Chancellor Heather Norris to Appalachian State University.

- Economic Development Matters including the following:
 - A. Proposed Resolution Requesting the United States Congress and the North Carolina General Assembly Continue to Provide Financial and Administrative Support for Small Businesses in Watauga County and All Western NC Counties Impacted by Hurricane Helene
 - B. Proposed Local Bill for Housing to be Entitled An Act To Authorize The Town of Blowing Rock, The Town of Boone, and The Watauga County Board of Education To Construct and Provide Affordable Housing for Town Employees and for Public School Teachers

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Vice-Commissioner Castle, moved to approve the March 4, 2025, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

REVISED BID FOR SHERIFF'S OFFICE VEHICLE PURCHASE

Captain Preston Russell, with the Sheriff's Office, requested the Board rescind the offer of acceptance to McNeil Chevrolet of Wilkesboro in the amount of \$48,744.36 for one (1) 2025 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Truck that was approved at the February 18, 2025, meeting and accept an offer from Elevation Chevrolet of Boone in the amount of \$46,356 for one (1) 2024 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Truck. County Attorney Miller recommended the Board discuss the request in closed session prior to consideration.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to add a "Possible Action After Closed Session" to the agenda.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

LETTER TO THE CHANCELLOR OF APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Chairman Eggers shared a letter that would be sent to the newly appointed Chancellor of Appalachian State University, Dr. Heather Norris. Dr. Norris, who has recently served as Interim Chancellor, had both the interests of the University and community as a whole at heart and the Board looks forward to working with the University through her leadership.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

A. Proposed Resolution Requesting the United States Congress and the North Carolina General Assembly Continue to Provide Financial and Administrative Support for Small Businesses in Watauga County and All Western NC Counties Impacted by Hurricane Helene

Mr. Joe Furman, Director of Economic Development with the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, presented a proposed resolution requesting the United States Congress and the North Carolina General Assembly continue to provide financial and administrative support for small businesses in Watauga County and all Western NC counties impacted by Hurricane Helene. Mr. Furman read the resolution.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to adopt the resolution as presented by Mr. Furman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

B. Proposed Local Bill for Housing to be Entitled An Act To Authorize The Town of Blowing Rock, The Town of Boone, and The Watauga County Board of Education To Construct and Provide Affordable Housing for Town Employees and for Public School Teachers

Mr. Joe Furman, Director of Economic Development with the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, stated that discussions were held over the past year with the North Carolina State Employees Credit Union Foundation for public employees housing assistance. Approximately one year ago, the UNC School of Government made staff aware that a Local Bill would be needed for such a project.

Mr. Furman presented a draft of a Local Bill for the Towns of Boone and Blowing Rock along with the Watauga Education Foundation, for such a project for teachers and other public employees. The deadline to introduce the Local Bill was rapidly approaching. Through the project, housing would not be subsidized but would rather be assisted in the form of a 0% loan. The County's involvement could be the sale or lease of County-owned land across from the Brookshire Road soccer fields which has long been considered for affordable housing. The Education Foundation would be the applicant. The Local Bill would not commit the County to anything but would allow the project to happen. If not introduced at this time, it would be one year before a Local Bill could be introduced.

The Local Bill would allow for the County, if the County so chose, to lease or sell the land without following Statutory laws. Mr. Furman requested to have Watauga County's name included in the Local Bill.

After discussion, Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to add Watauga County's name to the Local Bill authorizing the County, Town of Blowing Rock, Town of Boone, and the Watauga County Board of Education to construct and provide affordable housing for public employees and public school teachers.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

HURRICANE HELENE UPDATE

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, provided an update on the recovery from Hurricane Helene. Mr. Holt stated that PPDR and Waterway removal was underway with Rights-of-Entry ongoing. The information to register is on the County's website. Site are set up at the Western Watauga Community Center and the Poplar Grove Connector Site where in person help can be obtained. Flyers will soon be placed at all of the County's Container Sites and other public buildings. County Manager Geouque stated that billboards and temporary electronic roadside signs may also be used.

Mr. Holt state that waterway removal was underway on Hwy 421 and several other areas earlier in the day. Soil and Water and NCRS would be going to the removal locations when removal was done to see what remained. Mr. Holt stated that the registration deadline for individual assistance was March 8, 2025. If it were extended again, Mr. Holt stated that it would be requested for the in person sites to remain open as well.

The report was for information only; therefore, no action was required at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

C. Kill/Chill Project

The County Manager stated that the County Attorney had an update on the Kill/Chill project.

County Attorney Miller stated that the Fair Market Value (FMV) for the lease was determined to be between \$9 to \$11 dollars by Appraiser Mike Sweeting. Piedmont Meats wanted to obtain their own FMV. Mr. Miller stated that a \$500,000 grant for the project had been decommitted and that due to Hurricane Helene, the space designated for the facility at the old landfill site was being utilized by the Sanitation Department. When asked the costs of not being able to utilize the site, County Manager Geouque stated that it would costs approximately \$75,000 per year to haul the materials currently being stored on the site. Over time that would add up to approximately \$1.7 million which would be considered money lost due to not being able to use that site. No action was taken at this time.

[Clerk's Note: Action was taken after Closed Session.]

D. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following:

Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

The terms of Ms. Kim Rogers and Mr. Tony Gray on the Watauga County TDA Board expired at the end of February 2025. Ms. Rogers serves in one of three seats required to be filled by an owner or operator of a taxable lodging business with properties in Watauga County District U. Mr. Gray retired from Appalachian State University years ago having served as the Director of Conference and Institutes. He was also a Christmas tree grower for many years. The TDA has requested the reappointment of both Ms. Rogers and Mr. Gray each for a three-year term.

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to reappoint Ms. Kim Rogers and Mr. Tony Gray to three-year terms on the Watauga County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Workforce Development Board

Ms. Misty Bishop-Price, Director of High Country Council of Governments Workforce Development Board, has requested the reappointment of Ms. Tara Brossa for a two-year term ending on June 30, 2027. This was a first reading and, therefore, no action was required at this time.

Social Services Advisory Board

The Social Services Advisory Board recommends the appointment of Ms. Tiffany Williams who will fill the seat held by Ms. Mary Smalling. The term is for four years. This was a first reading and, therefore, no action was required at this time.

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The High Country Council of Governments' 49th Annual Banquet was postponed due to Hurricane Helene and has been rescheduled for Friday, March 7, 2025, from 6:00 to 9:00 P.M. in the Grandview Ballroom at the Northwest End Zone Facility, Appalachian State University.
- A Groundbreaking Ceremony will be held for the new EMS Facility off of Innovation Drive on Friday, March 14, 2025, at 1:00 P.M.
- The North Carolina Association of County Commissioners will hold a District 14 Meeting on April 24, 2025, from 5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. at the Avery Community Center. Commissioners are invited to attend.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:03 P.M., Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:13 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION**Sheriff's Office**

Commissioner Marsh, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to reject the offer from Elevation Chevrolet of Boone in the amount of \$46,356 for one (1) 2024 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Truck and honor offer of acceptance to McNeil Chevrolet of Wilkesboro in the amount of \$48,744.36 for one (1) 2025 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Truck that was approved at the February 18, 2025, meeting.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Kill/Chill Project

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to rescind the RFP awarded to Piedmont Meats for the operation of the Kill/Chill on August 20, 2024, and rescind the award of the design build of the Kill/Chill facility to DH Griffin based on the fact the Appalachian Regional Commission decommitted a \$500,000 grant so that we don't have the funds to construct the facility and the damage to the community caused by Hurricane Helene that has necessitated the need for more space at the landfill site.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Castle, seconded by Commissioner Greene, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Braxton Eggers, Chairman

ATTEST: Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

AGENDA ITEM 3:

APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 18, 2025, AGENDA

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AGENDA ITEM 4:

PUBLIC COMMENT

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Public Comment will last up to 1-hour dependent upon the number of speakers.

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AGENDA ITEM 5:

PROPOSED RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE APPRECIATION OF THE WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE ASSISTANCE RENDERED TO WATAUGA COUNTY ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2024, AND THE WEEKS FOLLOWING

MANAGER’S COMMENTS:

Chairman Eggers will present a resolution expressing the Board’s appreciation for all of the assistance received during, after, and currently from Hurricane Helene.

Board action is required to adopt the resolution as presented.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF WATAUGA

**RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE APPRECIATION OF THE
WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE ASSISTANCE RENDERED TO WATAUGA COUNTY
ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2024, AND THE WEEKS FOLLOWING**

WHEREAS, on September 27, 2024, Hurricane Helene brought major destruction to Watauga County and the western counties of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, heavy rains and winds lead to localized flooding, downed trees, power and internet lines, landslides, and road closures and washouts; and

WHEREAS, public safety agencies, utility workers, nonprofits, civic and religious organizations and businesses, have donated time, financial assistance, and unending support; and

WHEREAS, all of the assistance provided during this tragedy allowed our community to move forward and begin the recovery process; and

WHEREAS, the recovery process will take years and the continued support of community, local, state, and federal assistance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS declare formally their appreciation and recognition of public safety agencies, utility workers, nonprofits, civic and religious organizations and businesses that provided assistance throughout this catastrophic event and have shown the true sense of community.

ADOPTED this the 18th day of March, 2025.

Braxton Eggers, Chairman
Watauga County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Anita Fogle, Clerk to the Board



AGENDA ITEM 6:

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR FIRE ASSOCIATION

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Seth Norris, Chair – Watauga County Fire Commission, will present a letter to our State and Federal representatives requesting support by fully funding the North Carolina Forest Service budget request. The support would assist in the mitigation of wildfire risks for our county and the western counties of the state.

A letter in support of the Watauga County Fire Commission and Firefighters Association is included for Board review.

Board action is required to adopt the letter of support as presented.



County of Watauga

Administration Building, Suite 205 • 814 West King Street • Boone, North Carolina 28607

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Braxton Eggers, Chairman
Todd Castle, Vice-Chairman
Emily Greene
Tim Hodges
Ronnie Marsh

Telephone 828-265-8000
TDD 1-800-735-2962
Voice 1-800-735-8262

COUNTY MANAGER
Deron T. Geouque

COUNTY ATTORNEY
Nathan Miller

March 13, 2025

The Honorable Destin Hall
16 West Jones St., Rm. 2301
Raleigh, NC 27601-1096

The Honorable Ralph Hise
300 N. Salisbury St., Rm. 300-A
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Ray Pickett
300 N. Salisbury St., Rm. 411
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

Dear Speaker of the House Hall, Senator Hise, and Representative Pickett:

Hurricane Helene amplified the need for communities to be prepared for natural disasters. One specific issue highlighted was the need for pre-position assets with close proximity to the affected area. This was self-evident in Watauga County's case where there was difficulty getting resources to our area due to roads being washout, flooded, or blocked by debris. The County continues to assess what worked and areas in need of improvement.

