BURKE DEVELOPMENT INC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
September 12, 2025
BDI Office
MORGANTON, NORTH CAROLINA

Members Present		Members Absent	
Bill Carroll	Todd Herms	Jessica Bargsley	Sally Sandy
Mayor Watts	Chris Hawkins	Dr. Mike Swan	Dr. Joel Welch
Lamar Smitherman	Logan Shook	Gary Paxton	Bryan Beam
Jeff Brittain		Terry Childers	
		Brian Epley	

Also present were Alan Wood, Hope Hopkins, and Caleb Gardner.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 am.

Welcome of New Board Member

Alan Wood welcomed back Mike Watts as a returning board member. Mike previously served during BDI's move into the current building and will now hold the County's at-large seat, previously filled by Jim Toner. The board expressed appreciation for Jim's six years of service, and a formal letter and lunch will be arranged to thank him.

Approval of July 2025 Minutes

The minutes of the July 18, 2025, meeting were presented. With no changes or corrections, a motion was made by Mayor Watts, seconded by Jeff Brittain, and approved.

Approval of July 2025 Financial Report

Caleb Gardner presented the July financials. Caleb reported that the operational and business park accounts showed standard activity. The operational fund began with $398,363 and ended with $347,319.05, with $50,891.20 in monthly expenditures, or 8% of the annual budget. The business park fund showed $153.48 in taxes and a $109,500 payment to Alliance, while the Great Meadows fund reported no expenses and $4,206.45 in interest. The speculative building fund included a $163,950 payment to

WHN Architects and $6,632.35 in interest, reflecting continued design and geotechnical work. A $50,000 reimbursement from Golden LEAF remains pending. A motion to approve was made by Mayor Watts, seconded by Todd Herms, and approved.

By-Laws Update

The board reviewed bylaw changes reflecting the withdrawal of Connelly Springs from membership. References to Connelly Springs were removed, and Hildebran's designation was adjusted. Discussion focused on maintaining the number of board seats. The board voted to reduce the total from 15 to 14 members. A motion to approve was made by Bill Carroll, seconded by Todd Herms, and approved.

Staff Updates

Staff reported that the Burke Business Park project is progressing, with a maintenance agreement under review, roadwork set to begin, and unsuitable soils identified that will require excavation before the bid package goes out later this month. The speculative building design continues to advance, with a brokerage agreement finalized and a grant application pending for natural gas. On the housing side, inventory remains limited at 3.3 months, prices are up 10% year-to-date, and starter homes now average $340,000–$350,000, while developers explore projects in Hildebran and near East Burke High School. The OPT-IN Internship Program recently graduated 22 students, and the September board meeting will be moved to the 12th to accommodate site consultant visits.

Guest Presentation – Steve Fodor

The board also heard from Steve Fodor, CEO of Custom Services and Solutions, who spoke on the impact of tariffs. He noted that average U.S. import duties have risen from about 2.5% to nearly 20%, with furniture now facing rates of 55% or more. Import volumes are down 20–30%, and he emphasized the importance of correct tariff classifications and compliance, cautioning that some proposed workarounds are risky or illegal. He offered to serve as a resource for local businesses navigating these issues.

Adjournment

With no further business, a motion was made to adjourn by Chris Hawkins and seconded by Todd Herms. The meeting adjourned at 9:24 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Caleb Gardner