



Foothills Regional Commission  
Executive Committee Meeting  
August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
Minutes

**Committee Members Present**

- **Chairman** Fred Baisden, Polk County
- **Vice-Chair**, Max Hopper, Cleveland County
- Jack Shytle, Town of Polkville

**Committee Members Absent**

- **Secretary**, Bryan King, Rutherford County
- Ashley Wooten, McDowell County
- Dean Buff, McDowell County
- Jimmy Dancy, Town of Rutherfordton

**FRC Staff Present**

- Danna Stansbury
- Charlotte Sullivan
- Laura Lynch
- Pam Hall
- Annette Staley
- Amanda Scott

**FRC Staff Absent**

- Alan Toney

**Call to order**

Foothills Regional Commission's (FRC) Executive Committee meeting was held at Isothermal Community College on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025. Chairman Fred Baisden called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm and welcomed everyone. Chairman Baisden gave an invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and State Salute to the North Carolina Flag.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Baisden introduced the May 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting minutes for discussion.

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Jack Shytle.
- Second by: Max Hopper.
- Motion passed unanimously.



## Finance & Budget

(Charlotte Sullivan, Finance Director)

- Presented cash flow as of July 31<sup>st</sup>:
  - \$3.2 million in Investment Account (NCCMT)
  - \$664,162 in Section 8 Housing Account
  - \$147,923 in the General Fund Account
  - \$21,693 in the Payroll Account

Charlotte noted the State has been behind on reimbursements, which caused lower balances in July.

- Budget Amendment #1: \$332,164
  - Economic Planning & Community Development - \$157,726
  - WIOA - \$60,000
  - General Operations - \$114,438

Vice Chair Hopper introduced Budget Amendment #1 for discussion.

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Jack Shytle.
- Second by: Max Hopper.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Board Discussion

- Max Hopper suggested discontinuing the monthly cash flow reports since confidence in the Finance Department has improved, and these reports are no longer essential.
- Charlotte stated she will continue to do the cash flow reports, to keep the Board informed.

## Area Agency on Aging

(Laura Lynch, Area Agency on Aging Director)

- State Budget: We have received the official budget and are ready to proceed with block grant services.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Grant: \$50,000 awarded to address food insecurity and housing repairs.
- Housing Repairs Program:
  - In-house approach stretches funds further.
  - Services include AC units, electrical, appliances, and aluminum ramps (more affordable and reusable than wood).
  - Strong partnership established with Rutherford Housing Partnership, who refers seniors in need.
  - Approximately 40-50 seniors served with supplemental funds.

- Grants:
  - Dogwood Health Trust grant application pending.
  - PEAS Nutrition Grant active through December 2026.
- Challenges:
  - Division of Aging allocation remains tight: supplemental post of money helps broaden services.

## Housing

### (Pam Hall, Housing Director)

- Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs):
  - 32 vouchers awarded during COVID for homeless, at-risk, or domestic violence families.
  - 23 families remain active.
  - HUD notified agencies that funds may only last through 2026 (not 2030 as initially planned).
  - Options: absorb families into the Section 8 program or terminate assistance. FRC intends to absorb families.
  - Tracking terminations to manage capacity; expect to absorb all families by year-end. HUD will provide \$1,000 per family absorbed into Section 8.
- Housing Inspector Vehicle:
  - Current car (2014 model with 230,000 miles) needs replacement.
  - Will explore purchase through NC state contract.
- Veterans Vouchers:
  - 35 slots available; 25 currently utilized. Efforts are underway to increase awareness among veteran service officers.

## Workforce Development

### (Annette Staley, Workforce Development Director)

- Staff Updates:
  - Sandra Jenkins joined as Business Service Rep.
  - Linda Sprouse completed 440 participant placements under the Work Grant (ending September 30).
  - Bill Robertson (former staff) returned to assist.
- Helene Disaster Recovery Grant:
  - Supported 14 displaced workers; funds expected to run out by October.
  - Dogwood Trust funds will help continue cleanup efforts in Lake Lure and Chimney Rock.

- New Grants and Awards:
  - Pathway Home Grant: \$783,000 awarded (re-entry support for justice-involved individuals).
  - Governor’s Award of Excellence: Workforce Board recognized for Adult and Youth Programs at the October NC Partnership Conference.
  - Career Center Certification: All three NCWorks Career Centers have been certified for four years.

## Economic Development

**(Alan Toney, Economic Development Director - Absent, Danna Stansbury presented on his behalf)**

- Staff Update:
  - New Lead for NC Fellow, Sophie Schaefer, funded by Dogwood Health Trust.
- Projects:
  - Polk County Housing Study was presented and well-received.
  - Rutherford County Comprehensive Plan in progress.
  - Farmland Preservation Plans are ongoing (including Jackson County).
  - Assisting Kingstown with a major sewer grant.

## Executive Director's Report

**(Danna Stansbury, Executive Director)**

- Awards: FRC received three NADO Awards:
  1. Ageless Innovation (robotics partnership with senior centers).
  2. Collaborative Helene Recovery project with other Western COGs.
  3. Transportation Planning Award (joint with Piedmont Triad Regional Council).
- Next Full Board Meeting: September 18, 2025, at Cleveland Community College (Tim Moore Building).
- Facility Update:
  - Leaks and damage in the current building are worsening; WIOA relocated to the NCWorks building.
  - Hospital building option withdrawn (now for sale).
  - Alternatives being explored:
    - Old Daily Courier building (Forest City)
    - Former Wells Fargo building (Forest City)
    - Main Street Insurance offices (Forest City)
    - Old Rock School (Rutherford County-owned)
  - FEMA continues to delay facility reimbursement, questioning FRC’s local government status despite state recognition.

- Future Facility Committee:
  - To be reactivated. Will review prior committee membership and recruit new representatives from each county.
  - Suggested members included Steve Garrison, Ashley Wooten, Rick Howell, and Doug Barrick.
  - Max Hopper stated he would be glad to be on the committee.

#### Board Discussion

- Discussion of board attendance and possible recruitment of new members.
- Recognition of potential candidates for the Executive Committee board.
  - Becky Kennedy
  - Janet Gerald
  - Rodney Whetstine
  - Rick Howell
  - Carrol Pritchett

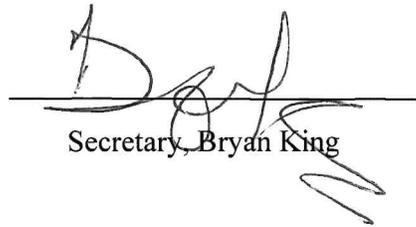
#### Adjournment

Chairman Baisden adjourned the meeting at 1:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Chair, Fred Baisden



Secretary, Bryan King