

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
NOVEMBER 10, 2025 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in a regular meeting on Monday, November 10, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Chambers at the County Administration Building, located at 101 S. Broad Street, Brevard, North Carolina.

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

Media: *The Transylvania Times*

Approximately 20 members of the public attended the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jason Chappell presiding declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

WELCOME

Chairman Chappell welcomed attendees and introduced the Commissioners and staff present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Doug Powell: Mr. Powell offered comments recognizing the upcoming observances of the establishment of the U.S. Supreme Court and Veterans Day. He expressed appreciation to Commissioner Chapman and all veterans for their service. He spoke about early American history, including the use of the “Appeal to Heaven” flag and the role he believes faith played in the nation’s founding. Mr. Powell shared his view that the phrase “separation of church and state” is often misunderstood and said it does not appear in the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, or Bill of Rights. He referenced a letter written by President Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptist Association and noted that Jefferson attended a church service in the U.S. Capitol shortly afterward. He concluded by suggesting that some common beliefs about the nation’s founding may need clarification as the country approaches its 250th anniversary.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

There were no agenda modifications.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey, and the motion was unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

The Board approved the following items:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes of the September 22, 2025, regular meeting.

DISCOVERY, RELEASE, & MONTHLY SETTLEMENT REPORTS - SEPTEMBER 2025 & OCTOBER 2025

The Tax Administrator is required by State law to report any newly discovered property that was not properly listed for taxation, as well as to provide the Board of Commissioners with a monthly update on tax releases and refunds. For September 2025, the County approved tax releases totaling \$7,102.33 and refunds of \$1,394.26. For October 2025, tax releases totaled \$2,549.12, and refunds amounted to \$1,930.60. The Board approved the Discovery, Release, and Monthly Settlement Reports for both months.

CANCELLATION OF NOVEMBER 24, 2025, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

The Board cancelled the November 24, 2025, regular meeting. The meeting falls during the week of Thanksgiving, and there is no pressing business that requires Board action prior to the first meeting in December. The Clerk to the Board will post and publish a public notice.

REQUEST TO CLOSE SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Board approved a request from the Department of Social Services to close offices on Thursday, December 11, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. for staff development and team-building activities. DSS staff will be on call to respond to emergencies. Staff will post and publish a public notice.

REQUEST TO USE THE COMMISSIONERS' CHAMBERS FOR COURT

The Board approved a request from Clerk of Superior Court Kristi Brown to use Commissioners' Chambers for court on Thursday, December 11, 2025, if needed. Criminal Superior Court is scheduled to begin in the large courtroom on December 1, and it could extend into the next week. If so, the District Court will be moved to the Elections Center Conference Room on December 8, 9, and 10. The Elections Center Conference Room is scheduled for another use on December 11.

DONATION OF SURPLUS DISPLAY TABLE TO VETERAN'S HISTORY MUSEUM OF THE CAROLINAS

The Manager has declared an oak display table no longer needed in the Register of Deeds office as surplus. The Veterans History Museum has expressed a need for the display table. NC general statutes allow a governmental entity to donate surplus personal property to a nonprofit after posting notice for at least five days, followed by approval of a resolution at a future meeting. The Board authorized staff to post the required notice.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT BAD DEBT WRITE-OFF

The Department of Public Health's Bad Debt policy identifies the process for handling aging accounts with no payment activity greater than 180 days. Pursuant to this policy, Health Director Elaine Russell requested the Board's approval to write off bad debts totaling \$51.60 for the time period 7/01/2024 to 12/31/2024. Staff will forward qualifying debt totaling \$50 to the North Carolina Tax Debt Setoff Program for potential recovery. The Board approved the recommendation.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT SUBMISSION OF DELTA DENTAL FOUNDATION GRANT

The Board approved the Department of Public Health's annual grant submission to the Delta Dental Foundation to fund the Healthy Smiles Dental Project, a dental program for early childhood and elementary-aged children in Transylvania County. This program provides dental education, dental screenings, and access to dental care for uninsured and Medicaid-eligible children from birth to twelve years of age. The grant funding (\$2,800) will be used to purchase dental screening supplies, program educational supplies, and dental hygiene items for all children in the daycare, preschool, and elementary (kindergarten and third grade) settings. There is no financial impact on the County as no grant match is required.

UPDATED STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT WITH THE NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The Board approved an updated statewide mutual aid agreement with the NC Department of Public Safety that allows Transylvania County to request help during planned events or emergencies that do not rise to the level of a formal state of emergency. The County Attorney reviewed the agreement and found no issues. This statewide agreement does not replace any existing mutual aid arrangements the County already has with nearby local governments.

AUTHORIZATION TO SIGN FISH STOCKING PERMIT WITH THE NC WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

Because the Setzer Fish Hatchery is currently offline, fewer trout will be stocked in delayed harvest streams. To help maintain expected trout levels, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission has created a policy allowing counties to authorize supplemental stocking. Kevin Howell of Davidson River Outfitters completed the necessary permit application on behalf of the County and secured both funding and volunteers to handle all stocking activities. There is no cost or staff time required from the County. The Board authorized the County Manager to sign the permit.

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND USING NCDEQ AT-RISK FUNDS

Transylvania County previously received \$7 million from the State to support water and sewer projects that must be completed by the end of 2026. The County is halfway through those planned projects. The Board approved a new resolution required by the NC Department of Environmental Quality to reflect current project details and spending. The resolution also acknowledges that NCDEQ consolidated the funds under a single grant number to simplify tracking and reporting.

**RESOLUTION # 47-2025
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OFFER RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the County of Transylvania has received an earmark for the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funded from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund established in S.L. 2021-180 to assist eligible units of government with meeting their water/wastewater infrastructure needs; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality has offered American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding in the total amount of \$7,000,000 to perform work detailed in the submitted applications and

WHEREAS, the county requested and received permission to combine two previous grant numbers with NCDEQ into a single grant identification number, SRP-D-ARP-0028; and

WHEREAS, the County of Transylvania intends to perform said projects in accordance with the agreed scopes of work;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF TRANSYLVANIA:

1. That County of Transylvania does hereby accept the American Rescue Plan Grant total offer of \$7,000,000 to fund the following projects as voted on by the Board of Commissioners on November 11, 2024, and updated to actual, where relevant, below:
 - a. Rosman- Gaia Water, Sewer & Pump Station \$3,498,494 (reimbursed)
 - b. Brevard and Rosman Interconnect \$789,044.06 (reimbursed)
 - c. Transylvania County Watershed Planning \$385,000

- d. Morris Road Stormwater Improvements \$575,000
 - e. Landfill Leachate Improvements \$1,300,268
 - f. Brevard- Boys and Girls Club/Gallimore Rd Sewer Extension: \$410,000
2. That the County of Transylvania does hereby give assurance to the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality that any Conditions or Assurances contained in the Award Offer will be adhered to. The County anticipates that the full \$7,000,000 will be spent by the grant deadline on qualified and approved projects.
 3. That Jaime Laughter, County Manager and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with this project; to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required by the Division of Water Infrastructure.

