

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
DECEMBER 16, 2025**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on December 16, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Mark A. Letson, Chairman
Jenny Lynn Hooper, Commissioner
Michael Jennings, Commissioner
John W. Smith, Commissioner
Absent: Todd Bryson, Vice Chair

Kevin King, County Manager
John Kubis, County Attorney (Via Zoom)
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Letson called the meeting to order.

(1) AGENDA: Commissioner Hooper moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(2) MINUTES: Commissioner Smith moved to approve the minutes of a Regular Meeting and Organizational Meeting of December 02, 2025 and a Work Session of December 02, 2025. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(3) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Chairman Letson reported he attended the Glendale-Cashiers Fire Department Christmas dinner at High Hampton. It was great to see everyone and their families. He thanked Toxaway Fire Department for covering so all the firefighters could attend.

(4) COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

(a) Commissioner Hooper stated they were invited to have lunch with the County Grounds Crew and it was phenomenal. Those people needed to be recognized for their cooking and for the work they did keeping all the grounds looking nice year-round. Also, the Rescue Squad held its dinner and awards ceremony honoring several of their volunteer members.

(b) Commissioner Smith stated the chili and baked potatoes were really good with the Grounds Crew. He enjoyed it as well.

(5) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT: Mr. King reported:

(a) **National Wreaths Across America Day:** December 13th was National Wreaths Across America Day. Locally, there were about 40 volunteers helping with the event.

(b) **School Projects:** A joint meeting would be held with the Board of Education on January 22nd to discuss all the school projects.

(c) **Fair Grounds:** At the last meeting, the Board awarded the bid to Clark Leatherwood and the project was proceeding.

(d) **Administration Building:** There were two bid dates for the project starting January 2nd.

(e) **Highway 107:** Several meetings were held about the project and the bid was awarded to Buchanan and Sons, Inc.

(6) INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC:

- (a) Phil Ayers requested support to have a portion of Macktown Gap Road paved by the state.
- (b) Brad Reisinger urged the Board to reconsider leaving FRL. He believed Yancey County was an example of how unsuccessful the transition could be.
- (c) German Vivas stated he was running for Commissioner in District One. He was concerned about taxes and county investments.
- (d) Mike Jones stated his concern about a brochure being circulated stating there were hundreds of inappropriate books at the library.
- (e) Becky Abel urged the Board not to exit FRL.
- (f) Chris Hamlet stated his concerns with the FRL Amendments.

(7) CONSENT AGENDA:

- (a) Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented the Finance Report for November, 2025; two Budget Ordinance Amendments for fiscal year ending June 30, 2026; and a Capital Project Ordinance for school projects, for approval.
- (b) Brandi Henson Brooks, Tax Collector, presented the Tax Collector and Refund Reports for November, 2025, for approval.

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

(8) PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINANCING: Ms. Fox requested the Board call for a public hearing for financing on January 6th at 6:25 p.m. The financing would be for the Administration Building, Fairview Elementary and the SMHS Track in the amount of \$27 mil. The proposals were due on December 19th.

Motion: Commissioner Jennings moved to set a public hearing for financing on January 6th at 6:25 p.m. to be held at the Justice and Administration Building, Room A201, as requested. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(9) APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION GRANT APPLICATION FOR INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION: Tiffany Henry, Economic Development Director, stated they were at a point to submit an application to Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for the waterline expansion that would service the Fair Ground property and the Whittier Community. The grant application was in partnership with the EBCI. She presented a letter requesting a \$700,000 grant from ARC with the remaining balance being paid by the county in the amount of \$1,021,700 and the EBCI in the amount of \$1,021,700. She requested the Board to allow Mr. King to sign the grant application for submission.

Motion: Commissioner Smith moved to approve the grant application and allow Mr. King to sign the grant application documents, as requested. Commissioner Hooper seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(10) FONTANA REGIONAL LIBRARY AGREEMENT: Mr. King presented the redlined version of the Amended Fontana Regional Library Agreement. The Board took the amendments into consideration at the work session.

General discussions were held.

Motion: Commissioner Smith moved to approve Amended Fontana Regional Library Agreement, as presented. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(11) BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RULES AND PROCEDURES POLICY: Mr. King stated the Board discussed this item at the work session. The version he presented was unchanged from last year.

Commissioner Jennings requested to add the Pledge of Allegiance to the start of the meetings. Commissioner Hooper stated she agreed.

Motion: *Commissioner Hooper moved to approve Board of Commissioners Rules and Procedures Policy, with the amendment of adding the Pledge of Allegiance under regular meetings, to be first on the agenda. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(12) COUNCIL ON AGING:

Motion: *Commissioner Jennings moved to reappoint Scott McConnell to serve an additional three-year term on the Council on Aging. Commissioner Smith seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(13) DANGEROUS DOG BOARD:

Motion: *Commissioner Smith moved to appoint Austin Holland, Jane Finneran and Rebecca Stevens to serve terms on the Dangerous Dog Board. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(14) FIREMEN'S RELIEF FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Recommendations for appointments were submitted by the respective fire departments.

Motion: *Commissioner Smith moved to appoint Steve Carpenter of the Balsam-Willets-Ochre Hill VFD; reappoint Terry McCall of the Canada VFD; reappoint Randy Dillard of the Cashiers-Glenville VFD; reappoint Leo Webb of the Cullowhee VFD; reappoint John Thomasson of the Qualla VFD; and reappoint Chris Cabe of the Savannah VFD, to serve two-year terms on the Firemen's Relief Fund Board of Trustees, terms expiring January 1, 2028. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(15) TUCKASEIGEE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY:

Motion: *Commissioner Smith moved to appoint Bruce Alan Farmer and Commissioner Jenny Hooper to serve three-year terms on the Tuckaseigee Water and Sewer Authority. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(16) PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

(17) CLOSED SESSION:

Motion: *Commissioner Hooper moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) Legal. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried.*

Chairman Letson called the regular meeting back to order and stated no action was taken in closed session.

There being no further business, Commissioner Hooper moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jennings seconded the Motion. Motion carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Attest:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Approved:

Mark A. Letson, Chairman