

**MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 9, 2025 – REGULAR MEETING**

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in a regular meeting on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Chambers at the County Administration Building, located at 101 S. Broad Street, Brevard, NC.

Commissioners present were Larry Chapman, Vice-Chairman Jake Dalton, Teresa McCall, and Chase McKelvey. Chairman Jason Chappell was out of town and unable to attend. County Manager Jaime Laughter and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan were also present. County Attorney Megan Silver participated via Zoom.

Media: Dan DeWitt – *Brevard Newsbeat*
Lauren Denon – *The Transylvania Times*

Approximately 20 people were in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Jake Dalton presiding declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

WELCOME

Vice-Chairman Dalton welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Commissioners and staff in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comments reflect the speakers' opinions or points of view.

Steve Delaney: Mr. Delaney, a resident of Lake Toxaway Estates, addressed the Board to express concerns about the recent property reassessment and its impact on his community. He summarized five main points that were also shared via email with County officials. First, he argued that the timing of the reassessment was flawed due to distorted post-COVID market conditions, resulting in inflated appraisals based on limited sales data. He cited his property as an example, noting a substantial increase in appraised value despite only a modest adjustment following his appeal. Second, he contended that the reassessment and the proposed 11% increase in property taxes disproportionately shift the tax burden to Lake Toxaway, estimating the community will cover 60% of the County's total property tax increase. Third, he stated that the fire tax burden is even more disproportionate, with Lake Toxaway residents projected to pay significantly more, in effect subsidizing other fire districts. Fourth, he highlighted the overall tax impact on his community, where many households are expected to see tax increases between 50% and 100%, far exceeding the County average. Lastly, he questioned the County's reliance on property taxes to make up for the \$3.1 million budget shortfall. He urged the Board to reconsider the assessment process, rebalance revenue sources, and explore a more equitable approach to funding fire services countywide.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications.

Commissioner Chapman moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey, and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, and unanimously approved.

The Board approved the following:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes of the May 27, 2025, regular meeting.

VAYA HEALTH FISCAL MONITORING REPORT – FY 2025 Q3

The Board received and entered into the record the Vaya Health Fiscal Monitoring Report for the third quarter of FY 2025, as required by N.C.G.S. § 122C-117(c). The report included financial data through March 31, 2025.

Current Actual Revenues	\$1,215,545,947 (99.58% of annualized budget)
Current Actual Expenditures	\$1,208,718,176 (99.02% of annualized budget)
Current Net Gain from Operations	\$6,827,771
Fund Balances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$0 restricted for risk reserve • \$76,653,598 restricted for state statute, prepaids, and investments in fixed assets • \$122,700,714 unrestricted
Operating Cash	\$297,227,654 net of risk reserves
Total Spendable Cash Estimate	\$218,907,592

APPROVAL OF FIREWORKS/PYROTECHNICS DISPLAYS

The Board approved fireworks and pyrotechnics display permits for several organizations that submitted applications in accordance with the 2010 North Carolina Pyrotechnics Act and related state statutes. Fire Marshal Scott Justus reviewed and confirmed that all applications met the requirements. Approved permits were granted to Burlingame Country Club, Camp Illahee, the City of Brevard, Keystone Camp, Lake Toxaway Country Club, Ridgehaven Inc., Rockbrook Camp, Camp High Rocks Inc., and Camp Carolina.

FY 2026 JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL FUNDING PLAN

The Board approved the FY 2026 Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Funding Plan as presented. The JCPC reviewed and updated its County Plan and identified services that are most effective at preventing and reducing juvenile delinquency in Transylvania County. After assessing youth risk and needs data and conducting a public request-for-proposals process, the JCPC recommended funding three programs for the upcoming fiscal year: Transylvania County Schools' Project Rebound (\$47,732), Aspire Youth and Family's Vocational Directions (\$46,737), and Kids at Work (\$31,478). All funded programs were previously found to be in compliance with policy and operating effectively. No administrative costs were requested for FY 2026.

REVIEW OF CONTRACT BETWEEN THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND MARKET CONNECTIONS

The Board reviewed the contract between the Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA) and Market Connections, the agency that has served as TCTDA's marketing partner for over a decade. Market Connections specializes in tourism marketing and has experience with Transylvania County's promotional needs, consistently providing high-quality services at a competitive cost. The TCTDA Board approved the marketing plan that includes continued engagement with the firm. The contract format was reviewed and approved by legal counsel. The Board confirmed that the review requirements outlined in Resolution #35-2021 had been met.

REVIEW OF CONTRACT BETWEEN THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND MEDIA ONE

The Board reviewed the contract between the Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA) and Media One, a firm that has provided digital marketing services to the TCTDA for the past five years. Media One is recognized for its expertise in the evolving digital marketing landscape, which plays an increasingly vital role in destination promotion. Under the arrangement, Market Connections creates advertising content and provides direction on target audiences based on the approved marketing plan, while Media One manages digital placement and execution. The contract format has been reviewed and approved by legal counsel. The Board confirmed that the review requirements set forth in Resolution #35-2021 had been met.

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE TO HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM HELENE

The Manager provided an update on the emergency response to Hurricane/Tropical Storm Helene.

- FEMA Assistance Data (as of 6/03/2025):
 - Over \$8.3 million awarded in Individual Assistance to Transylvania County residents.
 - 4,837 valid registrations; 4,189 referred to Individual Assistance; 3,042 found eligible for Housing/Other Needs Assistance.
 - No Transylvania County households are currently checked into hotels via the TSA program.
- WNC Economic Recovery resources are available at [wncrecovery@nc.gov/resources](mailto:wncrecovery@nc.gov), including funding information, mental health support, repair help, and sector-specific resources.
- Residents with private road or bridge damage can register for assistance at ncdps.gov/Helene/prb for Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 - Part 1 assistance.
- Transylvania County requested and was approved by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for debris removal in public rights of way, private property demolition/removal, and waterways. USACE manages contractors and permits; the County has no authority over contractors.
- Waterway debris removal is reportedly complete for 40 sites, but contractors suggest more sites are under review, causing mixed messaging.
- Private Property Debris Removal applications (~400) are being reviewed; USACE has bid for contractors and will notify property owners 72 hours before work begins. The County must notify any rejected applicants with information from USACE. Communication remains challenging.
- The County submitted public right-of-way debris for removal; USACE now claims they cannot remove NCDOT right of way debris, despite prior agreements. This issue is causing community challenges; staff continue advocacy.
- Contact information for debris concerns is limited to FEMA and NC Emergency Management emails (FEMA-dr4827-NC-debris@FEMA.dhs.gov and debris@ncdps.gov); communication difficulties persist despite staff efforts to assist residents.

Commissioner McCall inquired about ongoing FEMA engagement with property owners, with the Manager confirming FEMA remains active, especially through the lengthy Hazard Mitigation process. She noted fewer than 20 property owners had applied to sell their property to FEMA, some of whom have since withdrawn applications to pursue mitigation instead, with more information expected as applications are reviewed.

Commissioner Dalton sought clarification on USACE's claim that debris removal is complete. The Manager explained that while USACE reports completion for public rights of way and waterways, the County has experienced contradictory communication, particularly regarding debris in NCDOT rights of way, which USACE previously agreed to clear but now refuses to remove. The Manager described the challenging and inconsistent communication with USACE which required escalating complaints to secure weekly meetings.

Commissioner Dalton acknowledged multiple unaddressed debris sites, some along US 64, which County staff have shown to FEMA and USACE. The Manager also noted confusion over a supposed contract involving NCDEQ and NCDOT that was never signed and alleged County involvement throughout the process, which was untrue. Both she and Emergency Management Director Kevin Shook documented these communication failures.

Discussion recalled a January meeting where NCDOT was ordered to stand down, resulting in halted debris removal by NCDOT contractors, yet USACE now declines to send its contractors to clear debris in NCDOT's right of way, contradicting prior agreements. Commissioner McCall noted similar issues across Western North Carolina and expressed hope for resolution.

Concerns were raised about debris in the Davidson River area, particularly within Pisgah National Forest, which USACE is not addressing, without explanation.

Finally, Commissioner McKelvey inquired about potential revenue loss from FEMA buyouts. The Manager reported initial property valuations of around \$4 million but stressed that final figures remain uncertain due to applicants changing their minds about selling versus pursuing mitigation.

APPOINTMENTS

BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board considered the upcoming vacancy on the Blue Ridge Community College Board of Trustees due to the expiration of Brian Traylor's term at the end of June. Mr. Traylor was originally appointed to fill the remainder of a vacant term. College President Dr. Laura Leatherwood recognized Mr. Traylor as an outstanding board member who brings valuable representation from the manufacturing sector.

Upon motion by Commissioner Chapman, seconded by Commissioner McCall, the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Brian Traylor to a full term on the Board of Trustees.

CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION TEAM

The Board considered reappointments to the Child Fatality Prevention Team for three members serving in statutorily required roles: Heather Bradley (CFPT Coordinator), Jennifer Anderson (Transylvania County Public Health), and Kim Bailey (EMS Provider or Firefighter). Their terms expire at the end of June.

Commissioner McCall moved to reappoint all three individuals, with a second by Commissioner McKelvey. The motion was unanimously approved.

JURY COMMISSION

The Board considered the upcoming expiration of Artie Wilson's term on the Jury Commission at the end of June. Mr. Wilson is eligible and willing to serve another term, and his reappointment was recommended by Clerk of Superior Court Kristi Brown.

Commissioner Chapman moved to reappoint Artie Wilson, seconded by Commissioner McCall. The motion was unanimously approved.

SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

The Board addressed upcoming appointments to the Social Services Board. Commissioner Teresa McCall's term as the County Commissioner representative is set to expire on June 30, 2025.

Commissioner Chapman moved to reappoint Commissioner McCall to this role, with a second from Commissioner McKelvey. The motion passed unanimously.

