POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Public Hearing & Regular Meeting
March 16, 2026 - 5:00 PM
Bryant H. Womack Justice & Administration Building
40 Courthouse Street Columbus, NC 28722
MINUTES

Present: Vice-Chairman Moore, Commissioner Beiler, Commissioner Melton, and Commissioner Hargett. Also in attendance were County Manager Pittman, Attorney Berg, Clerk to the Board Freeman, and citizens.

Absent: Chairman Yoder

1. Public Hearing

   Vice-Chairman Moore called the public hearing to order.

   A. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to receive public comments on proposed new road names in Polk County: All the following are private roads within the Saluda Township, located off of Orchard Lake Road, SR 1100/1101; Alphabet Lane, Farside Road, Myrtle Hill Lane, Palmetto Road, RV Trail, and Watershed Trail. The notice was properly advertised in the Tryon Daily Bulletin.

   B. Citizen Comments

   There were no citizen comments.

   C. Adjourn Public Hearing

   Commissioner Beiler moved to adjourn the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Call to Order the Regular Meeting – Vice-Chairman Moore

3. Invocation - Commissioner Beiler

4. Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Hargett

5. Approval of Agenda

   A. Items may be added or removed at this time.

   Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Consent Agenda

   A. Approval of the February 16, 2026, Public Hearing Regular Meeting Minutes

B. Schedule a Public Hearing for proposed new road names to be considered on Monday, April 20, 2026 at 5:00 pm in the R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice, Womack Building.

C. Declare six Sheriff vehicles surplus to be sold electronically via GovDeals auction. Asset details attached.

D. Declare computers and miscellaneous equipment from IT department as surplus to be sold electronically via GovDeals auction. Asset details attached.

E. Appoint Chairman Yoder to the Regional Water Commission.

F. Vaya Health Quarterly Financial Report for the period ending December 31, 2025.

G. Tax Refund Requests in the amount of $1,922.77.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

There was one citizen comment.

8. Regular Agenda Items

A. Consideration and approval of the proposed seven new road names subsequent to the public hearing: Alphabet Lane, Farside Road, Myrtle Hill Lane, Palmetto Road, RV Trail, and Watershed Trail.

Attorney Berg was present for questions.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the proposed new road names, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Tax Department - Melissa O'Loughlin, Tax Administrator.

I. 2025 Uncollected (Delinquent) Tax Report.

Melissa O'Loughlin presented the 2025 uncollected tax report.

Commissioner Melton moved to charge the Tax Administrator to advertise and collect the 2025 taxes by any and all means, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

II. Misapplied Property Tax Payments Policy

Mrs. O’Loughlin explained that the policy aligns with General Statutes and provides guidelines for handling misapplied payments.

Commissioner Hargett moved to adopt the Misapplied Property Tax Payment Policy, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

III. Release of Interest Accrued From Misapplied Payment.

Mrs. O'Loughlin explained that a mortgage payment was applied to the wrong parcel. The mortgage company requested that the payment be moved, which caused interest to accrue. She said that, based on guidance from the School of Government, the payment should not have been transferred or assessed interest, so she is requesting approval to release the interest from the Board.

Commissioner Hargett moved to approve the release of interest accrued from misapplied payment, seconded by Commissioner Beiler, and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Approval of YMCA Architect, LS3P Associates, Budget Amendment, Project Budget Ordinance, and Contract - Manager Pittman

Manager Pittman reported that a selection committee completed the procurement process for architectural services for the Polk County YMCA Recreation Facility and ranked LS3P as the top firm. He stated that the negotiated contract, a budget amendment, and an amended project budget ordinance, allocating Fiscal Year 2026 tax revenue to the project, were being presented for approval.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the budget amendment and amended project budget ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried (Commissioner Hargett opposed).

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the LS3P Associates contract for architectural services and to grant Manager Pittman signatory authority, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Budget Amendment for the Buildings, Maintenance, and Repair Budget Line - Mickey Edwards, Parks, Recreation, and Maintenance Director.

Mr. Edwards explained that the requested budget amendment is necessary to address several unanticipated maintenance and repair issues within the Public Buildings Maintenance and Repair budget line during the current fiscal year. These repairs were required to maintain safe and functional operations of County facilities.