As part of the County's assessment, an increase in the risk of wildfires has been recognized due to the unprecedented number of trees down as a result of Hurricane Helene. These downed trees combined with the lack of rainfall has created a significant amount of fuel to lead to catastrophic wildfires. A catastrophic wildfire would place our community directly in the sights of another major disaster, while still recovering from Hurricane Helene. A wildfire in the magnitude that struck Gatlinburg, Tennessee would devastate our community and recovery efforts.

Our local Fire Commission and Fire Fighter Association has identified one step that could assist in the mitigation of risk along with other steps in reducing the amount of fuel for wildfires. The single most important step would be to fully fund the North Carolina Forest Service's budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Without full funding, the Forest Service's ability to address the escalating wildfire threat will be severely compromised. Two key takeaways from the devastating Gatlinburg Wildfire was 1.) Forest Management Practices: The assessment pointed out the importance of improved forest management to reduce wildfire risks; and 2.) Resource Allocation: Insufficient resources for firefighting and prevention efforts were noted as a critical issue.

We respectfully request the full funding of the North Carolina Forest Service to assist in the mitigation of wildfire risks to our community and to ensure we do not repeat issues already identified by the Gatlinburg Wildfire that could have been prevented with appropriate funding.

Thank you for your support and consideration of this most important matter regarding public safety.

Respectfully,

Braxton Eggers, Chairman
Watauga County Board of Commissioners

WATAUGA COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

184 HODGES GAP ROAD, BOX D
BOONE, NC 28607

March 11, 2025

Senator Ralph Hise
300 N. Salisbury Street, Rm. 300-A
Raleigh, NC 27603

Representative Ray Pickett
300 N. Salisbury Street, Rm. 411
Raleigh, NC 27603

Senator Hise and Representative Pickett:

We write you with an urgent request: to fully fund the funding requests of the North Carolina Forest Service as attached. The unprecedented wildfire risks facing Watauga County and the broader Western North Carolina region, particularly in the wake of Hurricane Helene, demand immediate and robust support to protect our communities, natural resources, and the brave men and women who serve on the front lines of fire prevention and suppression.

Hurricane Helene, which struck our region in September 2024, left behind a landscape primed for disaster. The storm’s ferocious winds and torrential rains felled countless trees, scattering debris across forests and residential areas alike. This downed timber, combined with drying conditions and seasonal leaf fall, has created an extraordinary fuel load that significantly elevates the risk of catastrophic wildfires. In Watauga County alone, our steep slopes, dense woodlands, and growing number of homes nestled within the wildland-urban interface amplify this danger. The potential for rapid fire spread threatens not only property but also the lives of residents and the firefighters tasked with protecting them.

Western North Carolina has already borne witness to this heightened risk. Recent wildfires, such as the Elk Creek Fire in Watauga County in November 2023, which burned over 200 acres in a matter of hours, and others across the region, underscore the volatile conditions we face. These incidents, occurring even before the full impact of Helene’s debris was realized, serve as a stark warning of what lies ahead without adequate resources. The NC Forest Service, alongside local fire departments, has been stretched thin responding to these events, and the compounding effects of Helene have only intensified the strain.

The NC Forest Service plays an indispensable role in mitigating these risks through wildfire prevention, suppression, and community education programs like Firewise. Their expertise and resources are critical to supporting our 15 local fire departments in Watauga County, which rely on state assistance for training, equipment, and coordination during large-scale incidents. However, without full funding for the 2025-26 budget, the Forest Service’s ability to address the escalating wildfire threat—exacerbated by Helene’s aftermath—will be severely compromised. This is not a hypothetical concern; it is a present and growing reality.

We respectfully urge you to consider the economic and human costs of inaction. Wildfires in Western North Carolina could devastate tourism, a cornerstone of our regional economy, destroy homes and businesses still rebuilding from Helene, and place an unbearable burden on our volunteer and career firefighters. The cost of suppressing a single uncontrolled wildfire far exceeds the investment required to bolster the NC Forest

BEAVER DAM | BEECH MOUNTAIN | BLOWING ROCK | BOONE | CRESTON
COVE CREEK | DEEP GAP | FALL CREEK | FOSCOE | MEAT CAMP | SEVEN DEVILS
SHAWNEEHAW | STEWART SIMMONS | TODD | ZIONVILLE

rebuilding from Helene and place an unbearable burden on our volunteer and career firefighters. The cost of suppressing a single uncontrolled wildfire far exceeds the investment required to bolster the NC Forest

Service's proactive measures. Full funding will ensure they can hire and train personnel, maintain equipment, conduct prescribed burns to reduce fuel loads, and expand outreach to help residents prepare their properties against fire risks.

As we find ourselves in another fire season, time is of the essence. The people of Watauga County and Western North Carolina cannot afford a repeat of past underfunding that leaves us vulnerable to preventable disasters. We implore you to act decisively by fully funding the NC Forest Service's 2025-26 budget requests, providing the resources necessary to safeguard our communities from the extreme wildfire risks we now face.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter and for your continued support of public safety across our state. We stand ready to provide further information or testimony to assist in your deliberations.

Sincerely,



Seth A. Norris
Chair, Watauga County Fire Commission



Floyd Hicks
President, Watauga County Firefighters Association

Enclosure (1)

Cc: Congresswoman Virginia Foxx
Watauga County Board of Commissioners
Commissioner Steve Troxler, NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Assistant Commissioner Greg Hicks, NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services



**POST HURRICANE HELENE NCFS NEEDS
TIMBER DAMAGE SUMMARY – FRAMING THE ISSUES**



NC Forest Service Needs:

To address the issues identified after Hurricane Helene, NCFS is requesting the following from the North Carolina Legislature.

Non-Recurring Needs:

- 1) (\$10,000,000) Funding to replace and upgrade firefighting equipment.**
 - a. The average age of the next 20 Firefighting Bulldozers, that need replacement, is 33-years.
 - b. Many of our transport units and specialized wildland firefighting equipment are Federal Excess Property. Many date from the 1970’s or earlier.
 - c. Specialized equipment is needed to recover from Helene and prepare for the wildfires to come. These include equipment such as masticators, skid steers with mulching heads, and tracked wildland fire engines.
- 2) (\$5,000,000) Funding to contract with private, other state, and federal equipment, aviation, fire crews, and other firefighting resources for the spring and fall 2025 fire seasons.**
 - a. These resources will likely be needed to contain and control any wildfire that becomes established in Helene damaged areas.
 - b. These resources are trained and qualified and are available to assist at a moment’s notice. New FTEs, brought on after July 1, 2025, from recurring funds, will not likely be hired and trained in time to offer support for fires that occur in 2025
- 3) (\$622,000) NCFS Linville River Nursery funding to recover from TS Helene’s direct impacts.**
 - a. Replace seed, tools, equipment and supplies lost during Helene flooding
 - b. This nursery provides many of the seedlings to the Christmas tree industry as well as for reforestation projects in Western NC.
- 4) (\$4,500,000) NCFS Aviation Firefighting Helicopter Replacement**
 - a. The NC Forest Service Division of the Department of Agriculture currently operates two Type 3 firefighting helicopters
 - b. One of the Type 3 helicopters (H-8) has been in service for more than 23 years and the annual costs to maintain airworthiness have been steadily increasing to the point of no longer being cost effective.

Recurring Needs:

- 1) Salary Adjustment funding to address NCFS recruitment and retention.**
 - a. NCFS has averaged nearly 100 vacancies over the last 5 years.
 - b. Most employees that leave cite low pay and poor work life ratio, due to emergency response requirements, as primary factors when choosing to leave.
 - c. Recruiting and retaining highly qualified firefighters and incident management team members is essential to fighting fires in a safe and cost-effective manner while protecting values at risk and keeping fires as small as possible
- 2) (\$900,000) Increase NCFS Aviation operating funding.**
 - a. Increases in the cost of maintaining our fleet of 22 aircraft have resulted in an annual shortfall.
 - b. Examples include insurance, fuel, fire suppressants, and contracted services



POST HURRICANE HELENE NCFS NEEDS TIMBER DAMAGE SUMMARY – FRAMING THE ISSUES



- 3) (\$1,500,000) Appropriated NCFS Overtime and On-Call compensation.**
 - a. On average (FY19-FY23) the cost to NCFS, for on-call and emergency callback is \$432,608 (appropriated) and \$225,045 (Receipts).
 - b. During the state fiscal year 2022-2023, NCFS permanent employees worked 157,586 hours and earned 92,477 hours of compensatory time related to wildfire suppression in the state.
 - c. With an average hourly pay rate of \$23 for our firefighters, and if funds were available to pay out the fire compensatory time, the cost would be \$2,126,971. Currently On-Call is funded out of our lapse salaries generated by vacant positions
- 4) (\$3,500,000) Funding to replace and upgrade our fleet of firefighting equipment.**
 - a. Current estimates for equipment that meets replacement criteria is \$29,000,000 (2024 dollars).
 - b. Increased annual funding is needed, in addition to the non-recurring request, to replace aging equipment such as bull dozers, truck tractors, trailers, and fire engines.
- 5) Recurring (\$1,906,000) and (\$767,000) non-recurring Funding and 22 FTEs to create a Wildfire / Fuels Management Crew.**
 - a. In the mountains of Western NC, manpower also known as hand crews are critical in responding to and controlling wildfires, to assist on prescribed burns, and implement fuel reduction treatments to protect the public.
 - b. NCFS is requesting new positions and an operating budget to develop a Fire and Fuels Hand crew program to assist in all aspects of wildfire and fuel reduction treatments to protect critical infrastructure, homes, and the public in the TS Helene impacted areas.
- 6) Recurring (\$346,000) and non-recurring (\$300,000) Funding and 4 FTEs to Forest Fire Equipment Operators in Western North Carolina.**
 - a. FFEO's are critical in responding to and controlling wildfires, to assist on prescribed burns, and to implement fuel reduction treatments to protect the public through operation of heavy equipment.
 - b. NCFS is requesting new positions and operating budget to add to our equipment operating capabilities and needs to assist in all aspects of wildfire and fuel reduction treatments to protect critical infrastructure, homes, and the public in the TS Helene impacted areas.
- 7) (\$370,000) Recurring Funding and FTE for the NCFS Wildfire Weather and Fuels Intelligence Program.**
 - a. Accurate and timely monitoring and modeling can help firefighters predict how intense fires will burn and how difficult they will be to contain and control.
 - b. Appropriated funding would allow the program to stabilize and react to the dynamic wildfire environment in our mountain communities, as well as statewide.
 - c. Current grant funding is not able to fully support the program, let alone fund needs due to the impact of Hurricane Helene.
- 8) (\$922,000 recurring and \$702,000 non-recurring) 11 FTEs to better address the expanded needs of Forest Landowners and the public in Western NC.**
 - a. 7 counties in Western NC are currently only staffed with one county forest ranger. Adding assistant county forest rangers will allow NCFS to respond to increased emergency response and forest management needs in these counties.
 - b. Law Enforcement, Safety Officer and BRIDGE Project Leader positions will be able to support the NCFS needs across Western NC and Statewide.