Adopted this the 10th day of November 2025.

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

RESOLUTION APPROVING SOLE SOURCE VENDOR/MANUFACTURER SECURITY CAMERA WAREHOUSE

The Board approved a resolution allowing the County to purchase security camera equipment exclusively from Security Camera Warehouse (SCW). Both the County and School System already use SCW equipment, and because the system is proprietary, staying with the same vendor ensures compatibility and reliability. State law allows this type of “sole source” purchasing when needed for operational reasons. Both the County and School Board must approve the arrangement because the equipment will support shared capital projects.

**RESOLUTION # 48-2025
APPROVAL OF SCW AS A SOLE SOURCE VENDOR/MANUFACTURER FOR THE
SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS AND INSTALLATION FOR TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY AND
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS**

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 and Transylvania County Schools use Security Camera Warehouse cameras, and due to standardization, to keep consistent with current systems; and

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

WHEREAS, The sole source exemption is not-to-exceed an annual amount of \$500,000 and two (2) renewals before needing reinstatement of exemption approval.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners and Transylvania County Schools approve 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 10th day of November 2025.

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

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH LAND OF SKY FOR INTERIM PLANNING DIRECTOR

Transylvania County's Planning and Community Development Department is facing temporary staffing shortages due to the upcoming departure of its Director, Jeff Adams, on November 21, one planner being on maternity leave, and another planner position currently vacant. To ensure the County can continue providing essential planning services, including plat reviews, ordinance enforcement, and zoning administration, the Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the Land of Sky Regional Council. Under this agreement, Land of Sky Planner Jacob Compher will serve as Interim Planning Director for 12 weeks, working in the County offices three days per week. Mr. Compher has the experience needed to manage the department's responsibilities and provide continuity during this transition period. His work will also support the County as it evaluates potential changes to its transit operations that could influence long-term staffing needs within the planning department. As part of his interim role, the Board approved a resolution appointing Mr. Compher as a Review Officer, which authorizes him to certify that maps and plats submitted to the Register of Deeds meet all legal requirements for recording. He will also serve as the enforcement officer and zoning administrator for all County planning-related ordinances. This temporary support will help maintain service levels for residents while the County works on filling vacancies and assessing future departmental structure.

**RESOLUTION #46-2025
APPOINTMENT OF REVIEW OFFICERS FOR TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY**

WHEREAS, Chapter 47-30.2 of the North Carolina General Statutes requires the Board of Commissioners of each county to designate by name one or more persons experienced in mapping or land records management to be appointed as a Review Officer to certify the maps or plats presented to the Register of Deeds as complying with all statutory requirements for recording; and

WHEREAS, the review of statutory requirements is of a technical nature; and

WHEREAS, one of the services that Transylvania County staff provides to the community is a similar technical process for subdivision plat review in order to verify compliance with the County's development regulations; and

WHEREAS, Transylvania County is committed to streamlining the review procedures for proposed developments and subdivisions of land; and

WHEREAS, it appears most efficient for Transylvania County to avoid adding another layer of development review by providing for the certification of statutory compliance for all maps or plats to be presented to the Register of Deeds for recording within the context of subdivision review procedures;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY:

Section 1. The addition of the following person is recommended to be appointed by the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners to serve as Review Officers for all lands within Transylvania County's planning jurisdiction in order to certify each map and plat presented to the Transylvania County Register of Deeds for recording satisfies the statutory requirements for recording:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION/TITLE</u>
Jacob Compher	Interim Planning and Community Development Director, Transylvania County Planning and Community Development Department

Adopted and approved this the 10th day of November 2025.

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

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

FISCAL YEAR 2024 AUDIT PRESENTATION

Finance Director Meagan O’Neal introduced Kelly Gooderham with Martin Starnes & Associates to present the FY 2024 Audit.

Audit Highlight

Ms. Gooderham reported that the County received a clean, unmodified opinion, the highest opinion an auditor can issue, and she thanked the Board for continuing to engage her firm as the County’s auditor.

General Fund Summary

She summarized that General Fund revenues increased by \$2.1 million (3%), mainly from higher investment earnings and property tax collections, while expenditures rose by \$5 million (8%), driven largely by Public Safety, Human Services, and General Government.

Total Fund Balance-General Fund

The County’s total General Fund balance at year was \$49.9 million, an increase of \$7 million over the prior year.

Fund Balance Position – General Fund

Using the Local Government Commission methodology, the available fund balance for FY 2024 totaled \$38.9 million. Unassigned fund balance, which excludes funds restricted or committed for specific purposes, totaled \$15.8 million. Based on LGC calculations, the County had approximately seven months of expenditures on hand at year’s end (up from five in the prior year), while unassigned fund balance represented about three months.

Unassigned Fund Balance as a Percent of Expenditures – General Fund

The unassigned fund balance represents 23.2% of the General Fund expenditures.

Top Three Revenues: General Fund

Ms. Gooderham noted that the County’s top revenue sources, property tax, local option sales tax, and restricted intergovernmental revenues, comprised 84% of total General Fund revenues. Property tax increased by 2% with a 99.77% collection rate. Local option sales tax increased by 1%, and restricted intergovernmental revenues remained stable.

Top Three Expenditures: General Fund

The largest expenditures, Public Safety, Education (excluding debt service), and Human Services, accounted for 73% of General Fund spending; Public Safety saw the largest increase, rising 15% due to salaries, benefits, and capital purchases.

Solid Waste Fund

She also reviewed the Solid Waste Fund, noting a negative operational cash flow of \$3.1 million, total net position of \$7.5 million, and a \$1.38 million decrease in overall net position.

Performance Indicators

As required by the LGC, the County must also report certain performance indicators and respond to any items of concern. The audit included two significant deficiencies: one related to the Escheat Process (checks held more than two years must be sent to the State Treasurer) and one related to the late submission of a federal audit data collection form. Two material weaknesses were also reported: the late audit submission and delays in reconciling the general ledger to subsidiary ledgers due to staffing turnover and timing issues during the audit period. County staff have already corrected these issues and are preparing the formal response required by the LGC within 60 days, which must be signed by a majority of the Board. Ms. O'Neal emphasized that the concerns were not major and that corrective steps are already in place.

The Manager also noted that the presented numbers reflect the period ending June 30, 2024, and that significant changes to fund balance will appear in the FY 2025 audit due to capital projects and debt issuances.

