

**MINUTES**  
**TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**JULY 13, 2026 – REGULAR MEETING**

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in a regular meeting on Monday, July 13, 2026, 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 Vice-Chair Larry Chapman, Jason Chappell, Chair Teresa McCall, and Chase McKelvey. Commissioner Jake Dalton was out of town and unable to attend. County Manager Jaime Laughter, County Attorney Megan Silver, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan were also present.

There were approximately 50 people in the audience.

Media: Jon Rich – *Brevard Beagle*

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Teresa McCall presiding declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**WELCOME**

Chairwoman McCall welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Commissioners and staff in attendance.

Chairwoman McCall welcomed Representative Anna Ferguson and invited her to address the audience.

Representative Ferguson addressed recent public concerns regarding funding for three local infrastructure projects: the Azalea Avenue water and sewer extension, a pump station at Brevard High School, and the Town of Rosman's water and sewer project. She explained that the projects had been incorrectly identified by the State several years ago due to a clerical error and assured the Board that the issue is being corrected. She reported that all three projects will remain fully funded through completion.

Representative Ferguson explained that approximately \$10 million in previously misidentified funding had initially been slated for reversion to the State's General Fund. Instead, legislative leadership allowed those funds to remain within her district for Hurricane Helene recovery efforts. She stated that approximately 40% of those funds will be directed to Transylvania County and that an additional \$4 million in Hurricane Helene recovery funding has also been designated for the County.

Representative Ferguson encouraged residents to contact her office with questions regarding State funding matters and emphasized her commitment to serving House District 119.

Chairwoman McCall thanked Representative Ferguson for attending the meeting and for her continued assistance to Transylvania County.

Commissioner Chapman reiterated that, as Representative Ferguson had explained, the funding issue was not the result of any error by Transylvania County. Representative Ferguson confirmed that, to her knowledge, the County was not responsible for the funding error.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

*The public comments reflect the opinions and viewpoints of the speakers.*

Peter Offen expressed concerns about the status of State funding for the Azalea Avenue water and sewer extension, the Brevard High School pump station, and the Town of Rosman's water and sewer project. He requested that the County work with Representative Ferguson to provide the public with a clear explanation of the funding changes, including the reported reallocation of \$10 million and the additional \$4 million for Hurricane Helene recovery. He also encouraged the Board to act more promptly on major projects and grant-funded initiatives, create a public timeline for the infrastructure funding, and continue working with the City of Brevard to address the needs of residents on Azalea Avenue.

Richard Williams declined to speak when recognized.

James Swope criticized what he described as repeated delays in addressing major County projects and initiatives, including the courthouse, school construction, employee compensation, public records requests, and appointments to advisory boards. He urged the Board to take more decisive action on issues affecting the County and stated that elected officials should be held accountable by voters.

Doug Powell thanked the Commissioners who participated in the community reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 4. He spoke about the nation's founding principles, emphasizing his belief that the Declaration of Independence affirms that individual rights are derived from God and that the role of government is to protect those rights. He expressed appreciation to the Board for helping commemorate the nation's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Owen Carson used the analogy of highway rumble strips to encourage the Board to view recent challenges as warning signs requiring proactive leadership. He cited concerns about infrastructure funding, housing affordability, future County revenues, and changing State policies, and encouraged the Board to strengthen communication and collaboration with legislators, municipalities, and the public to address issues before they become larger problems.

## AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

The County Manager requested adding Landfill Erosion Control Update as Item B under Presentations/Recognitions and moving the Update on Response to Hurricane/Tropical Storm Helene to Item C.

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

**Commissioner McKelvey moved to approve the agenda as modified, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

## CONSENT AGENDA

**Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, and unanimously approved.**

The Board approved the following items:

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board approved the minutes of the June 22, 2026, regular meeting.

### DISCOVERY, RELEASE & MONTHLY SETTLEMENT REPORT: JUNE 23-30, 2026

Per N.C.G.S. §§ 105-312(b) and 105-381(b), the Board received the Tax Administrator's Discovery, Release, and Monthly Settlement Report for June 23-30, 2026. The report reflected tax releases totaling \$312.16 and refunds totaling \$1,153.69. The Board approved the report as submitted.

### RESOLUTION DECLARING CERTAIN PRODUCTS, EQUIPMENT, SYSTEMS, AND SERVICES FOR THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE PROJECT TO BE AVAILABLE FROM SOLE SOURCE PROVIDERS

The Board considered a resolution authorizing the use of sole source providers for certain products, equipment, systems, and services for the new courthouse project to ensure compatibility, reliability, security, and long-term maintenance, as authorized by N.C.G.S. § 143-129(e)(6). The Board approved the resolution.

#### RESOLUTION # 28 - 2026

#### DECLARING CERTAIN PRODUCTS, EQUIPMENT, SYSTEMS, AND SERVICES FOR THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE PROJECT TO BE AVAILABLE FROM SOLE SOURCE PROVIDERS PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. § 143-129(e)(6)

WHEREAS, Transylvania County is engaged in the planning, design, and construction of a new courthouse facility to serve the judicial and governmental needs of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the courthouse project includes specialized building systems, detention and security equipment, electronic access control systems, power management systems, locking hardware, and related technologies that are essential to the safe, secure, and efficient operation of the facility; and

WHEREAS, certain systems and equipment proposed for incorporation into the courthouse have proprietary components, software, maintenance requirements, service agreements, warranty provisions, and operational characteristics that necessitate the use of specific manufacturers, vendors, distributors, or authorized service providers; and

WHEREAS, the County has determined that standardization of these systems is necessary to ensure compatibility, reliability, security, continuity of operations, and long-term maintenance support throughout the useful life of the facility; and

WHEREAS, N.C.G.S. § 143-129(e)(6) authorizes the purchase of apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment without competitive bidding when the governing board determines that performance or price competition is not available and that the needed product is available from only one source of supply or through a sole distributor; and

WHEREAS, County staff, the project design team, and courthouse planning consultants have reviewed the proposed systems and vendors and have determined that the following products, equipment, systems, and related services are available only from the identified sole source providers or their authorized representatives:

1. Johnson Controls – Building automation systems, integrated facility controls, proprietary software, related equipment, maintenance, service, and support.
2. Cornerstone Detention Products – Detention security systems, detention doors, detention hardware, controls, proprietary equipment, maintenance, service, and support.

