Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency

MEMORANDUM

TO: Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Board of Directors

FROM: Ashley Featherstone, Director

RE: Minutes for June 17, 2025

DATE: July 17, 2025

Enclosed, please find the Minutes for the Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Board meeting held on **Tuesday June 17, 2025 at 4:00pm**. The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday July 24, 2025 at 4:00pm** in the meeting room located at the previous Buncombe County Permit Office at 30 Valley Street, Asheville, NC 28801.

This meeting will be live streamed on Engage Buncombe which can be accessed at https://engage.buncombecounty.org/s8486. The board meeting documents will also be available on the Engage Buncombe site. The meeting will be recorded and can be viewed later.

The Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Board of Directors met on Tuesday, June 17, 2025, in the meeting room at the Buncombe County Permit Office located at 30 Valley Street, Asheville, N.C.

The attendance of the Board members was as follows:

Members Present:	**Members Absent:**
Joel Storrow	*Ned Guttman*
Karl Koon	*Garry Whisnant*
Caitlin Crossett	

Staff Present: *Ashley Featherstone, Director; James Raiford, Permitting Program Manager; Mike Matthews, Air Quality Specialist II; Hannah Rhodes, Air Quality Coordinator*

Others Present: *Amy Broughton, County Attorney; Angelica Tyler, CAPE*

Joel Storrow called the meeting of the Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Board of Directors to order on June 17, 2025, at 4:00 pm.

The order of business was as follows:

1. **Public Comment Protocol Announcement**
   A. Joel Storrow read the public comment protocol.

2. **Adjustment and Approval of Agenda**
   A. Karl Koon made the motion to approve the agenda.
   B. Caitlin Crossett seconded the motion.
   C. All present – yes
   D. The motion passed 3-0

3. **Unfinished Business**
   A. Reduce to Rebuild Proposal-Permit Fee Modification
      i. Ashley Featherstone summarized the proposal. The county commissioners wanted to initiate this permit fee modification to alleviate some of the financial burden for residents rebuilding after Hurricane Helene. The proposal reduces permit fees for residential properties by 50%. We issued the public notice on May 14th, 2025 and it closed on June 13th, 2025. We did not receive any comments from the public. Mike Matthews and James Raiford have been working with the IT department to help make this permit fee reduction feasible, should the board vote to approve it.
      ii. Karl Koon asked if there would be any fees that were previously collected on the old rate that would need to be refunded to align with the new rate.
         1) Ashley Featherstone explained that, should this permit fee reduction be passed, it would go into effect after it was voted on by this board. Therefore, the change date would begin

that same day, June 17th, 2025, and would be effective through the end of the calendar year. Anyone who received a permit from January 1st, 2025 thorough the time of the vote on June 17th would not get a refund.

2) Ashley Featherstone explained that, during the open comment period, Air Quality staff did try to communicate with permit applicants with Helene-related damage that, if they waited, there was a potential for them to receive a lower permit price.
    a) Mike Matthews said that there had maybe been two applicants that would have fallen into this category, and one of them specifically did not want to wait for the potentially reduced fee.
3) Mike Matthews said that many residential permits for Helene-related damage have already been issued.

iii. Karl Koon made the motion to open the public hearing.
1) Caitlin Crossett seconded the motion.
2) All present – yes
3) The motion passed 3-0

iv. It was found that there was no public comment.

v. Joel Storrow asked for a motion to close the public comment
1) Karl Koon made the motion to close the public comment.
2) Caitlin Crossett seconded the motion.
3) All present – yes
4) The motion passed 3-0

B. Karl Koon made the motion to approve the "Reduce to Rebuild" permit fee reduction.
i. Caitlin Crossett seconded the motion.
ii. All present – yes
iii. The motion passed 3-0

4. Other Business

A. Calendar
i. Next meeting July 24, 2025

B. Announcements

5. Public Comment

A. None

6. Adjournment

A. Karl Koon made the motion to adjourn the meeting.
B. Caitlin Crossett seconded the motion.
C. All present – yes
D. The motion passed 3-0
E. The meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm