

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
MARCH 18, 2025**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on March 18, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Balsam-Willets Fire Department, 36 Mount Pleasant Church Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present:	Mark A. Letson, Chairman	John Kubis, County Attorney (Via Zoom)
	Todd Bryson, Vice Chair	Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to the Board
	Jenny Lynn Hooper, Commissioner	Darlene Fox, Finance Director
	Michael Jennings, Commissioner	
	John W. Smith, Commissioner	
Absent:	Kevin King, County Manager	

Chairman Letson called the meeting to order.

(1) PRESENTATION OF COLORS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chairman Letson welcomed and congratulated the Smoky Mountain High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps., who had 31 total members in their first year.

In attendance: Sergeant First Class Tremko, Lieutenant Colonel Carter and Cadets: Commander Landon Thomas, First Lieutenant Camden Davis, First Lieutenant Ford Perry, First Lieutenant Victoria Moore and Corporal Kaylynn Allen.

The Presentation of Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance were presented by the Smoky Mountain High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

(2) AGENDA: Commissioner Smith moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Bryson seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(3) MINUTES: Commissioner Bryson moved to approve the minutes a Regular Meeting of March 04, 2025 and a Work Session of March 04, 2025. Commissioner Hooper seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(4) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Chairman Letson reported he attended a class for CPR and AED training at the Glenville-Cashiers Rescue Squad. It was a wonderful class and a great offering to the community. Over 300 people had attended the class so far and one life had been saved as a result of the trainings.

(5) COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

(a) Commissioner Bryson thanked Balsam Fire Department for hosting the Commissioner meeting that evening.

(b) Commissioner Smith stated two weeks ago he visited the Smoky Mountain JROTC and asked them to Present Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance for the meeting. He appreciated them and he urged the other Commissioners to visit with Smoky Mountain High School JROTC to check out the program. He was hopeful to have at least double the enrollment in the program in the fall.

(6) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT: None.

(7) INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC:

(a) Dick Darnall requested the paving of Indian Mound Road. He also requested to look at implementing calligraphy back into the school program for third graders.

(b) Brad Reisinger stated he had been a resident in the county since 2008 and he had two kids in Jackson County Schools. He had been an English teacher in both public and Christian schools and had spent the last 15 years as a college English instructor. School Boards should prioritize student success rather than advancing political party agendas. Partisan elections would pressure school board members to conform to party platforms rather than make independent student focused decisions. Also, off cycle elections helped to create a local buffer between local and national political issues. He requested the Board rescind the last-minute bill to make the School Board partisan.

(c) Casey Walawender stated she also wanted to speak about the partisan Board of Education issue. She was a parent and Jackson County resident. She had been a school employee in Jackson County Public Schools for six years and PTA President. It bothered her that the item was not on the agenda and there was no opportunity for the community to speak to the issue before the Board voted. She requested the Board pull back on this and have discussions to hear from the community. She thought more transparency was needed in the future about what the Board would vote on and talk about because it impacted the kids.

(8) CONSENT AGENDA: Ms. Fox presented:

(a) Finance Report for February for approval.

(b) Tax Collector and Refund Reports for February for approval.

***Motion:** Commissioner Smith moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Hooper seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(9) RESOLUTION R25-07 APPLICATION FOR FINANCING AGREEMENT:

Ms. Fox stated Resolution R25-07 authorized the filing of an application for the approval of the financing agreement authorized by North Carolina General Statute 160A-20. This would be the financing for the projects approved previously by the Board in the Capital Improvement Plan.

***Motion:** Commissioner Smith moved to approve Resolution R25-07 Application for Financing Agreement, as presented. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(10) RESOLUTION R25-08 RENAMING A PORTION OF US HIGHWAY 74 "CHARLES R. ELDERS HIGHWAY": Ms. Fox presented Resolution R25-08 requesting the North Carolina Board of Transportation rename a portion of US Highway 74 the "Charles R. Elders Highway" for consideration.

***Motion:** Commissioner Hooper moved to approve Resolution R25-07 renaming a portion of US Highway 74 the "Charles R. Elders Highway" as presented. Commissioner Bryson seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(11) PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

There being no further business, Commissioner Hooper moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Mark A. Letson, Chairman