Burke County -- America 250 Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, September 8, 2025
Location: Burke Co. Travel & Tourism office
140 N. Sterling St., Morganton
Time: 1:30 pm – 2:20 pm

Members Present:				Guests Present:
Gordon, Waits		Medford, Sylvia	✓	Mike Stroud
Hancock, Kevin		Patton, Robert	✓	
Johnston, Laurie (Secretary)	✓	Phillips, Ed (Chair)	✓	
Jones, Deborah		Smith, Phil		
Lindsey, Dr. Bryant	✓	Swan, Dr. Mike		
Lindsey, Dr. Linda	✓	Welch, Dr. Joel (Vice Chair)	✓	
McKesson, Dr. Leslie	✓	Wilkinson, Sam		
McSwain, Butch	✓			

Call to Order

Committee Chairman, Ed Phillips, called the meeting to order and welcomed committee members. A quorum was present. It was noted that Kevin Hancock will no longer be attending to represent the SAR but that Charles Woodie's name has been submitted to replace him on the committee.

Approval of Minutes from August 11, 2025

Minutes from the August meeting were sent by email prior to the meeting and hardcopies were distributed at the meeting for discussion. One correction in "Old Business" of the spelling of the presenters, the Voelkers was made. Butch McSwain moved to accept the minutes as corrected, seconded by Linda Lindsey. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

- 2025 Revolutionary War Days Update

Ed Phillips provided an update of plans for the Rev. War Days events for September 26 & 27. For the Historic Site Tour on the 26th, of 40 tickets available, 20 have sold. A final count is needed for the lunch at the Community House. Committee members presented ideas for advertising and promoting the event to increase sales, including announcements in individual groups' emails and Facebook pages, The Paper, and Grace Ridge. It was suggested that The Paper could send a reporter to attend the tour then report about it.

Ed reported that Burke America 250 T-shirts have been ordered and will arrive in one week. We will draft contract to sell the shirts. For the Rev. War Encampment event on the 27th, there is a Facebook Ad that has been boosted, so content cannot be altered. The original flyer has been updated to show an increase in the number of vendors to 45. Asking everyone on the committee to promote the event with flyers in the community, send electronically in emails, etc. Historic Burke Foundation will send updated electronic flyer. Joel Welch said he could send out to about 3000

email contacts. Linda asked about sending in schools on Take Home Tuesday and Ed said he would check with Mike Swan on when that could be done. Mike Stroud suggested that a videographer go on the tour to document. Ed said there is a videographer hired to document and produce 4 or 5 videos of the day. Robert said that Nick Anderson is planning to video for SAR.

Ed turned time over to Linda for an update on planning for the 27th. She and other members of HBF have been logging 14 hour days and logging phone calls for 2 weeks in preparation for the event. Vendors have increased to 45 stations and over 90 people involved. Volunteers have been assigned to conduct tours and we will need extra volunteers for set up and take down.

Stations include a variety of demonstrations such as blacksmith, spinning, needlework, cornhusk dolls, dying fabric, knitting, lacework, gun cleaning and black powder. Entertainment and educational presentations by 2 groups of fiddle players, Dr. Sonny Kelly will perform, Mary Charlotte Safford will present information about 3 black patriots, Trish Baker who has written 30 books will do "Tales from the Tavern." We will set up 4-foot by 8-foot character cutouts that depict natives, settlers, etc. for photo opportunities. The NCDCR America 250 Airstream is coming with 2 staff members, along with the author of the book, Blue's March. There will be a knitter, needlepoint, sword display by Scott Coley, table setting in the house, and the National Park Exhibit will include a children's clothing closet with period clothing and hats for people to dress up and take photos. Marchers from the Overmountain Men will do stories, demonstrate & fire muskets. There will be gift shops, David Dowdy & Trish Baker will sell their books, the Voelkers will have a booth with colonial clothes, toys, and games. Alan Darveaux is bringing his hammer dulcimer. Bobby Denton is making long rifles. Gordon Sisk is demonstrating packing on a trail with a haversack, how to roll cartridge & black powder. There will be 3-4 militia tents with the Southeastern Living Historians set up and camping overnight, demonstrating cooking venison on a spit, with a campfire and will be out front by the road to create ambience. There will be something for everyone, young and old.

Ed said that the front porch performances will use the Burke County Tourism sound system and it was confirmed that there is electricity on the porch.

Linda added that HBF has been working hard to prepare the site, cleaning windows, gutters, spraying for mosquitoes, cleaning the visitor's center, moving furniture, etc. Foot traffic will come in through the back door as performances will go on from the front porch. A lace maker & knitter will be set up demonstrating on the back porch. If you have any questions about the event, see Linda.

There was some discussion about the difficulty of getting a headcount at the event. Ed reported that Tim Barnsback, a teacher and America250 Fellow was planning to bring a group of student volunteers. Leslie said that we may be able to get some attendance data from a door prize giveaway. There will be 2 food trucks. Water and lunch will be provided for workers.

Someone asked about how we would handle trash at the event. Linda explained that they have portable folding cardboard trash cans they would get from the city that would hold 55 gallon trash bags & should have enough of these. The cardboard frames are reusable and board members will put away at the end of the event. The picnic tables have been delivered and placed. Two were

donated by HBF and 6 more were purchased for people to have a place to set and eat from the food trucks.

Bryant mentioned the event at the CoMMA on September 30th sponsored by the Friends of the Lake James State Park.

Ed mentioned that he has taken out ¼ page ads every Saturday in The Paper to help advertise the event. It is complicated to get the word out so we need to use a variety of methods and means.

Volunteer Assignments

Linda polled the committee to see who was available to help that day. Mike Stroud volunteered. Butch McSwain said he could help set up at 8 am and bring tables. Joel Welch said he could help set up. Leslie will show up. Laurie is helping at booths & available all day.

On the same day as this event, it was noted that the county is hosting a commemorative event for the anniversary of Hurricane Helene at the Soccer Complex. That may be a competing event.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm. The next meeting will be Monday, October 13 at 1:30 pm.

Submitted by Laurie Johnston, Secretary
November 10, 2025

Appendix:
Attachment A—Meeting Agenda