Buncombe County Land Conservation Advisory Board

Meeting Agenda for March 18, 2026, at 8 am

Virtual Meeting

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1. Call Meeting to Order – Lang Hornthal
2. Conflict of Interest – Lang Hornthal

   In the interest of preserving public confidence in the actions of this Board, the chair reminds members of their duty to avoid any conflicts of interest and inquires as to whether any member knows of any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest with respect to matters to come before the Board.
3. Approval of Agenda for March 18, 2026, Meeting – Lang Hornthal
4. Approval of Minutes for February 18, 2026, Meeting – Lang Hornthal
5. Public Comment
6. Update from Land Conservation Agencies
   a. Land Trust Updates
   b. BC Agriculture & Land Resources update
7. Easements 101 with Jess Laggis, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy
8. Announcements & Adjournment

BUNCOMBE COUNTY
LAND CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
8:00 AM, FEBRUARY 18, 2026. VIA ZOOM

Members present:	Non-members present:
Nancy Edgerton, Chair Lang Hornthal, Vice-Chair Cameron Farlow David Siripoonsup Liesl Erb Stagg Newman Patrick Hunter Bruce Schlessinger David Tuch (quorum = 9/9)	Ariel Zijp - BCSWCD Martha Ross– BCSWCD Jess Laggis – SAHC Michelle Pugliese – SAHC Hannah Coats – RiverLink Samantha Kirk – BC Staff Marika Lapham - BCSWCD

There was a quorum, as there were at least 5 members present. The following discussion occurred between members present:

The meeting was called to order at 8:02am.

- Nancy Edgerton called the meeting to order.

Conflict of Interest Statement: *In the interest of preserving public confidence in the actions of this Board, the chair reminds members of their duty to avoid any conflicts of interests and inquires as to whether any member knows of any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest with respect to matters to come before the Board.*

No conflict of interest raised by the Board.

Approval of Minutes

- Stagg Newman made a motion to approve February 18, 2026, minutes, Lang Hornthal seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

- Cameron Farlow made a motion to approve January 21, 2026, agenda, seconded by Liesl Erb and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: None.

Deaverview Process: Presented by Michelle Pugliese.
SAHC is very close to closing on the 324 acre-tract just west of Asheville with stunning long-range scenic views. This property is a gem that locals have been using for decades. SAHC is approaching the end of the three-year option agreement to purchase the property with the goal of

the property becoming a county park. There is an existing set of trails already. Twelve headwater tributaries flow into Ragsdale Creek, Dix Creek, Lee Creek, and Smith Mill Creek.
Funding is coming from two difference sources. The first is from the NC Land and Water Fund with the following conditions: a conservation easement must be placed on the entire undisturbed portion of the property (315.5 acres), and then the lower area (shaded in gray, 26.65 acres) is going to be Declaration of Convenance and Restrictions (basically a more lenient document similar to a conservation easement). Deaverview will be passive recreation county park with hiking, non-motorized biking, and environmental education. The county will be the owner of the property, and SAHC will oversee the monitoring of the easement. The county is hoping to close on the acquisition next month and then plans to begin the process of seeking public input and planning & design. Discussion ensued. The second funding source is the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership, and one of their requirements is to open the park in a timely manner and to include community input. Discussion ensued on county funding for due diligence and the passive recreational advisory committee, additional funding questions and maintenance costs, Helene damage, and a possible county bus-line extension.
Update from Parks and Rec: The next step is selecting a professional design and plan team to help guide the future of the park. The design team is chosen by Request for Qualifications (RFQ), with a formal RFQ process, allowing the county to evaluate a team's past work and their quality of work, rather than being bound by budget. Proposals will be evaluated and once a team is selected, county community and NC stake holders will meet to create a master plan for Deaverview to ensure it serves the needs of the community. Discussion on timeline ensued.

<u>Updates from Land Conservation Agencies and BC Agriculture & Land Resources</u>

- Tom Fanslow, Conserving Carolina
    - Renewing application for NC Land and Water fund for Duck Branch, a project LCAB recommended funding for.
    - March 20, Grand Opening at Fairview Community Forest. Funding from the U.S. Forest Service and other funding sources.
- Hannah, Riverlink
    - Applied for a 5-acre property in Swannanoa with the DEQ Flood Blueprint Program with a great recreational opportunities.
    - Two applications for NC Land and water fund for 2 stream water restorations projects. (1) Nasty Branch (river arts district) and (2) upcoming Beacon Park in Swannanoa.
    - Gateway Park Project, 1.2 acres, fully funded to build a park, but were in a holding pattern from NCDOT. Now able to move forward with Equinox to move forward with the design and build the park this year.
- Jess Laggis, SAHC
    - No recent closings since January meeting.
- Ariel Zijp, BCSWCD
    - Presenting 5 new projects at the March 17th Commissioners Meeting: the three projects that Tom Fanslow with Conserving Carolina have been working on; (1) Duck Branch, (2) Light Center Preserve, and (3) Light Center Farm, and two donation easements (~ 95 acres in Fairview) that the Agriculture Advisory Board approved. This is conjunction with Ag Awareness Day!
    - As a reminder, there will be informational presentations over the next 5 months.

        - March: Jess Laggis will do an Easements – 101.
        - April: Ariel Zijp and Martha Ross will present on LCAB Grant Process.
        - May: Land Conservation Community Events – there appears to be a LCAB funding for hosted-events.
        - June: Start the Grant Process again and Applications are due.
    - Conversation ensued on Community hosted Events and timing.
- Conversation ensued on the possibility of the county commissioners' funding another land conservation bond.

Announcements and Discussions

Discussion ensued on the possibility of the County Commissioners' funding another land conservation bond.

Adjournment

- Liesl Erb made a motion to adjourn, seconded by David Tuch, and the motion passed unanimously.

With no other announcements or discussions, the meeting adjourned at 8:59 am.