Board of Commissioners - Public Forum

January 8, 2026 – 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners in Attendance:
Commissioner Tom Widmer
Commissioner Jane Alexander
Mayor Pro Tem Kitty Fouche
Commissioner Mason Blake

Board of Commissioners Absent:
Mayor Tim Helms
Commissioner Grant Dasher

Town Staff in Attendance:
Savannah Parrish, Town Manager
Angie Murphy, Town Clerk
Brandon Freeman, Town Attorney
Marty Benson, Associate of Town Attorney

Members of the Public in Attendance:
Approximately 20 people

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order with a welcome by Mayor Pro Tem Kitty Fouche, followed by a moment of silence.

Agenda Adoption

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Tom Widmer, seconded by Commissioner Jane Alexander, and passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Jean Norris, 192 Mississippi Rd, from the Flat Creek Crossing Steering Committee informed the Board that they were preparing a grant proposal due by January 30th for the Helene Recovery Fund (2025-2026). The committee had recently walked the site and identified significant bank damage that requires repair, restoration, and rebuilding. The damage extends beyond their original scope, particularly near the town maintenance facility and on the Mountain Retreat Association (MRA) side where a tree is hanging with exposed roots. Ms. Norris explained they would be working with Town Manager Savannah Parrish, Public Works Director Barry Creasman, MRA representatives, and their attorney to prepare the proposal, though they didn't yet know the amount they would be requesting. The grant would require a 1:1 match. The application would be submitted to

the North Carolina State Parks and Recreation Trust Fund's Helene Recovery Fund, which follows PARTF rules with some modifications for hurricane recovery.

Letta Jean Taylor, 386 Oklahoma Rd, addressed the Board regarding the conditional use permit being considered later in the meeting. She reminded the commissioners that ordinances should not be rubber-stamped or changed to suit one or two people and emphasized that decisions are about properties rather than people, setting precedents that will affect many in the future. Mrs. Taylor also noted that the Buncombe County living wage for 2025 was $23.15 (up from $22.10 in 2024), and that it was expected to rise to approximately $25.00 in 2026. She encouraged the Board to keep this in mind during budget planning. Town Manager Savannah Parrish responded that all full-time town employees currently make at least the Buncombe County living wage of $23.15 per hour.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the Public Forum was made by Commissioner Mason Blake, seconded by Commissioner Jane Alexander, and passed unanimously.

The forum adjourned at 5:39 PM until the regular meeting at 6:00 PM.

Mayor Pro Tem Kitty Fouche

Town Clerk Angie Murphy