3. Security Camera Warehouse – Electronic security systems, surveillance equipment, access control systems, proprietary components, maintenance, service, and support.
4. Atlantic South Power – Emergency power systems, power management equipment, proprietary components, maintenance, service, and support.
5. Best Lock – Locking hardware, keying systems, access control hardware, proprietary components, maintenance, service, and support.
6. Carrier HVAC Systems – Chiller and boiler systems, the Carrier iVue building automation system, proprietary HVAC equipment, maintenance, service, software, and support. The County currently utilizes Carrier systems and iVue automation at Community Services, the Library, and Public Safety facilities, and standardization will ensure compatibility, operational continuity, and efficient long-term maintenance.
7. Suprema Incorporated – Access control badge swipe systems, proprietary access control hardware and software, maintenance, service, and support. The County currently utilizes Suprema access control systems countywide, and integration with existing systems and servers is necessary to maintain compatibility, centralized management, and operational continuity.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners finds that the identified products, systems, equipment, maintenance, and related services are necessary for the courthouse project and that substantial benefits will be realized through system standardization, compatibility, operational continuity, and long-term maintenance support.

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

1. The Board hereby determines pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-129(e)(6) that the products, systems, equipment, maintenance, support, software, proprietary components, and related services identified herein are available only from the vendors listed above or their authorized representatives.
2. The Board further determines that performance and price competition are not available for these specific products and services due to proprietary technology, compatibility requirements, system integration needs, maintenance obligations, security considerations, and operational requirements associated with the courthouse project.
3. The Board further finds that use of standardized systems across County facilities will reduce operational complexity, improve staff training and system administration, enhance security and reliability, simplify maintenance and replacement parts procurement, and provide cost efficiencies over the life of the courthouse facility.
4. The County Manager, or her designee, is authorized to negotiate and execute purchase orders, contracts, amendments, maintenance agreements, service agreements, and related documents necessary to acquire and maintain the identified products and services in accordance with applicable law and County purchasing policies.
5. This determination shall apply to the courthouse project and any associated maintenance, support, software licensing, upgrades, replacement parts, and related services required for the continued operation of the identified systems.

Adopted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of July 2026.

S://Teresa K. McCall, Chair  
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

REQUEST TO USE THE COMMISSIONERS' MULTIPURPOSE CHAMBERS FOR FAMILY COURT  
AND CANCEL THE SEPTEMBER 14 BOARD MEETING

To accommodate a special Superior Court session and the relocation of family court proceedings, the Clerk of Superior Court requested use of the Commissioners' Multipurpose Chambers on September 14, 2026. Because

the duration of court proceedings could conflict with the Board's regularly scheduled meeting, staff recommended canceling the September 14 Board of Commissioners meeting. The Board approved the request to use the Commissioners' Chambers for family court proceedings and canceled the September 14, 2026, regular meeting. The Clerk was directed to publish the required public notice.

#### OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUEST - HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department requested approval for out-of-state travel for the Substance Abuse Counselor and Re-Entry Coordinator to attend the National Reentry Workforce Collaborative (NRWC) Annual Conference. Attendance is required as part of the federally funded Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP) grant, which supports substance abuse counseling, re-entry coordination, and peer support services for individuals at the Transylvania County Detention Center. The Board approved the requested out-of-state travel.

### **PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS**

#### RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

As part of the Board's semiannual citizen recognition program, the Board recognized volunteers completing service on County advisory boards and commissions between January 1 and June 30, 2026. Chairwoman McCall presented certificates of appreciation and commemorative mugs to those in attendance, and the Clerk will mail certificates to those unable to attend.

The following individuals were recognized for their service:

- John Buford – Agricultural Advisory Board
- Shannon Roberts – County Council on Aging
- James Bailey – Personnel Board
- Jo Ann McCall – Personnel Board
- Billy Parrish – Joint Historic Preservation Commission
- Keith Wilmot – Transportation Advisory Committee
- Karen Cole – Library Board of Trustees
- Jessica Shanor – Social Services Board
- Greg Cochran – Parks and Recreation Commission
- Christina Mahoney – Board of Health
- Daniel Mehdi – Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

#### LANDFILL EROSION CONTROL UPDATE

Assistant County Manager David McNeill presented an update on erosion control measures associated with construction of Phase 7 of the County landfill, which is nearing completion.

Mr. McNeill reported that on May 4, 2026, the County received a Notice of Violation (NOV) from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) identifying erosion and sediment control issues on both the east and west slopes of the construction site, as well as several site-wide corrective measures. He noted that the initial inspection was prompted by reports of a white milky substance near the headwaters of the French Broad River; however, NCDEQ determined the substance did not originate from the landfill.

County staff worked with CBP Environmental and LaBella Engineering to develop and implement a corrective action plan addressing each item identified in the NOV. A response documenting the completed corrective actions was submitted to NCDEQ on May 22.

Following a June 12 reinspection, NCDEQ issued a second NOV on June 19 identifying additional items requiring attention. The County again worked with its consultants to complete the required corrective measures and submitted a second response to NCDEQ on July 2. The County is awaiting a follow-up inspection and has requested that NCDEQ, County staff, the contractor, and the project engineers conduct the inspection together to ensure all concerns are fully addressed.

Mr. McNeill also reported that the County received citizen complaints regarding sediment in Browns Mill Creek near the landfill's east slope. In response, the County engaged CBP Environmental, LaBella Engineering, and an independent engineering firm, Smith + Gardner Engineers, to investigate.

Josh Rue of Smith + Gardner Engineers reported that an inspection of Browns Mill Creek found no active discharge from the landfill's sediment basins during the site visit. The investigation identified several nearby residential construction sites with land-disturbing activity that could also be contributing sediment to the creek. Based on the observations made during the inspection, Smith + Gardner found no evidence that runoff from the landfill was the source of the sediment observed downstream.

Mr. McNeill reported that County staff have continued to monitor the creek and inspect the site following rainfall events. Staff observed that runoff leaving the landfill is generally clear and that sediment increases farther downstream near other construction activities. He stated that the erosion control measures installed at the landfill appear to be functioning as intended, but staff will continue monitoring the site and working closely with NCDEQ.

Mr. McNeill emphasized that the County has taken the violations seriously, completed all required corrective actions, and continues to communicate with NCDEQ throughout the process. He also noted that while the County reported sediment concerns observed at other construction sites to the appropriate regulatory agencies, those sites are outside the County's enforcement jurisdiction.