Additionally, Page Lemel's term also expires at the end of June; however, as a State Appointee, her reappointment is pending confirmation from the State. She has submitted her application to continue serving.

TRANSYLVANIA ECONOMIC ALLIANCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board addressed upcoming appointments to the Transylvania Economic Alliance Board of Directors. Commissioner Jake Dalton's term as the County Commissioner representative is set to expire on June 30, 2025.

Commissioner McCall moved to reappoint Commissioner Dalton as an ex officio member of the Transylvania Economic Alliance Board of Directors, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

REMOVAL OF UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS AT TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS

Assistant County Manager David McNeill presented an update on the removal of underground storage tanks (USTs) at Transylvania County Schools as established in the scopes of work for the school bond projects. All schools in the Brevard area have transitioned from fuel oil to natural gas, and the County is working with S&ME Engineering and Environmental Services to remove or close in place the unused USTs at these schools. The proposal includes the safe removal of the tanks or closure in place using flowable fill, disposal of residual fuel, site remediation, and repairs, with all work scheduled to occur between June 9 and August 15 in coordination with the School System. For schools in the Rosman and Quebec areas, the tanks currently used will be removed and replaced as part of site-specific scopes of work. However, the tank at Rosman High School, damaged during testing by S&ME, will be replaced by the company, though the replacement is delayed due to a 14-week delivery timeframe.

FINANCIAL IMPACT	
S&ME Proposal	\$261,000
Contingency	\$52,200 (tanks are 30-40 years old, so this covers any issues that were not identified during pre-removal testing)

Pre-Removal Underground Storage Testing (previously performed)	\$11,000
Total Project Cost	\$324,200
Project Cost for Brevard Area Tanks identified by Axias (currently well within project scope budget)	\$955,000 (prior to design contingency, general conditions contingency, and construction contingency)
Axias Total Project Budget for Underground Storage Tank Removal (entire project)	\$2,414,940
Budget Remaining for Rosman Area Tank Replacements	\$2,090,740

Mr. McNeill requested approval to proceed with the underground storage tank project as outlined.

Commissioner Chapman moved to approve the project as recommended, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey. Commissioner Dalton asked about the timing and coordination of the tank work at TC Henderson. Mr. McNeill assured the Board it would not interfere with heating and would be coordinated with other projects, though those are dependent on a challenging NCDPI review process. Commissioner Chapman asked about responsibility for working with NCDEQ, and Mr. McNeill clarified that S&ME is handling that directly and has already conducted pre-removal testing. Only the tank at Brevard High School showed a chemical alert in the soil, indicating remediation will be required there, though no definitive leakage was found. The old fuel in the tanks is no longer usable and must be disposed of, adding to project costs. Commissioner McCall confirmed that tanks at Brevard area schools will not be replaced since they now use natural gas. However, Rosman area schools will receive new underground fuel oil tanks due to a lack of above-ground space. These new tanks will be double walled for safety. In response to a question about contamination, Mr. McNeill explained that NCDEQ requires remediation and relocation of tanks if leakage is confirmed at a site. **The motion passed unanimously.**

LIBRARY AMPHITHEATER PROJECT

The Manager presented an update on the Transylvania County Library Amphitheater Project, recommending Carolina Recreation & Design Co. as a sole source vendor for the prefabricated canopy. This company, representing ICON Shelter Manufacturing, was the only responsive vendor capable of designing, supplying, and installing the unique canopy structure and its footings. Staff recommended proceeding under N.C.G.S. § 143-129(e)(6), which allows sole source procurement when only one supplier is available. The Library Foundation is fully funding the \$660,000 project.

Commissioner McCall confirmed that no County funds are being used. The Manager explained that funds will pass through the County's General Fund into the capital fund for invoice and payment management.

Commissioner Dalton confirmed that oversight of the project will remain with the County. The Manager clarified that the County would oversee the project because it involves a County facility.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the sole source vendor for the prefabricated canopy for the amphitheater project, seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Commissioner Chapman asked about timing, and the Manager noted that the design is complete and coordination with the Library's summer events is ongoing. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

RESOLUTION # 26-2025
APPROVAL OF CAROLINA RECREATION & DESIGN CO. AS A SOLE SOURCE
VENDOR/MANUFACTURER FOR THE LIBRARY AMPHITHEATER PROJECT

WHEREAS, N.C.G.S 143-129(e)(6), Procedure for Letting of Public Contracts, allows for the waiver of formal bidding requirements for purchases of apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment when performance or price competition for a product are not available, or a needed product is available from only one source of supply, or standardization or compatibility is the overriding consideration; and

WHEREAS, Transylvania County sought a unique structure design for the Library Amphitheatre canopy that is consistent with current architectural design; and

WHEREAS, One company being responsive, interested and having the ability to not only provide and structurally design our unique structure but also design and place the concrete footings and erect the structure, was Carolina Recreation & Design Co. located in Mooresville, NC (represent ICON Shelter Manufacturing); and

WHEREAS, Based upon their collective responsiveness, capabilities and staff discussions with the Library design team and personnel, Transylvania County recommends this vendor/manufacture be considered a sole source for the canopy structure; and

WHEREAS, The governing board must approve the purchase under this bidding exemption prior to awarding the contract.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners approves the purchases described herein utilizing the exception to formal bidding requirements contained in N.C.G.S. 143-129(e)(6) and finds that the conditions described in that statute have been met.

This the 9th day of June 2025.

S://Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
 Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

DISCUSSION OF FY 2026 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Commissioner Dalton requested the addition of a discussion on the FY 2026 Budget Proposal, noting it had been omitted from the recent budget workshop. He felt an open discussion would help the Board better understand the proposed budget. The Manager expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide more detail and explained that her presentation would focus on the recommended budget, excluding previously covered information on property revaluation. She reiterated that revaluations are mandated by state statute and governed by the NC Department of Revenue, and once initiated, counties cannot stop the process based on outcomes. However, the appeals process is available at informal, local, and state levels for those concerned about their property valuations. She then presented a summary of the recommended budget, followed by more detailed information.

County Budget Recommendation Summary

- General Fund Budget: \$81,342,524 balanced with a recommended tax rate of \$0.4105, intended to remain stable for the next four years based on current assumptions.
- Departmental Costs: County department personnel and operations increased by 4.4% increase.
 - The previous year's comparable funding required a tax rate of \$0.58033.
- Key Budget Drivers:

- Increased costs for Public Safety equipment and Information Technology (hardware/software).
- School operational funding increased by 7%, with the Superintendent indicating it will support staff pay raises. The spending of these funds falls under the authority of the Board of Education.
- Blue Ridge Community College and the Economic Alliance each receive a 6% operational funding increase.
- Rescue Squad receives an 8% operational increase, aligned with minimum staffing recommendations that also applied to the fire departments.
- Capital payments support EMS, courthouse, and school bond sales (phases 1 and 2), continuing the capital planning started in FY 2016.
 - No remaining funds for other capital needs, like economic development or parks.
 - No operational funding yet for the new courthouse.
- Fire Department Funding:
 - Increase from one to four paid firefighters per department with equal funding per position across departments.
 - Public safety equipment costs are rising sharply.
 - Last year's fire tax outside the City of Brevard totaled \$0.075 (\$0.02 from the General Fund + \$0.055 district tax).
 - This year's rate would be \$0.07 under the single district option (requires a public hearing).
 - Alternative funding options not requiring a public hearing will be presented by the Manager later.

Budgeting in North Carolina and the Role of the County Manager

- Dillon's Rule State: North Carolina operates under Dillon's Rule, meaning counties can only exercise powers expressly granted by state law, which includes property valuation, budgeting, and the County Manager's role.
- County Manager's Budget Role:
 - Required by law to present a recommended budget to the Board of Commissioners by June 1 each year.
 - Responsibilities include collecting funding requests, evaluating expenditures, projecting revenues, and ensuring fiscal management.
 - Provides legal, operational, and fiscal impact information to guide Board decisions.
 - Citizens have suggested a top-down budget cap approach, but the Manager emphasized her duty is to make sure the Board understands the consequences of budget decisions. The Board must help identify where reductions occur if cuts are desired.
- Statutory Duties of the Manager (N.C.G.S. § 153A-82):
 - Chief administrator of county government.
 - Prepares and submits the annual budget and capital program.
 - Submits an annual audit and report on county finances and administration.
 - This marks the County Manager's 18th year preparing a local government budget.
- The Board of Commissioners must hold a public hearing and adopt the budget by June 30.
- Mandated Services:
 - Over 86% of the County budget is tied to mandated services (e.g., jail, IT, social services).
 - Zero-based budgeting is not practical due to the volume of mandated services; much of what would be removed would need to be added back in, making the method inefficient for county budgeting.

Revenue Projection

- Property taxes are the primary source of local government revenue, applied to real property, personal property, and motor vehicles. The tax rate must be adopted annually by July 1 and recorded in the budget ordinance by July 1.
- The NC Department of Revenue governs the property valuation process. Counties may contract for or use state-trained staff to conduct property appraisals, which occur on a rolling basis, not just in revaluation years.
- Counties cannot create new tax types or exemptions; only those in state statute (e.g., agriculture deferments) are allowed. Commissioners do not have the authority to create tax exemptions or to create different types of taxes. Legislative efforts to expand local authority for more creative taxation have been unsuccessful.
- In revaluation years, the County Manager must calculate and disclose the revenue neutral rate in the budget ordinance along with the proposed rate. This ensures transparency and prevents unnoticed tax increases. The calculation method is defined by statute.
- County Managers in North Carolina are trained to project revenues from property tax, sales tax, and fees as permitted by law. Projections must factor in economic trends at the national, state, and local levels. Some revenues, like sales tax, have a long lag time (e.g., 2+ months delay between collection and receipt), making projections difficult with limited real-time data.

