



Foothills Regional Commission
Executive Committee Meeting
May 22nd, 2025
Minutes

Committee Members Present

- **Vice-Chair**, Max Hopper, Cleveland County
- Jimmy Dancy, Town of Rutherfordton
- Jack Shytle, Town of Polkville
- Dean Buff, McDowell County

Committee Members Absent

- **Chairman** Fred Baisden, Polk County
- **Secretary**, Bryan King, Rutherford County
- Ashley Wooten, McDowell County

FRC Staff Present

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

FRC Staff Absent

- Alan Toney
- Pam Hall

Call to order

Foothills Regional Commission's (FRC) Executive Committee meeting was held at Isothermal Community College on May 22nd, 2025. Vice Chair Max Hopper called the meeting to order at 12:23 pm and welcomed everyone. Vice-Chair Hopper gave an invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and State Salute to the North Carolina Flag.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Hopper introduced the February 13th meeting minutes and the April 24th special-called meeting minutes for discussion.

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



FY26 Proposed Budget

(Charlotte Sullivan, Finance Director)

- Presented the proposed budget for FY26, totaling \$16,388,359.
 - Includes a 3.5% raise for full-time employees
 - Retirement contribution increases from 13.64% to 14.39%.
 - Indirect cost rate adjusted to 58%; fringe benefit rate at 43%.
 - No increase in local government dues.
 - Budget is balanced as required by law.
 - Noted future budget amendments may adjust for carryover.
 - Confirmed a public hearing to approve the budget will be held in June.

Board Discussion

- Concerns about potential federal cuts and the impact on local governments and services.
- Noted that dues remain based on per capita population.
- Recognized uncertainty due to the proposed federal budget eliminating key funding streams.

Area Agency on Aging

(Laura Lynch, Area Agency on Aging Director)

- Warned of proposed federal cuts to aging programs:
 - Ombudsman Program.
 - Adult Protective Services (APS).
 - Health promotion program (3D dollars).
 - Title V program (senior employment).
- The state will guarantee 3 months of federal funds (July-September); there will be no guarantees after that.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation to provide \$60,000 for food insecurity among senior adults.
- Emphasized the importance of continued funding and partnerships to support vulnerable populations.

Finance & Budget

(Charlotte Sullivan, Finance Director)

- Presented cash flow as of April 30th:
 - \$3.4 million in Investment Account (NCCMT)
 - \$687,972 in Section 8 Housing Account
 - \$88,923 in the General Fund Account
 - \$8,143 in the Payroll Account
- Budget Amendment #5: \$1,187,758
 - Aging - \$1,764
 - Community & Economic Development - \$29,000

- Housing - \$817,578
- WIOA - \$34,416
- General Operations - \$305,000

Vice Chair Hopper introduced Budget Amendment #5 for discussion.

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

Housing

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

- A new full-time housing employee (former Title V participant, Guynelle McEntire) was hired.
- Noted potential federal cuts to Section 8 and HOME programs, with HOME being the only HUD program serving rural America.

Workforce Development Update

(Annette Staley, Workforce Development Director)

- Workforce Board approved a feasibility study to evaluate barriers to business attraction.
- Common issues: infrastructure, lack of natural gas, housing, childcare, and transportation.
- Announced new hire: Sandra Jenkins, Business Services Specialist.
- Provided update on Helene Disaster Recovery Grant – \$350,000 received.
 - 15 employees currently providing services across the region.
 - State monitor visited and observed significant hurricane damage and relief efforts.

Executive Director's Report

(Danna Stansbury, Executive Director)

- Reported on visit from NC Assistant Secretary for Rural Development, Reginald Speight.
- Exploring relocation to a 25,000 sq ft facility near Belk in Forest City.
- Confirmed new fee-for-service contracts:
 - Town of Columbus: Interim management, finance, and planning services.
 - City of Saluda: Finance support.
- Proposed to rotate board meetings across counties next fiscal year.
- Discussed the possibility of making Juneteenth a holiday for the commission.
- Employee Updates:
 - Guynelle McEntire hired full-time (Housing)
 - Julie Shearer (Finance – part-time)
 - Sandra Jenkins (Workforce)
 - Rafael Lugo (Planning Intern)
- Presented the FY25/26 meeting calendar.

Vice Chair Hopper requested a motion to approve the observance of Juneteenth as a holiday

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Jimmy Dancy.
- Second by: Dean Buff
- Motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Hopper requested a motion to approve the FY25/26 meeting calendar.

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Jimmy Dancy.
- Second by: Dean Buff
- Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to Enter Closed Session

Vice Chair Hopper requested a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss a personnel matter.

- No objections were raised.
- Motion to approve: Jimmy Dancy.
- Second by: Dean Buff.
- Motion passed unanimously.

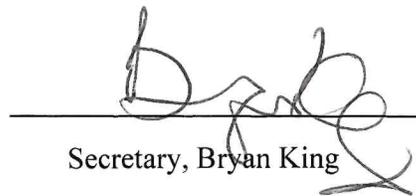
Adjournment

Vice Chair Hopper adjourned the meeting at 1:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Chair, Fred Baisden



Secretary, Bryan King