POST HURRICANE HELENE NCFS NEEDS TIMBER DAMAGE SUMMARY – FRAMING THE ISSUES



9) (\$1,500,000) Increased funding for the Forest Development Program (FDP).

- a. FDP is an NCFS administered cost share program that funds a range of forest management practices including tree planting, prescribed burning and other site preparation. This program is underfunded by \$1.2 to \$2 million annually, based on the number of applications that cannot be funded.
- b. Unfunded forestry cost-share program applications face a significant risk of going unplanted, jeopardizing the State from realizing the numerous societal, economic, and environmental benefits associated with promptly replanted and improved woodlands. Additional funding is also necessary to supplement potential lost FDP forest assessment monies from recent forestry mill closures and revenue from timber loss due to Tropical System Helene.

Helene Timber Damage Summary:

Hurricane Helene made landfall in Florida on September 26, 2024. Impacts in North Carolina started in the early morning hours of September 27. However, moisture from the storm was inundating Western North Carolina for days ahead of the winds arriving. The resulting rainfall (in excess of 30-inches in Yancy County) softened the ground and created conditions for timber to blow down. The wind arrived early in the morning of September 27. Peak wind gusts at Grandfather Mountain were 106 mph. In early October NCFS conducted an aerial survey of timber damage. This survey produced a conservative estimate of 822,000 acres damaged. Satellite imagery that shows changes in forest cover suggests the extent of damage is much greater.

Framing the Issues:

Access for Emergency response – State and locally maintained road systems are opening. However, numerous private roads, logging roads and fire breaks have been completely blocked by downed timber or washed out by flooding. Fire managers in Western North Carolina rely on these to access and contain wildfires. Natural barriers, such as streams, that historically would stop, or slow fire spread cannot be relied upon due to the amount of debris. With these access points & barriers blocked or unusable, firefighters will have to find open routes that are further away from the fire, resulting in larger fires.

Severity of Wildfires / Wildland Urban Interface – The historic amount of blown down and damaged timber has and will impact how wildfires are contained and controlled for decades to come. Combined with damage in and around the Wildland Urban Interface the potential for damaging wildfire is increased. Limited access and unreliable natural barriers will result in larger fires (As we have seen already from the Crooked Creek and North Fork Fires in McDowell County - January 2025). In the short term, leaves and pine tops will ignite easily and burn intensely resulting in extreme fire behavior and rapid wildfire growth. In the long-term, larger timber will start to dry and contribute to fire intensity, smoldering and smoke production resulting in wildfires that take longer to control and produce more smoke. Combining fast moving fires that are harder to access and control with the urban interface can have catastrophic impacts as evidenced by the Gatlinburg Fires in 2016. NCFS has a critical need for manpower and equipment to open these accesses and battle the wildfires that are sure to come.

Insects, Diseases, & Non-Native Pests – Both native and non-native insects and diseases are likely to flourish in the wake of Hurricane Helene. Destructive species such as Pine Beetles, Spongy Moth, Spotted Lantern Fly and Emerald Ash Borer will seek stressed / damaged timber to attack. Often killing these weakened trees. Invasive plants such as Miscanthus will take advantage of openings in the forest, created by the hurricane, to expand and choke out native species. NCFS positions are needed to identify these areas and help provide resources to landowners to control outbreaks.

Forest Management / Timber Value Loss – FIA data suggests that the 822,000 acres of timber damaged is valued in excess of \$214,000,000. Much of this timber is not feasible to salvage for forest products. Preliminary estimates show that some counties, such as Avery, Mitchell and Watauga, have 30% or more of their forestland damaged. North Carolina forest landowners need support and professional guidance to determine what options are available to them. The NCFS Forest Development Program is well established and positioned to provide cost share assistance for these forest landowners. Unfortunately, many of these same counties only have one NCFS position staffing them or they are vacant due to poor recruitment and retention. NCFS has on average 100 vacant positions over the past 5 years.

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AGENDA ITEM 7:

WATAUGA HERITAGE MUSEUM REPORT

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Ms. Mary Moretz, Secretary - Watauga Heritage Museum, will update the Board on the progress regarding the Watauga Heritage Museum. Staff was unsure if there will be a formal request of the Board at this time.

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AGENDA ITEM 8:

MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY EASEMENT REQUEST

Ms. Wendy Patoprsty, Middle Fork Greenway, will request the Board terminate the current easement between Appalachian Regional and Watauga County. A copy of the Easement Agreement is attached, after which Blowing Rock will secure a similar easement from Appalachian Regional and begin construction of that portion of the Middle Fork Greenway.

Board action is required to terminate the Easement Agreement with Appalachian Regional, only on the piece of property as described in the attachment; thus allowing Blowing Rock to enter into an agreement with Appalachian Regional so that only one easement is recorded for the property.

FILED Amy J. Shook
Register of Deeds, Watauga Co, NC
Fee Amt: \$0.00

Bk 1896 Pg 454 (8)

Recorded: 12/20/2016 at 03:45:26 PM
Doc No: 654110 Kind: AGMT



✓
JOE FURMAN PICK UP

This instrument drawn by: Eggers, Eggers, Eggers and Eggers, Attorneys at Law, Post Office Box 248, Boone, North Carolina 28607

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

EASEMENT AGREEMENT

COUNTY OF WATAUGA

THIS EASEMENT AGREEMENT, made and entered into this 27th day of ~~August~~ ^{OCTOBER}, 2016, executed by and between Appalachian Regional Healthcare System, Inc., a N.C. Non-Profit Corporation, of: Post Office Box 2600, Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina 28607, party of the first part, and Watauga County, a body politic, organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of North Carolina, of: 814 West King Street, Boone, Watauga County, North Carolina, 28607, party of the second part;

WITNESSETH:

THAT WHEREAS, the party of the first part herein owns land located in Blowing Rock Township, Watauga County, North Carolina, said property lying off of NC Highway 221-321, Blowing Rock, North Carolina, said property being more particularly described as a 24.793 acre tract, more or less, as set out in deed recorded in Book of Records 1631 at Page 636, Watauga County Registry;

Bk 1896 Pg 455

Doc No: 654110 Kind: AGMT

AND WHEREAS, the party of the second part, has requested said party of the first part to convey to them, an easement across the said lands of the party of the first part, for a walking and biking trail as a part of the Middle Fork Greenway, and said party of the first part has agreed so to do;

AND WHEREAS, an agreement has been reached as to the location of said easement between the parties of the first and second part herein, with said easement being 20 feet in width, located as set out on plat prepared by Donald H. McNeil, PLS L-2809, Appalachian Professional Land Surveyors and Consultants, P.A., C-2398, a copy of said plat being attached hereto, marked Exhibit "A", and said location of said proposed easement being highlighted in yellow;

AND WHEREAS, party of the second part has further requested the party of the first part to convey to them a temporary easement for construction and maintenance of said walking and biking trails;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the sum of One dollar and other good, valuable and sufficient considerations, in hand paid, the receipt of which is hereby fully acknowledged, the party of the first part hereby conveys and grants to the party of the second part, a non-exclusive easement for a walking and biking trail as a part of the Middle Fork Greenway, as more particularly described, shown and set out on copy of plat attached hereto, marked Exhibit "A".

It being the intention of this instrument to establish a non-exclusive easement for a walking and biking trail, 20 feet in width, as set forth above.

Bk 1896 Pg 456

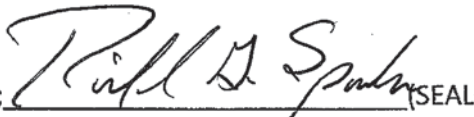
Doc No: 654110 Kind: AGMT

Said easements to remain open and unobstructed at all times, and are to be used for the the general public, for a walking and biking trail.

The party of the first part has further agreed that in addition to the above described easement, that they will convey a temporary construction easement, as follows: Beginning at the point shown as "Proposed Access Easement - NCDOT Project R-5525", on the attached plat, and running 50 feet on each side of the centerline, for the construction of the walking and biking trails. Said temporary construction easement to expire 360 days from the date construction of said walking and biking trails begin.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said parties of the first and second part herein, have hereunto set their hands and seals, or caused this instrument to be signed in their name by their duly authorized officers, the day and year first above written.

PARTY OF THE FIRST PART:
APPALACHIAN REGIONAL HEALTHCARE
SYSTEM, INC., A N.C. NON-PROFIT
CORPORATION

BY:  (SEAL)
President

Bk 1896 Pg 457

Doc No: 654110 Kind: AGMT

PARTY OF THE SECOND PART:
WATAUGA COUNTY, A N. C.
BODY POLITIC

By: [Signature]
Chairman

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Clerk to the Board

(SEAL)

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF WATAUGA

I, JoLynn M. Mahoney, Notary Public, do hereby certify
Richard G. Sparks personally came before me this day and acknowledged that
he is the President of Appalachian Regional Healthcare System, Inc., a Non-Profit Corporation
organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of North Carolina, and that
by authority duly given and as the act of the said Corporation, the foregoing instrument was
signed in its name by himself as its President.

WITNESS my hand and notarial seal, this 27 day of October, 2016.

[Signature]
Notary Public

My commission expires December 7, 2019

(SEAL)

JoLynn M Mahoney
NOTARY PUBLIC
Watauga County
North Carolina
My Commission Expires Dec. 7, 2019

Bk 1896 Pg 458

Doc No: 654110 Kind: AGMT

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF WATAUGA

I, Monica K Harrison, Notary Public, do hereby certify Anita J. Fogle personally came before me this day and acknowledged that she is the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners for Watauga County, a body politic, and that by authority duly given and as the act of the said County, the foregoing instrument was signed in its name by the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners for said County, and attested by her self as Clerk to the Board of Commissioners of said County.

WITNESS my hand and notarial seal, this 7 day of December, 2016.

