BLACK MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

March 12, 2026 | Special Emergency Called Meeting | Time: 5:00 PM

Town Hall Council Chambers | 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711

Black Mountain Town Council held their special emergency called meeting agenda on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 5:00 PM in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711. The purpose of this special emergency-called meeting is to discuss the Public Safety Building at 106 Montreat Rd., stemming from the presentation made at the March 9, 2026 Council meeting on the building's conditions.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor C. Michael Sobol called the emergency meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance: Mayor C. Michael Sobol, Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller, Town Council Member Doug Hay, and Town Council Member Pam King. Council Members Alice Berry and Ryan Stone were absent.

The following staff members were present: Richard Hicks, Interim Town Manager; Wesley Barker, Town Clerk; John Coffey, Fire Chief; Steve Parker, Police Chief; Jamey Matthews, Public Works Director; Matt Begley, Budget Analyst.

2. PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING DISCUSSION

Fire Chief John Coffey and Police Chief Steve Parker presented relocation proposals to the Council as a follow-up from the information presented at the March 9, 2026 Town Council meeting by Moseley Architects and McGill Associates where they stated that the public safety building was not safe to be occupied, which led to an urgent need to relocated public safety personnel while additional testing is performed, and measures are taken to find a long-term solution to the problem.

The Chiefs and their staff have been working to find remedies and funding options for the immediate, short-term, and medium-term solutions. Town staff had several meetings with Ryan Cole, Emergency Services Director for Buncombe County who connected town staff with high level FEMA PA staff for FEMA Region 4 and at the state level. These conversations were critical in determining the necessary scoping for the project to fit into a Category B designation. Further, town staff met with various property owners and public safety departmental staff in other jurisdictions to explore options, and held conversations with OSBM staff to determine whether funds made available for the Public Safety Building through the NC Helene Capital Grant program could be used for temporary facilities pending the results of the engineering report.

Options that were presented as feasible options to temporarily relocate personnel included the 1) Ridgecrest Conference Center, 2) Monte Vista & Cragmont, 3) auctioned FEMA

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modular units, 4) a temporary facility from City of Hendersonville, and 5) a lease to own a temporary facility like City of Hendersonville's for their Police Department.
Pros and cons of each were reviewed. Options that were explored and determined non-viable were Blue Ridge Assembly, a property on US-70, and Buncombe County Schools. Options for programs and/or funding included modifying the scope of the Town's Category B Project for "Temp Facility Public Works & Planning Dept." to include Public Safety Offices (Project #: 965582), and use of NC Helene Capital Grant Funds.

Out of the options presented, Town staff recommend pursuing a combination of several options to cover both short-term and medium-term stability and safety for Public Safety personnel and limit disruption for critical service provision. These include Ridgecrest Conference Center, temporary facility from the City of Hendersonville, and a lease to own a temporary facility like the City of Hendersonville's for their Police Department.

The most beneficial option from a staff recommendation standpoint is acquiring the modular unit offered by the City of Hendersonville. This option alone will not be adequate to house both Fire & Police Department personnel. If this option is used, staff recommend supplementing this strategy with a lease to purchase agreement for a similar modular for Police Department personnel. Anticipated costs between $300,000 to $350,000 for the lifetime of the project. Staff also recommends pursuing the option to utilize space at Ridgecrest Conference Center or another local space to house Police Department personnel until we can procure a more suitable space for the duration of the remediation or construction process. The Police Department will also require storage of their armory and evidence and have determined the most viable option is the rental of one or more Conex Box Container(s).

Based on conversations with FEMA PA personnel, we anticipate this project to be eligible as a Category B project. This funding method is the recommendation of Town staff, given its adequacy to cover a substantial amount of all the project expenses. This allows the Town to direct more funding toward the remediation or replacement of the facility and leave the scopes and purposes of current grants unchanged.

Additional discussion ensued on the modular unit from Hendersonville and its placement on Honeycutt St., which runs in front of the current public safety building, as well as the utility hook ups. Also closure of Honeycutt St. was discussed but would occur when this modular would be brought here. Other discussion included costs and eligibility with the FEMA Category B project, and it was stated that $1 million from the Town's insurance provider could go toward temporary housing and/or repair, and for new buildings.

Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller made a motion to approve the temporary housing at Ridgecrest Conference Center as recommended and start the process of acquiring the modular from the City of Hendersonville. A vote of 3-0 in favor. Council Member Alice Berry and Ryan Stone were absent.

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3. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to be discussed, Mayor C. Michael Sobol adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

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C. Michael Sobol, Mayor

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Wesley M. Barker, Town Clerk

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