Board Discussion

Commissioner McCall requested additional clarification regarding the audit findings. Ms. Gooderham noted there were four findings:

- Two significant deficiency findings, including (1) the escheat process, where checks held longer than two years should have been remitted to the State Treasurer, and (2) a delay in submitting the federally required Data Collection Form due to timing issues with the single audit.
- Two material weakness findings related to (1) the late audit submission and (2) reconciliation challenges between the general ledger and subsidiary ledgers, which were complicated by staff turnover and the audit delay.

Commissioner McCall observed that late audits are becoming increasingly common statewide, which the Manager confirmed, citing growing audit complexity for counties.

Commissioner McCall also asked about DSS staffing levels, noting that the County previously received State funding to support additional positions tied to Medicaid expansion. The Manager confirmed that the staffing increases reported for DSS were supported by State Department of Health funding and did not require general fund appropriation.

Commissioner Chapman asked whether any of the findings posed significant concerns. Ms. O'Neal responded that they did not and that corrective actions were already underway or completed. She noted:

- The Escheats process has been corrected, including addressing several duplicate checks that predated her employment.
- Staff are already working toward the next audit cycle to avoid future delays.
- The reconciliation finding related largely to timing issues in the Tax Office's online credit card payment system. Staff showed the LGC that bank activity is reconciled daily, and the LGC considered the issue minor once clarified.

Ms. O'Neal confirmed that all findings have been addressed and that she will present the required response letter for Board approval at the next meeting.

Ms. Gooderham added that auditing standards and GASB requirements have become significantly more complex, forcing many audit firms to reduce their client load. This has created a statewide shortage of firms able to take on local government audits, which has contributed to widespread audit delays. She noted that while Martin Starnes has audited Transylvania County for many years, the specific staff assigned rotates periodically. She has served as the County's audit partner since 2019, and a new partner will be assigned this year, providing a fresh review of the County's processes.

Chairman Chappell thanked Ms. Gooderham for the presentation, and he called for a motion to formally receive the audit.

Commissioner McCall moved to receive the FY 2024 audit, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, and the motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION BY PRESIDENT OF BREVARD COLLEGE

The Manager introduced Brevard College President Bradley Andrews to provide an update on the College. Mr. Andrews opened by thanking veterans in attendance and expressing appreciation to the Board for their work on behalf of the community. He emphasized that the success of the College and Transylvania County is closely linked.

Overview of Brevard College

Mr. Andrews noted that Brevard College has been a proud member of the community for nearly 100 years. The College currently enrolls 821 undergraduate students, primarily from North and South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia, and approximately 60 graduate students, both residential and online, largely in the MBA program.

Community Impact

- Employs approximately 250 County residents
- Roughly 1,000 alumni currently live in Transylvania County.
- Contributes an estimated \$75 million in annual economic impact across WNC and \$40 million within Transylvania County

Operating Philosophy

Mr. Andrews described Brevard College as a small, mission-driven institution focused on living within its means and serving students well. He noted that the College operates more like a successful local business than a large national university and receives no research funding or direct government appropriations.

Financial Snapshot

The College brings in just under \$24 million annually, with 86% of revenue coming directly from students.

- Major revenue sources include tuition (\$11 million) and room/board (\$10 million)
- Philanthropic support and a modest \$1.25 million endowment draw help fund scholarships.
- Students rely heavily on state and federal aid, including Pell Grants and the NC Needs-Based Scholarship.
- The median family income for students is approximately \$80,000

Annual expenditures total roughly \$23.5 million:

- The majority supports salaries.
- \$5 million in operating costs
- \$3 million for facilities and capital needs, including some debt service
- \$1.5 million in discretionary spending (e.g., athletics travel, faculty development)

Mr. Andrews highlighted that enrollment is the single most important factor in the College's financial stability, supplemented significantly by donor generosity.

Financial Stability & Performance

- The College has produced a positive net operating income in 10 of the past 11 years.
- Continuing to meet budget and planning targets
- Ongoing capital campaign has raised \$11.3 million toward a \$12 million goal.
- Donor participation continues to increase across academics, athletics, and the arts.

Student Success & New Academic Programs

- Applications are at a record high
- Two new majors, engineering and AI management, are planned for launch as early as next fall.
- An additional six to eight new undergraduate programs are planned in the next five years.

Recognition & Community Engagement

Brevard College has received national recognition from sources including *U.S. News & World Report*, Colleges of Distinction, and national mental health and wellness organizations. The College maintains strong partnerships with the Brevard Music Center, TVS, and local community initiatives such as Downtown Dollars.

Campus Improvements

Mr. Andrews shared renderings of a new student center project that will transform the existing Myers Dining Hall site.

- The facility will double the current footprint.
- Features include dining, lounge, and recreation space, a 24-hour fitness center for non-athletes, and a new mailroom.
- Preliminary site work will begin in two to three weeks, with a groundbreaking expected in January.
- Construction is planned for a 14-16-month period, with anticipated opening in spring 2027
- Campus Drive will be closed and converted into a pedestrian-friendly quad for students and faculty.

Mr. Andrews concluded by reiterating the College's commitment to its students and to Transylvania County. Chairman Chappell thanked him for the presentation and the College's ongoing partnership with the community.

MONTHLY CAPITAL UPDATE

Key Highlights

- Over \$150 million in capital projects are underway or planned.
- The County has secured approximately \$30 million in grant funding to support these efforts (excluding broadband funding awarded directly to providers).
- Updates are normally provided monthly at the Board's second meeting; the Board cancelled the second meeting in October and November, so staff combined the reports for presentation at this meeting. Another update will be shared at the first meeting in December.

The Manager introduced Project Manager Beecher Allison to present the monthly update on Transylvania County Schools' capital projects per the interlocal agreement with the Board of Education.

Fixing Transylvania County Schools – Step One: Investment in Capital Projects at All Nine Schools

Mr. Allison reported that the project update reports for both the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education are available on the County website on the special projects page. His report is summarized below:

- Underground Storage Tanks
 - Tanks will be replaced in the summer of 2026 in coordination with Rosman area projects.
- Brevard Area Scope #1 (Old BHS Gym)
 - TPO roof is complete.
 - The air handling unit was installed last week.
 - Timeline: Completion expected by late November/early December, with a ribbon cutting to be scheduled soon thereafter.
- Larger Scope Projects (BHS Scope #2, Rosman Area Scopes, Brevard Area Scopes)
 - The design team issued schematic design to the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR); CMAR expects to submit pricing to the architect and project team for initial review by December 5.
 - Once pricing is confirmed, the project team will identify items for consideration by the Joint School Bond Committee. The Committee will consider changes to the scope that are within the budget and as outlined in the interlocal agreement. (January 2026)
 - CMAR is pricing options based on geotechnical studies conducted at Rosman Elementary, Middle, and High Schools, which will support consideration of revising the scopes to include additional work.
- Emergency Repairs – BHS EC Wing Roof
 - Emergency project authorized under State statutes due to deteriorating roof conditions.
 - The TPO roof is complete, metal trim and gutter work around the roof perimeter is ongoing.
 - Interior work ongoing; design team developing submittals for final finishes for review and approval.
 - Timeline: Substantial completion projected for the end of December.
 - Exploring HVAC options to identify the closest option to replacement with in-kind as required under the emergency statute provisions. HVAC installation will be the final step to project completion.
 - Safety coordination activities onsite continue.
- Conclusion and Next Steps
 - Brevard Area Scope #1 and the EC Wing project will be completed soon.
 - Additional work sites will commence once the CMAR and architect confirm the schedule and budget with the owner.
 - Work is expected to continue in December and January.
 - The goal remains on track to complete as much work as possible next summer when school is out.