Monica K Harrison
Notary Public

My commission expires 12-02-2020

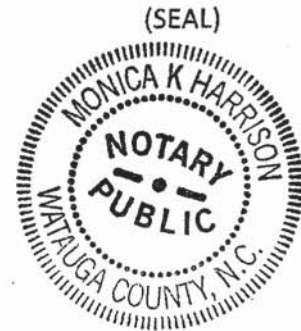


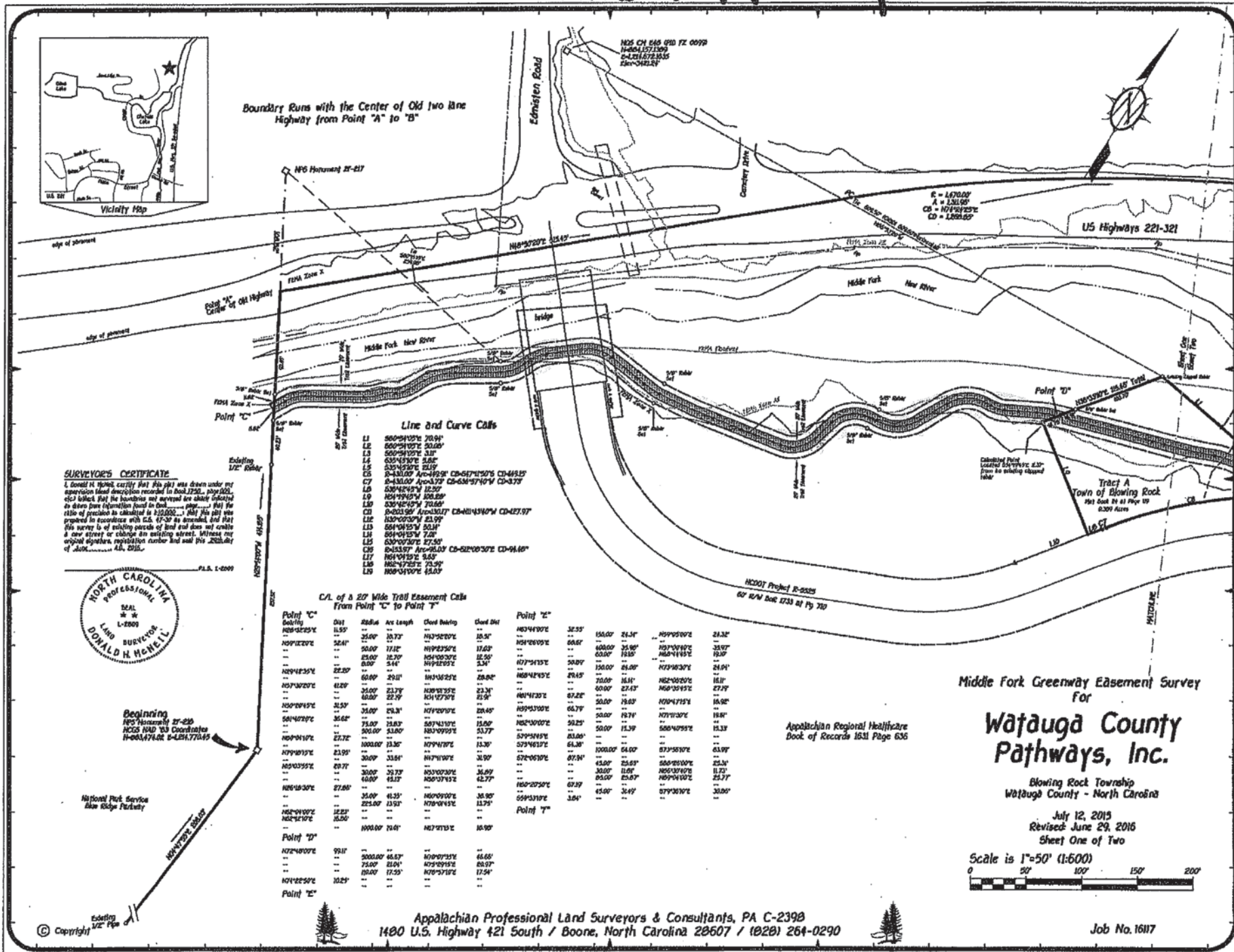
Exhibit "A" - Page One

031825 BCC Meeting

THIS MAP IS NOT A CERTIFIED SURVEY
AND HAS NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY A
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY FOR
COMPLIANCE WITH ANY APPLICABLE
LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS.

Bk 1896 Pg 459
Doc No: 654110 Kind: RGMT

BK 1896 PG 459 DOC# 654110



Line and Curve Calls

L1	S60°41'05"W	70.01'
L2	S60°41'05"W	50.00'
L3	S60°41'05"W	31.17'
L4	S55°45'05"W	5.85'
L5	S55°45'05"W	5.85'
C1	R=31.00' Arc=49.91' CD=617.1576 CD=64.915'	
C2	R=31.00' Arc=49.91' CD=617.1576 CD=64.915'	
L6	S59°42'24"W	12.50'
L7	N59°42'24"W	106.29'
L8	S59°42'24"W	70.00'
C3	R=325.10' Arc=220.01' CD=414.9107 CD=427.97'	
L9	N30°03'30"W	23.99'
L10	S64°04'25"W	50.11'
L11	S64°04'25"W	7.00'
L12	S64°04'25"W	27.50'
L13	N61°49'12"E	8.45'
L14	S59°42'24"W	27.50'
L15	N62°47'25"E	73.59'
L16	N62°47'25"E	15.00'

C.A. of a 20' Wide Trail Easement Calls From Point "C" to Point "E"

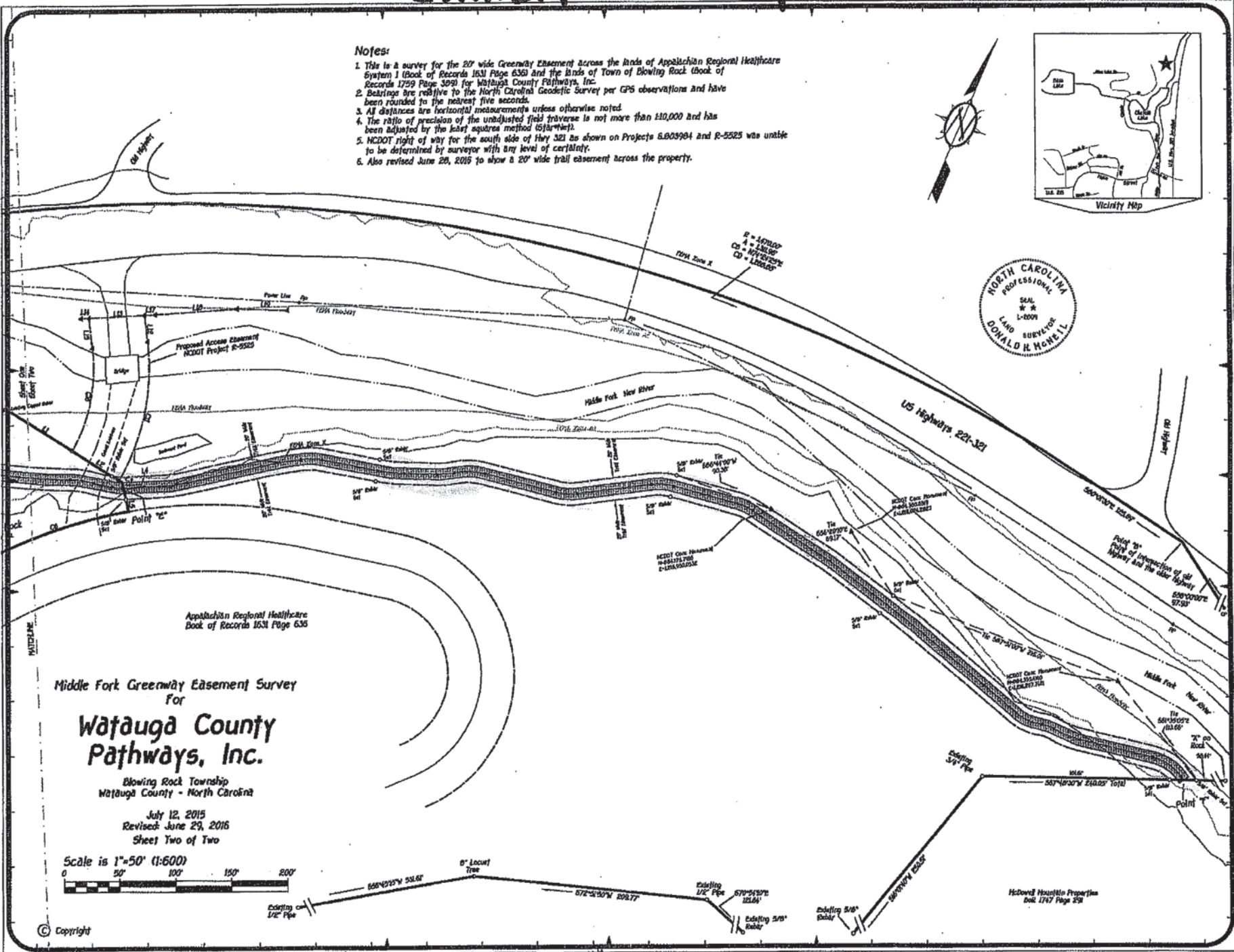
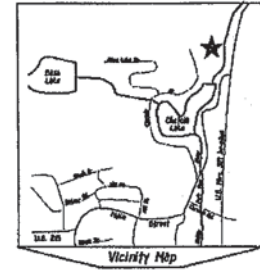
Point "C"	Dist	Bearing	Arc Length	Chord Bearing	Chord Dist	Point "E"
N62°47'25"E	11.50'	...	...	...	...	32.35'
N62°47'25"E	24.00'	...	...	...	...	55.00'
N62°47'25"E	36.00'	...	...	...	...	67.00'
N62°47'25"E	48.00'	...	...	...	...	79.00'
N62°47'25"E	60.00'	...	...	...	...	91.00'
N62°47'25"E	72.00'	...	...	...	...	103.00'
N62°47'25"E	84.00'	...	...	...	...	115.00'
N62°47'25"E	96.00'	...	...	...	...	127.00'
N62°47'25"E	108.00'	...	...	...	...	139.00'
N62°47'25"E	120.00'	...	...	...	...	151.00'
N62°47'25"E	132.00'	...	...	...	...	163.00'
N62°47'25"E	144.00'	...	...	...	...	175.00'
N62°47'25"E	156.00'	...	...	...	...	187.00'
N62°47'25"E	168.00'	...	...	...	...	199.00'
N62°47'25"E	180.00'	...	...	...	...	211.00'
N62°47'25"E	192.00'	...	...	...	...	223.00'
N62°47'25"E	204.00'	...	...	...	...	235.00'
N62°47'25"E	216.00'	...	...	...	...	247.00'
N62°47'25"E	228.00'	...	...	...	...	259.00'
N62°47'25"E	240.00'	...	...	...	...	271.00'
N62°47'25"E	252.00'	...	...	...	...	283.00'
N62°47'25"E	264.00'	...	...	...	...	295.00'
N62°47'25"E	276.00'	...	...	...	...	307.00'
N62°47'25"E	288.00'	...	...	...	...	319.00'
N62°47'25"E	300.00'	...	...	...	...	331.00'
N62°47'25"E	312.00'	...	...	...	...	343.00'
N62°47'25"E	324.00'	...	...	...	...	355.00'
N62°47'25"E	336.00'	...	...	...	...	367.00'
N62°47'25"E	348.00'	...	...	...	...	379.00'
N62°47'25"E	360.00'	...	...	...	...	391.00'
N62°47'25"E	372.00'	...	...	...	...	403.00'
N62°47'25"E	384.00'	...	...	...	...	415.00'
N62°47'25"E	396.00'	...	...	...	...	427.00'
N62°47'25"E	408.00'	...	...	...	...	439.00'
N62°47'25"E	420.00'	...	...	...	...	451.00'
N62°47'25"E	432.00'	...	...	...	...	463.00'
N62°47'25"E	444.00'	...	...	...	...	475.00'
N62°47'25"E	456.00'	...	...	...	...	487.00'
N62°47'25"E	468.00'	...	...	...	...	499.00'
N62°47'25"E	480.00'	...	...	...	...	511.00'
N62°47'25"E	492.00'	...	...	...	...	523.00'
N62°47'25"E	504.00'	...	...	...	...	535.00'
N62°47'25"E	516.00'	...	...	...	...	547.00'
N62°47'25"E	528.00'	...	...	...	...	559.00'
N62°47'25"E	540.00'	...	...	...	...	571.00'
N62°47'25"E	552.00'	...	...	...	...	583.00'
N62°47'25"E	564.00'	...	...	...	...	595.00'
N62°47'25"E	576.00'	...	...	...	...	607.00'
N62°47'25"E	588.00'	...	...	...	...	619.00'
N62°47'25"E	600.00'	...	...	...	...	631.00'
N62°47'25"E	612.00'	...	...	...	...	643.00'
N62°47'25"E	624.00'	...	...	...	...	655.00'
N62°47'25"E	636.00'	...	...	...	...	667.00'
N62°47'25"E	648.00'	...	...	...	...	679.00'
N62°47'25"E	660.00'	...	...	...	...	691.00'
N62°47'25"E	672.00'	...	...	...	...	703.00'
N62°47'25"E	684.00'	...	...	...	...	715.00'
N62°47'25"E	696.00'	...	...	...	...	727.00'
N62°47'25"E	708.00'	...	...	...	...	739.00'
N62°47'25"E	720.00'	...	...	...	...	751.00'
N62°47'25"E	732.00'	...	...	...	...	763.00'
N62°47'25"E	744.00'	...	...	...	...	775.00'
N62°47'25"E	756.00'	...	...	...	...	787.00'
N62°47'25"E	768.00'	...	...	...	...	799.00'
N62°47'25"E	780.00'	...	...	...	...	811.00'
N62°47'25"E	792.00'	...	...	...	...	823.00'
N62°47'25"E	804.00'	...	...	...	...	835.00'
N62°47'25"E	816.00'	...	...	...	...	847.00'
N62°47'25"E	828.00'	...	...	...	...	859.00'
N62°47'25"E	840.00'	...	...	...	...	871.00'
N62°47'25"E	852.00'	...	...	...	...	883.00'
N62°47'25"E	864.00'	...	...	...	...	895.00'
N62°47'25"E	876.00'	...	...	...	...	907.00'
N62°47'25"E	888.00'	...	...	...	...	919.00'
N62°47'25"E	900.00'	...	...	...	...	931.00'
N62°47'25"E	912.00'	...	...	...	...	943.00'
N62°47'25"E	924.00'	...	...	...	...	955.00'
N62°47'25"E	936.00'	...	...	...	...	967.00'
N62°47'25"E	948.00'	...	...	...	...	979.00'
N62°47'25"E	960.00'	...	...	...	...	991.00'
N62°47'25"E	972.00'	...	...	...	...	1003.00'
N62°47'25"E	984.00'	...	...	...	...	1015.00'
N62°47'25"E	996.00'	...	...	...	...	1027.00'
N62°47'25"E	1008.00'	...	...	...	...	1039.00'