Revenue Projection – Calculating Revenue Neutral

- The North Carolina Department of Revenue (NCDOR) provides a standard worksheet for local governments to calculate the revenue neutral tax rate.
- The Tax Administrator provides estimated valuations in April, though appeals are still underway and some assumptions must be made. These include real property, personal property, and business personal property components. The goal is to avoid overestimating which could lead to a revenue shortfall.
- At year-end, the certified tax levy and valuation are used to calculate the final revenue neutral rate. This figure can change higher or lower than the projection but ideally it should not fall below it.
- Vehicle property taxes are billed and collected by the state, tied to vehicle registration. The vehicle tax year runs from October to September, which does not align with the fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) or tax year (calendar year). If a registration is cancelled, (e.g., tag turned in), the state does not collect the delinquent tax, and it is removed from the rolls. The County receives monthly tax rolls for vehicle taxes.
- The NCDOR worksheet referenced below shows valuation figures as of June 30. FY 2027 uses projections only. The worksheet calculates:
 - The percentage change in certified valuations.
 - The average annual growth (e.g., 2.1%)
 - The levy that would have occurred without the revaluation (e.g., \$44.7 million at the previous year's rate and 100% collection)
 - Adds growth value (e.g., \$930,317 from new construction, remodeling, etc.)
 - Revenue neutral rate=\$0.3837

Neutral Property Tax Increase (Decrease)				Transylvania County		
Note: The top part of this worksheet is used as working papers to make it easier for you (counties and municipalities) to calculate amounts that should be used in the actual budget ordinance.						
Revaluations as of:						
January 1, 2021 and 2025						
Fiscal year		Assessed Valuation as of June 30	Annexation (Deannexation)	Total Adjusted for Annexation or Deannexation	Valuation Increase (Decrease)	Percentage change
2026-2027		11,901,400,000	25-26	11,901,400,000		
			24-25	7,415,068,898		
	Revaluation					
2024-2025		7,415,068,898	24-25	7,415,068,898	161,268,606	2.2%
				7,253,800,292		
2023-2024		7,253,800,292	23-24	7,253,800,292	134,264,862	1.9%
				7,119,535,430		
2022-2023		7,119,535,430	22-23	7,119,535,430	148,466,014	2.1%
			21-22	6,971,069,416		
2021-2022	Revaluation 1/1/2021	6,971,069,416				
						2.1%
						Average growth %
						Doesn't include
						revaluation increase
						(decrease)
Last year prior to revaluation					Tax rate Estimated tax levy	
2024-2025		7,415,068,898			0.6033	44,735,111
First year of revaluation					Tax rate to produce equivalent levy	
2026-2027		11,901,400,000			0.3759	44,735,111
					Revenue neutral tax rate, to be included in budget ordinance, adjusted for growth	
Increase (decrease) tax rate for average growth rate						
2026-2027		11,901,400,000			0.3837	45,665,428
					Increase (decrease) in Tax Levy	930,317
					Average Percentage Increase (Decrease)	2.1%

Property Tax Base Projection

- Each spring, the Tax Administrator provides a tax base projection based on assumptions that may change. The official levy adopted in July determines what is billed. Throughout the year, adjustments occur via discoveries (e.g., unreported improvements) and refunds (e.g., destroyed properties no longer existing on January 1). There are also refunds. While these changes are minor, they are reflected in financial reports.
- Revenue projections must be conservative to ensure the County can meet financial obligations despite unforeseen events. For example, Hurricane Helene created a fiscal shock, and staff continue to assess its impact through the end of FY 2025.
- Property taxes and motor vehicle taxes are projected separately but use the same tax rate:
 - Real and personal property is projected at a 98.5% collection rate.
 - Motor vehicles are projected at 96% due to the state's billing process and lack of transparency regarding associated fees.
 - Because of increases in real and personal property values, vehicle tax bills will decrease for Transylvania County residents.
- FY 2026 tax projections using the recommended rate:
 - Real and Personal Property: \$46,328,750 (up 11.2%)
 - Motor Vehicle Tax: \$1,684,420 (down 31.5%)
- Due to the revaluation, the actual tax impact will vary by household, even under a revenue neutral rate.

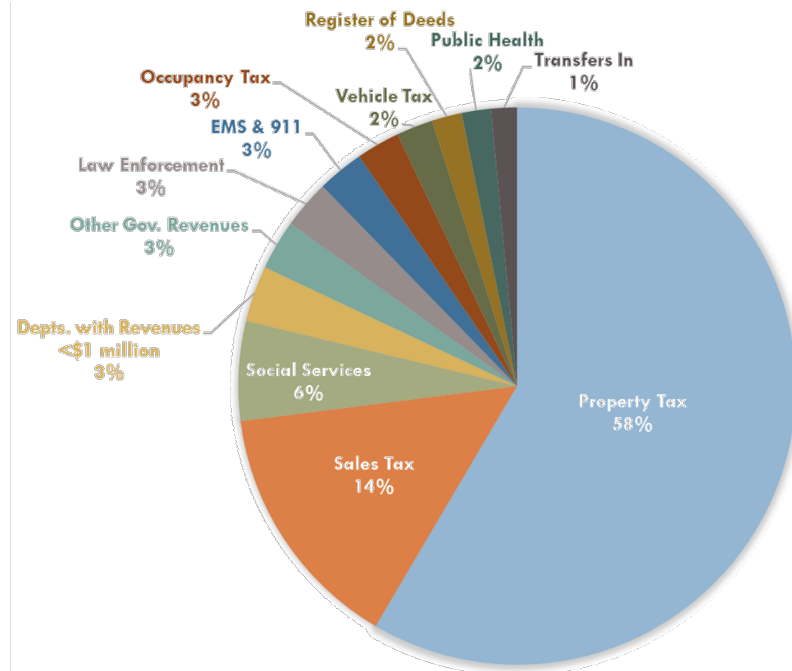
Median Home Value and Vehicle Calculations

- The Manager used the 2024 median home value of \$313,135 and estimated vehicle value of \$77,000 (based on ownership of two average vehicles) to calculate property tax bills.

- 2024 Tax Scenario:
 - Applied the property tax rate of \$0.6033 broken out between County services and the non-city fire service supplement and between structure/property and vehicle.
 - Applied the fire district rate of \$0.055 for both property and vehicles.
 - Total tax bill: \$2,568.26 for the year (median value home + two vehicles).
- 2025 Revenue Neutral Scenario:
 - Median home value increased to \$506,380 due to revaluation; vehicle value stays the same at \$77,000 (valued on a rolling basis by the State).
 - Applying the revenue neutral general fund rate and revenue neutral fire district rate, the total bill would be \$2,559.29, slightly less than in 2024.
- City vs. Rural Taxpayers:
 - In 2024, City residents paid the general fund property tax rate of \$0.6033 (including \$0.02 supplement to support rural fire departments) while not paying the district fire rate.
 - Under the proposed budget, City residents no longer subsidize rural fire, resulting in a lower tax burden for City residents in the new model.
- Proposed FY 2026 Budget Impact:
 - Under the recommended \$0.4105 County tax rate and the \$0.07 single fire district rate, the total tax bill for the same scenario (median home + 2 vehicles) is \$2,748.30.
 - This is an increase of approximately \$363/year over the revenue neutral rate scenario.

FY 2026 Revenue Projections

- Property Tax remains the County's primary revenue source, as authorized under state law.
- Sales Tax is also state governed:
 - Certain sales tax revenues are restricted by statutes for designated use (e.g., school capital).
 - Predicted to remain flat due to the limited post-Hurricane Helene growth.
- Investment Income has increased, but future gains depend on economic conditions.
- Fee Schedule Adjustments:
 - Some fees will increase in FY 2026.
 - State law allows fees; but places strict limitations on how they are calculated and used.
 - Example: Building Inspection fees must be directly tied to service costs; any excess revenue must be placed in a restricted fund balance for that department's use (e.g., staff, equipment).
- Occupancy Tax supports the Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA):
 - The County does not control this revenue.
 - Treated as a pass-through/remittance item.
 - These revenues act like remittances.
- Other remittance-based revenues (like real estate transfer tax) increase the total budget but do not increase available funding for County services; they are collected and immediately passed through to the state.



FY 2026 Budget: Revenue

- Sales Tax (collected by the state and distributed to counties/municipalities):
 - Distributed under three separate statutes, each with unique rules and distribution methods.
 - Two of the articles require a portion of the funds to be spent on school capital (counties only; not required for municipalities).
 - Municipalities receive distributions based on local sales activity, without the same restrictions.
 - A ¼-cent local options sales tax could generate revenue equal to 1 cent on the property tax rate but requires voter approval via referendum.
 - A rescinded sales tax article once tied to Medicaid resulted in a \$500,000 loss to Transylvania County.
 - Despite the loss, counties must still provide hold harmless distributions to municipalities.
 - The State House Budget proposes diverting a portion of local sales tax to fund the VIPER emergency communications system, reducing local government shares.
 - Impact unknown; may disproportionately affect small counties like Transylvania.
- Special Tax Districts (used for services like fire protection):
 - Governed by state law and must be included in the annual budget ordinance.
 - Transylvania County currently has eight fire districts.
 - In 2020, the Board considered moving to a single fire tax district but did not proceed to the public hearing stage.
 - In 2020, the Manager presented four funding options allowed under state law:
 - Continue funding by the individual district.
 - Establish a single fire district.
 - Fund through the general fund (no district tax). fire department
 - Use a hybrid approach.
 - The Board chose a hybrid – supplementing with the general fund and setting equal tax rates across the eight districts.
 - The issue of fire department funding and supplementation is publicly discussed each year during the budget presentations.

- Fees:
 - Some fees are allowed under state statutes.
 - Any such fees allowed must be adopted as part of the budget ordinance.