Commissioner Melton moved to approve the maintenance budget amendment, seconded by Commissioner Beiler, and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Polk County Schools - Dr. Brandon Schweitzer, Ed. D., Director of Operations.

I. Request transfer of $102,746.88 from the County's Capital Reserve Account to reimburse Polk County Schools for capital expenses paid through this year.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the transfer of $102,746.88 from the county's capital reserve account for reimbursement, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

II. Tryon Elementary School Pre-K Expansion Update.

Dr. Schweitzer reported that the Pre-K expansion project at Tryon Elementary School has been completed. He explained that the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction requires a final report for projects funded through the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund. This report documents the successful completion of the project and satisfies all closeout requirements. Dr. Schweitzer noted that the project included the addition of five new classrooms at Tryon Elementary School, which will support expanded Pre-K services.

F. Health and Human Services Agency Child Abuse Prevention Proclamation - Chairman Yoder.

Attorney Berg read the Health and Human Services Agency Child Abuse Prevention Proclamation.

Commissioner Hargett moved to approve the proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

G. DRMF (Disaster Recovery Mitigation Fund) Flood Gauge Network Project Budget Ordinance - Manager Pittman.

County Manager Pittman explained that after Helene, the County identified a lack of flood gauge management along local streams and rivers, that limited real-time water level monitoring. He said the County is seeking funding through Disaster Recovery Mitigation Fund for the Engineering phase of a flood gauge system, with the expectation that FEMA will fund full implementation once the design is complete.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the Disaster Recovery Mitigation Fund, Flood Gauge Network Project Grant Agreement, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the amended project budget ordinance for the Flood Gauge Network Project, seconded by Commissioner Mellton, and the motion carried unanimously.

H. Purchase Order Request and Budget amendment to appropriate insurance proceeds and additional fund balance for new demo ambulance - Michael Crater, EMS Director.

Mr. Crater explained that this request is to replace an ambulance that was totaled last year. He said that three quotes were obtained, and the preferred option is the lowest cost of the three. It was further explained that insurance covered approximately 75% of the purchase, and the remaining 25% will be funded through the County’s fund balance.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the purchase order request and budget amendment for the Emergency Medical Services' new demo ambulance, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

9. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items

There were no citizen comments.

10. Volunteer Board Applications

A. Adult Care Advisory Committee - There are five vacancies and three applicants; Brent Seagle, Carol Blakely, and Cornelia Yoder.

Commissioner Hargett moved to appoint Brent Seagle, Carol Blakely, and Cornelia Yoder to the Adult Care Advisory Committee, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Agricultural Advisory Board - There are two vacancies and three applicants; Beth Foster, Craig Taffaro, and Libbie Johnson.

Commissioner Hargett nominated Beth Foster and Craig Taffaro.

Commissioner Hargett moved to appoint Bether Foster, and Craig Taffaro to the Agricultural Advisory Board, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Appearance Commission - There are three vacancies and two applicants; Dawn Spinola (Tryon Township), and Will Kallberg (At Large).

Commissioner Beiler moved to appoint Dawn Spinola to the Tryon Township position and Will Kallberg to the At-Large position on the Appearance Commission, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee - There are five vacancies and three applicants; Brent Seagle, Carol Blakely, and Cornelia Yoder.

Commissioner Hargett moved to appoint Brent Seagle, Carol Blakely, and Cornelia Yoder to the Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Recreation Advisory Board - There are six vacancies and one applicant; Tabitha Letterman.

Commissioner Hargett moved to appoint Tabitha Letterman to the Recreation Advisory Board, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Commissioner Comments

The Commissioners thanked everyone who was in attendance and encouraged everyone to go by Lake Adger to see the progress being made on th sediment and debris removal project.

12. Closed Session

    A. Motion to go into Closed Session for the purpose of Attorney-Client Privilege.

    Commissioner Melton moved to go into closed session for the purpose of Attorney-Client Privilege, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

    B. Motion to return to open session.

    Commissioner Beiler moved to return to open session, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Adjournment

    Commissioner Hargett moved to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Commissioner Beiler, and the motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Kennedy E Freeman
Clerk to the Board

Myron Yoder
Chairman