Exhibit "A" - Page Two

Notes:

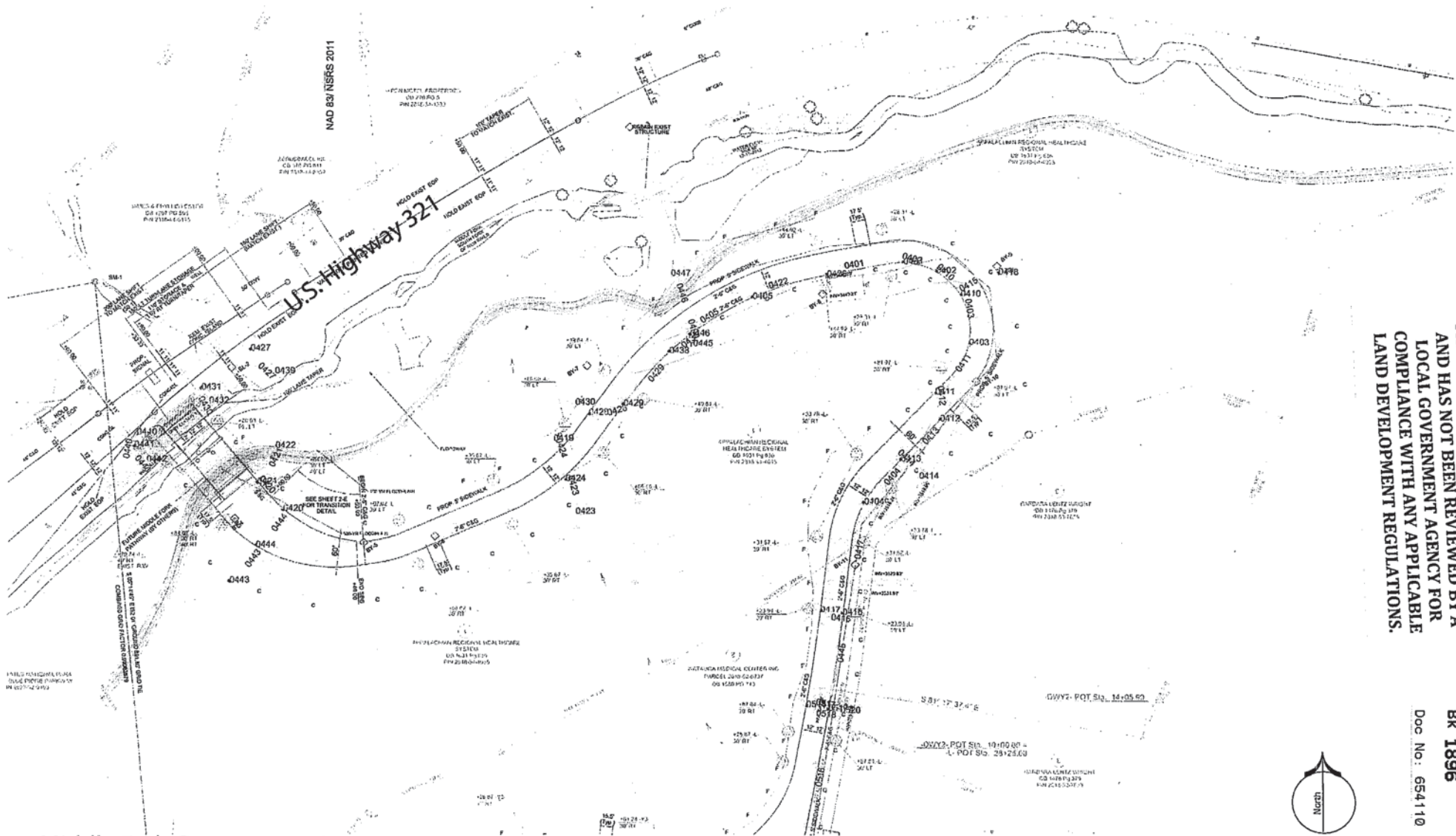
1. This is a survey for the 20' wide Greenway Easement across the lands of Appalachian Regional Healthcare System 1 (Book of Records 1631 Page 636) and the lands of Town of Blowing Rock (Book of Records 1759 Page 399) for Watauga County Pathways, Inc.
2. Bearings are relative to the North Carolina Geodetic Survey per GPS observations and have been rounded to the nearest five seconds.
3. All distances are horizontal measurements unless otherwise noted.
4. The ratio of precision of the unadjusted field traverse is not more than 1:10,000 and has been adjusted by the least squares method (Sparre).
5. MCDOT right of way for the south side of Hwy 321 as shown on Projects 6-003984 and R-5525 was unable to be determined by surveyor with any level of certainty.
6. Also revised June 29, 2016 to show a 20' wide trail easement across the property.



THIS MAP IS NOT A CERTIFIED SURVEY AND HAS NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY A LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH ANY APPLICABLE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS.

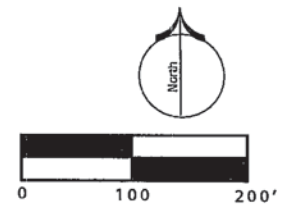
Bk 1896 Pg 460
 Doc No: 654110 Kind: ACMT

BK 1896 PG 460 DOC# 654110



Middle Fork Greenway
Proposed Alignment at Chestnut Ridge

Not for Construction
Location Approximate



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AND HAS NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY A
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY FOR
COMPLIANCE WITH ANY APPLICABLE
LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS.

BK 1896 PG 461 DOC# 654110
BK 1896 Pg 461
Doc No: 654110 Kind: AGMT

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AGENDA ITEM 9:

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR GUY FORD ROAD RIVER ACCESS STORM DAMAGE REPAIRS

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, will request the Board approve the bid from Estate Maintenance Company in the amount of \$54,625 for repairs at the Guy Ford Road River Access. Staff advertised the repair project in a Request for Bids, which was published on the County website. Three bids were received on March 11, 2025.

Board action is required to accept the bid from Estate Maintenance Company in the amount of \$54,625 for repairs at the Guy Ford Road River Access.




WATAUGA COUNTY

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

274 Winklers Creek Road, Suite B, Boone, NC 28607 - Phone (828) 264-1430
Fax (828) 264-1473

TO: Deron Geouque, County Manager

FROM: Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director 

DATE: March 11, 2025

RE: Bid Award Request for Guy Ford Road River Access Storm Damage Repairs

BACKGROUND

Tropical Storm Helene damaged the fencing, signs, asphalt, handicapped ramp and retaining walls at the Guy Ford Road River Access in September 2025. Staff advertised the repair project in a Request for Bids which was published on the County website. The RFB was run twice due to receiving less than three bids on the first advertised bid opening. Three bids were received on March 11, 2025.

BID RESULTS

Estate Maintenance Company, Boone, NC	\$54,625
Darren Moretz Backhoe Service, Boone, NC	\$61,595
Greene Construction, Inc., Boone, NC	\$69,845

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the bid award be made to the low bidder, Estate Maintenance Company, in the amount of \$54,625.

Estate Maintenance Company

2260 AHO ROAD
BOONE, NC 28607
828-264-7441

FEBRUARY 27, 2025

WATAUGA COUNTY MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT
274 WINKLERS CREEK ROAD
BOONE, NC 28607

PROPOSAL

ESTATE MAINTENANCE PROPOSES TO CLEAN UP AND REMOVE STORM DEBRIS WASHED UP AGAINST WALLS AND RAMP AREA, ALSO TO LEVEL AND GRADE A SMOOTH AREA ALONG WALLS AND A PATH TO THE RIVER AS FOR WALKING AND MAINTENANCE OF THE PARK FOR THE GUY FORD ROAD CANOE ACCESS FLOOD DAMAGE RESTORATION PROJECT.