FY 2026 Budget: Key Factors

- Capital Planning (2016–2026):
 - Implements a 10-year capital plan to fund debt service on major projects (EMS Base, school improvements, courthouse, etc.).
 - Goal: Stabilize the tax rate for the next four years.
- Cost Escalations:
 - Significant increases in the cost of public safety equipment and vehicles:
 - Patrol vehicles: Up from \$45,100 (FY 2016) to \$98,000 (FY 2026).
 - Ambulances: Up from \$176,000 to \$355,409.
- Cybersecurity Needs: Investments required for software upgrades, VPNs, and multi-factor authentication to protect public systems and data.
- Federal Uncertainty: Potential impacts from tariffs and federal/state budget cuts.
- Policy Compliance: The County must meet ADA digital accessibility standards by 2027.
- Workforce Recruitment & Retention: Focus on competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain talent in county departments, schools, and fire services.
- Ongoing Supplements:
 - The General Fund continues to supplement the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund.
 - Fire department supplements are removed with the implementation of the single fire district model.
 - Transylvania Rescue Squad and NC Forestry Service remain funded through the General Fund.

Expense Projections

- Mandated Services:
 - Must be adequately funded to avoid regulatory action from state agencies.
 - Some mandated expenses are unpredictable, such as:
 - Autopsies ordered by the medical examiner.
 - Final disposition of unclaimed bodies.
- Federal and State Law Changes: New regulations (e.g., in jail operations or landfill management) can increase costs by requiring additional resources.
- Service Delivery Needs:
 - Essential services require sufficient staffing and funding.
 - EMS staffing shortages in recent years forced counties to increase pay or reduce service availability.
- Fund Balance:
 - Represents savings in the General Fund, categorized as:
 - Restricted – Only for specific legally limited uses.
 - Assigned – Planned future expenses (e.g., courthouse design).
 - A healthy fund balance is crucial for good bond ratings and favorable debt terms (e.g., for school bond sales).
 - This year's budget does not use fund balance for recurring expenses due to the large upcoming capital costs.
 - Previously assigned amounts:
 - \$4 million – Sylvan Valley Industrial Park Phase 2
 - \$3 million – Courthouse design
 - \$2.5 million – Landfill expansion

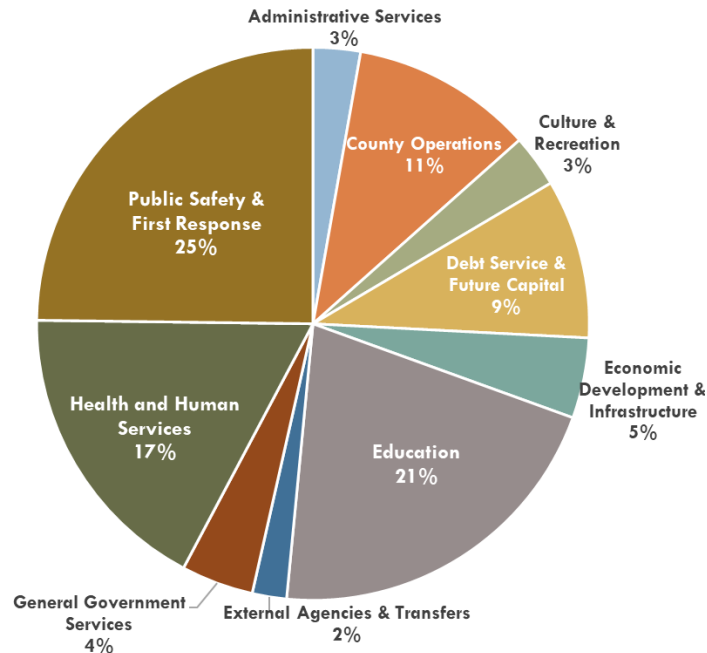
- Goal: Preserve fund balance to support debt issuance and capital payments over the next four years.

FY 2026 Expense Highlights

- Budget Overview:
 - Balanced General Fund Budget: \$81,342,524 - reflects a 4.1% actual increase, or 6.7% gross increase over FY 2025.
 - Includes \$2 million placeholder (both expense and revenue) for multi-year leases/subscriptions per new GASB rules (e.g., EMS equipment).
 - Excluding this, the true operating budget is \$79,345,732 (4.1% increase).
- General:
 - Ongoing contract evaluations for quality and cost-effectiveness.
 - Capital planning pending Axias study for specific project allocations.
- Personnel Changes:
 - New Positions: Project Manager (School Projects) and Narcotics Investigator (Sheriff)
 - Increased Part-Time Hours: IT, Register of Deeds (passports), Housekeeping, Maintenance
 - Reclassifications: Nine job codes adjusted
- Personnel Committee Recommendations:
 - 2% 401K contribution for all employees (already 5% for law enforcement per statute)
 - Longevity cap increase (first since 2007)
 - Mental health copay lowered to \$10 to reduce barriers
- Information Technology: Upgrades to AV systems (Library, Elections, Commissioner Chambers) for better public engagement
- Emergency Response Equipment:
 - Increased costs + shorter lifespans due to service agreements/software
 - Restore vehicle replacement schedule (Sheriff) – 4 to 5 vehicles/year
 - New bodycam/taser leases
 - Body scanner (jail overdose prevention), jail oven replacement
 - EMS: Leases for stretchers, powerlifts, cardiac monitors, and ambulance replacement
- Planning & Transit: Transit vehicle replacements, partially funded by the state with a county match
- Debt Service & Capital: Continuation of 10-year capital planning efforts initiated in FY 2016.

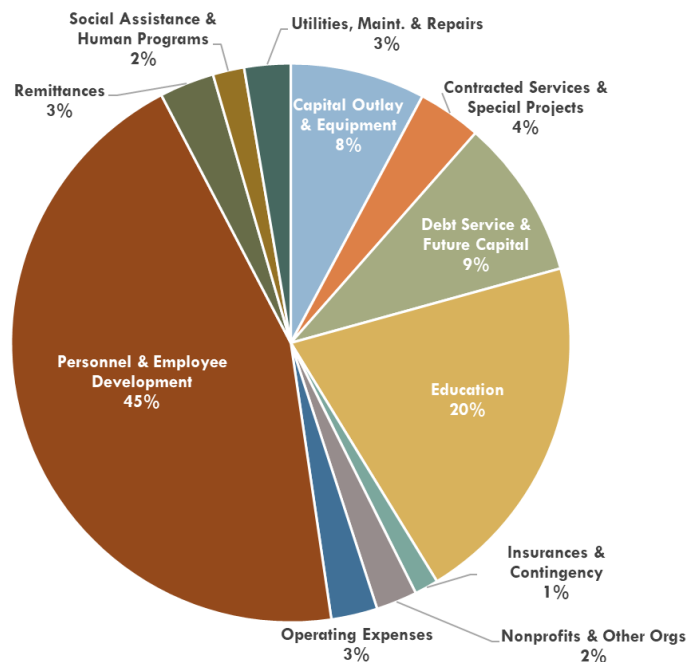
FY 2026 Expenditures by Function

- Education accounts for the largest share of expenditures.
- Followed by:
 - Public Safety & First Response (includes law enforcement, fire, EMS)
 - Health and Human Services (includes public health, DSS, and related services)



FY 2026 Expenditures by Type

- Personnel-related costs are the largest expenditure, reflecting that local government is primarily a people-serving-people operation.
- Education funding is the second largest, with some education-related costs also included in Debt Service and Future Capital.
- According to the Transylvania County Schools Superintendent, 60.2% of current expense funding for schools is personnel-based.



Education Funding: K-Community College

- Transylvania County Schools (K-12)
 - Operational increase of 7% (\$14,567,870.75), among the highest increases in the Manager's recommendation.
 - Intended to support at least a match of the Henderson County teacher supplement.
 - Covers the state-projected 5% teacher pay increase (final salary set by the General Assembly).
 - All school capital requests are funded in full (\$1,572,006.28).
 - An additional \$432,690 is expected from lottery funds for a new school safety system.
 - School Capital Projects Fund balance: \$83,931,993.77 (includes bond and legacy capital project funding).
 - Total K-12 new FY 2026 funding increases by 10%.
 - Includes County-funded Project Manager for school bond projects.
 - Does not include debt service for education capital.
- Blue Ridge Community College
 - 6% operational increase as requested.
 - Operational Funding: \$731,920
 - Capital Funding: \$75,000

Funding Needs

In this portion, the Manager presented the specific dollar figures behind the funding needs. The intent was to give the Board of Commissioners a clearer understanding of the actual financial requirements driving the FY 2026 budget proposal.

FY 26 New Additions		
<i>Equipment</i>		
AED Replacements County Bldgs and Jail	\$ 20,000.00	
EMS Cardiac Monitors, Stretchers, Powerlifts Lease	\$ 315,000.00	
EMS Ambulance	\$ 355,000.00	*200k budget inc from FY 25
Transit Van Replacements	\$ 40,000.00	*match to total \$435k expense
Tasers Lease	\$ 31,822.00	
Body Camera Lease	\$ 95,238.00	
Jail Oven	\$ 27,000.00	
Jail Body Scanner	\$ 175,000.00	
Elections Equipment and Staffing	\$ 75,000.00	
	\$ 1,134,060.00	
<i>IT</i>		
Elections AV Support	\$ 10,000.00	
ADA Website Compliance Step 1	\$ 10,500.00	
Software Subscription Increases	\$ 160,000.00	
AV in Commissioner meetings- streaming	\$ 175,000.00	
Public Safety Network Switches	\$ 422,000.00	
	\$ 777,500.00	
<i>Personnel</i>		
Project Manager- Education Projects	\$ 135,791.00	
Narcotics Investigator	\$ 83,756.00	
Reclassifications	\$ 61,898.00	
PT- IT, Housekeeping, Maint	\$ 60,000.00	
DSS PT/OT	\$ 100,000.00	
Non-LEO 401k Contribution	\$ 375,000.00	
Longevity Cap Inc	\$ 125,000.00	
	\$ 941,445.00	
<i>Other</i>		
Maintenance Projects Inc	\$ 304,000.00	
	\$ 3,157,005.00	

The following items represent increases above the baseline 1.5% natural growth in revenue (approximately \$832,223). These are key drivers of the FY 2026 budget beyond revenue-neutral adjustments.