Mr. Allison concluded his report and invited comments and questions from the Board.

Commissioner McCall asked whether the new HVAC system planned for the EC Wing could operate independently or if it needed to connect to the school's main system. The Manager said the project team is getting pricing on several options. The goal is to stay as close to "replacement in-kind" as possible to comply with emergency repair rules and remain within budget, especially since HVAC work was not included in the original project scope. That area currently has four different units.

Commissioner McKelvey asked about reports of leaking in the old gym roof and whether it caused damage or delays. The Manager explained that the leak came from about an inch of roofing material that did not fully seal, which is not unusual with TPO roofs during the final stages of construction. Heavy rain helped identify the gap, and the contractor repaired it within 24 hours. There was no damage to the gym floor or building, and the issue did not affect the project timeline. The roof will also carry a one-year warranty.

Commissioner Dalton asked how the current renovation plans might change if the School System receives a Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund Grant to consolidate Davidson River School into Brevard High School. Project Manager Allison said the team is still moving forward with schematic designs as originally planned. The Manager added that continuing to get pricing now will help identify items that could be removed from the project and used as the County's grant match if the award comes through. Some repairs may still need to be completed regardless to ensure the school can function until any new construction begins. The County hopes to hear about the grant by the end of the year, though announcements are typically made in October or November.

Commissioner McCall also noted that if the grant is awarded, the School System would still own the Davidson River School building, meaning decisions about its future use would be needed. Commissioner Dalton added that because the building is historic, any future changes would come with restrictions.

Next, the Manager moved forward with covering the remaining countywide capital projects.

Creating Jobs and a Safe Community: New Space for Growing Businesses and Upgrading Public Safety

- Sylvan Valley Industrial Building Phase 2: Project is complete.
- Hart Road Emergency Access and Flood Mitigation Project; Project is complete, and grant closeout is underway.
- New Courthouse at the Public Safety Complex: Work continues on refining the budget and bringing the project within budget. Final construction documents are on track to be completed in spring 2026.
- Library Amphitheater Cover Project: The main canopy has been ordered. Site work should begin in the not-too-distant future.

Protecting Transylvania Natural Resources: Clean Water, Sanitary Sewer, Solid Waste Disposal, and Streambank Restoration

- Watershed Study: Presentation to the Board of Commissioners at the December 8 meeting.
- Boys and Girls Club/Gallimore Road Sewer Project: DEQ cleared review last week; project should begin soon.
- Landfill Leachate Pretreatment Project: Preliminary work has begun.
- Pisgah Labs Water and Sewer Extension: Pending the City of Brevard and Pisgah Labs finalizing an agreement.
- Landfill Expansion Project: Progress continues on cell expansion to extend the life of the landfill for five years upon completion.

Chairman Chappell asked for an update on the County's ongoing review of landfill options. The Manager reported that staff have received a draft of the study analyzing future solid waste options and are currently reviewing it. Once that review is complete, the study will be presented to the Board. A related rate study is expected next spring, which will outline what fees would be required to support whichever solid waste option the Board chooses. Over the next six months, staff expect to receive additional information that will help guide Board decisions on long-term waste management.

Commissioner Chapman reminded the Board that they still need to determine the future use of the old courthouse and should continue working through that decision-making process.

There were no further comments.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE UPDATE TO HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM HELENE

The Manager provided an overview of ongoing local, state, and federal efforts related to Hurricane/Tropical Storm Helene.

Available Resources

- renewnc.org - Offers assistance beyond FEMA, including housing support and repair help. Applications are currently open.
- WNC Economic Recovery - Resources available at [wncrecovery@nc.gov/resources](mailto:wncrecovery@nc.gov), including funding information, mental health services, repair assistance, and sector-specific support for local governments, nonprofits, and others.

Private Property Debris Removal (SMART Program)

- Contractors are continuing to clear debris on private property through the NCEM SMART Program.
- FEMA is re-evaluating properties that were originally ruled ineligible. Decisions must come from FEMA before cleanup can occur, which continues to cause frustration among homeowners.
- 215 Right of Entry (ROE) forms have been processed in Transylvania County, with 27 still awaiting eligibility review.
- 24 properties have been fully approved for debris removal; 195 were deemed ineligible by FEMA.
- Of the 177 properties originally marked "Eligible with Conditions":
 - 32 are in work-authorization drafting
 - 90 have been assigned to a hauler
 - 94 have been closed
- Call Center activity for Transylvania County: 262 incoming calls (94% answered within 20 seconds), 531 outgoing calls, and 10-minute average call time.

Waterway Debris and Infrastructure Concerns

- NCEM and FEMA continue reviewing 632 identified waterway targets where debris could threaten infrastructure.
- 347 sites have been reported and 346 reviewed so far.

Hazard Mitigation Efforts

- NCEM has hired Summit Design and Engineering Services to complete the required engineering work for home elevation projects under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Work includes feasibility studies, surveys, elevation certificates, geotechnical investigations, and preliminary designs.
- Applicants should expect contact from Summit and will need to ensure safe access to their property (open gates, secure pets, etc.).
- A new Right of Entry form is required before Summit can proceed with geotechnical work.
- Emergency Management has attempted contact with applicants who have not yet submitted updated forms. Out of the eight applicants emailed, four have responded with completed ROEs. NCEM and Summit will continue efforts to contact the remaining applicants.

Private Roads and Bridges

- Assessments and cost estimates have been completed for 52 sites, serving 330 households.
- The State is finalizing designs that meet local load and waterway safety requirements.

FEMA Reimbursement Work

County staff, particularly the Finance Director, continue to work closely with FEMA to secure reimbursement for eligible response and recovery expenses.