THE SCOPE OF WORK OF THIS PROJECT WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

REPAIR AND REPLACE THE LARGE RETAINING WALL BLOCK, REPAIR AND REPLACE THE SMALLER RETAINING WALL BLOCK AND CAPS, REMOVE SAND AND DEBRIS FROM HANDICAP RAMP AREA AND WASH DOWN, INSTALL BOULDER WALL WHERE A SECTION OF RETENTION IS MISSING, CUT AND REMOVE SUNKEN AND DAMAGED ASPHALT, INSTALL AND COMPACT STONE, REPAVE DAMAGED AREAS WITH 4" ASPHALT, REPLACE ALL FENCES, AND REPLACE NECESSARY SIGNAGE.

THE COST OF THIS PROJECT WILL BE \$54,625.00.

THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO PRICE THIS PROJECT FOR YOU.

SPECIAL NOTE: IF UNFORSEEN COMPLICATIONS SHOULD ARISE DURING INSTALL THE PROJECT MANAGER WILL BE NOTIFIED OF THE PRICE CHANGE.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL MY CELL PHONE 828-268-1770.

**THANK YOU
DARREN WALLACE
wemcoinc@charter.net
NC Certified Landscape Contractor #1604**

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AGENDA ITEM 10:

HUMAN SERVICES ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM REQUEST

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Drew Eggers, IT Director, will request the Board approve a quote from Freedom ElecTech in the amount of \$27,709 for upgrading the access control (security system for doors) at the Human Services Building. Freedom ElecTech provides access control to other County facilities.

Board action is required to approve the quote from Freedom ElecTech in the amount of \$27,709 for upgrading the access control (security system for doors) at the Human Services Building.



WATAUGA COUNTY Information Technologies

*Courthouse, Suite 4 • 842 West King Street • Boone, North Carolina 28607 • Phone (828) 265-8015
FAX (828) 265-8076
TDD 1-800-735-2962
Voice 1-800-735-8262*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Watauga County Board of Commissioners
Deron Geouque, County Manager

FROM: Drew Eggers, Information Technologies Director

SUBJECT: Human Services Access Control System

DATE: March 6, 2025

The attached quote is for upgrading our access control (security system for doors) at the Human Services building. The current system has become obsolete and prone to error, and confidence that the system will continue working much longer is low.

This installation will be used for access control to fourteen doors within the Human Services building. The new system will be able to communicate to the system currently in the Courthouse which will facilitate centralized management when access is granted or revoked or when doors need to be locked down off-schedule due to inclement weather or emergencies.

Total cost for the new access control system with labor is **\$27,709**.

Funds for this project are available and in the budget.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Freedom ElecTech, Inc.
 521 Hwy 105 Ext
 Boone, NC 28607 USA
 +18283866555
 info@freedomelectech.com
 www.freedomelectech.com



Estimate

ADDRESS

Watauga Information Technologies
 814 W. King St.
 Boone, NC 28607

SHIP TO

Watauga Information Technologies
 814 W. King St.
 Boone, NC 28607

ESTIMATE # 3142

DATE 03/04/2025

EXPIRATION DATE 03/18/2025

DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
DSS Access Control Upgrade (Revised)			
Linear EXN-4MP eMerge Elite E3 Series 4-Door Expansion Node in Metal Enclosure with Power Distribution Module	4	2,150.00	8,600.00
HES 1006CLB-12/24D-630 1006 Series Complete Electric Strike [Annex]	1	650.00	650.00
Linear 2-N-1ProxHAF 125 kHz 2-N-1 Proximity Reader [Annex]	1	140.00	140.00
Genesis 31961002 Plenum Composite Access Control Cable	2,000	1.17	2,340.00
Alarm Controls TS-20 SPDT Alternate Action Push Button (Lock Down)	3	60.00	180.00
			Subtotal: 11,910.00
Labor - 2 Technicians	40	150.00	6,000.00T
Labor- 2 Electricians	80	110.00	8,800.00T

NOTE: Two 4" pipes through mechanical room floor, and one additional 4" pipe behind the IT rack (if possible) to be provided by Watauga County Maintenance.

This estimate is based upon information available on the date above. Freedom ElecTech, Inc. will perform this work on a time & materials basis, and as such you will only be charged for what is required.	1	0.00	0.00
--	---	------	------

Upon acceptance of this estimate, a deposit of \$11,910 is required to order the necessary materials.

Once your deposit is received we will contact you regarding scheduling.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an estimate for this project.	SUBTOTAL	26,710.00
In the event this project is cancelled after material purchase, any costs associated with returns will be charged to you at that time.	TAX	999.00
	TOTAL	\$27,709.00

Please sign, date, & return the approved estimate.

We look forward to working with you on this project.

Accepted By

Accepted Date

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AGENDA ITEM 11:

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Tyler Rash, Tax Administrator, will present the Monthly Collections Report and be available for questions and discussion.

The report is for information only; therefore, no action is required.

Monthly Collections Report**Watauga County**

Bank deposits of the following amounts have been made and credited to the account of Watauga County. The reported totals do not include small shortages and overages reported to the Watauga County Finance Officer

Monthly Report February 2025

	<u>Current Month</u> <u>Collections</u>	<u>Current FY</u> <u>Collections</u>	<u>Current FY</u> <u>Percentage</u>	<u>Previous FY</u> <u>Percentage</u>
<u>General County</u>				
Taxes 2024	928,851.67	42,775,985.37	96.32%	96.56%
Prior Year Taxes	48,536.80	390,044.81		
Solid Waste User Fees	83,726.68	3,280,188.58	95.03%	95.08%
Total County Funds	\$1,061,115.15	\$46,446,218.76		
<u>Fire Districts</u>				
Foscoe Fire	12,739.90	679,426.43	97.01%	96.63%
Boone Fire	23,390.64	1,303,909.06	96.08%	96.36%
Fall Creek Service Dist.	594.43	13,374.00	93.97%	95.24%
Beaver Dam Fire	4,759.41	135,187.80	93.92%	93.66%
Stewart Simmons Fire	19,065.66	434,938.63	96.73%	95.91%
Zionville Fire	3,453.67	15,277.58	93.16%	93.58%
Cove Creek Fire	8,242.78	344,249.66	95.12%	95.41%
Shawneehaw Fire	4,982.15	160,845.71	96.16%	95.52%
Meat Camp Fire	8,108.38	308,298.03	93.56%	94.18%
Deep Gap Fire	5,976.03	269,689.51	94.15%	95.80%
Todd Fire	1,504.66	75,791.88	96.48%	93.87%
Blowing Rock Fire	14,455.86	699,077.96	96.37%	97.05%
M.C. Creston Fire	532.00	6,962.89	89.86%	86.19%
Foscoe Service District	3,114.44	106,104.97	95.61%	97.55%
Beech Mtn. Service Dist.	148.89	2,754.65	98.87%	99.07%
Cove Creek Service Dist.	0.00	65.65	19.50%	100.00%
Shawneehaw Service Dist	506.73	8,069.52	93.98%	94.68%
Total Fire Districts	111,575.63	4,564,023.93		
<u>Towns</u>				
Boone	157,800.98	9,106,562.37	97.91%	97.94%
Municipal Services	7,713.26	282,619.68	98.15%	97.59%
Total Town Taxes	\$165,514.24	\$9,389,182.05		
Total Amount Collected	\$1,338,205.02	\$60,399,424.74		

 Tax Collections Director

 Tax Administrator

AGENDA ITEM 11:

TAX MATTERS

B. Refunds and Releases

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Rash will present the Refunds and Releases Reports. Board action is required to accept the Refunds and Releases Reports.

RELEASES - 02/01/2025 TO 02/28/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT YEAR PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	VALUE REF NO	CHARGE	AMOUNT
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3439				0 F12	83.60
	1533			F12		G01	531.70
	TAX RELEASES				253439		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED BY ERROR.		615.30
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3439	02/20/2025			0 F12	83.60
	1533			F12		G01	531.70
	TAX RELEASES				12109		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED BY ERROR.		615.30
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3440	02/20/2025			0 G01	398.04
	1534			C03			
	TAX RELEASES				12110		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED BY ERROR.		
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3440				0 C03	500.68
	1534			C03		G01	398.04
	TAX RELEASES				253440		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED BY ERROR.		898.72
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3441				0 C05	1,046.18
	1573			C05		G01	511.82
	TAX RELEASES				253441		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED BY ERROR.		1,558.00
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3441	02/20/2025			0 G01	511.82
	1573			C05			
	TAX RELEASES				12111		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED BY ERROR.		
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3442	02/20/2025			0 F04	2.45
	1934			F04		G01	15.55
	TAX RELEASES				12112		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED IN ERROR.		18.00
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3442				0 F04	2.45
	1934			F04		G01	15.55
	TAX RELEASES				253442		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED IN ERROR.		18.00
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024	3443				0 F10	3.66
	1935			F10		G01	23.25
	TAX RELEASES				253443		-----
					PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED IN ERROR.		26.91

RELEASES - 02/01/2025 TO 02/28/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT YEAR PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	VALUE REF NO	CHARGE	AMOUNT
1748561 AMERICAN TOWERS INC DOUG BRAUN PO BOX 723597 ATLANTA, GA 31139	PP 2024 1935	3443	02/20/2025	F10		0 F10 G01	3.66 23.25
	TAX RELEASES				12113		-----
	PUBLIC UTILITY BILL GENERATED IN ERROR.						26.91
1606080 BUCHANAN, KEITH CPA PO BOX 604 BOONE, NC 28607	PP 2024 606080999	3040	02/13/2025	MS1		0 C02 G01 MS1 C02L G01L MS1L	2.57 2.10 1.04 .26 .21 .10
	TAX RELEASES closed				12101		6.28
1812286 BUTLER, TERRY BUTLER, GAIL 2480 NC HWY 801 N MOCKSVILLE, NC 27028	PP 2024 3334	976	02/18/2025	F12		0 F12 G01 SWF F12L G01L	11.07 70.37 102.87 1.11 7.04
	TAX RELEASES MH SOLD IN MAY 2023				12107		192.46
1754605 COMPASSIONATE CARE OF NC PA 400 SHADOWLINE DR. STE 201 B BOONE, NC 28607	PP 2024 1517	383	02/17/2025	F01		0 F01 G01	4.22 26.84
	TAX RELEASES closed				12103		-----
							31.06
1859801 FARMS, FREEDOM PO BOX 153 BOONE, NC 28607	PP 2024 4487	1476	02/06/2025	F07		0 F07 G01	47.45 301.78
	TAX RELEASES EXEMPTION DID NOT CALCULATE				12093		-----
							349.23
1859801 FARMS, FREEDOM PO BOX 153 BOONE, NC 28607	PP 2024 4487	1476	02/06/2025	F07		0 SWF	102.87
	TAX ADJUSTMENTS RECEIVES RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION				12094		
1512178 FLAMINGO ENT INC D/B/A VILLAGE CAFE THE 4862 N NEWPORT ISLAND DR VERO BEACH, FL 32967	PP 2024 512178999	2331	02/24/2025	C03		0 G01 F12 G01L F12L	64.08 10.08 6.41 1.01
	REFUND RELEASE SOLD				12115		-----
							81.58
1813423 FREEDOM FARM MINISTRIES P O BOX 153 BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2024 1962-52-6478-000	15149	02/25/2025	F07		0 F07 G01	135.85 864.01
	TAX RELEASES exempt property				12116		-----
							999.86