Funding Beyond Natural Growth

Transylvania County School Operational Ex	\$ 748,816.00
Blue Ridge CC Operational Funding	\$ 33,180.00
Rescue Squad	\$ 32,820.00
NC Forestry Service	\$ 1,113.00
Transylvania Economic Alliance	\$ 16,294.00
	\$ 832,223.00

Median Home Value and Vehicle Calculations

If only natural growth were funded and the \$3 million in new additions were removed, this example would align closely with the revenue neutral estimates.

2024 Median Home Valuation:	\$313,135				
Vehicle Avg of used sale and new sale dataX2	\$ 77,000.00				
		Structure and Property Amount	Vehicle Amount	Total	
	County Service Funding (Education, Public Safety, etc)	\$1,826.52	\$449.14	\$2,275.66	General County Services Tax Total
2024 Rate General Fund at \$0.6033/\$100 Valuation *All tax payers*	Non-City Fire Service funding	\$62.63	\$15.40		Non-City Fire Service Funding
2024 Fire Tax District Rate \$0.055/\$100 Valuation (same in all districts)*City tax payers do not pay*	Non-City Fire Service funding	\$172.22	\$42.35	\$350.35	
		\$2,061.37	\$506.89	\$2,568.26	Total Tax

County Revenue Neutral Comparison					
2025 Median Home Valuation:	\$506,380				
Vehicle Avg of used sale and new sale dataX	\$77,000				
		Structure and Property Amount	Vehicle	Total	
	County Service Funding (Education, Public Safety, etc)	\$1,942.98	\$295.45	\$2,238.43	General County Services Tax Total
2025 Rate General Fund at \$0.3837/\$100 Valuation *All tax payers*	Non-City Fire Service funding	\$0.00	\$0.00		Non-City Fire Service Funding
2025 Fire Tax District Rate \$0.055/\$100 Valuation (same in all districts)*City tax payers do not pay*	Non-City Fire Service funding	\$278.51	\$42.35	\$320.86	
		\$2,221.49	\$337.80	\$2,559.29	Total Tax

The additional \$363 per year reflected in the recommended 2025 tax amount is directly tied to funding the County's recommended budget, which goes beyond the revenue neutral rate. The budget proposes a single fire tax district rate of \$0.07 per \$100/valuation for all areas outside the City of Brevard. City of Brevard taxpayers are excluded from paying the fire tax, as they are already covered by their municipal fire services.

County Recommended Budget Comparison					
2025 Median Home Valuation:	\$506,380				
Vehicle Avg of used sale and new sale dataX	\$77,000				
		Structure and Property Amount	Vehicle	Total	
	County Service Funding (Education, Public Safety, etc)	\$2,031.09	\$308.85	\$2,339.94	General County Services Tax Total
2025 Rate General Fund at \$0.4011/\$100 Valuation *All tax payers*	Non-City Fire Service funding	\$0.00	\$0.00		Non-City Fire Service Funding
2025 Fire Tax District Rate \$0.07/\$100 Valuation (same in all districts)*City tax payers do not pay*	Non-City Fire Service funding	\$354.47	\$53.90	\$408.37	
		\$2,385.56	\$362.75	\$2,748.30	Total Tax

What does a revenue neutral scenario look like?

- To adopt a revenue neutral rate for the General Fund, the Board would need to reduce the budget by approximately \$4.6 million.
 - \$3.15 million in new initiatives would be cut that are aimed at enhancing public safety, supporting education, and making strategic investments
 - The \$1.5 million fire department supplement, which is currently funded through the General Fund, would need to be eliminated.
- Other considerations or options:
 - \$832,223 in recommended funding beyond the natural growth
 - Reconsider community center Wi-Fi and capital grants, and nonprofit support contracts that deliver services on the County's behalf.
 - Revenue options, such as a fund balance offset
 - The County currently subsidizes landfill operations by about \$500,000/year despite it being an enterprise fund.
 - Reevaluating fees has been previously considered but met resistance
 - An alternative could be to shift more of the operational costs onto user fees.
 - Nonmandated services:
 - The only two major non-mandated departments are:
 - Library: \$1.5 million net cost after accounting for fees, grants, and foundation support.
 - Parks and Recreation: \$600,000 net cost, which helps fund base infrastructure for public programming.
 - The County Manager is not advocating for cuts to either department and fully supports their continued operation.
- The County cannot maintain existing service levels while also adopting a revenue neutral budget. Moving to a revenue neutral rate would require eliminating or reducing valued services, which would significantly affect service delivery levels across the County:
 - EMS and 911 response times
 - Investigative processing time in the Sheriff's Office

Reduce recommended funding to major revenue inc 1.5%		
Transylvania County School Operational Expense	\$ 748,816.00	*Note: Capital not reduced due to dedicated funding stream
Blue Ridge CC Operational Funding	\$ 33,180.00	
Rescue Squad	\$ 32,820.00	
NC Forestry Service	\$ 1,113.00	
Transylvania Economic Alliance	\$ 16,294.00	
	\$ 832,223.00	

Existing Budget Non-Mandated or Emergency Outside Funding		
Community Centers wifi and grants	\$ 85,000.00	
Nonprofits	\$ 108,000.00	
	\$ 193,000.00	
Revenue Options		
Fund Balance Offset	\$ 500,000.00	*Cash coming out of FB for Sylvan Valley Industrial P2 (2.5mil), courthouse (2 mil), landfill cell (2.5 mil)
Landfill Fees instead of general fund	\$ 1,000,000.00	*500k annual, 500k FB annual allocation for expansion
	\$ 1,500,000.00	
Non-mandated services		
Library	\$ 1,559,000.00	Net funding of revenue, Note that programs are primarily funded by grants
Parks and Recreation	\$ 599,000.00	Net funding of revenue
	\$ 2,158,000.00	
Change Capital Plan		

Fire and Rescue Services Highlights

- The County's public safety system is heavily dependent on local fire departments and their ability to respond to emergencies. The recent forest fires highlighted the critical role of mutual aid, and the effectiveness of response efforts would not have been possible without countywide cooperation and support from partner agencies beyond Transylvania County.
- The recommended FY 2026 budget transitions all fire department operational funding to a new countywide single fire tax district (excluding the City of Brevard). This structure includes a 5.86% increase in overall County support for fire and rescue departments. The Transylvania County Rescue Squad and NC Forestry Service will continue to be funded through the General Fund.
- The key need identified this year is increasing baseline staffing levels for fire departments. While volunteers remain vital, reliance on volunteer-only staffing is no longer sustainable, especially due to work schedules and training requirements.
 - Commissioners first approved funding for one paid firefighter per district in FY 2014.
 - The Fire Budget Review Subcommittee now recommends a new staffing baseline of four paid firefighter positions per department with standardized funding for salary and benefits. Some departments already meet this standard and will see smaller increases; others will see larger increases to reach the new baseline.
- Significantly increasing equipment costs are affecting fire departments just as they are other County operations.

Proposed Fire Service Tax District

- The County is divided into eight separate fire protection service districts, not including the City of Brevard.
- These districts have vastly different property values, ranging from \$1.7 million to \$1.9 billion, which causes significant disparities in the ability of each district to generate revenue.
- To address these inequities, the County currently does not base fire department budgets solely on their district's tax base. Instead, it supplements many departments using General Fund dollars.
- The change being proposed is only on the revenue side – it does not alter response areas, contracts, or operations of individual fire departments.

- The single fire service district would include the entire unincorporated County and the Town of Rosman. It would exclude the City of Brevard, which continues its independent fire service and taxation.
- Fire department funding would still be based on individual approved budgets, just as it is today.
- The County would distribute funds based on needs – not geography – supporting mutual aid and fair service levels across the County.
- The single district creates a more efficient and fair revenue model by reducing administrative complexity (fewer districts, fewer billing steps), stabilizing fire tax rates across the County, and eliminating the need for annual General Fund supplements.
- In FY 2014, Commissioners approved funding for one paid firefighter per district. Since then, departments have added staff at varied rates. The current funding model ties staffing growth to district wealth, not service need.
- If the single district had been in place in FY 2024, the tax rate would have been \$0.08 per \$100 of value based on approved fire department budgets. The revenue neutral rate for FY 2026 is estimated at \$0.055, which would cover existing budgets and limited growth but not support recommended staffing increases.