RECOGNITION OF TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY EMPLOYEE VETERANS

The Manager expressed appreciation to County employees who served in the U.S. Military in recognition of Veterans Day on November 11. Chairman Chappell thanked the Manager for recognizing the employees who served our nation. He expressed the Board's gratitude for their service and sacrifices, noting that their

commitment helps ensure the freedoms that allow the Board to meet today. He also offered special thanks to Commissioner Chapman for his military service.

Department	Employee	Branch
Board of Elections	Michael "Jeff" Storey	US Air Force
Commissioner	Larry Chapman	US Marine Corps
EMS	Clark Andersen	US Army
EMS	Wesley "Dean" Galloway	US Marine Corps
EMS	Kellie Rhoton	US Army
EMS	Shannon Ropp	US Air Force
Facilities Engineering	Larry Reece	US Army
Information Technology	Jason Cox	US Army
Sheriff	Christopher Clark	US Marine Corps
Sheriff	Ralph Davenport	US Air Force
Sheriff	Hampton "Rick" Lasater	US Army
Sheriff	Jonathan "Kris" McCall	US Army
Sheriff	Henry "Hank" Moffitt	US Army
Sheriff	Christopher Pogue	US Marine Corps
Sheriff	William "Anthony" Worley	US Marine Corps
Social Services	Tracy Justice	US Army
Social Services	Sherri Stearns	US Navy
Solid Waste	Donald "Donnie" Credille	US Navy
Solid Waste	James "Jim" Cox	US Navy
Solid Waste	John Waller	US Navy
Solid Waste	Elwood "Rick" Treadwell	US Air Force
Tax Administration	James "Aaron" Siniard	US Navy
Transportation	Marion "Jack" Duncan	US Air Force
Veterans Services	Frank Pearsall	US Marine Corps

APPOINTMENTS

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Board reviewed upcoming appointments to the Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA). One member, Madeline Magin, is eligible and willing to serve another term, while another member, Dee Dee Perkins, has completed two terms and is ineligible for reappointment. After reviewing two new applications, the TCTDA recommended appointing Emrie Carlton-Jackson to fill Ms. Perkins' seat. The Town of Rosman also reappointed Jessica Whitmire as its representative and recommended she serve as Chair of the TCTDA for 2026.

Commissioner Dalton moved to accept the recommendation of the TCTDA to reappoint Madelin Magin (Member-at-Large), to appoint Emrie Carlton-Jackson to the Interested Individual position (replacing Dee Dee Perkins at the end of her term), to accept the Town of Rosman's recommendation to reappoint Jessica Whitmire and appoint her as chair for 2026, all effective January 1, 2026, seconded by Commissioner McCall. Commissioner McCall noted that another applicant had expressed interest but did not meet the eligibility requirements for the open position. She encouraged the applicant to continue applying for future opportunities to serve on County boards and committees. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

OLD BUSINESS

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH TOWN OF ROSMAN ON GRANT-FUNDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

On September 22, the Board authorized the Manager to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of Rosman to support the Town's request for State infrastructure funding from the County. The proposed project involves \$3.9 million in improvements to Rosman's wastewater system. Key terms in the draft MOU include:

- Upon grantor approval, the County will fund, manage, and oversee the design and construction of the wastewater improvements.
- The Town will work with the County during design and will take full ownership, operation, and maintenance of the completed facilities.
- If the Town decides it can no longer operate its water/sewer system, or if State authority changes, the Town would support the County having the first option to assume ownership and operation.

The County approved these terms on October 13 and sent the MOU to both the Town and the grantor for review. At its October 14 meeting, Rosman's Board of Aldermen reviewed the MOU and requested two changes:

- The Town agreed that the County may have the first option to take over the system if Rosman stops operating it, except in the case of a private purchase offer. In that scenario, the Town requested no County involvement.
- If the State temporarily takes over the Town's system (such as after a disaster), the Town wants the MOU to state that the system would be returned to Rosman when the event ends.

The Manager recommended adding a third component. Because the County is pursuing the establishment of a watershed that will protect water intake for Rosman's future water plant, the Town would need to adopt the required watershed ordinance when State approval occurs. Some of the watershed area includes Town-annexed property, making their adoption necessary. This ensures the County's multi-year investment in watershed planning leads to a successful outcome.

The Manager raised concerns about the Town's first proposal regarding a private company purchasing the Town's system. A private purchase could jeopardize grant funding and trigger "claw back" requirements.

Chairman Chappell asked whether the watershed boundaries could be drawn to avoid the annexed parcel, which is what requires Town approval. The Manager said doing so would likely reduce the permitted water intake but will confirm with the engineer before the December 8 meeting.

Commissioner McCall said she does not support the first provision and does not understand why the Town is requesting it. Commissioner Dalton explained the Town's request stems from a general "what-if" scenario and past experiences, including Rosman's purchase of the Burlingame system. Chairman Chappell said he might support a compromise, stating the County would have first right of refusal if any private offer were made.

Commissioner McCall said she was comfortable with the Town's request in the second provision as long as the system would only be returned to the Town if the Local Government Commission (LGC) recommended it. The Manager confirmed the LGC ultimately controls whether or when a financially distressed unit regains operational authority.

After further discussion, and upon the Manager's suggestion, Commissioners agreed that more information was needed before taking action and supported tabling this item until the December 8 meeting.

Commissioner Dalton moved to table the MOU decision until December 8, when they will receive the watershed presentation, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey, and the motion was unanimously approved.

(Commissioner Chapman was excused from the meeting at 5:30 p.m. to attend the Marine Corps 250th Birthday celebration.)

NEW BUSINESS

FACILITY ASSISTANCE REQUEST FROM BALSAM GROVE FIRE RESCUE

Fire Marshal Scott Justus presented a request from Balsam Grove Fire Rescue, which is seeking help from County staff as it begins planning for a station expansion. The department currently does not have adequate space to house 24-hour paid staff or to store all of its fire apparatus (two vehicles must be kept outside in the weather). The station also has mold and flood-related damage that now requires mitigation.

The department asked to use up to \$20,000 from its Service District Reserve Fund (current balance: \$57,304) to hire design professionals to evaluate the current site and develop options for expansion or relocation. County staff would assist in coordinating this work and later present any proposals, including design concepts and cost estimates, to the Board of Commissioners.

During early discussions, staff learned the fire station property is still legally owned by the Balsam Grove Community Center. Representatives from the Community Center expressed full support for deeding the property to the fire department if the site is suitable. They also noted an unused community septic system on the property that could be transferred to the fire department as part of the process.

Mr. Justus noted that the Fire Marshal's Office, the NC Department of Insurance, and the Office of the State Fire Marshal have all reviewed the situation. To maintain its current ISO insurance rating, the fire station must remain within a half mile of the existing location. The department meets the required number of apparatus but lacks indoor space for two of its vehicles. Temporary structures like carports are not allowed because apparatus must be housed in a fully rated building.