Commissioner Chapman noted that Phase 7 will be the final landfill cell constructed at the current site due to environmental constraints and the increasing cost of future expansion. He stated that the Board will continue discussions regarding the County's long-term solid waste strategy.

Mr. McNeill clarified that the erosion control issues relate only to construction of Phase 7 and not to the operation of the existing lined landfill cells. He explained that the existing landfill continues to operate as designed and that Phase 7 will function in the same manner once placed into service.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. McNeill acknowledged that some sediment runoff likely occurred during construction before vegetation became established but stated that interim erosion control measures have been implemented to minimize runoff until permanent ground cover is established. He further advised that all corrective actions identified by NCDEQ have been completed and that staff continues to conduct routine site inspections.

Commissioners also discussed citizen inquiries regarding sediment in Browns Mill Creek and NCDEQ's oversight of erosion and sediment control. At Commissioner Chappell's request, staff agreed to post information on the County website directing residents to the appropriate NCDEQ contacts for reporting erosion and sediment concerns.

#### UPDATE ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM HELENE

The County Manager provided an update on Hurricane Helene recovery efforts and highlighted several newly available state and federal assistance programs.

The Manager announced new assistance opportunities for agricultural producers, including the USDA Disaster Block Grant Program for farmers impacted by Hurricane Helene. She also highlighted the North Carolina Forest Service's Disaster Mitigation Program, which provides wildfire risk reduction services in Helene-affected communities, and the Western North Carolina Home Repair Readiness Program, which assists income-qualified homeowners with repairs needed to qualify for energy-efficiency rehabilitation programs. In addition, applications are now being accepted for the Renew NC Multi-Family Construction and Repair Program to support the repair and development of affordable rental housing in impacted areas.

The Manager also provided an update on the County's SMART Program Private Property Debris Removal Program. To date, 428 Rights of Entry have been processed, 35 are pending work authorization, 102 have been determined ineligible by FEMA, 65 work authorizations have been issued to the debris removal contractor, and 244 properties have been completed. She noted that the call center continues assisting property owners with questions and eligibility, and that FEMA's re-review of previously denied applications has resulted in additional properties becoming eligible for assistance.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

### **VOTING DELEGATE TO THE NCACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The Board considered the appointment of a voting delegate and alternate to represent Transylvania County at the NCACC Annual Conference Business Session in Durham County on August 22, 2026.

**Chairwoman McCall moved to appoint Vice-Chair Larry Chapman as the County's Voting Delegate, seconded by Commissioner Chappell, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

**Commissioner Chappell moved to appoint Chairwoman Teresa McCall as the Alternate Voting Delegate, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

Commissioner Chapman noted that his term on the NCACC Board of Directors expires in August and that the Association will soon begin seeking nominations from District 16 for the upcoming term.

### **JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL**

To maintain the membership required by state law for continued eligibility to receive juvenile justice funding, the Board considered filling one of two Commissioner-appointed vacancies on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

**Commissioner Chappell moved to appoint Samantha Salyards to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, seconded simultaneously by Commissioners Chapman and McKelvey, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

### **NURSING AND ADULT CARE HOME ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Board considered the reappointment of Dr. Ben Lamm to the Nursing and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee following the expiration of his term. Regional Ombudsman Donna Case recommended his reappointment.

**Commissioner Chapman moved to reappoint Dr. Ben Lamm to the Nursing and Adult Care Home Advisory Committee, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

### PERSONNEL BOARD

The Board considered filling one of several vacancies on the Personnel Board as the County prepares for its upcoming salary and compensation study. Human Resources Director Sheila Cozart recommended appointing Mark Emory to a member-at-large position based on his human resources experience.

**Commissioner McKelvey moved to appoint Mark Emory to the Personnel Board, seconded by Commissioners Chapman and Chappell, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

### TRANSYLVANIA ECONOMIC ALLIANCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board considered the reappointment of Steve Warner to the public member position on the Transylvania Economic Alliance Board of Directors following the expiration of his term. Executive Director Burton Hodges recommended his reappointment for a full three-year term.

**Commissioner Chappell moved to reappoint Steve Warner to the Transylvania Economic Alliance Board of Directors, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### GRANT-FUNDED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

County Manager Jaime Laughter presented an overview of the status of state-funded infrastructure projects affected by the recently adopted State budget and invited Michael Goforth of High Country Engineering to assist with the presentation.

The Manager explained that the presentation would provide an overview of the Session Law 2023 infrastructure grant funding, the County's grant management practices, the status of the affected infrastructure projects, and recommendations for moving forward.

#### **Status of S.L. 2023 Grant Funds**

The Manager reviewed the status of the Session Law 2023 appropriation, which originally allocated \$10 million for infrastructure projects in Transylvania County, including \$9.85 million for local projects and \$150,000 for grant administration by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ). She reported that the draft State budget released in late June reallocated those funds, providing \$4 million for Blue Ridge Community College and EMS/Fire projects while redirecting approximately \$6 million to other regional priorities and eliminating the original infrastructure allocation for the three County projects.

The Manager stated that County staff first learned of the reallocation when the draft State budget was released and had no prior notice that the funding would be removed. She emphasized that the action was not the result of missed deadlines, grant compliance issues, or project delays. Rather, the County had written correspondence confirming that no expenditure deadlines had been established for the appropriation.

The Manager reported that State legislative leaders responded quickly after learning of the issue and are working to ensure that the affected infrastructure projects ultimately receive funding. She noted that the projects were originally selected through collaboration among Transylvania County, the City of Brevard, and the Town of Rosman to address the County's highest-priority infrastructure needs, consistent with the intent of the original appropriation.

The Manager provided the following status updates on the affected projects:

- **Brevard High School Pump Station:** Engineering is already underway, and the project will continue because of the critical nature of the infrastructure serving the school campus. She noted that direct

funding to the County remains the preferred approach because the work will occur on school property as part of the ongoing school construction project.

- **Azalea Avenue Sewer Extension:** Engineering continues using previously awarded Dogwood Health Trust grant funds. County staff has discussed with the City of Brevard how the Memorandum of Understanding could be structured should construction funding ultimately be directed to the City, which would provide better coordination with the City's planned affordable housing project.
- **Calvert Road Sewer Extension:** Engineering cannot proceed until the Town of Rosman confirms the availability of its required matching funds. The Town has indicated its commitment to securing the match, although those funds have not yet been identified.