Fire Department Funding Alternatives

- While the County Manager has recommended establishing a single fire service tax district, the Board of Commissioners has multiple legally permissible funding options available. These options were initially explored during the FY 2020 budget process.
- Hybrid model (current funding method, implemented in FY 2020)
 - Levy a per district tax rate of \$0.034, with the remainder of the fire budgets \$0.025 funded through the General Fund.
 - An additional \$0.027 would fund four paid firefighters in Balsam Grove, currently recommended as a delayed/phased approach.
 - City of Brevard residents would continue to contribute to rural fire departments via the General Fund.
- District model
 - Creates significant disparities, with rates ranging from \$0.034 to \$0.22 (based on the recommended budget)
 - For a median household with two vehicles, the tax burden could differ by up to \$1,000 annually depending on location.
 - Two counties statewide have a district above \$0.20. This is considered unusually high.
 - The County Manager advised against this approach due to inequities and taxpayer burden in less wealthy districts.
- General Fund model
 - The entire rural/fire rescue budget is funded through the General Fund at \$0.058.
 - All County taxpayers, including City of Brevard residents, contribute.
 - Does not create dedicated reserves within individual districts. Surplus funds must be intentionally budgeted.
- Single District model
 - Recommended at \$0.07
 - Considers the capital planning components as previously reported.
- Comparison chart below:

Collection Rate Factored									
Department	District Property Valuation	District Cent Equals	District MV Val	District Real Val	District MV 1 Cent .96	District Real Val 1 Cent .985	District Rev Generated 1 cent	Districts at 3.4	
Brevard (Sylvan II)	\$ 1,793,800,000.00	\$ 176,689.30	\$ 118,217,078.00	\$ 1,675,582,922.00	\$ 11,348.84	\$ 165,044.92	176,393.76	\$	599,738.77
Rosman	\$ 906,000,000.00	\$ 89,241.00	\$ 46,864,486.00	\$ 859,135,514.00	\$ 4,498.99	\$ 84,624.85	89,123.84	\$	303,021.05
Cedar Mountain	\$ 265,200,000.00	\$ 26,122.20	\$ 9,968,057.00	\$ 256,231,943.00	\$ 960.93	\$ 25,238.85	26,099.78	\$	86,739.25
Conneestee	\$ 2,002,500,000.00	\$ 197,246.25	\$ 70,649,575.00	\$ 1,931,850,425.00	\$ 6,782.36	\$ 190,287.27	197,069.63	\$	670,036.73
Lake Toxaway	\$ 3,427,400,000.00	\$ 337,598.90	\$ 47,160,629.00	\$ 3,380,239,371.00	\$ 4,527.42	\$ 332,953.58	337,481.00	\$	1,147,435.39
Little River	\$ 1,070,100,000.00	\$ 105,404.85	\$ 61,772,103.00	\$ 1,008,327,897.00	\$ 5,930.12	\$ 99,320.30	105,250.42	\$	357,851.43
North Transylvania	\$ 276,900,000.00	\$ 27,274.65	\$ 14,853,304.00	\$ 262,046,696.00	\$ 1,425.92	\$ 25,811.60	27,237.52	\$	92,607.56
Balsam Grove	\$ 163,600,000.00	\$ 16,114.60	\$ 8,564,535.00	\$ 155,035,465.00	\$ 822.20	\$ 15,270.99	16,093.19	\$	54,716.84
Total	\$ 9,905,500,000.00	\$ 975,691.75						\$	3,314,147.03
Department	rec budget-gen fund balance needed	General Fund 1 cent	General Fund rate to cover hybrid	Total Effective Rate- Hybrid	General Fund Only	District Only Funding Rate			
Brevard (Sylvan II)	\$ 175,886.23					4.4 Brevard (Sylvan II)			
Rosman	\$ 713,763.95					11.4 Rosman			
Cedar Mountain	\$ 424,079.75					19.6 Cedar Mountain			
Conneestee	\$ 387,051.27					5.4 Conneestee			
Lake Toxaway						3.4 Lake Toxaway			
Little River	\$ 418,446.57					7.4 Little River			
North Transylvania	\$ 501,030.44					21.8 North Transylvania			
Balsam Grove	\$ 301,078.16					22.1 Balsam Grove			
Total	\$ 2,921,336.37	\$ 1,172,287.90	2.5	5.9	5.3				
*District Reserves continue, Assign FB for Reserves (BG no budgeted capital included)									
*Would need \$.27 gf for Balsam Grove staffing									
				6.2	582,000.00	5.8			
Single District Value 1 cent									
	\$974,749.13								
Single District Rate for Rec									
			6.4 Rec Only						
			0.3 BG Impl 312						
			0.1 Cap Planning 100k						
			0.2 Sylvan Substation 150k						
			7.0						

Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Summary

- FY 2026 Budget reflects a balanced budget of \$3,905,000, which is a 5.6% decrease from FY 2025. This decrease is primarily due to the lack of new heavy equipment purchases in the upcoming fiscal year.
- Revenue is generated through a mix of scale sales, sticker sales, and interest earnings. Measured growth in user fees has helped stabilize operational income. Despite this, the Solid Waste Fund continues to rely on a General Fund supplement to remain balanced.
- The Board could reduce pressure on the property tax rate by adjusting solid waste fees in the future. The current revenue mix is sufficient for short-term operations, but does not allow for long-term capital savings, including future landfill expansions.
- The current landfill cell, now entering construction, will extend landfill life to approximately 2030. Future phases will require significantly more capital investment.
 - The current expansion is being funded through a combination of General Fund balance and a state grant, which helped move the project forward.
 - Planning for the next phase must begin soon, and the Board may consider strategies to reduce reliance on fund balance in the future.

Budget Growth: Comparisons

In response to questions about the County's budget growth over the past decade, the County Manager provided a comparative analysis to place Transylvania County's growth in context. Comparing with peer counties is a routine and valuable practice that helps identify cost-effective service models and explore opportunities for efficiency. However, meaningful comparisons require more than just looking at budget totals to ensure a true "apples to apples" analysis.

The Manager presented a chart comparing Transylvania County to the 10 North Carolina counties with the lowest property tax rates. Transylvania County falls in the middle of the pack, with a 63% increase in its budget over the last 10 years. The analysis demonstrates that budget growth in Transylvania County is not out of step with comparable counties. (The Manager provided a detailed breakdown of the factors driving budget changes in the next section.)

		County	FY 15	FY 25	Delta	%
FY 25 Lowest County Tax Rates	1	Macon	\$45,721,122	\$63,704,651	\$17,983,529	39%
	2	Moore	\$93,277,963	\$145,341,165	\$52,063,202	56%
	3	Watauga	\$43,586,346	\$82,066,362	\$38,480,016	88%
	4	Carteret	\$81,526,400	\$130,020,000	\$48,493,600	59%
	5	Brunswick	\$148,475,105	\$277,925,747	\$129,450,642	87%
	6	Madison	\$22,218,191	\$33,068,798	\$10,850,607	49%
	7	Jackson	\$55,141,090	\$93,803,495	\$38,662,405	70%
	8	Catawba	\$177,595,263	\$250,435,039	\$72,839,776	41%
	9	Avery	\$26,000,000	\$39,639,298	\$13,639,298	52%
	10	Dare	\$100,454,649	\$136,171,205	\$35,716,556	36%
					Average	58%
		Transylvania	\$46,788,000	\$76,209,010	\$29,421,010	63%*
		Henderson	\$117,076,752	\$204,542,012	\$87,465,260	75%

*One-third of the increase from the Solid Waste supplement, the Fire Department supplement, and the School Bond in the General Fund.

Budget Growth: Comparison Example

To provide additional context around Transylvania County's budget growth, the County Manager offered a detailed comparison with Macon County, a similarly sized and situated peer county in Western North Carolina.

- While North Carolina counties share many state-mandated responsibilities, individual county budgets reflect local funding decisions, service delivery models, and community priorities.
- In FY 2025, there was a \$12.5 million difference between Macon County's and Transylvania County's budgets. Most of this variance comes from intentional local investments in external partners and service areas. Key local funding differences include:
 - Transfers Out (Capital, Fire Department Supplement, Solid Waste Supplement): \$6.22 million
 - K-12 Education (operating): \$3.6 million
 - Community College: \$300,000
 - Rescue Squad: \$548,000
 - Economic Development: \$200,000
 - Animal Services: \$300,000 (Note: Underfunded in Macon County, currently under review)
 - Total identified differences: \$11.2 million
- Macon County relies heavily on user fees. Their solid waste system operates entirely on fees, while Transylvania County subsidizes its Solid Waste Fund through the General Fund.
- Transylvania County's budget is shaped by unique demographic and economic realities:

- The oldest population by percentage in North Carolina (1st for over 65, 95th for under 18) which drives the demand for health and human services, EMS, and public safety support.
- Rising wages reflect investment in the local economy.
 - Ranked 48th for average weekly wage in 2023 (up from 75th in 2013).
- Highly educated population: Only 7% of adults without a diploma (14th lowest in North Carolina).
- Education investments yield results:
 - 25th ranked school district (statewide)
 - 7th in per student funding (2024)
 - 2nd of 115 school districts for best teachers (niche.com)
 - 29th in teacher supplement (2023)
 - 91% teacher satisfaction: “My school is a good place to work” (2024 Working Conditions Survey)
- Public health and safety priorities
 - 14th lowest overall crime index
 - 5th lowest overdose death rate
 - Animal Services:
 - Maintains over 90% live release rate (no-kill threshold).
 - Standard Operating Procedure used as a model by the NC Department of Agriculture.

Deeper Analysis – Budget Comparison

To provide transparency and context for Transylvania County’s budget growth, the County Manager conducted a detailed comparison of the FY 2015 and FY 2025 budget ordinances.

- Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA)
 - In FY 2015, TCTDA’s revenues and expenditures were reported in the County’s General Fund.
 - Due to an accounting practice change, TCTDA is now kept in a separate fund.
- School Bond & Capital Improvements
 - The FY 2025 budget includes \$8 million related to the school bond and capital improvement plan.
- State Remittances
 - Includes pass-through items like Register of Deeds real estate transaction fees, totaling \$1 million in FY 2025.
 - These revenues are collected and remitted directly to the State and are not controlled or retained by the County.
- Merged Funds (Employee Benefits)
 - Approximately \$600,000 related to employee benefits was moved into the General Fund after FY 2015, due to another accounting adjustment.
- New County Services
 - The License Plate Agency and Passport Office, both added after FY 2015, now account for \$200,000 in the FY 2025 budget.
- Fire Department Supplement
 - \$1.5 million supplement from the General Fund.

Taking the above comparisons into account, the actual operational budget has grown by approximately 34% between FY 2015 and FY 2025. This growth is nearly identical to the 35% increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) over the same period.

One major driver of cost growth is the rise in emergency services demand, particularly in the wake of COVID-19 and evolving service expectations. FY 2025 fire department funding requests totaled \$9 million. The approved budgets for the fire departments increased 73% from FY 2015 to FY 2025. Countywide public safety expenditures have increased 91% over the past decade. This growth is tied to personnel needs, rising equipment and operational costs, and strategic efforts to meet increased call volume and complexity.