Commissioner Dalton raised concerns about mold inside the building and asked whether the current site had room to expand. Mr. Justus said that it depends on septic system specifications and Health Department review, but early discussions indicate the Community Center is willing to allow additional space if feasible. Adding a second story is also a possibility.

Commissioner McCall asked about expansion options and reiterated the need for long-term planning for fire department capital needs. Mr. Justus reported that another option may be constructing a small addition now and considering a future substation elsewhere in the district.

The Manager noted that this type of long-range planning aligns with the staff's recommendation to examine future capital needs for all fire departments, most of which rely heavily on County funding.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the request and grant consent for County staff to assist Balsam Grove Fire Rescue in engaging the necessary design professionals and to approve a drawdown of up to \$20,000 to cover the cost of these services, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, and unanimously approved.

FY 2026 1st Quarter Budget Amendments

Budget and Management Analyst Jennifer Wright presented this agenda item. Based on policies approved by the Board of Commissioners through the annual budget ordinance and the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, it is necessary for the Board of Commissioners to approve certain amendments to the budget ordinance. Primarily, these are the types of budget amendments that by their nature require review/approval by a governing board: recognition of new revenues and appropriations for related expenditures; appropriations of fund balance (whether assigned, committed, or restricted); transfers from one fund to another fund, if permitted by statute; and establishment of new special revenue funds, capital project funds, or fiduciary funds. A summary of the amendments for approval is below:

Budget Amendment 1: Established \$812,690 in new FY 2026 projects in the Education Capital Fund, as requested by the Board of Education and approved by the Board of Commissioners, including the lottery-funded project for the schools to purchase the CENTEGIX Safety Platform. The amendment also sets up the full estimated project budgets for the school bond projects now contracted with architect LS3P Associates Ltd. Effective 7/1/25.

Budget Amendment 2: Recognized and allocated \$80,000 in annual federal funding for the Sheriff's Office for a new 5-year Cooperative Law Enforcement Agreement between the Transylvania County Sheriff's Office and the USDA Forest Service to fund patrol operations in the county's national forests. Effective 7/1/25.

Budget Amendment 3: Recognized and allocated an \$11,098 grant from the Youth Sports Grant Fund to Transylvania County Parks & Recreation to purchase youth pickleball equipment. Effective 7/1/25.

Budget Amendment 4: Set up the 2% 401K contribution for all employees, as approved by the Board of Commissioners in the FY 2026 Budget (about \$329,000). Effective 7/1/25.

Budget Amendment 5: Established the FY 2026 fire department budgets (\$3,252,143), as approved by the Board of Commissioners in the FY 2026 budget.

Budget Amendment 6: Closed out the EMS base capital construction project and established the ongoing related bond payments in the General Fund (\$948,132.62 transferred from project fund to General Fund for initial bond payments). Effective 7/9/25.

Budget Amendment 7: Budgeted the increased rental cost (\$8,600) from the new lease agreement for the Probation & Parole Office starting 7/1/25, as approved by Commissioners on July 14, 2025. Effective 7/1/25.

Budget Amendment 8: Recognized and allocated \$25,000 in new Vulnerable APS Essentials funding for the Department of Social Services. Effective 7/27/25.

Budget Amendment 9: Established the \$500,000 budget for the new Toxaway emergency radio communications tower project. Effective 8/1/2025.

Budget Amendment 10: Updated the approved budget for LS3P professional services for the school bond projects. The following changes were made from contingency funds: \$21,820 + \$2,000 (premium time) to assess Rosman Elementary wall cracks; \$52,661 LiDAR Scan + \$3,600 BIM Production hosting on all school buildings; and \$16,390 + \$1,000 (scoping contingency) for WGLA Engineering (WGLA) and Bunnell-Lammons Engineering (BLE) engagement on the Rosman Middle & High Old Gym. Effective 8/6/25.

Budget Amendment 11: Reallocated \$10,000 within the Maintenance Operations budget at the request of the director. Effective 8/19/25.

Budget Amendment 12: Reallocated \$19,802 from a part-time TDA position to contract services for marketing, as approved by the TDA Director and the TDA Board Chair. Effective 8/25/25.

Budget Amendment 13: Allocated the county portion of the stipend (\$1,875) for the Interim CED of Cooperative Extension, which she received while the CED is on parental leave. Effective 9/2/25.

Budget Amendment 14: Allocated a Board-approved drawdown of \$20,000 from the Sheriff's Tuition Assistance Reserve to fund unexpected vehicle repairs, as requested by the Sheriff. Effective 8/25/25.

Budget Amendment 15: Allocated a Board-approved drawdown of \$115,000 from Lake Toxaway Fire & Rescue Department reserve to pay for a new fire truck and for employee physicals/testing, at the request of the department. Effective 8/25/25.

Budget Amendment 16: Reflected two actions: 1) The final reconciled school portion of sales tax for FY 2025 was transferred into the Education Capital Fund and placed in fund balance. 2) The latest interest for funds in the Education Capital Fund was budgeted and placed in fund balance. Total added to Education Capital Fund Balance was \$3,492,332.89. Effective 9/22/25.

Budget Amendment 17: Established the FY 2026 bond payments (\$4,403,212.50) for the 2024 School Bonds. Funds for this purpose are held in reserve in the Education Capital Fund; then, as required by county auditors, these funds must be transferred to the appropriate lines in Fund 10 and paid from that fund. Effective 9/26/25.

Budget Amendment 18: Established \$2,231,211.15 in carry-forward funds in the FY 2026 Budget. The carryforward amendment, which is completed each fiscal year, is necessary to adjust the FY 2026 budget to include expenditures authorized in FY 2025 that were not incurred or completed until after July 1, 2025. Effective 9/30/25.

(Numbering system is for internal use only.)

Ms. Wright recommended that the Board receive the report through September 30, 2025, and approve the budget amendments as presented.

Commissioner McCall moved to receive the report through September 30, 2025, and to approve the budget amendments as presented, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, and the motion was unanimously approved.

FY 2026 1ST QUARTER FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Finance Director Meagan O'Neal presented the FY 2026 1st Quarter Financial Summary (through September 30, 2025). Fiscal controls require that the Finance Director report unaudited financial statements for each quarter to the Board of Commissioners.

General Fund

- Revenue: \$19.5 million
 - Property taxes totaled \$15.9 million (about 33% of the annual budget).
 - Sales tax revenue was \$955,000, which reflects the State's two-month payment delay (8.3% of the budget).
 - Investment earnings totaled \$633,000.
 - Permits, fines, sales, and services brought in \$1.05 million.
- Expenditures: \$18.2 million
 - Personnel costs were \$7.7 million (21.4% of the annual budget).
 - Education funding for Transylvania County Schools and Blue Ridge Community College totaled \$4.1 million.

