MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'

BRIEFING MEETING OF AUGUST 4, 2026.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Briefing Meeting on August 4, 2026, in the First Floor Conference room at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Vice-Chair Martin Moore; Commissioner Terri Wells, Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Parker Sloan; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball.

The following items were reviewed.

1. **Resolution in Support of Lennie's Law**

Commissioner Ball provided background information. He explained that we rate high per capita for bicycle crashes. Other municipalities have passed resolutions in support of bicycle safety. There was safety was a discussion as to why this resolution is important. It was suggested that they revisit the road safety discussion at least once a year. The Commissioner's agreed to add the resolution to the August 4, 2026, meeting agenda for approval.

2. **Enka Heritage Trail Update**

Allison Dains, The Parks & Recreation Director provided an update on the Enka Heritage Trail (EHT), a component of the larger Enka Recreation Destination project that has been underway since 2019. She further explained that although feasibility studies and a 25% design have been completed, the project was paused in 2024 due to the landowner's unwillingness to agree to necessary easements. The timeline updates show continued negotiations with the Enka Youth Sports Organization (EYSO), including their request for compensation for 51 acres and delays while they sought funding for related improvements. She explained that the County's valuation of the property differs significantly from the landowner's appraisal, which continues to prevent progress on right-of-way acquisition. The County requested EYSO honor past agreements to donate easements for greenway. As a result, staff are now exploring alternative connectivity options within the Buncombe County Sports Park and to Sand Hill School, a 10 foot paved path has already been constructed around fields 3, 4, and 5. Next steps include gathering Commissioner input, coordinating with NCDOT on project closeout requirements, and evaluating the feasibility of improved circulation and connectivity in the area.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Ball moved that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners go into closed session for the following reasons.

1. To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the Board of Commissioners, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered in negotiations, provided that any action authorizing the payment of economic development incentives will occur in open session. The statutory authority is contained in G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4).

2. To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged to consider and give instructions concerning the handling of a claim where no lawsuit that has not been filed at this time. There will be no formal action taken at this time. The statutory authority is contained in G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

Commissioner Whitesides seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'

REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 4, 2026.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met to hold a Regular Meeting on August 4, 2026, in the Chamber at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 5:00 p.m.

> Present: Chair Amanda Edwards; Vice-Chair Martin Moore; Commissioner Terri Wells, Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Parker Sloan; Commissioner Jennifer Horton; Commissioner Drew Ball.

The Chair opened the meeting and provided opening remarks.

CONSENT

1. Approval of the July 14, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of the July 21, 2026, Combined Meeting Minutes
3. Approval of the June 2026 Tax Collection Report
4. Approval of Resolution and Construction Manager at Risk Contract for AB Tech Capital Plan Maintenance Projects
5. Approval of Resolution and Contract for Buncombe County Emergency Operations Center and Storage Facility
6. Budget Amendment to Enhance and Expand Adoption Promotion Funds

7. Approval of the Digital Opportunities Interlocal Agreement for Buncombe County Public Libraries

Commissioner Moore made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Commissioner Sloan seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Terry Scholl is a member of Connect Enka and spoke in support of the Enka Heritage Trail.

Mel Scholl completed Terry Scholl's comments – that the County must consider Connect Buncombe's master plan in the future; when entering any contract the County must make sure it is enforceable so the developer has to do their agreed part of the community service; and that the youth sports organization did not act in good faith and asks that they not receive any more funding.

Rob Denton, president of Connect Enka spoke about the Greenway Easement Grant Agreement and he wonders how Martin Lewis got around the agreement.

Rob Jackson, retired Buncombe County Schools Superintendent, expressed thanks to the Commissioners for their annual investment in the school system.

Leah Weaver discussed a heroin like candy that is currently legal and soon will be made illegal, and the impact it will have on the users.