The Manager reminded the Board that these infrastructure projects and the allocation of the Session Law 2023 funding have been discussed publicly during prior Board meetings, including the March 9, 2026, meeting. She noted that since 2022, approximately \$55 million in grant funding has been secured collaboratively for projects benefiting Transylvania County, the City of Brevard, and the Town of Rosman. She emphasized that the County's grant strategy has been to partner with local governments to leverage outside funding for critical infrastructure improvements.

### **Grant Management**

The Manager explained that Transylvania County currently administers approximately \$120 million in capital grant funding, exclusive of additional programmatic and staffing grants.

She outlined the County's grant management process, noting that the Board receives regular oversight through monthly capital project status reports, quarterly financial reports presented by the Finance Director, and the County's annual independent audit. She explained that state and federal grants spanning multiple fiscal years are accounted for in separate project funds to ensure proper tracking and reporting.

The Manager further reported that the County is subject to annual program audits because of the volume of state and federal grant funding it receives. Those audits include reviews of grant compliance and the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal and State Awards (SEFSA), and no audit findings have been reported related to grant administration. In addition, many granting agencies conduct their own monitoring reviews, including site visits, examinations of financial records, project files, grant reports, and Board minutes to verify project progress and compliance with grant requirements. She noted that two infrastructure grants reviewed through recent monitoring had no findings.

The Manager emphasized that grant administration includes continual communication with funding agencies regarding reporting requirements, compliance obligations, and project deadlines, all of which vary by grant program. She stated that no expenditure deadlines or reversion dates were communicated for the Session Law 2023 infrastructure appropriation.

The Manager explained that successful administration of capital grants requires coordination among multiple departments and professionals, including Administration, Finance, project managers, engineers, architects, and County project teams.

Referring to the County's monthly capital project reports, the Manager noted that staff regularly provides updates on the status of grant-funded projects, including regulatory reviews, permitting, and project milestones. She cited the June Capital Project Update, which identified the Leachate Cell Expansion Project and the Morris Road Stormwater Project as being under review by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ), issues that would be discussed later in the presentation.

The Manager then contrasted Session Law 2023's appropriation with other grants that contain specific expenditure deadlines. Using the County's \$7 million landfill construction grant administered through the

Office of State Budget and Management as an example, she explained that the County received formal written notice of the June 30 reversion deadline, as well as subsequent correspondence regarding the possibility of an extension. Although an extension was ultimately granted, the County had already expended the funds before the original deadline.

The Manager further explained that grant requirements can change during the life of a project. She cited the County's \$7 million infrastructure grant funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)/State Fiscal Recovery Funds, noting that the funding agency later notified the County that the remaining funds would transition from federal ARPA funds to State General Fund dollars after the federal allocation threshold had been met. She explained that such changes alter the compliance requirements associated with the grant and may also include revised expenditure deadlines or extension opportunities, requiring ongoing coordination with the funding agency throughout the project.

Finally, the Manager noted that many capital projects are financed through multiple funding sources, each with separate eligibility requirements and reporting standards. Using the U.S. 64 Water and Sewer Extension Project as an example, she explained that project expenditures are allocated among multiple grant sources, with each reimbursement request reviewed to ensure compliance with the specific requirements of each funding program. She added that these grants have likewise been reviewed through the County's annual audit without findings.

#### **Status and Background of Infrastructure Grant Funds**

The Manager reported that since 2022, Transylvania County has secured and administered five major infrastructure grant programs, in addition to grant funding received directly by the City of Brevard and the Town of Rosman. She explained that pursuing funding through multiple local governments has strengthened the region's competitiveness for infrastructure funding and resulted in greater overall investment throughout the county.

The Manager summarized the County's major infrastructure grant programs as follows:

- **NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) At-Risk Infrastructure Grant:** Approximately **\$7 million** in combined federal and state funding was secured through the Water Infrastructure Fund for priority county infrastructure projects. The grant was obtained through the efforts of former Senator Chuck Edwards, with guidance that the funds be directed toward the County's highest-priority infrastructure needs. The original grant required expenditures by December 31, 2026, with written notice that failure to meet the deadline could result in reversion of funds. The funding agency has since modified the program to allow construction projects to request deadline extensions. Projects funded through this grant include the U.S. 64/Gaia Herbs Water and Sewer Extension, the Brevard-Rosman Water Interconnect, the Upper Transylvania Watershed Study, the Gallimore Road/Boys and Girls Club Sewer Project, the Leachate Pretreatment Project, and the Morris Road Stormwater Project.
- **Dogwood Health Trust Housing Infrastructure Grant:** The County received \$2 million in private foundation funding to support housing-related infrastructure improvements, with expenditures required by December 2028. The Manager explained that these funds were originally intended to support the Gaia Herbs infrastructure project; however, because DEQ grant funding became available sooner, Dogwood Health Trust approved a modification allowing those funds to be redirected to other eligible housing projects. Current allocations include engineering for the Azalea Avenue Sewer Extension, sewer extensions serving Habitat for Humanity and the Housing Assistance Corporation developments, the Upper Transylvania County Water Distribution Study, and the County's Housing Study.

- **Appalachian Regional Commission Grant:** The County received approximately \$300,000 in federal funding to support the U.S. 64 sewer extension serving Gaia Herbs as an economic development project. The grant is currently in the closeout phase.
- **NC Department of Commerce Industrial Development Fund Grant:** The County received approximately \$880,000 in state funding for the U.S. 64 sewer extension serving Gaia Herbs. The project has been completed, and the grant has been successfully closed out.
- **Session Law 2023 Infrastructure Appropriation:** The General Assembly appropriated \$10 million in state funding for Transylvania County infrastructure projects, including an administrative allocation for the Department of Environmental Quality that was later reduced from \$300,000 to \$150,000, leaving \$9.85 million available for local project funding. On March 9, 2026, the Board allocated the funding among three priority infrastructure projects: the Brevard High School Pump Station, the Azalea Avenue Sewer Extension, and the Calvert Road Sewer Extension.

The Manager also noted that the County has committed local funding to support the City of Brevard's Pisgah Labs infrastructure project by providing the required local match for a federal grant, as well as assisting with the increased project costs resulting from delays in the grant approval process.

### **Current Status of Infrastructure Projects**

The Manager reported that the Board receives monthly updates on capital projects, including infrastructure grants, and that the reports, along with supporting documentation related to the grant-funded projects, are available on the County's website for public review.