RELEASES - 02/01/2025 TO 02/28/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT YEAR PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1813423 FREEDOM FARM MINISTRIES P O BOX 153 BOONE, NC 28607	PP 2024 4281 TAX RELEASES exempt property	1411	02/25/2025	F07	12117	0 SWF	102.87
1793898 GILLIKIN, SHERRI 210 GREENLYN DR CLAYTON, NC 27527	PP 2024 2959 TAX RELEASES MH'S REMOVED FROM PROPERTY END D PROPERTY IN 4-28-2023	838	02/14/2025	F10	12102	0 F10 G01 SWF F10L G01L	3.30 20.99 205.74 .33 2.10 232.46
1812316 GOJO MARKETING INC 420 TIMBER CREEK DR BLOWING ROCK, NC 28605	PP 2024 3337 REFUND RELEASE closed	977	02/18/2025	F12	12105	0 F12 G01	.81 5.15 ----- 5.96
1860103 HALLMAN, TERESA MENSCHER HALLMAN, PAUL ROSS III 788 RHYMER BRANCH RD DEEP GAP, NC 28618	RE 2024 2940-65-6145-000 REFUND RELEASE HOUSE REMOVED 12/2022	47213	02/07/2025	F05	12096	18,800 F05 G01 SWF	15.98 59.78 102.87 ----- 178.63
1849647 HARMON, DANIEL K HARMON, BETTY M 165 JOE J MILLER RD BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2024 1962-98-6173-000 REFUND RELEASE SHOULD HAVE BEEN DEACTIVATED;	15261	02/18/2025	F07	12106	0 SWF PARCEL SPL	102.87
1847973 HAUPT, TERESA MENSCHER 788 RHYMER BRANCH RD DEEP GAP, NC 28618	RE 2023 2940-65-6145-000 REFUND RELEASE HOUSE REMOVED 12/2022	47278	02/07/2025	F05	12095	18,800 F05 G01 SWF	15.98 59.78 102.87 ----- 178.63
1767352 MARTIN, KYLE ANDREW MARTIN, CARYN LYNN 438 B'S NEST RD VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2024 1965-92-0799-000 CORRECT BILL RUN ROLLBACK CORRECTION.	1000096	02/12/2025	F04	12097	357,206 F04 G01	178.60 1,135.92 ----- 1,314.52
1767352 MARTIN, KYLE ANDREW MARTIN, CARYN LYNN 438 B'S NEST RD VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2024 1965-92-0799-000 CORRECT BILL RUN CORRECTING ROLLBACK BILL	1000099	02/12/2025	F04	12098	213,675 F04 G01	106.84 861.11 ----- 967.95

RELEASES - 02/01/2025 TO 02/28/2025

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT YEAR PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALUE CHARGE	AMOUNT
1767352 MARTIN, KYLE ANDREW MARTIN, CARYN LYNN 438 B'S NEST RD VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2024 1965-92-0799-000 CORRECT BILL RUN ROLLBACK CORRECTION.	1000098	02/12/2025	F04	12099	357,206 F04 G01	178.60 1,135.92 ----- 1,314.52
1767352 MARTIN, KYLE ANDREW MARTIN, CARYN LYNN 438 B'S NEST RD VILAS, NC 28692	RE 2024 1965-92-0799-000 CORRECT BILL RUN ROLLBACK CORRECTION.	1000097	02/12/2025	F04	12100	357,206 F04 G01	178.60 1,135.92 ----- 1,314.52
1611460 MORETZ, RODNEY DALE MORETZ, ROBY EARL 11635 LINWOOD SOUTHMONT RD LEXINGTON, NC 27292	PP 2024 3760 REFUND RELEASE MH; NO LONGER THERE SINCE 2023	1147	02/21/2025	F09	12114	0 F09 G01 SWF	3.65 23.21 102.87 ----- 129.73
1521810 MOTES, ROBERT L MOTES, JUDY T 294 RICHARD RD LEXINGTON, NC 27292	PP 2024 250146900 TAX RELEASES MH REMOVED IN 2023	1924	02/18/2025	F09	12108	0 F09 G01 SWF	8.96 56.95 102.87 ----- 168.78
1171255 WATAUGA COUNTY 814 WEST KING ST SUITE 205 BOONE, NC 28607	RE 2024 2921-30-3252-000 TAX RELEASES From CAMA Integration	43958	02/17/2025	C02	12104	1,934,200 C02 G01	7,543.38 6,150.76 ----- 13,694.14
DETAIL SUMMARY	COUNT: 30	RELEASES - TOTAL				3,257,093	26,155.92

RELEASES - 02/01/2025 TO 02/28/2025

RELEASES - CHARGE SUMMARY FOR ALL CLERKS

YEAR	CAT	CHARGE	AMOUNT	
2023	RE	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	15.98
2023	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	59.78
2023	RE	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE	102.87
2023 TOTAL			178.63	
2024	RE	C02	BOONE RE	7,543.38
2024	RE	F04	BEAVER DAM FIRE RE	642.64
2024	RE	F05	STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	15.98
2024	RE	F07	COVE CREEK FIRE RE	135.85
2024	RE	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY RE	11,343.42
2024	RE	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE	205.74
2024	PP	C02	BOONE PP	2.57
2024	PP	C02L	BOONE LATE LIST	.26
2024	PP	C03	BLOWING ROCK PP	500.68
2024	PP	C05	BEECH MOUNTAIN PP	1,046.18
2024	PP	F01	FOSCOE FIRE PP	4.22
2024	PP	F04	BEAVER DAM FIRE PP	4.90
2024	PP	F07	COVE CREEK FIRE PP	47.45
2024	PP	F09	MEAT CAMP FIRE PP	12.61
2024	PP	F10	DEEP GAP FIRE PP	10.62
2024	PP	F10L	DEEP GAP FIRE LATE LIST	.33
2024	PP	F12	BLOWING ROCK FIRE PP	189.16
2024	PP	F12L	BLOWING ROCK FIRE LATE LIST	2.12
2024	PP	G01	WATAUGA COUNTY PP	3,532.19
2024	PP	G01L	WATAUGA COUNTY LATE LIST	15.76
2024	PP	MS1	BOONE MUNICIPAL SERV DIST PP	1.04
2024	PP	MS1L	BOONE MUNICIPAL SERV DIST LATE	.10
2024	PP	SWF	SANITATION USER FEE	720.09
2024 TOTAL			25,977.29	
SUMMARY TOTAL			26,155.92	

RELEASES - 02/01/2025 TO 02/28/2025

RELEASES - JURISDICTION SUMMARY FOR ALL CLERKS

JUR	YEAR	CHARGE	AMOUNT
C02	2024	C02 BOONE RE	7,543.38
C02	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	6,150.76
		C02 TOTAL	13,694.14
C03	2024	C03 BLOWING ROCK PP	500.68
C03	2024	F12 BLOWING ROCK FIRE PP	10.08
C03	2024	F12L BLOWING ROCK FIRE LATE LIST	1.01
C03	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	860.16
C03	2024	G01L WATAUGA COUNTY LATE LIST	6.41
		C03 TOTAL	1,378.34
C05	2024	C05 BEECH MOUNTAIN PP	1,046.18
C05	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	1,023.64
		C05 TOTAL	2,069.82
F01	2024	F01 FOSCOE FIRE PP	4.22
F01	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	26.84
		F01 TOTAL	31.06
F04	2024	F04 BEAVER DAM FIRE PP	647.54
F04	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	4,299.97
		F04 TOTAL	4,947.51
F05	2023	F05 STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	15.98
F05	2023	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	59.78
F05	2023	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	102.87
F05	2024	F05 STEWART SIMMONS FIRE RE	15.98
F05	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY RE	59.78
F05	2024	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	102.87
		F05 TOTAL	357.26
F07	2024	F07 COVE CREEK FIRE PP	183.30
F07	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	1,165.79
F07	2024	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	308.61
		F07 TOTAL	1,657.70
F09	2024	F09 MEAT CAMP FIRE PP	12.61
F09	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	80.16
F09	2024	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	205.74
		F09 TOTAL	298.51
F10	2024	F10 DEEP GAP FIRE PP	10.62
F10	2024	F10L DEEP GAP FIRE LATE LIST	.33
F10	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	67.49
F10	2024	G01L WATAUGA COUNTY LATE LIST	2.10
F10	2024	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	205.74
		F10 TOTAL	286.28

RELEASES - 02/01/2025 TO 02/28/2025

RELEASES - JURISDICTION SUMMARY FOR ALL CLERKS

JUR	YEAR	CHARGE	AMOUNT
F12	2024	F12 BLOWING ROCK FIRE PP	179.08
F12	2024	F12L BLOWING ROCK FIRE LATE LIST	1.11
F12	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	1,138.92
F12	2024	G01L WATAUGA COUNTY LATE LIST	7.04
F12	2024	SWF SANITATION USER FEE	102.87
F12 TOTAL			1,429.02
MS1	2024	C02 BOONE PP	2.57
MS1	2024	C02L BOONE LATE LIST	.26
MS1	2024	G01 WATAUGA COUNTY PP	2.10
MS1	2024	G01L WATAUGA COUNTY LATE LIST	.21
MS1	2024	MS1 BOONE MUNICIPAL SERV DIST PP	1.04
MS1	2024	MS1L BOONE MUNICIPAL SERV DIST LATE	.10
MS1 TOTAL			6.28
SUMMARY TOTAL			26,155.92

AGENDA ITEM 12:

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Boards and Commissions

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Workforce Development Board

Ms. Misty Bishop-Price, Director of High Country Council of Governments Workforce Development Board, has requested the reappointment of Ms. Tara Brossa for a two-year term ending on June 30, 2027. This is the second reading.

Social Services Advisory Board

The Social Services Advisory Board recommends the appointment of Ms. Tiffany Williams who will fill the seat held by Ms. Mary Smalling. The term is for four years. This is the second reading.

