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**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**     September 8, 2025

**ALEXANDER COUNTY**  
**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**PRESENT:**    Marty Pennell, Chairman  
                  Larry Yoder, Vice-Chairman  
                  Kent Herman  
                  Josh Lail  
                  Ronnie Reese

**STAFF:**        Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney  
                  Gary Herman, PIO  
                  Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, September 8, 2025 in Room 103 of the CVCC / Alexander Center in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pennell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice-Chairman Yoder gave the invocation and Commissioner Herman led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Chairman Pennell expressed his gratitude to Alexander County EMS and other emergency personnel who responded to his residence recently, thanking them for the high level of professionalism they demonstrated.

Vice-Chairman Yoder attended the NCACC Annual Conference in Pitt County last month where Jennifer Herman, Finance Director, was recognized as one of the NCACC Heroic Hands Award recipients.

Commissioner Herman, who attended the August Fire Chief's Meeting, reported that all 8 fire departments in Alexander County had been awarded Disaster Recovery Grants through the NC Office of the State Fire Marshal. Plans for this funding among departments include the purchase

of generators, ATVs, a brush truck, and station upgrades along with additional training that could assist with lowering ISO ratings.

Commissioner Lail commented on the popularity of the new pickleball courts at Bethlehem Park.

## **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Vice-Chairman Yoder made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one spoke during the Public Comment Period.

## **RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT NC COMMERCE BUILDING REUSE GRANT FOR URGENT CARE FACILITY**

David Moose, Consolidated Human Services Director, reported that on July 14, 2025, the Board authorized an application for a Building Reuse grant to assist with the renovation of a medical facility owned by Catawba Valley Medical Center that Urgent Care of Mountain View intends to lease. During the review process, the NC Department of Commerce felt the project warranted additional funding and therefore approved a grant totaling \$175,000. Because the amount awarded is higher than expected, the Board must approve a new resolution to accept the grant and commit to the 5% match (\$8,750) required by the County. Mr. Moose added that the project would create 14 new jobs.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to approve the resolution accepting a Building Reuse grant totaling \$175,000 for an urgent care facility. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously

## **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS & APPROVING THIRD SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT**

Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney, presented a resolution approving a revised opioid settlement agreement with Purdue/Sackler along with new agreements with 8 additional generic opioid manufacturers (Alvogen, Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Indivior, Mylan, Sun Pharma, and Zydus), the proceeds of which are expected to generate a combined \$183 million in opioid settlement funds for NC over the next 10-15 years. Local governments will receive 85% of these funds for opioid abatement and remediation activities. Funds will be deposited into the County's existing special revenue fund created for opioid settlement dollars and staff will continue to evaluate strategies to ensure the greatest impact to address the opioid crisis. Mr. Faulkenberry recommended approval

of the resolution that will also give signatory authority to the County Manager or County Attorney on settlement agreements.

Vice-Chairman Yoder made a motion to approve the Opioid Settlement Resolution. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #7**

Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney, explained the purpose of Budget Amendment #7 as follows:

- To increase the budget for the NC Department of Military and Veterans Affairs state grant to match the funds available to spend in FY 2026. The grant award began in the latter part of FY 2025 and will be completed in FY 2026.
- To increase the Sheriff's Office budget for the NC Association of Chiefs of Police Performance and Wellness Grant Program. The reimbursement grant will cover the first year of a personnel management software program.
- To increase the Human Resources Department budget for speakers on wellness topics, the wellness fair, and employee appreciation events with funds received from an insurance rebate.

Vice-Chairman Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #7. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Tax Abatements & Adjustments (\$23,784.82) and Tax Refunds (\$1,537.95) for July 24 – September 1, 2025.
- B. Minutes from the August 4, 2025 Regular Meeting.
- C. Board / Committee Appointments – CVCC Board of Trustees, JCPC, Animal Control Advisory Board, Jury Commission, and Consolidated Human Services Advisory Committee.
- D. Line-Item Transfer Report for August 2025.
- E. Amendments to the Fire Prevention & Protection Ordinance.
- F. Proclamation declaring September 2025 as Preparedness Month.
- G. Renewal of annual contract with Alexander County Schools to provide school nursing services.

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice-Chairman Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Reese made a motion to adjourn at 6:19 PM. Vice-Chairman Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Marty A. Pennell, Chairman

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Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board

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**CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING**     September 8, 2025

**ALEXANDER COUNTY  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**PRESENT:**    Marty Pennell, Chairman  
                  Larry Yoder, Vice-Chairman  
                  Kent Herman  
                  Josh Lail  
                  Ronnie Reese

**STAFF:**        Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney  
                  Gary Herman, PIO  
                  Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Consolidated Human Services Board held a regular meeting on Monday, September 8, 2025 in Room 103 of the CVCC / Alexander Center in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pennell called the meeting to order at 6:19 PM.

**PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT**

Billie Walker, Health Director, reviewed the following:

- Organizational Update (Accreditation 37.6) – Ms. Walker described current vacancies within the Health Department. There is still a need for an ophthalmologist on the CHS Advisory Committee but an engineer was just appointed earlier tonight. Staff vacancies include a Behavioral Health Licensed Clinical Social Worker. There have been two resignations (Medical Office Assistant/Lab and PTNB Public Health Nurse II) that will not be reposted due to state and federal funding restrictions. The School-Based Dental Health Coordinator began on August 18.
- Financial Updates – with the expiration of COVID-19 funding, public health organizations are losing state programs, initiatives, and consultants.
- Accreditation Updates – Ms. Walker stated that the NC Local Health Department Accreditation dashboard was changing and will begin with Alexander County in the fall of 2026. The state has decreased the number of benchmarks from 147 to 45.

- Communicable Disease Annual Report (Accreditation 2.4) – Emily Vick, RN-CPHN, presented the 2025 Communicable Disease Annual Report and shared details about Communicable Disease and why it is important. A 5-year prevalence was discussed where chlamydia and gonorrhea were the most prevalent STDs in NC and Alexander County. There were 54 cases of chlamydia, 18 cases of gonorrhea, and salmonella was the most reported food-borne disease with 9 cases in 2024. Trends ongoing/upcoming were discussed as well. Ms. Vick stated, although COVID-19 cases have not been counted since May 2023, cases linked to outbreaks in congregate living facilities are investigated and reported. There were 4 COVID-19 outbreaks in long-term care facilities in 2024. There have been no cases of MPox in Alexander County and as of August 5, 2025, a total of 1,356 confirmed measles cases have been reported in 41 jurisdictions throughout the U.S., primarily resulting from 32 outbreaks. To date, there has only been one confirmed case in NC and none in Alexander County. Flu vaccines will be available at the Health Department beginning October 1.
- Community Outreach – Ms. Walker discussed community outreach events for August, September, and October 2025.

## **DSS REPORT**

The DSS Report was presented by Keri Jerrell, DSS Director; Lakeshia Feaster, Child Welfare/Adult Services Program Manager; Trena Riddle, Economic Services Program Manager; and David Moose, Consolidated Human Services Director.

Ms. Feaster discussed HB 612, known as the “Fostering Care in NC Act” and signed into law in June. She stated that staff was still learning the possible impacts the bill could have on the agency. Ms. Jerrell added that proponents of the bill believe counties need more supervision in certain areas of foster care, noting that the bill was also intended to give foster parents more rights. Current stats included a vacancy rate of 7% as well as 49 children in foster care, 8 in the Links Program, 4 in the 18-21 Program, 10 foster homes, 5 adoptions in progress, and 11 adult wards. Ms. Feaster also mentioned PATH NC that went live on August 11<sup>th</sup> to enhance interagency communications, case management, and data accessibility.

Ms. Riddle provided an Adult / Child Medicaid update that included information on HR1, the One Big Beautiful Bill, that may affect Medicaid cases beginning December 31, 2026. Preliminary information suggests modifications to work requirements and a return to a 6-month eligibility review instead of the existing one year. There are currently 10,000 Medicaid cases in Alexander County.

Mr. Moose advised that he and Ms. Jerrell attended a Consolidated Human Services Alliance meeting where HR1 was a major topic of discussion. Agencies across the state are monitoring the situation to determine the impacts.

## **SENIOR CENTER REPORT**

Kristy Hunt, Senior Center Director, gave updates on the center's ongoing activities and reported that almost 300 people attended the Annual Christmas in July Craft Fair. A MedAssist event was also held on May 30<sup>th</sup> with 684 participants. The Diamond Tours trip to Vermont is scheduled for this month and next year's trip will be 9 days in Ireland. Ms. Hunt announced that a Medicare Hoedown will be held on October 10<sup>th</sup> to kick off open enrollment that begins October 15<sup>th</sup> and runs through December 7. To date, 206 contacts related to Medicare drug plans have been made since January with a savings of \$166,646.

**CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3 & 4) ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:58 PM to allow for attorney/client privilege and to discuss economic development pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3 & 4). Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Yoder made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 PM. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Marty A. Pennell, Chairman

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Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board