The Manager summarized the status of the County's infrastructure projects as follows:

#### *Completed Projects*

- **U.S. 64/Gaia Herbs Sewer Extension:** The \$4.6 million project has been completed and transferred to the Town of Rosman for ownership and operation.
- **Brevard-Rosman Emergency Water Interconnect:** The approximately \$900,000 project has been completed and transferred to the City of Brevard and the Town of Rosman for ownership and operation.
- **Upper Transylvania Water Expansion Preliminary Engineering Study:** The \$50,000 engineering study has been completed and delivered to the Town of Rosman.

#### *Projects Underway*

**Upper Transylvania Watershed Study:** Engineering is underway. The next phase is a State scoping meeting. The Manager noted that watershed studies typically require several years to complete because of the State review process.

**Leachate Pretreatment Project:** Engineering has been completed; however, during the Department of Environmental Quality's review, additional treatment requirements were identified that substantially expanded the scope of the project.

Engineer Michael Goforth explained that the original design consisted of a relatively simple aeration system intended to improve treatment of landfill leachate before it was transported to the Town of Rosman's wastewater treatment facility. During DEQ's review, however, the agency required a much more comprehensive wastewater treatment process than originally anticipated. Those additional requirements significantly increased the project's complexity, cost, operational requirements, and long-term maintenance obligations, including management and disposal of treatment residuals.

Mr. Goforth further reported that, since the project was initiated, the Town of Rosman has received grant funding to construct improvements at its wastewater treatment plant, including an aerated equalization basin that will enhance the system's ability to treat landfill leachate. Given those improvements, together with the County's ongoing evaluation of future solid waste disposal options, he recommended that additional on-site pretreatment be considered as part of the County's long-term solid waste planning rather than proceeding with the current project.

**Morris Road Stormwater Project:** Engineering has been completed; however, DEQ determined that the project was not eligible for funding under the grant program because it consists primarily of stormwater conveyance improvements rather than water quality improvements.

Mr. Goforth explained that the project was designed to improve stormwater conveyance from the Public Safety Facility and future courthouse site along Morris Road. Although the plans and supporting narratives were submitted to DEQ throughout the design process, the agency ultimately determined that grant funding would require the addition of water quality treatment components. He stated that those improvements were not appropriate for the project and would add unnecessary construction and long-term maintenance costs without providing a meaningful benefit, as both the Public Safety Facility and future courthouse will include their own required stormwater treatment systems.

The Manager added that the Morris Road improvements remain necessary because they will ultimately serve the future courthouse site. She recommended incorporating the completed design into the courthouse construction project and bidding the work as an alternate, thereby allowing the grant funding originally designated for the project to be reallocated to other eligible infrastructure needs. She also noted that County staff and the project engineer had worked closely with DEQ throughout the design process and that DEQ acknowledged during recent discussions that it had not initially recognized the project's ineligibility under the grant program.

**Brevard High School Pump Station:** Engineering remains under contract and is progressing. The Manager recommended reallocating engineering costs to the DEQ At-Risk Infrastructure Grant so work can continue without interruption. She further recommended requesting that any future construction funding be appropriated directly to the County because the work is located on school property and must be coordinated with the County's ongoing school construction project.

**Azalea Avenue Sewer Extension:** Engineering continues under the County's Dogwood Health Trust grant. The Manager reported that she has been coordinating with the City of Brevard on a memorandum of understanding that would allow construction responsibilities to be transferred to the City should future construction funding be awarded directly to the City. The agreement cannot be finalized until the final funding source is determined.

**Calvert Road Sewer Extension:** Similarly, the Town of Rosman would have direct administration of the project should construction funding ultimately be awarded directly to the Town rather than the County.

**Pisgah Labs Sewer Extension:** The agreement between the City of Brevard and Pisgah Labs has been finalized, and the engineering contract is under review following the required qualifications-based selection process for federally funded projects. The Manager reported that staff recommends funding the project through the DEQ At-Risk Infrastructure Grant rather than the Session Law 2023 appropriation or County funds, with a memorandum of understanding to be finalized.

## Recommendations

The Manager reviewed staff's recommended adjustments to the County's infrastructure grant funding strategy based on recent guidance from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and ongoing project needs.

She explained that, as noted in previous capital project updates, staff recommends reallocating certain projects among existing grant funding sources to maximize available funding and maintain project schedules. Specifically:

- **Leachate Pretreatment Project:** Remove this project from the DEQ At-Risk Infrastructure Grant. The engineering and planning components would instead be incorporated into the County's ongoing landfill planning efforts to evaluate long-term leachate treatment needs based on future landfill operations and cell closures.
- **Morris Road Stormwater Project:** Remove this project from the DEQ At-Risk Infrastructure Grant. The project design would instead be incorporated as an alternate within the new courthouse project budget.
- **Pisgah Labs Sewer Extension:** Add the engineering and construction phases of this project to the DEQ At-Risk Infrastructure Grant.
- **Brevard High School Pump Station Project:** Add the engineering work and initial construction phase to the DEQ At-Risk Infrastructure Grant to allow the project to move forward without delay. Remaining construction costs would be funded through other grant sources.

The Manager reported that these proposed reallocations would require two grant extension requests beyond the current December 31 deadline for the Pisgah Labs and Brevard High School projects. She emphasized that the requested extensions would apply only to the construction phase, allowing the County to complete the projects and properly close out the grants.

In closing, the Manager acknowledged that the multiple funding sources and grant requirements have created confusion for the public. She emphasized that the County has an experienced team, including administration, finance staff, project managers, engineers, and consultants, that actively manages these grants and ensures compliance with the requirements of each funding source.

The Manager concluded the presentation and invited questions from the Board.

## Board Discussion

Commissioner Chapman asked what the estimated cost would be if the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) ultimately required the County to construct both the leachate pretreatment facility at the landfill and the Morris Road stormwater project. Mr. Goforth estimated the leachate pretreatment project at approximately \$750,000 for construction, plus engineering, surveying, contingencies, and related costs. He estimated the Morris Road stormwater project at approximately \$450,000 for construction.

Mr. Goforth explained that the proposed leachate pretreatment facility originated from challenges experienced by the Town of Rosman's wastewater treatment plant in treating landfill leachate together with other wastewater flows. The pretreatment system was intended to reduce those impacts before the leachate entered the Town's treatment system.

Commissioner Chapman asked whether there remained a risk that Rosman could be unable to treat the leachate without additional improvements. Mr. Goforth explained that the Town had secured funding for an aerated equalization basin at its wastewater treatment plant, which will mix, aerate, cool, and equalize incoming wastewater before treatment, helping address those concerns.