All departments are operating within their budgets.

Enterprise Fund (Solid Waste)

- Revenue: \$842,658
 - Scale fees: \$572,192 (26% of budget)
 - Sticker sales: \$161,229 (24.8% of budget)

- Investment earnings: \$80,544
 - Expenditures: \$629,136
- This resulted in a net gain of \$213,522 for the first quarter.

Other Financial Updates

- School capital projects are progressing.
- Construction of the new landfill cell is underway.
- FEMA reimbursement requests have moved forward:
 - \$6,700 has been received for emergency landfill road repairs after the storm.
 - An additional \$58,000 has been approved but not yet received.
- Finance staff are preparing to begin the FY 2025 audit once the contract is finalized, as well as other year-end calendar duties.

The Manager reminded the Board that first-quarter revenue comparisons between fiscal years can show timing differences due to modified accrual accounting and the State's delay in sending sales tax. This also affects carry-forward balances.

Ms. O'Neal reported no negative trends. Property tax revenue is strong, and November mortgage payments will increase collections. Investments are performing well, and spending is on track.

The Manager expressed uncertainty about the impact of the State operating under a continuing budget will have on the County's budget. The County is receiving inconsistent guidance about programs such as SNAP and WIC, so the effect on intergovernmental revenue is still unclear.

Commissioner Dalton moved to receive the report as presented by the Finance Director, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey, and the motion was unanimously approved.

FY 2025 CONTRACT TO AUDIT ACCOUNTS

Finance Director Meagan O'Neal presented the annual audit contract required under N.C.G.S. § 159-34(a). She noted that the County last issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for auditing services in advance of the FY 2022 audit. At that time, two qualified firms responded, and Martin Starnes & Associates (MSA), a firm that audits many counties across the state, submitted the most competitive three-year proposal. FY 2024 was the final year of that initial agreement.

For FY 2025, Ms. O'Neal requested a one-year extension from MSA. The firm provided a proposed contract totaling up to \$99,450, which includes:

- \$78,000: Base audit fee
- \$4,250 per major program tested beyond the two already included
- \$8,700: Financial statement preparation

Based on expected State and federal awards, the County anticipates needing up to three additional programs tested, but the final number may change depending on grant thresholds. Testing requirements are driven by federal rules mandating coverage of 40% of federal programs over \$750,000 and state programs over \$500,000.

Ms. O'Neal explained that although the amount is higher than last year, the overall increase over the last five years has been less than 7%, which is significantly below statewide trends. She further noted several reasons audit costs are rising across North Carolina:

- A limited number of CPA firms are qualified to complete governmental audits.

- Multiple new Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements since 2022, which increase staff preparation and auditor workload
- More grant funding is flowing through counties, which reduces reliance on tax dollars but increases the number of programs requiring testing.

Ms. O'Neal shared statewide comparison data showing that MSAs' FY 2025 audit fees for counties of similar size range from \$77,000 to \$133,000, with an average of \$104,000, meaning Transylvania County's proposed contract remains below the state average. She also emphasized that issuing a new RFP at this point in the audit season would delay the FY 2025 audit and make it difficult to secure another firm, as most are already fully booked.

MSA will also assign a new firm partner to lead this year's audit, part of their routine rotation, to provide fresh oversight. She reminded the Board that the County consistently receives the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, which she said reflects the quality and thoroughness of MSA's work.

A budget amendment of \$18,750 from fund balance is required because the audit fee amount was not known when preparing the FY 2026 budget.

Chairman Chappell stated that he has supported rotating auditors over time to gain different perspectives. However, he said he appreciated MSA's internal rotation process and noted the limited availability of other firms. He expressed support for continuing with MSA.

Commissioner McCall added that she typically favors conducting a firm search but agreed that the current circumstances, particularly the small number of firms performing local government audits, make extending with MSA the most practical choice this year.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the FY 2025 audit contract with Martin Starnes & Associates and to approve the associated budget amendment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously approved.

MULTI-YEAR SERVICE AND PURCHASING CONTRACT BETWEEN THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND AXON FOR BODY CAMERAS AND TASERS

The Manager reported that the FY 2026 Sheriff's Office budget includes the replacement and upgrade of body cameras and tasers. After evaluating available options, the Sheriff's Office selected Axon as the preferred vendor. Axon is the only provider whose system fully meets the District Attorney's Office requirements for digital evidence submission, including the secure upload, storage, and management of video and other case-related files.

The agreement with Axon, along with an accompanying amendment outlining the specific licensing levels needed for staff, is a multi-year contract. As such, Board approval is required because the County must commit funds beyond a single fiscal year to meet the contract terms. The contract will also require pre-audit certification by the Finance Director, and the County Manager or Chairman is authorized to sign the agreement once approved.

IT Director Nathanael Carver explained that the additional licensing included in the amendment is necessary to ensure the Sheriff's Office can properly maintain digital evidence and chain-of-custody standards required by the District Attorney.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the Axon contract and accompanying amendment and to authorize the Manager to execute the agreement on behalf of the County, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, and unanimously approved.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD FIXED ROUTE RECOMMENDATION AND
ADMINISTRATION ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION FOR OPERATIONAL STUDY

The Manager explained that this item includes two separate recommendations regarding the County's public transit services.

The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), required by federal transit funding rules, recommended ending the fixed-route bus service due to consistently low ridership. Despite efforts by staff to increase use, ridership has not grown. However, there remains a steady group of riders who depend on the route. Any decision to discontinue the service would require a public hearing before the Board of Commissioners. If the Board wishes to pursue discontinuation, staff will schedule that hearing.

After further review, the Manager recommended not making immediate changes. She advised keeping the current fixed-route service in place for at least six months while the County conducts a comprehensive transit operational study.

The need for a study is driven by several factors:

- Out-of-county medical trips stopped when the local cab company closed, and additional service losses could severely impact riders who rely on transit.
- The study would help determine whether the fixed route can be improved or whether other service models could better meet community needs.
- The Planner/Transportation Director position, intended to oversee both transit operations and long-term planning, is currently vacant. Before filling the role, the County wants to evaluate whether the job description aligns with the department's actual needs.

The Manager stressed that under her recommendation, no service changes would occur until after the operational study, and only if the study supports improvements or alternative service models. Any future changes would still require a public hearing and Board approval.

The Manager proposed contracting with the Land of Sky Regional Council to conduct the study. Land of Sky would manage the request-for-qualifications process and oversee the work. The total project would cost up to \$220,000 (\$200,000 for the study and \$20,000 for administrative services), funded from unassigned fund balance.

Commissioner Dalton asked whether the study could affect existing transit grant funding. The Manager said it would not and may actually help ensure the County is fully utilizing its grant opportunities.