	FY 15	FY 25			
Total	\$46,788,842.00	\$ 76,209,020.00	\$ 29,420,178.00	62.88%	
<i>Items in FY 25 not in FY 15 budget</i>					
TDA in General Fund		\$ (2,100,000.00)			
School Bond and CIP		\$ (8,000,000.00)			
Remittances (ROD real estate transaction fees, etc)		\$ (1,000,000.00)			
Funds merged into GF since FY 15	\$ 600,000.00				
Lisence Plate Agency and Passport Office		\$ (200,000.00)			
Fire Department Supplement		\$ (1,491,565.00)			
	\$47,388,842.00	\$ 63,417,455.00	\$ 16,028,613.00	33.82%	*CPI Inflation for same period 35%
Emergency Services Trends					*Major discussion item in FY 22& 23
Fire Departments	\$ 2,739,492.00	\$ 4,743,708.00	\$ 2,004,216.00	73.16%	
Public Safety County Services	\$10,858,587.00	\$ 20,761,341.00	\$ 9,902,754.00	91.20%	

County Budget Recommendation Summary

- Balanced General Fund budget totaling \$81,342,524 for FY 2026, with a recommended property tax rate of \$0.4105 per \$100 valuation. The proposed rate is designed to remain stable for the next four years, assuming there will be no major changes in service demand or economic conditions.
- Overall departmental operations and personnel: 4.4% increase from FY 2025.
- Key cost drivers:
 - Public safety equipment and technology.
 - School operational funding: 7% increased, intended to support staff pay increases and align teacher supplements with Henderson County.
 - Blue Ridge Community College & Transylvania Economic Alliance: 6% increase in operational support.
 - Rescue Squad: 8% increase in operational support.
 - Capital commitments:
 - Funding included for payments for EMS base, courthouse, and school bonds (phases 1 and 2)
 - Implements capital planning goals set by the Board beginning in FY 2016.
 - Does not include new capital for economic development or parks and recreation.
 - Operational costs of the courthouse are not included in this total.
- Fire department funding recommendation:
 - Expands staffing from one paid firefighter per department to four; equalizes funding per position across all departments, regardless of local tax base
 - Addresses equipment cost increases affecting all departments
 - Transitions to a single fire service tax district (excluding City of Brevard)
 - Tax rate: \$0.07 for rural fire protection (compared to last year's total of \$0.075, which included \$0.02 from the General Fund and \$0.055 from the district rate)
 - A public hearing has been scheduled to consider the single district fire funding model.
 - Alternative funding options remain available to the Board, including hybrid or district-based models.

Next Steps

- Board of Commissioners to determine whether to fund the recommended expenditures.
- Public Hearing on the Budget: Scheduled for June 23.
- Budget Adoption Deadline: July 1.
- The primary option for increasing revenue is through the property tax rate. Fees may be adjusted, though staff advise that the current fee structure is competitive with peer counties and meets statutory requirements for cost recovery. Solid Waste fees could be revisited as a revenue source; however, the Board has not pursued changes in recent years.
- Public Hearing on the Single Fire Tax District: Scheduled for June 23. If the single district is approved, it may be used as the fire funding model. If not, the Board may choose from other legal funding structures. The Board may choose to fund fire departments at the recommended level or adjust the level of support.
- Does the Board need additional details, or would it like the Manager to run additional scenarios?

Board Discussion and Action

Chairman Chappell, unable to attend due to a previously scheduled family trip, submitted a written statement (read aloud by Commissioner McCall) expressing his full support for the recommended FY 2026 budget. He noted this was his 20th budget cycle as a Commissioner and praised the preparation and presentation by the County Manager and staff. He highlighted the following key components:

- Support for the proposed single fire tax district, which maintains existing service areas but provides sustainable funding for additional paid staffing in fire departments, reducing reliance on the General Fund.
- A 7% operational funding increase for public schools, plus funding for capital needs, and a County-funded project manager to oversee school bond projects.
- A 5.86% increase in Fire and Rescue funding, aligned with the fire budget review committee's recommendation for a new minimum staffing level of four paid positions per department.
- Funding for an additional narcotics officer to support the drug task force, replacing positions no longer funded by the City of Brevard.
- Additional part-time staffing in several departments to meet service needs.
- Planning for two new public safety communication towers.
- Addressing requirements for GASB compliance, ADA digital accessibility, and increased costs for public safety equipment.

Chairman Chappell expressed gratitude to the County Manager, finance and IT staff, department heads, and others involved in the budget process, and acknowledged efforts to ensure the proposed budget is accessible to the public.

Commissioner Chapman noted that the Board has received several emails and public comments regarding the proposed FY 2026 budget. With Chairman Chappell unable to attend the current meeting, Commissioner Chapman suggested holding an additional budget workshop to review and respond to the specific concerns raised by the public. He proposed holding the workshop on Tuesday, June 17 at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner McCall expressed support for the workshop, particularly if any Commissioner has received information not yet shared with the full Board or the County Manager. She agreed it would be beneficial to hold a workshop that includes Chairman Chappell, especially if the Board considers items beyond the current budget proposal.

Commissioner Chapman emphasized the importance of clearly identifying the specific questions or concerns in advance so that staff can prepare responses.

Commissioner Chapman moved to schedule a budget workshop on Tuesday, June 17 at 6:00 p.m. to review public feedback and related questions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCall and approved unanimously.

The County Manager requested that Commissioners submit any additional questions or requested scenarios by Friday so staff can prepare materials in advance of the workshop.

Commissioner McCall stated that, based on the information presented, she would not recommend any changes to the proposed budget. She expressed full support for the single fire tax district, emphasizing that fire departments need consistent and adequate funding to serve the public effectively. She added that if the Board were to consider budget reductions, they should be applied across all non-mandated services proportionally, rather than cutting specific departments. With approximately 86% of the budget mandated, she noted that options for significant reductions would be extremely limited (library; parks and recreation).

Commissioner Chapman reiterated his support for the single fire tax district, stating that all citizens deserve equal access to fire protection, regardless of property value or geographic location. He emphasized that the proposed funding model ensures fire department budgets are reviewed and recommended collaboratively by a committee that includes fire chiefs, and that the costs should be equitably shared across the county.

Commissioner McKelvey requested clarification on how the previous year's \$0.6033 tax rate, which included General Fund support for fire departments, relates to the proposed revenue neutral rate and the funding shift for fire services. He specifically asked whether the \$0.02 supplement from the General Fund for fire departments was accounted for in the new rate structure or if it was being absorbed by other General Fund revenues or fees. The County Manager explained that in FY 2024, the \$0.6033 rate included both \$0.5833 for general County services, and \$0.02 to support fire departments outside the City of Brevard. In the FY 2026 revenue neutral rate of \$0.3837, the \$0.02 fire department supplement is no longer included because the proposed budget shifts fire department funding fully out of the General Fund and into a separate fire service tax rate. As a result, City residents would no longer contribute to rural fire services, unlike in FY 2024 and FY 2025 when the General Fund supplement was shared countywide.

Commissioner McKelvey emphasized the need for transparency in how fire department funding is represented on the property tax bill. He expressed his concern that while the proposed budget moves \$1.5 million in fire department funding from the General Fund to the fire tax, taxpayers may not fully understand how this shift is reflected on the visible portion of their tax bill. He noted that, based on new property valuations totaling \$11.9 billion, even a \$0.055 fire tax rate would shift approximately \$2.5 million onto the tax bill. At a \$0.07 rate, that shift would be closer to \$4.2 million. He stated his preference for the hybrid model, which keeps the rate around \$0.059, potentially reducing the visible burden on taxpayers. Commissioner McKelvey also expressed concerns about valuation trends, noting that recent property sales are occurring below assessed values, which could lead to a mismatch between tax burden and market value. The Manager clarified that the actual amount being shifted is \$1.5 million, not \$2.5 million, and that the reason for the larger perceived impact is due to the City of Brevard no longer participating in funding rural fire services. As a result, the tax burden is now spread across fewer property owners. She emphasized that this funding shift is consistent whether the fire tax is collected through a single district or individual districts, and that the base \$0.055 rate would maintain current fire department funding levels without increases.

Commissioner McCall reaffirmed her support for the single fire tax district and sought clarification on whether adopting a hybrid model would eliminate that option. The County Manager explained that it is possible to have a single district in combination with smaller districts or a General Fund supplement, but doing so would introduce additional administrative complexity for both the Tax Office and Finance staff.

Commissioner McCall confirmed that the recommended budget includes a single fire tax district at a \$0.07 rate and does not include any General Fund supplement. The Manager confirmed this and added that although a General Fund supplement is not part of the recommendation, she has run the figures to support alternate scenarios. If the Board were to maintain a \$0.055 fire tax rate and continue supplementing fire department funding through the General Fund, the Manager stated that the district rate would drop to \$0.034, with a \$0.026 General Fund supplement, resulting in a total fire funding equivalent of \$0.062 if the Balsam Grove staffing is included.

Commissioner McCall asked if shifting fire department funding back into the General Fund, instead of using a dedicated fire tax, would increase the proposed property tax above the \$0.268 over revenue neutral. The County Manager confirmed that it would.

Commissioner McCall noted her concern about the cumulative tax burden on residents, especially in light of nationwide inflation, real estate trends, and revaluation impacts. She referenced instances where properties previously valued at \$200,000 sold for \$600,000, leading to significant increases in assessed values during revaluation. She acknowledged the County had maintained a flat tax rate for the past four years, unlike the City, which had raised taxes in three of the last four years. While understanding the public's frustration, she credited the County Manager for making every effort to keep the proposed budget as low as possible. Commissioner McCall said that she would only support across-the-board reductions, if any, to maintain fairness across all departments. She emphasized the challenge in identifying cuts without affecting critical services such as education, law enforcement, and IT infrastructure.