Commissioner Chappell noted that the situation was similar to previous improvements undertaken by the City of Brevard to address industrial wastewater impacts from Oskar Blues Brewery. Mr. Goforth agreed that the circumstances were comparable.

Commissioner Chappell emphasized that, regardless of any future decisions regarding the County's solid waste system, the County will continue to have a long-term responsibility for managing landfill leachate. The Manager agreed, noting that although leachate volumes should decrease as landfill cells are closed, leachate generation will continue for many years. She added that existing stormwater diversion measures help reduce leachate generation but are limited by landfill regulatory requirements.

The Manager recommended that the Board authorize the County Manager and the County's engineer to make the recommended revisions to the DEQ At-Risk funding allocations and execute the necessary resolutions of acceptance for each project. She further recommended authorizing the County Manager to accept future grant awards, execute grant documents as the County's delegated official, and amend memoranda of understanding as needed to accommodate new funding sources identified for the remaining infrastructure projects.

**Commissioner Chappell moved to authorize the County Manager and County Engineer to revise the DEQ At-Risk funding allocations as recommended and execute the necessary resolutions of acceptance for each project. The motion also authorized the County Manager to accept grant funds, execute all required grant documents as the delegated official, and amend memoranda of understanding as necessary to accommodate new funding sources for the remaining projects. Commissioner Chapman seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

Following the vote, Commissioner Chappell asked whether the grant audits discussed earlier also include reviews of grant drawdown requirements. The Manager confirmed that grant monitoring includes compliance with grant agreements, expenditure eligibility, reporting deadlines, drawdown procedures, and other program requirements. She noted that these reviews are conducted in addition to the County's annual financial audit and that the Finance Director will discuss those processes later in the meeting.

Commissioner Chappell observed that these monitoring processes provide additional oversight beyond the County's internal grant management procedures. The Manager agreed, explaining that because of the volume of state and federal grant funding administered by the County, Transylvania County is subject to a significantly higher level of monitoring and compliance review than many smaller jurisdictions.

Commissioner Chapman asked whether the County had previously experienced any grant clawbacks or compliance issues resulting from failure to meet grant requirements. The Manager responded that the County has never had grant funds clawed back or lost due to noncompliance, including the current infrastructure grants under discussion. She noted that one federal COVID-related grant program was discontinued through a federal rescission affecting numerous jurisdictions. Although the County lost access to less than \$100,000 in funding under that program, the restrictive grant requirements prevented identification of an eligible project, resulting in no financial impact to the County.

Chairwoman McCall thanked the Manager for the comprehensive presentation, stating that it clearly demonstrated the County's grant management practices and the statutory requirement that grant funds be maintained separately from General Fund revenues. She noted that the County's annual audits consistently verify that grant funds are administered in accordance with their intended purposes and expressed appreciation for the factual presentation, which she believed would help address misinformation regarding the County's management of grant-funded projects.

### NCACC LEGISLATIVE GOALS

At its previous meeting, the Board reviewed legislative goals submitted during previous cycles and discussed potential priorities for the upcoming session. Discussion included concerns regarding unfunded state mandates, restrictions on local revenue sources, local control of school calendars, the use of occupancy tax revenues, and proposals affecting property tax authority. Commissioners emphasized the importance of advocating for greater state funding support for mandated services and preserving local government flexibility in addressing community needs.

Staff has consolidated the goals to promote several guiding principles:

- The State of North Carolina should fully fund state-mandated services.
- State policy changes should not result in unintended revenue losses or cost shifts to county governments.
- Counties should be provided reasonable flexibility to address local needs and local circumstances.
- State funding formulas should accurately reflect local fiscal capacity, economic realities, and service demands.
- Public entities receiving taxpayer dollars should be held to consistent standards of transparency, accountability, and fiscal stewardship.
- Counties with unique geographic, environmental, tourism, or land-use characteristics should have access to tools that allow them to maintain a sustainable tax base while continuing to support statewide priorities.

Staff requested that the Board discuss and offer any modifications to the current consolidated goal list and then approve the final list of legislative goals for submission to the NC Association of County Commissioners for consideration, along with the cover letter from Chairwoman McCall.

With no modifications or additions, **Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the legislative goals for submission to the NC Association of County Commissioners for consideration, along with the cover letter from Chairwoman McCall, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously approved.**

### REQUEST TO EXTEND CONTRACT WITH ALLIES 4 OUTCOMES

DSS Director Amanda Vanderoef presented a request to extend the County's contract with Allies 4 Outcomes to continue providing staffing support for the Child Welfare Division.

In March 2026, the Board approved a three-month contract with Allies 4 Outcomes, not to exceed \$135,921, to address staffing shortages in the Child Welfare Division. Since the contract became effective on April 1, 2026, the department has incurred \$16,605.14 in expenses through the June 15 service invoice, with approximately \$4,000 in additional June expenses anticipated.

Ms. Vanderoef reported that the contract has successfully supplemented staffing while the department continues recruiting and training permanent employees. Although several vacancies have been filled, Foster Care continues to experience staffing shortages, including one position that has remained vacant for six months and an anticipated retirement later this year.

She explained that Allies 4 Outcomes is one of several agencies that provide temporary staffing support to county departments of social services across North Carolina. Because Child Welfare services are mandated by the State, the department must continue providing services regardless of staffing shortages.

Ms. Vanderoef requested approval to carry forward the remaining contract balance of \$114,515.85 from FY 2026 to FY 2027 and extend the contract through June 30, 2027, allowing the department to utilize contract staff as needed rather than requesting additional Board approvals throughout the year.

Commissioner Chappell thanked Ms. Vanderoef for noting that staffing shortages are a statewide issue and commended the department for identifying solutions to ensure mandated services continue uninterrupted. He remarked that the challenges of recruiting and retaining qualified child welfare staff are likely to continue.

Chairwoman McCall asked for clarification regarding the requested contract term and the carryforward of funds. Ms. Vanderoef explained that the carryforward represents the funding available to draw upon if contract services are needed and that she does not anticipate using the entire amount. She emphasized that, as with the original contract, the department intends to use only the services necessary.

Commissioner McKelvey expressed support for the request, noting that the department had used less than 20% of the originally authorized amount while successfully maintaining operations. He commended Ms. Vanderoef and her staff for managing the workload effectively.