Commissioner Dalton also noted a constituent request for resuming out-of-county medical trips. The Manager said the County can reestablish those services once a qualified vendor is found.

Chairman Chappell said the study could strengthen the County's annual grant applications and that, with vacant staff positions and other changes underway, this is an ideal time to evaluate the entire transit structure.

Commissioner Dalton asked whether Uber or Lyft are restricted in the County. The Manager said the County does not restrict them; the City of Brevard is currently reviewing its taxi and ride-for-hire ordinances to help attract new service providers.

Commissioner McCall noted that Vaya Health and some DSS programs provide transportation for Medicaid clients. She supported the study and wants to identify broader community needs.

Chairman Chappell requested adding a component to the study analyzing whether the County's two transportation-related committees, the Transportation Advisory Board (transit) and the Transportation Advisory Committee (roads), could be combined to reduce confusion and streamline work. The Manager agreed.

Commissioner Dalton moved to authorize the County Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with Land of Sky to conduct a transit operational study, not to exceed \$200,000, with funds coming from unassigned fund balance, and an additional \$20,000 for LOS administrative services, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO 2027

The Manager explained that the County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan is set to expire at the end of the year. Due to significant staffing challenges in the Planning and Community Development Department, including the departure of the Planning Director, a vacant Planner position currently on hold pending the transit operational study, and another Planner on medical leave, staff are not far enough along in preparing an updated plan for proper review and adoption.

She emphasized that a Comprehensive Plan is an important long-term document that guides community development and must reflect both professional standards and community vision. Rushing the process now would not produce a quality document.

To ensure adequate time for thorough preparation and public review, the Manager recommended formally extending the current Comprehensive Plan through 2027. She noted that the original plan's timeframe was shorter than most (typically 20–30 years), and its content remains relevant and representative of community goals. The extension will also give staff time to rebuild capacity and strengthen the plan development process.

Chairman Chappell asked whether the delay could negatively affect grant applications or other matters. The Manager confirmed there would be no adverse impacts. She also noted the Planning Board's membership is stable and that extending the existing plan maintains statutory compliance, as local governments must have a plan in place to ensure ordinance consistency.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the resolution extending the Transylvania County Comprehensive Plan to 2027, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, and unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION # 49-2025 A RESOLUTION TO EXTEND THE TERM OF THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY 2050 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners adopted the Transylvania County 2050 Comprehensive Plan (hereafter the "Plan") as a long-range guiding document for development, growth, and policy decisions in the County; and

WHEREAS, the Plan is currently scheduled to expire on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the County has initiated work on the update of the 2050 Plan (including community engagement, surveys, draft preparation, review, etc.); and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the time needed for robust public participation, technical review, and final adoption procedures, the Board finds that it is in the public interest to extend the effective life of the existing Plan temporarily to avoid a planning “gap”; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to extend the expiration date of the Plan by two years, so that the Plan’s policies and goals continue to guide County decisions until December 31, 2027, unless sooner repealed or replaced;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County as follows:

1. **Extension of Plan Term.** The expiration date of the Transylvania County 2050 Comprehensive Plan is hereby extended from December 31, 2025, to December 31, 2027. During this extension period, the Plan shall continue to serve as the guiding policy document for County planning, zoning, land use, infrastructure, and related decisions, until such time as a new or revised plan is formally adopted.
2. **Interim Review & Updates.** County staff, the Planning Board, and such advisory committees as may be established shall continue to review emerging issues, new data, and changing conditions. The Board may direct interim amendments or minor updates consistent with the Plan during the extension period, provided such amendments follow appropriate public hearing and statutory procedures.
3. **Plan Update Process.** The Board reaffirms its commitment to completing the comprehensive update process no later than December 31, 2027. The update shall include public input, technical analysis, draft proposals, and a final public hearing and adoption.
4. **Consistency & Zoning Compliance.** Zoning and land-use decisions made during the extension period shall continue to be evaluated for consistency or reasonableness with the 2050 Plan, as extended, in accordance with North Carolina law (including G.S. 160D). The Planning Board and Board of Commissioners shall issue plan consistency statements or findings consistent with applicable statute.
5. **Severability.** If any section or provision of this resolution shall be held invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect any other section or provision of this resolution, which can be given effect without the invalid part.
6. **Effective Date.** This resolution shall take effect upon its adoption by the Board of Commissioners, and the extension of the Plan expiration shall be effective immediately.

Adopted this the 10th day of November 2025.

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

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported the following:

- Federal government shutdown impacts:
 - Health and Human Services funding is at risk; funding guidance continues to evolve.
 - Minor funding claw-backs so far (e.g., \$6,000 from Title X) have been absorbed within the current budget.
 - USDA has directed NCDHHS to reduce Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) maximum benefits by 35% for November, meaning many households will receive less or no benefit this month.
 - WIC benefits may not continue past the end of November without additional federal funding.
 - Other nutrition programs could also be affected in the coming weeks.
 - Counties may face financial impacts if federal administrative funding changes; demand for social services could increase.

- The County will continue monitoring needs, sharing information about local food resources, and coordinating with community partners. Counties may fund food assistance for low- or moderate-income residents and seniors and may contract (but not donate funds) private organizations.
- The County is participating in Operation Green Light, a national and statewide initiative to honor veterans by lighting county buildings green from November 4-11. The public is invited to the Veterans Day Ceremony tomorrow at 11 a.m., on the Courthouse Lawn and Gazebo.
- Recognition of the Marine Corps' 250th Anniversary.
- Kudos! Maintenance staff cleaned, sanded, and repainted gazebo benches. Sidewalk repairs leading to the Veterans History Museum were completed in partnership with Palmetto Concrete. These upgrades will benefit the Veterans Day Ceremony.
- Kudos! The Transylvania County Soil & Water Conservation District was named Area 1 Outstanding District for 2024–2025. The award recognizes the district's accomplishments detailed in its annual report.
- Congratulations to Captain Justin Bell and Captain James Dodson on their recent promotions within the Sheriff's Office.
- Kudos! Appreciation expressed to Troy Stauter, EMS Training Officer, for leading CPR and AED training at Carr's Hill Baptist Church.
- Mike Owen, Building Inspections Director, will retire in two weeks. Staff are encouraged to thank him for his years of service. An announcement about his successor will be made soon.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Dalton congratulated the Brevard High School football team on their undefeated season and recognized the Rosman High School football team for earning their first playoff win in nine years.

Chairman Chappell expressed his continued thoughts and prayers for the family of Tawny McCoy, former Chair of the Board of Education, who recently passed away after an illness. He noted her many years of dedicated service to the school system. Chairman Chappell also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and reminded the public that the Board will not meet again until December 8.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Commissioner Dalton moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m., seconded by Commissioner McCall, and unanimously carried.**

Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board