

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**      October 6, 2025

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

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

**ABSENT:**     Josh Lail

**STAFF:**      Debra Bechtel, Interim County Manager  
                  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, October 6, 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**

After a moment of silence in memory of William “Bill” Randlett, Chairman Pennell gave the invocation and Commissioner Reese led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**COMMISSIONER’S REPORT**

Chairman Pennell reminded the Board that elections for the positions of chairman and vice-chairman for 2026 would take place in December.

Commissioner Reese spoke about attending the Charlie Kirk Memorial held yesterday at Courthouse Park.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

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

### **\*\*\*SPECIAL RECOGNITION\*\*\***

Terry Foxx, Captain of Alexander Rescue Squad & EMS, recognized 4 junior members that competed at the NC Association of Rescue & EMS Annual Convention in Fayetteville on September 6<sup>th</sup> – Kade Church, Coley Whitener, Wyatt Johnson, and Hunter Dancy. The team earned second place, finishing only two points shy of first place. In addition, they also received the Chad Smith Spirit Award, a distinction that has never been given to a junior team.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chad Lackey asked the Board to reinstate the tap fee discount for the current ARPA Water Line Extension Project along with any future water projects made possible through grant funds. He reported high levels of iron in his well water and stated that the price of a City of Hickory water meter was now \$4,777, a sum that would be difficult for the average family to pay.

### **VAYA HEALTH PRESENTATION**

Zack Shepherd, Vaya Community Relations Regional Director, gave a slide show presentation that included the following information:

- Vaya is a public managed care organization that prioritizes whole-person health with 3 types of plans – Tailored Plan (Vaya Total Care), Medicaid Direct, and State Funding/Single Stream.
- In Alexander County, there are 1,022 Medicaid Direct clients and 902 Tailored Plan clients.
- NC DHHS is preparing for the Rural Health Transformation Program that will increase access to rural hospitals and providers, strengthen the rural healthcare workforce, foster provider partnerships, and improve health outcomes.
- The General Assembly’s “mini budget” includes \$600 million in Medicaid funding, which falls below NC DHHS’s projections. Vaya’s Single Stream funding was reduced by approx. \$6 million.
- The go-live date for the statewide BCBS Child and Family Specialty Plan Waiver is scheduled for December 1, 2025.

- As part of the Hope4NC grant, residents in counties affected by Hurricane Helene can call the 24/7 helpline at 1-855-587-3463 for free and anonymous mental health services.

## **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT #8**

Debra Bechtel, Interim County Manager, explained the purpose of Budget Amendment #8 as follows:

- To increase the Sheriff's Office budget for use of state Unauthorized Substance Tax funds to pay the tax and tag expenses for the armored vehicle purchased in September.
- To budget for a refund to the NC Department of Juvenile Justice for 2024-2025 funds that service providers were unable to spend by the end of the budget year.
- To increase the Elections Department budget for a Homeland Security grant that will reimburse the County up to \$3,007.14 to upgrade/replace computer equipment that is no longer supported.

Vice-Chairman Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #8. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Tax Abatements & Adjustments (\$13,960.40) and Tax Refunds (\$1,488.67) for September 2-28, 2025.
- B. Minutes from the September 8, 2025 Regular Meeting, September 8, 2025 Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting, and September 23, 2025 Special Meeting.
- C. Line-Item Transfer Report for September 2025.
- D. Resolution authorizing the County Attorney to initiate legal action to abate code violations.
- E. Contract with NC Department of Commerce for the Urgent Care of Mountain View Project.
- F. Contract with Icard Architecture, PLLC for additions to EMS Station #2 in Bethlehem.
- G. Rewrite of the Alexander County Personnel Policy.

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

## **CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3, 4, & 6) ATTORNEY / CLIENT PRIVILEGE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, & PERSONNEL**

Vice-Chairman Yoder made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:28 PM to allow for attorney/client privilege and to discuss economic development and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3, 4, & 6). Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Reese made a motion to adjourn at 9:25 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