Commissioner Chappell questioned the significant difference between the original contract authorization and the amount actually used. Ms. Vanderoef explained that the contract amount was based on estimated staffing needs and the agency's hourly rates. At the time the contract was approved, four of six Child Welfare positions were vacant, but the department has since filled several positions, reducing its reliance on contract staff. The Manager added that fluctuations in caseload also affect the level of contract services needed and noted that the County receives a 50% reimbursement of eligible state administrative costs associated with the contract.

In response to Chairwoman McCall's question about the carryforward process, the Manager explained that funds associated with outstanding purchase orders or contracts are routinely carried forward into the next fiscal year. Because the Board had originally limited this contract to June 30, 2026, staff returned to the Board to request both the carryforward of funds and an extension of the contract term.

**Commissioner Chappell moved to carry forward \$114,515.85 from FY 2026 to FY 2027 and extend the contract with Allies 4 Outcomes through June 30, 2027, to continue providing staffing support for the Child Welfare Division. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chapman and unanimously approved.**

Following the vote, Commissioner Chappell requested that staff provide quarterly reports on the use of contract services, including expenditures and utilization. The Manager agreed and stated that the quarterly reports would also include the number of cases served to provide additional context regarding contract usage.

## NEW BUSINESS

### 2025 TAX SETTLEMENT REPORT

Tax Administrator Jessica McCall presented the annual Tax Settlement Report for the 2025 tax year, as required by N.C.G.S. § 105-373.

- 2025 Total Tax Levy
  - County: \$47,467,688.44
  - All Districts: \$54,330,548.35
- 2025 Taxes Collected (as of June 30, 2026)
  - County: \$47,352,840.78
  - All Districts: \$54,203,078.29

- 2025 Taxes Outstanding (as of June 30, 2026)
  - County: \$114,847.66
  - All Districts: \$127,470.06
- Overall County Collection Rate: 99.76%
  - Collection rate as of January 5, 2026 (last day to pay without interest): 90.25%
- 2024 and Prior Delinquent Taxes Collected (as of June 30, 2026)
  - County: \$85,952.83
  - All Districts: \$93,614.84
- Bank Attachments: 0
- Wage Garnishments: 0
- Active Payment Plans: 164 (up from 126 the previous year)
- Approximately 10,000 delinquent taxpayer contacts were made through phone calls, emails, letters, and other outreach efforts.

Commissioner Chappell remarked that he is consistently impressed by the number of taxpayer contacts made each year, noting the Tax Office's diligence and professionalism. He commended Ms. McCall and her staff for working with taxpayers to establish payment plans and other options to help them meet their tax obligations.

Chairwoman McCall also commended the Tax Office for continuing to achieve an exceptional annual collection rate.

**Commissioner Chappell moved to accept the 2025 Tax Settlement Report as presented, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously approved.**

#### 2026 ORDER TO COLLECT ALL REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES

Tax Administrator Jessica McCall presented the annual Order to Collect Taxes.

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 105-321, the Board is required to charge the Tax Collector with the collection of the 2026 tax bills. The Order to Collect authorizes the Tax Collector to collect taxes using all remedies provided by law, including forced collection when necessary, and has the force and effect of a judgment and execution against the taxpayer's real and personal property.

**Commissioner Chappell moved to approve the 2026 Order to Collect All Real and Personal Property Taxes, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey, and unanimously approved.**

#### FY 2026 CONTRACT TO AUDIT ACCOUNTS

Finance Director Meagan O'Neal presented the proposed contract for the FY 2026 annual audit of the County's accounts, as required by N.C.G.S. § 159-34(a).

Martin Starnes & Associates has served as the County's independent auditor for several years. At the direction of the Board of Commissioners, staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the FY 2022 through FY 2024 audits to evaluate available firms and ensure the County continued to receive high-quality audit services at a competitive cost. Martin Starnes & Associates was selected through that competitive process and subsequently received a one-year contract extension for the FY 2025 audit. That extension included a 21% increase in the audit fee from FY 2024 following three consecutive years without an increase and to better reflect current market rates for governmental audit services.

The proposed FY 2026 contract includes an audit fee of \$83,000, a 7% increase over FY 2025. The contract also provides for additional fees associated with required state and federal grant testing and financial statement preparation, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$124,500.

She noted that audit costs have increased significantly across North Carolina due to a shrinking number of firms qualified to perform governmental audits, increasing audit complexity, additional Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) reporting requirements, and expanded testing required for state and federal grant programs. Because the County expends more than \$1 million annually in federal funds, it must undergo a Single Audit, which requires detailed testing of major grant programs, internal controls, procurement practices, financial reporting, and grant compliance.

Ms. O'Neal explained that the number of grant programs subject to testing varies each year based on expenditures. Although only two major programs are included in the base contract, additional testing may be required depending on annual grant activity. During the FY 2025 audit, seven grant programs required testing, necessitating a contract amendment. Staff included funding for up to nine programs in the FY 2026 contract to account for the potential workload, although the County will pay only for the testing that is ultimately required.

She emphasized that the County's investment in maintaining strong internal controls and thorough documentation has resulted in clean grant compliance reviews and annual audits without questioned costs or compliance findings. Those efforts strengthen the County's ability to compete successfully for future grant funding.

Ms. O'Neal also presented a statewide comparison of governmental audit firms and contract costs. She explained that relatively few firms are approved by the Local Government Commission to perform county audits and that Martin Starnes & Associates remains competitively priced near the midpoint of comparable contracts across North Carolina. Staff believes approving the contract would allow interim audit work to begin in early August and place the County on schedule to complete the FY 2026 audit by year-end.

Commissioner Chapman agreed with staff's recommendation, noting the increasing difficulty counties face in securing qualified auditors. Based on the information presented, he believed the proposed contract represented a fair market price and expressed concern that delaying approval to seek new proposals could jeopardize the County's ability to retain an auditor.

**Commissioner Chapman moved to approve the FY 2026 audit contract with Martin Starnes & Associates and the associated budget amendment. Commissioner McKelvey seconded the motion.**

Commissioner Chappell supported the motion and expressed appreciation that Martin Starnes periodically rotates audit partners and staff to provide fresh perspectives while maintaining continuity. He also emphasized that the shortage of qualified governmental auditors is a statewide issue that should be brought to the attention of the General Assembly, as the increasing complexity of governmental auditing may discourage firms from continuing to perform local government audits. In response to questions from the Board, Ms. O'Neal explained that while audit teams change periodically, the firm maintains continuity through its audit manager. She also noted that Single Audit testing requires auditors to verify not only grant expenditures but also the County's compliance with its own adopted procurement policies and internal control procedures. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Following the vote, Chairwoman McCall remarked that the County's continued record of clean audits demonstrates its commitment to proper financial management and accountability.