Commissioner Dalton discussed the County's property revaluation schedule, noting that although North Carolina requires revaluation every eight years, Transylvania County follows a four-year cycle. He asked the County Manager to explain the state's 60% sales ratio threshold. The Manager explained that the NC Department of Revenue monitors county property values by comparing assessed values to actual sales. If the ratio drops below 75%, the Department may require a revaluation, as a disparity in tax burden develops. Additionally, a lower sales ratio may result in reduced utility revenue. She added that even without the County's four-year cycle, the state would likely have recommended a revaluation this year.

Commissioner Dalton also inquired about the 7% increase in school operational funding and whether the school security component had been removed, given the plan to use lottery funds for that purpose. The Manager confirmed that the increase pertains only to operational funding, which cannot be specifically earmarked by the County. She noted the Superintendent's stated intent to use the funding for staffing needs, including teacher supplements and replacing lost state-funded positions due to declining enrollment. Commissioner Dalton remarked that since the state budget had not yet passed, the school system remains uncertain about its funding outlook. The Manager agreed.

Regarding the fire tax, Commissioner Dalton asked whether individual district rates could exceed \$0.15 if the County chose to return to the previous funding method. The Manager responded that Transylvania County's fire service districts can legally exceed \$0.15. Under the recommended budget, three districts would exceed \$0.15 and four more would exceed \$0.10. She added that most counties in the state do not exceed \$0.10, but two counties currently have at least one district over \$0.20, according to Department of Revenue data.

Commissioner Dalton revisited a prior suggestion to eliminate all convenience center sites and asked if there was an updated estimate of potential savings. The County Manager did not have the numbers readily available but said the solid waste study underway could provide current data. She noted that the last estimate indicated the County would have to charge \$9 per bag—compared to the current \$3 per bag—to fully offset the operational costs, meaning the centers do not operate at a break-even level. Commissioner Dalton referenced the Pisgah Forest convenience center, which remains impacted by Hurricane Helene, and is operating at reduced capacity.

He also noted the pending grant application for the Sheriff's scanner, which could free up funds depending on the outcome.

Commissioner Dalton informed the Board that Avery County, after adopting a single fire tax district, is now considering reversing that decision. While details are not yet confirmed, he is looking into the matter and plans to speak with officials during upcoming committee meetings in Raleigh. The Manager offered to contact the Avery County Manager to gain further insight. She also reported that the NC Office of the State Fire Marshal recently shared in statewide training that many counties are moving away from multiple small districts and toward single district, hybrid, or general fund models. Currently, 38 of 100 counties in North Carolina utilize a single fire tax district, with the remainder using hybrid or general fund structures.

Commissioner Chapman stated that regardless of the funding method, hybrid or single fire tax district, citizens bear the cost, even if it appears differently on the tax bill. The County Manager agreed, adding that the same principle applies to a revenue neutral rate. If the Board chose to adopt a revenue neutral approach, either in the General Fund or within the fire district, the budget would need to be reduced accordingly, as revenue neutral does not allow for any additional funding. The recommended budget includes funding increases that would need to be eliminated to meet that threshold.

Commissioner McKelvey asked whether, under a hybrid fire tax model, it would be possible to reflect the full amount of fire-related funding on the tax bill, rather than just the portion labeled as a fire district tax (e.g., \$0.034). The County Manager responded that due to statutory requirements, the general fund tax rate must be shown as a single line, but a graphical insert could clarify how much of the general fund tax supports fire services.

Commissioner McKelvey also inquired whether the upcoming landfill study would include fee recommendations that would allow the Solid Waste Fund to break even. The Manager confirmed the study would assess operational costs and provide fee structure options but noted that recycling revenues have declined significantly due to international policy changes. As a result, jurisdictions increasingly face higher operational costs without corresponding recycling income.

Commissioner Dalton recalled that the County previously explored alternatives such as a transfer station, which was estimated to cost \$15 million more than current operations. He noted that Henderson County operates a transfer station and is now encountering challenges with that model. He asked whether the current solid waste study would include an analysis of an incinerator option. The County Manager confirmed that the topic has already been raised with the engineering firm and, while comparative data in North Carolina is limited, the consultants will provide some comparison pieces to inform the discussion.

Commissioner McKelvey highlighted the financial impact of the County's low sales assessment ratio, which had fallen to 60.73%, resulting in the loss of approximately \$271,000 annually in utility revenue over the last five years. He asked whether the current budget projections included recapturing that lost utility value. The Manager confirmed it is included in the budget assumptions and is based on state-provided valuation estimates. She clarified that the loss is theoretical; it represents unrealized revenue rather than a shortfall in budget projections.

Commissioner Dalton asked whether the County had ever experienced a revaluation that resulted in decreased property values. The Manager confirmed that declines have occurred, especially after the 2008 housing crash, and noted that some areas like Lake Toxaway saw decreased values in prior revaluations but were among the highest-growth areas in the current one.

Commissioner McCall requested that the upcoming budget workshop include:

- An analysis of the County's convenience center operations, including total sites, staffing impacts, and potential cost savings if sites were closed.
- A comparison of how pulling fire funding from the General Fund would affect the tax rate. The Manager stated that shifting fire funding back to the General Fund would increase the tax rate by \$0.028, bringing it to \$0.4385.
- A scenario analysis of what would happen next year if the Board adopted a revenue-neutral budget this year. Commissioner McCall said it would likely result in an even greater tax increase next year.

Commissioner McCall emphasized that the public may not fully understand the implications of a single fire tax district. She noted that under the current system, taxpayers are already paying the same flat rate for fire protection. Whether the County adopts a single district, hybrid model, or continues supplementing from the general fund, the financial impact to taxpayers remains the same. She strongly supported the single fire tax district. She emphasized that the single district would create equity across the County and enable long-term capital planning for fire departments. She expressed frustration with opposition to the proposal and urged the Board to consider the County as a whole in its decision-making.

Commissioner Chapman agreed and stressed that the Board needs to use the upcoming workshop to make concrete decisions about what services or expenses they are willing to reduce, since property taxes are the only way to increase revenue. He recommended a full review of the budget line by line to determine where cuts could be made and asked that staff be prepared to explain the impact of any reductions.

NEW BUSINESS

MANAGER'S REPORT

- Vaya Health will host virtual Community Listening Sessions on Wednesday, June 18, from 12:00-1:00 p.m. and 6:00-7:00 p.m. for Region 2, which includes Transylvania County. Public comments may also be submitted via email to listening@vayahealth.com.
- The 10th annual Upper French Broad Riverfest will be held on Saturday, June 21, from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Champion Park in Rosman. Hosted by multiple partners, this free, family-friendly event will feature live music, educational exhibits, food trucks, and free tubing.
- Lauren McMurray (Sheriff's Office) has earned certifications in Crime Scene Investigation, Bloodstain Pattern Analysis, and Shooting Reconstruction through the Forensics Academy. The Board recognized her outstanding accomplishment.
- A 75th Anniversary Ceremony commemorating the Korean War will be held on Saturday, June 21, from 2:00–3:30 p.m. at Ingram Auditorium, Brevard College. Hosted by the Veterans History Museum of the Carolinas and the Korea Center of Greenville, the event honors U.S. service members who served in or supported the Korean conflict.
- The Board extended appreciation to Tommy Laughter, former Regional Field Representative for Congressman Chuck Edwards, whose last day was June 7. Connor Brown will now serve in that role and can be reached at connor.brown@mail.house.gov or 828-845-0914.
- A special budget workshop will be held on Tuesday, June 17 at 6:00 p.m.
- The Board of Commissioners' meeting on June 23 will include public hearings on the proposed FY 2026 Budget and the Single Fire Service District, followed by Board votes on both items.

Commissioner McCall asked if an additional meeting could be held the week of June 23 if the Board was not ready to vote. The Manager responded that a special meeting could be advertised with 48 hours' notice.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The public comments reflect the speakers' opinions or points of view.

Hershel Johnson: Mr. Johnson thanked the Board for their hard work, acknowledging the challenges posed by factors like COVID and population growth affecting property values. He emphasized the potential tax relief that could have come from a quarter-cent sales tax referendum, encouraging public support for such measures in the future.

Daniel Carey: Mr. Carey, representing Pisgah Legal Services, expressed gratitude for the County's ongoing support. He praised the County Manager's clear and organized reports and highlighted the important civil legal services provided by the nonprofit, including domestic violence and homelessness prevention. Mr. Carey noted that while nonprofit funding is often a small part of the budget and might seem easy to cut, their work reduces pressure on the County and benefits the community.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Chapman thanked the Board for their work amid ongoing challenges and noted that he and Commissioner Dalton would be traveling to Raleigh to advocate County issues with state representatives. He emphasized the stability brought by conducting property revaluations every four years and highlighted that the County's tax rate remains low compared to others, especially given the limited commercial tax base relative to counties like Henderson. Commissioner Chapman stressed the importance of providing necessary services at the lowest possible tax rate and acknowledged the critical role nonprofits and community centers play in the County. He welcomed citizen input on budget priorities and potential cuts.

Commissioner Dalton also noted their upcoming committee meetings in Raleigh, continuing to advocate for the County's unique challenges, especially in comparison to wealthier regions with larger tax bases.

Commissioner McCall moved to entered into a closed session per N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other materials terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease, following a 10-minute recess, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Per N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other materials terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease, a closed session was entered into a 6:43 p.m. Present were Vice-Chairman Dalton, Commissioners Chapman, McCall and McKelvey, County Manager Jaime Laughter, Assistant County Manager David McNeill, County Attorney Megan Silver (via Zoom), Information Technology Director Nathanael Carver (for IT support), and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

The Board directed staff on how to proceed with negotiations.

Commissioner Chapman moved to leave the closed session, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey, and unanimously approved.

OPEN SESSION

Commissioner McCall moved to seal the minutes of the closed session until such time that opening the minutes does not frustrate the purpose of the closed session, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, and unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Chapman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m., seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously approved.

Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board