GOOD NEWS

1. NACO Best in Class Achievement Award

Sybil Tate provided background information. She explained that during the July National Association of Counties (NACo) conference featuring more than 3,000 counties from across the country, Buncombe County earned seven 2026 Achievement Awards including our first-ever Best-in-Category for Economic Service's Staff Development Training program.

OLD NEWS

1. **Approval of the Addendum to Interlocal Agreement Between Buncombe County and the Town of Woodfin for Design and Construction Services for Greenways**

Allison Daines, Parks and Recreation Director provided background information. She explained that on November 21, 2017, Buncombe County and the Town of Woodfin entered into an Interlocal Agreement for Design and Construction Services for Greenways ("Interlocal Agreement"). By the terms of the Interlocal Agreement, Buncombe County agreed to act as agent for Woodfin to conduct, oversee, and manage the construction of greenway projects along the French Broad River. Following the execution of the Interlocal Agreement, the parties identified two feasible greenway projects in Woodfin: EB- 5774AA Segment and EB5774B Segment ("Woodfin Greenways"). The County and Woodfin now seek to update the Interlocal Agreement to clarify roles and responsibilities concerning the construction and ongoing maintenance of the Woodfin Greenways.

She further explained that this Addendum designates the specific greenways; establishes the County's obligation to construct the designated greenways, and Woodfin's obligation to maintain those greenways in perpetuity.

Commissioner Ball made the motion to authorize the execution of the Interlocal Agreements. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Economic Development Update and Building Reuse Grant Request for Board Authorization

Josh Hallingse provided background information. He explained that Buncombe County Economic Development staff will be providing an update regarding Southeastern Container's announced expansion at their local Enka Headquarters building. Announced in February 2026, Southeastern Container will be investing approximately $31 million and creating 12 new full-time positions with an expected average wage of $32.90. Buncombe County Economic Development will be providing notice of a Public Hearing, currently scheduled for August 18th, to request the Board's consideration of economic development incentives to induce this project. In support of this proposed project, NC Commerce has awarded a $100,000 Building Reuse grant for the Southeastern Container local expansion. This grant requires a 5% ($5,000) local match to enable the award. As part of this presentation, Buncombe County Economic Development will request board authorization to coordinate with Southeastern Container and participate in the Building Reuse program.

Commissioner Whitesides made the motion to authorize the County Manager to coordinate with Southeastern Container and participate in the NC Commerce Building Reuse Grant Program. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried six to one with Commissioner Ball as the nay.

2. Approval of the Annual Property Tax Settlement for Fiscal Year 2026 and Order of Collection to Tax Collector for the Current Fiscal Year

Jennifer Pike, Tax Collector, provided background information. She explained that pursuant to NCGS 105-373, the Tax Collector must provide to the Board of Commissioners an annual settlement of property tax collected in the previous fiscal year for approval. And that Pursuant to NCGS 105-321, following approval of the Tax Collector's Annual Settlement for the preceding year and Order of Collection to the Tax Collector must be adopted authorizing the collection of the current fiscal year property taxes.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to approve the fiscal year 2026 Annual Tax Settlement. Commissioner Whitesides seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Horton made the motion to adopt the Order of Collection for fiscal year 2027. Commissioner Wells seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Budget Amendment for the NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund's Helene Recovery Funds

Joseph Gusman provided background information. He explained that The NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund's Helene Recovery Fund is a state-run grant program that provides funding for public recreation purposes to assist with disaster recovery from Hurricane Helene. This action is to accept $284,368 awarded to Buncombe County to develop boat launches at Bent Creek River Park, Glen Bridge River Park, and Hominy Creek River Park. $284,368 in matching funds have already been budgeted between the following sources:

• $163,638 in the County's existing FY27 Glen Bridge River Park Boat Launch Replacement capital project

• $120,730 in FEMA PA dollars for recovery work at Hominy Creek River Park

He noted that no additional County funding required.

Commissioner Sloan made the motion to accept the grant and approve the budget amendment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moore and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at: 5:46pm