Ms. O'Neal reported that the FY 2025 audit was submitted to the Local Government Commission on June 25, 2026, and that the County successfully completed two on-site grant compliance reviews the following week.

## APPROVAL OF MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT WITH THREATLOCKER, INC. FOR CYBERSECURITY PLATFORM

IT Director Nathanael Carver presented a request to approve a multi-year agreement with ThreatLocker, Inc. to implement an advanced cybersecurity platform for the County.

Mr. Carver explained that cybersecurity remains a top priority to protect County operations, maintain essential public services, and safeguard sensitive citizen and employee information. Cyberattacks against local governments continue to increase in both frequency and sophistication, creating risks that can disrupt operations, compromise data, and result in significant recovery costs.

ThreatLocker's cybersecurity platform is designed to prevent unauthorized software and malicious programs from executing on County computers, significantly reducing the risk of ransomware, malware, and other cyber threats. The proposed agreement includes software licensing, implementation, ongoing support, and product updates throughout the contract term.

Mr. Carver reported that the Information Technology Department negotiated a 63% discount, approximately \$215,000, from ThreatLocker's list price by entering into a multi-year agreement. The contract also locks in pricing for the duration of the agreement and replaces two existing software programs, creating additional cost savings. Funding for the agreement is included in the FY 2027 Information Technology operating budget.

The County Attorney reviewed the agreement and confirmed that it meets the County's contractual and legal requirements.

Commissioner Chappell asked how frequently the County experiences cyberattacks. Mr. Carver responded that the County encounters between 20 and 50 brute force attacks targeting employee email accounts each day.

The Manager added that during a recent conversation with Mr. Carver regarding another IT matter, he observed approximately 15 different attempts to log into the Manager's email account from foreign countries within 30 seconds, illustrating the constant nature of cybersecurity threats facing the County.

Commissioner McKelvey asked about the implementation timeline. Mr. Carver reported that the onboarding process had already begun in anticipation of the Board's action.

**Commissioner McKelvey moved to approve the multi-year agreement with ThreatLocker, Inc. and authorize the County Manager to execute all necessary contract documents. Commissioner Chapman seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

## MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager provided the following updates to the Board:

- Residents were encouraged to prepare for the remainder of hurricane season by reviewing their flood insurance coverage and developing emergency preparedness plans. She reminded the public that standard homeowner's insurance typically does not cover flood damage and that most flood insurance policies include a 30-day waiting period before coverage becomes effective. She also encouraged residents to utilize available preparedness resources and flood alert tools offered by the State.
- The County has been awarded several new grants totaling approximately \$4.4 million. These include \$2.1 million for streambank restoration and debris removal projects to be administered by the Soil and Water Conservation District and approximately \$2.3 million to support the construction of two new communications towers and related equipment.

- The Manager recognized employees at the Solid Waste Department after receiving a complimentary phone call from a citizen praising staff for their exceptional customer service, patience, and willingness to assist elderly and disabled residents.
- She also thanked the Information Technology Department for assisting with an investigation into an email delivery issue involving Proton Mail accounts. The investigation determined that certain emails had been blocked by Microsoft's email security system before reaching County staff. The County is exploring options to safely allow those emails while maintaining cybersecurity protections and encouraged citizens to contact the County if they do not receive an expected response to an email.
- The Manager highlighted several provisions of the recently adopted State budget that may affect County operations, including teacher salary increases, changes to SNAP administrative funding and cost-sharing requirements for counties, a state-funded bonus for sworn law enforcement officers, revisions to laws governing the sale of water and wastewater systems, restrictions on occupancy tax revenues, changes to cash payment rounding requirements for property taxes, and expanded investment options for local governments. Staff continues to review the legislation and monitor additional guidance from the School of Government and the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.
- Finally, she reminded the public of several upcoming events commemorating America's 250th anniversary, including educational programs and historical demonstrations scheduled throughout the summer.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

*The public comments represent the speakers' opinions and points of view.*

Owen Carson addressed several matters related to the County landfill, sedimentation, stormwater management, and floodplain regulations. He stated that the Notice of Violation (NOV) regarding the landfill described multiple sediment discharges into Woodruff Branch and questioned the extent of sediment that entered the stream. He also referenced observations of a white, milky discharge in the creek dating back to 2023 and suggested further investigation into potential sediment sources upstream, including nearby residential developments. Mr. Carson encouraged the County to strengthen its land disturbance ordinance by clarifying enforcement authority and procedures. Mr. Carson also discussed landfill leachate management, suggesting the County explore whether the City of Brevard's wastewater treatment facility could accept leachate in the future as part of its planned upgrades. Finally, he encouraged the Board to consider strengthening the County's flood damage prevention ordinance to improve flood resilience and help property owners maintain access to flood insurance.

## **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Chapman thanked everyone who attended the meeting in person or online and encouraged citizens to rely on factual information available through the County rather than social media commentary. He expressed appreciation to the County Manager, staff, and Clerk for their work managing County operations and significant grant funding. He also thanked Representative Ferguson for attending the meeting and noted that Senator Corbin had remained engaged throughout the discussions. He encouraged citizens to continue participating in Board meetings.

Commissioner Chappell thanked Representative Ferguson and Senator Corbin for their responsiveness after concerns regarding the infrastructure funding became known and expressed appreciation for their willingness to work toward a solution. He also encouraged consideration of additional flash flood notification systems similar to those used in neighboring counties, noting their potential to improve public safety and suggesting they could be supported through future state funding or partnerships.

Chairwoman McCall thanked the County Manager and County staff for their extensive work researching the infrastructure funding issue and assembling factual information for the Board and the public. She also thanked Representative Ferguson and Senator Corbin for their prompt communication and efforts to resolve the funding issue. Chairwoman McCall expressed appreciation to everyone who spoke during public comment, emphasizing that while differing opinions are expected, accurate information is essential. She noted that supporting documentation and the project timeline are publicly available through the County and encouraged citizens to review those materials.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Commissioner Chapman moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Chappell and unanimously approved.**

S://Teresa K. McCall

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Teresa K. McCall, Chair  
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

S://Trisha M. Hogan

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Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board