



Foothills Regional Commission
Full Board Meeting
March 27th, 2025
Minutes

Board Members Present

- **Vice-Chair:** Max Hopper, Cleveland County
- **Chair:** Fred Baisden, Polk County
- Janet Gerald, Town of Kingstown
- Jack Shytle, Town of Polkville
- Jimmy Dancy, Town of Rutherfordton
- Doug Bridges, Cleveland County
- Rodney Willis, Town of Bellwood
- Dee Dee Bright, Town of Forest City
- Tommy Greene, Town of Boiling Springs
- David Guy, Town of Ruth

FRC Staff Present

- Danna Stansbury
- Charlotte Sullivan
- Amanda Scott
- Annette Staley
- Penny Martinez
- Laura Lynch
- Alan Toney

FRC Staff Absent

- Pam Hall

Guests Present

- Amy Baer

Board Members Absent

- **Secretary:** Bryan King, Rutherford County
- Jeffery Emory, Town of Grover
- Ashley Wooten, McDowell County
- Tom Helton, Town of Ellenboro
- Rick Howell, City of Shelby
- Mike Lugo, Rutherford County
- Scott Neisler, City of Kings Mountain
- Ray Padgett, Town of Lawndale
- Mark Phillips, Town of Columbus
- Jeff Swink, Town of Bostic
- Carol Pritchett, Town of Lake Lure
- Justin Conner, Town of Forest City
- David Moore, Polk County
- Marche Pittman, Polk County
- Dean Buff, McDowell County
- Scott Webber, Town of Spindale
- Steve Garrison, Rutherford County
- Larry Dooley, Cleveland County
- Peter O'Leary, Chimney Rock Village

Virtual Attendees

- Joe McKinney



Call to Order

Foothills Regional Commission (FRC) full board Meeting was held at Isothermal Community College in the Business Sciences Building, room 15, on March 27th, 2025. Chairman Fred Baisden called the meeting to order at 12:09 pm and welcomed everyone. The meeting began with a moment of silence in remembrance of the recent passing of local mayors and those affected by the ongoing fires. The Pledge of Allegiance and State Salute to the North Carolina Flag followed the invocation. The board then enjoyed lunch together.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Baisden introduced the meeting minutes from December 12, 2025, for discussion.

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Jimmy Dancy.
- Seconded by: Tommy Greene.
- Motion passes unanimously.

Reports and Presentations

A. National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Update Joe McKinney, Executive Director of NADO, joined the meeting virtually and provided a presentation on federal legislative and funding updates. Key highlights included:

- Praised Danna Stansbury's leadership and passion for rural communities, noting her role on the NADO board.
- Clarified NADO's role as a national network supporting community and economic development through regional councils.
- NADO advocates for local governments on Capitol Hill and collaborates closely with federal agencies, including EDA, HUD, USDA, and FHWA.
- Emphasized the bipartisan reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the first time in 21 years.
- Planning partnership grants may increase from \$70,000 to \$200,000, with a potential 100% federal match.
- Reauthorization also increased authorized funding for infrastructure and public works, which is particularly critical after disasters.
- Urged local leaders to stay engaged and be prepared to advocate to Congress in the fall when appropriations are considered.

- Shared appreciation for local officials' involvement, stating it significantly impacts congressional decision-making.
- Encouraged local officials to remain engaged and be prepared to contact congressional representatives later in the year to advocate for funding.

Finance & Budget

(Charlotte Sullivan, Finance Director)

- Noted fluctuations in investment, general funds, and payroll accounts.
- Concerns were raised regarding the uncertainty of federal funding for Section 8 housing and Aging services.
- Budget Amendment #4: \$397,131
 - Community & Economic Development - \$217,259
 - Aging - \$179,872
- Reported on the success of the inter-council contract with Land of Sky. This marks the first time such a shared services agreement has been established for Councils of Government.
- The board expressed support and excitement for future collaborations.

Chair Baisden introduced Budget Amendment #4 Resolution for discussion.

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Tommy Greene.
- Seconded by: David Guy.
- Motion passes unanimously.

Disaster Recovery Update

(Penny Martinez, Disaster Recovery & Resiliency Manager)

- FEMA coordination and public meetings in the hardest-hit areas.
- Efforts with NC Emergency Management and community recovery task forces.
- Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Watershed Protection grant applications.
- Coordination with UNC Charlotte, App State, and AmeriCorps for community planning and psychological support.
- Concerns about debris removal and communication gaps in Polk County.

HUD Home Update

(Penny Martinez, HUD Home Manager)

- Allocation of \$534,127 to five CHDOs and LIHTC letters for affordable housing projects.
- Continued reporting requirements and challenges in rural funding distribution.
- Public hearing planned in McDowell County.

Aging

(Laura Lynch, Aging Director)

- Status of housing and home repair grant (expected to be fully expended by December 2025).
- Concerns over funding formula inequities impacting small, rural counties.
- Advocacy efforts for block grant allocation reform.
- The Division of Aging block grant is outdated and favors urban counties.
- Board members are encouraged to contact legislators.
- Advocacy cheat sheets and data will be distributed.
- New PEAS nutrition grants underway.

Housing

(Pam Hall, Housing Director – Absent – Danna presented on her behalf)

- Annual and 5-Year PHA Plans were reviewed.
- 92 vouchers issued: 69 first-time recipients.
- Recovery of \$820 due to tenant fraud.
- Six HUD-VASH vouchers support homeless veterans.

Chairman Baisden introduced the Annual and Five-Year PHA Plan for discussion

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Janet Gerald.
- Seconded by: Tommy Greene.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Workforce Development

(Annette Staley, Workforce Development Director)

- Ongoing staffing challenges, but strong program performance.
- 15 individuals placed via National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG).
- Regional unemployment rate at 4.8%, higher than state and national levels.
- Discussed restrictions preventing businesses from rehiring previous employees under the current grant rules.

Economic Development & CEDS Update

(Alan Toney, Economic Development Director)

- Broadband project delays due to federal guideline changes.
- CDBG awards for Spindale (\$2.2 million) and Boiling Springs (\$950,000).
- ARC funding availability as of March 21 for infrastructure/economic development projects.

Executive Director Report

(Danna Stansbury, Executive Director)

- Legislative visits and advocacy at the DDAA/NADO conference.
- Roston will provide testing on the building per FEMA requirements.
- Continued collaboration with FEMA and Roston consultants for facility issues.
- Full board meeting date changed to June 17th, 2025

Action Items

- Approval of December 12th, 2024, minutes. The motion was made by Jimmy Dancy and seconded by Tommy Greene.
- Budget Amendment #4 approved. The motion was made by Tommy Greene and seconded by David Guy.
- The Annual and Five-Year PHA Plans were approved. The motion was made by Janet Gerald and seconded by Tommy Greene.

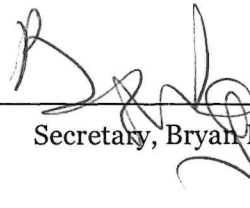
Announcements & Adjournment

- Next meeting: June 17th, 2025
- Meeting adjourned at 2:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chairman, Fred Baisden



Secretary, Bryan King