Anita.Fogle

From: Misty Price <misty.bishopprice@highcountrywdb.com>
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2025 2:09 PM
To: Braxton Eggers
Cc: Anita.Fogle
Subject: Watauga WDB member; save the date March 10th

Good afternoon Commissioner Eggers—hope things are going well and was nice talking with you this afternoon!

I am reaching out regarding your private sector workforce development board member, **Tara Brossa**/Hampton Inn. Her term is expiring in June, however she is willing and would like to be reappointed to continue her role on the High Country Workforce Development Board for another two year term. Tara has been great to work with and we would welcome her reappointment!

As a reminder, your other private sector seat is filled by **JD Kern** with Blue Ridge Brokerage—his term expires June 2026. The two private sector seats have alternating two year terms.

Also, please save the date for a regional **Consortium meeting for March 10th possibly at 11:30** in Boone. Once I hear from the majority of members, I will confirm the date and time.

Have a great weekend and thanks for all that you do!

Misty Bishop-Price

High Country Workforce Development Board



468 New Market Blvd.
 Boone, NC 28607
 828.265.5434 ext. 119

Services and activities funded by the High Country Workforce Development Board are equal opportunity employers/programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities. To place a free relay call in North Carolina, dial 711.

Volunteer Application
Watauga County Boards And Commissions

If you are a Watauga County resident, at least 18 years old, and willing to volunteer your time and expertise to your community, please complete the application below and click on Print Form.
Please sign and mail or fax to:

Watauga County Commissioners' Office
814 West King Street, Suite 205
Boone, NC 28607
Phone: (828) 265-8000
Fax: (828) 264-3230

Name: Tiffany Williams
Home Address: 127 Boulder In
City: Blowing Rock Zip: 28605
Telephone: (H) 803-604-6174 (W) _____ (Fax) _____
Email: tteate@gmail.com
Place of Employment: N/A
Job Title: - Currently on maternity break

In Order To Assure County wide Representation Please Indicate Your Township Of Residence:

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bald Mountain | <input type="checkbox"/> Stony Fork | <input type="checkbox"/> Watauga |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New River | <input type="checkbox"/> Brushy Fork | <input type="checkbox"/> Cove Creek |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beaver Dam | <input type="checkbox"/> Meat Camp | <input type="checkbox"/> Shawneehaw |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Ridge | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blowing Rock | <input type="checkbox"/> Laurel Creek |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elk | <input type="checkbox"/> North Fork | <input type="checkbox"/> Boone |

In addition, Please Indicate If You Live In One Of The Following Areas:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foscoe-Grandfather Community | <input type="checkbox"/> Valle Crucis Historic District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Howards Creek Watershed | <input type="checkbox"/> Winklers Creek Watershed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> South Fork New River Watershed | <input type="checkbox"/> Extraterritorial Area |

We Ask Your Help In Assuring Diversity Of Membership By Age, Gender, And Race, By Answering The Following Questions

- | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Gender | Ethnic Background | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caucasian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American | |

Please List (In Order Of Preference) The Boards/Commissions On Which You Would Be Willing To Serve.

- Social Services Board
- ~~Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee~~
- ~~Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee~~

**Volunteer Application
Watauga County Boards And Commissions
(Continued)**

Please list any work, volunteer, and/or other experience you would like to have considered in the review of your application.

**Work
Experience:**

-Western Youth Network (2020-2024) Watauga Community Health Coordinator. In this position I coordinated the Watauga Substance Action and Prevention Coalition. This Coalition is a multi-sector group of leaders in the community who utilize evidence based community strategies to prevent substance use among youth. I also coordinated the Community Mental Health Project, a grassroots initiative that spread awareness and resources to improve access to mental health professionals.
- Adjunct Social Work Faculty at Appalachian State University. (2023-2024) I taught Basic Skills for the social work profession. The course is designed to teach effective relationship, communication, interviewing and recording skills, based on ethical and professional values
-

**Volunteer
Experience:**

-Leadership Board for the Community Mental Health Project (2023-Present)
-Founder of Helene Housing Relief Project (Fall of 2024) Coordinated a group of volunteers to find temporary housing for those who lost their home.

**Other
Experience:**

Previously to working in North Carolina, I worked as a policy analyst for the House of Representatives in Texas for Representative Garnet Coleman. Following that position I was a Policy Analyst and Advocate for legislation that protected the educational rights of youth with disabilities.

**Other
Comments:**

As a macro social worker, it is certainly my passion for systems to be in place to protect all children from harm, and to promote community strategies that help them thrive.

Signature: 

Date: 2/25/2024

[Print Form](#)

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AGENDA ITEM 12:**MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS*****B. Announcements*****MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

The UNC School of Government will present an Ethics for Elected Officials course via Zoom on Thursday, May 22, 2025, from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. The course will be live and will be broadcast in the Commissioners' Board Room. The course is required to be taken by all Commissioners by December 2025. A group registration will be done for those who plan to attend in the Board Room and separate registrations will be done for those who will need to view it from a different location. Please let Anita know if you can attend.

The North Carolina Association of County Commissioners will hold a District 14 Meeting on April 24, 2025, from 5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. at the Avery Community Center. Commissioners are invited to attend. The deadline to RSVP is April 1, 2025. Please let Anita know if you plan to attend and she will assist with registration.

AGENDA ITEM 13:**BREAK**

Ethics for Elected Officials

Online - *Click here to register for this course offering*

May 22, 2025



Overview



Register



Discounts &
Scholarships



Materials



Contact

This training will be held live on 5/22/25, online via Zoom, from 10am to 12pm.

Group discounts are not offered for the on-demand version.

Under North Carolina law, members of governing boards of cities, counties, local boards of education, unified governments, sanitary districts, and consolidated city-counties are required to receive at least two (2) clock hours of ethics training within twelve months after each election or appointment to office. The ethics training requirement is an ongoing obligation, triggered by each subsequent re-election or reappointment to office.

This online training will satisfy the 2 clock hours of local ethics training required by state law for elected and appointed officials. This training **MUST** be completed within 12 months of election day and is required every time they are re-elected or appointed and reappointed to a local office.

See further instructions below and in the Preparation Checklist.

- Is your board attorney or a member of your board who is an attorney watching the webinar? The NC State Bar requires attorneys who wish to claim CLE (Continuing Legal Education) credit to purchase the webinar

separately in their name. The attorney must self-report to the State Bar for CLE credit.

What you need to know before you purchase:

A. If multiple incumbent board members need to receive their ethics training, you all should register via the group rates. Have your clerk or manager register you all as a group in a single transaction. If you need assistance, contact registration@sog.unc.edu.

B. Who this training does NOT cover:

Individuals serving on state boards subject to the State Government Ethics Act (SGEA): Local elected officials who also serve on a state board that is subject to the State Government Ethics Act (SGEA), including local community college boards, are required to take ethics training that is offered through the State Ethics Commission. The SOG ethics-training program for local elected officials does NOT satisfy the state ethics training, and the state ethics training does NOT satisfy the local elected official ethics-training which is offered through this page. Consequently, local elected officials who also serve on a state board subject to the SGEA, must take both the state and the local ethics training programs. Officials who need to complete state ethics training should:

- Contact their board's ethics liaison for training, or
- Complete the online training available on State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement (formerly the State Ethics Commission)
website: ethics.ncsbe.gov/education/eduOnline

Local ABC Boards: For individuals who serve on a local ABC board, separate training is required. The SOG ethics training program for local elected officials does *NOT* satisfy the local ABC Board training, and the local ABC Board training does *NOT* satisfy the local elected officials ethic training. Here is the link to the webinar page for local ABC Boards.

School Boards: Please contact the NC School Boards Association for further information.

C. Board notice of a public meeting:

Boards are advised to give public notice of a special meeting for ethics training sessions if a majority of the board might be in attendance at the event. This is in keeping with the spirit of the ethics law, and out of an abundance of caution

concerning the legal requirements for board meetings.

Purchasing the Webinar

A. Who should purchase from your unit:

- If you want to receive the group rate, have your clerk or manager register everyone in a single transaction.
- Is your board attorney or a member of your board who is an attorney watching the webinar? The NC State Bar requires attorneys who wish to claim CLE (Continuing Legal Education) credit to purchase the webinar separately in their name, and to self-report to the State Bar for CLE credit.
- Do you have to purchase the webinars for each person watching from your board? Yes.
- Adding no-reply@sog.unc.edu and lrich@sog.unc.edu to your contacts will increase the chance of the email getting through.

Issues with purchasing? Simply email our registration department directly at registration@sog.unc.edu for issues with the registration/purchase process, passwords, or logging in. Provide your phone number and brief summary of your issue and someone from that department will contact you shortly. This is the fastest way to get assistance as there are multiple people in that department who can respond to you quickly.

LELA Level: This is a 101 Level course in the Local Elected Leaders Academy. Participating elected officials will earn 2 credits toward their Practitioner recognition certificate.

LEAD FACULTY

Dear Watauga County Commissioners,

I am pleased to invite Watauga Commissioners to attend the upcoming NCACC District 14 meeting. This event will take place on Thursday, April 24th, 2025 at the Avery Community Center located at 661 Vale Rd in Newland. I hope each of you will attend and join in this opportunity to have county leaders and staff from our district together.

This year's meeting will feature NCACC president "T" Davis and his presidential initiative "Heroic Hands". This initiative is focused around honoring those in the public service workforce and highlighting the value of having a career in public service. Over the next couple of months be thinking about someone in public service who has gone above and beyond. Each county will have the opportunity to make a submission and once they are consolidated a book will be produced. More information about this project will be dispersed once the details are finalized.

Your participation is invaluable as we work together to strengthen our communities and advocate for western North Carolina. Please feel free to include your administrative staff and have your clerk to the board consolidate RSVP's and submit them **before April 1st**. *If you have any food allergies please let me know so I can make menu accommodations.*

Some important upcoming dates you may want to get on your calendar are June 10th & 11th which are County Advocacy Days in Raleigh and August 21st - 23rd will be the annual NCACC conference in Pitt County and registration will open in April.

Should any of you have questions about any of the information provided please don't hesitate to contact me.

Harley Masters
NCACC District 14 Director
harley.masters@mitchellcountync.gov
(423) 741-9645

District 14

Alleghany - Ashe - Avery - Mitchell - Watauga - Wilkes - Yancey



**April 24th, 2025
5:30 - 7:30pm**

**661 Vale Rd
Newland, NC 28657**

Please RSVP by April 1st, 2025

Please join us for the District 14 meeting being held at the Avery Community Center.

This years Presidential initiative is Heroic Hands and the NCACC President "T" Davis and Director Kevin Leonard will both be in attendance at our meeting.

Important Upcoming Dates

June 10th & 11th - County Advocacy Days

August 21st - 23rd Annual Conference



AGENDA ITEM 14:

CLOSED SESSION

Attorney/Client Matters per, G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3)

Personnel Matters per, G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6)