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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS **ALEXANDER COUNTY**
REGULAR MEETING April 6, 2026 **STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

PRESENT: Larry Yoder, Chairman
Josh Lail, Vice-Chairman
Kent Herman

ABSENT: Marty Pennell
Ronnie Reese

STAFF: Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney
Justin Mundy, County Manager
Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, April 6, 2026 in Room 103 of the CVCC / Alexander Center in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Yoder called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Yoder gave the invocation and Vice-Chairman Lail led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

No reports were given.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Yoder requested the addition of an NCACC Informational Video as Agenda Item #6A.

Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Helen Chestnut advised that, although a statement had been prepared for tonight's meeting regarding the Sterling Road CDBG Project, those comments would be delayed to a future meeting to allow more time to address outstanding issues.

NCACC INFORMATIONAL VIDEO

The Board viewed a short video by Wallace Nelson, NCACC President, who provided a recap of the NC Counties Care Forum held on March 27th where the topics of healthcare and rural hospitals were discussed. The next forum is planned for May 20th in Beaufort County where discussions will center around healthcare in jails. Mr. Nelson also emphasized the importance of County Advocacy Days scheduled for June 9-10 in Wake County, which will provide an opportunity to engage with state leaders on key policy issues such as property tax reform.

NC SELECTSITE READINESS PROGRAM PRESENTATION

After announcing that the 16-acre graded site in the Alexander Industrial Park had been accepted into the NC Selectsite Readiness Program, Michael Worley, Economic Development Director, introduced Garrett Wyckoff with Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina who gave a slide show presentation with the following information:

- Site readiness is the process of preparing a site for construction, development, or new business. It involves assessing suitability, addressing challenges, and making necessary improvements to attract investments, boost economic growth, and create jobs.

- In May 2025, amendments to the Selectsite Readiness Program added a requirement to identify up to 5 new Selectsites in counties declared as major disaster areas following Hurricane Helene.

- Eligible purposes include site acquisition, public infrastructure, on-site preparation, and site due diligence.

- Recommendations for the 16-acre graded site include continued discussions with ownership of the northern adjacent site to ensure availability and pricing, complete comprehensive due diligence, upgrade water and sewer infrastructure, and other site preparation.

PUBLIC HEARING: REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION THROUGH LAND OPTION AGREEMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney, requested the Board's consideration of an Option to Purchase Agreement with Alexander Railroad Company for two parcels adjacent to the Alexander Industrial Park identified as Parcel ID #0062292 and #0067284, totaling approx. 115 acres. The Option to Purchase Agreement included an initial term of 12 months with the ability to extend for an additional 12 months. Alexander County will be granted the exclusive right to purchase the property during this period and to perform due diligence surveys, tests, and evaluations to determine if the property is suitable as an addition to the Industrial Park and to attract new industry.

He explained that the purchase price, if exercised, would be $7,948.49 per acre, which will increase to $8,000 if surveys determine more than 115 acres is available. The only upfront money required will be a $1.00 option fee for both properties.

After a motion by Vice-Chairman Lail, second by Commissioner Herman, and unanimous vote, the public hearing was called to order and comments requested. There being none, Commissioner Herman made a motion to close the public hearing. Vice-Chairman Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve the Option to Purchase Agreement as discussed and allow staff to execute and record necessary documents. Vice-Chairman Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING CASE RZ-26-01 – PETTAWAY / CLAYTON HOMES & GREEN

Patrick Creech, Planning Director, presented Rezoning Case RZ-26-01 submitted by Kemmi Pettway with Clayton Homes of Conover and owner Scotty Green who requested rezoning of 4.549 acres located at 421 Emerald Lane in Hiddenite from Residential District 1 (R1) to Residential District 2 (R2) to allow placement of a doublewide manufactured home as a private residence.

After reviewing aerial maps and criteria to be considered when conducting rezoning cases, Mr. Creech reported that the property was located in an Urban Services Area according to the Future Land Use Plan where investments in affordable housing development should occur; therefore, R2 zoning is appropriate. Staff does not anticipate negative impacts to adjacent property owners since the proposed use is consistent with the character of the surrounding community.

The Planning Board held a public hearing on March 12, 2026 to consider this petition and voted unanimously to recommend approval based on consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, there were no concerns reported by the TRC or the public.

After a motion by Vice-Chairman Lail, second by Commissioner Herman, and unanimous vote, the public hearing was called to order and comments requested.

<u>Public Comment</u>

Property owner Scotty Green clarified that the property was served by a public water line even though locate GIS maps did not indicate such.

There being no further comments, Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to approve Rezoning Case RZ-26-01 based on consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING CASE RZ-26-02 – HAMMER

Amy Bucknum, County Planner, presented Rezoning Case RZ-26-02 submitted by David Hammer with Hammer Hospitalities, LLC, who requested rezoning of 4 parcels totaling 3.64 acres located on Happy Plains Road from Residential District 1 (R1) to Residential District 2 (R2) to allow placement of doublewide manufactured homes for rental purposes.

After reviewing aerial maps and criteria to be considered when conducting rezoning cases, Ms. Bucknum reported that this property was subdivided in April 2024 and one doublewide was placed on a single parcel prior to approval of the Land Development Code, which changed the zoning to R1. The property is located in an Urban Services Area according to the Future Land Use Plan where investments in affordable housing development should occur; therefore, R2 zoning is appropriate. Staff does not anticipate negative impacts to adjacent property owners since the proposed use is consistent with the character of the surrounding community.

The Planning Board held a public hearing on March 12, 2026 to consider this petition and voted unanimously to recommend approval based on consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Since that meeting, staff has received 3 calls from residents who prefer site-built homes over manufactured home.

After a motion by Vice-Chairman Lail, second by Commissioner Herman, and unanimous vote, the public hearing was called to order and comments requested.

Public Comment

Property owner David Hammer advised that he and his wife purchased the property in 2019 with plans to subdivide it for rental purposes. He explained that the homes would be new doublewide manufactured units, noting that many similar manufactured homes were already located along Happy Plains Road and in the surrounding area.

Todd Lange with Howard Hanna Allen Tate Real Estate expressed concerns that the rezoning could have an impact on a proposed 250-300 home subdivision on the adjacent 82-acre Stikeleather property.

There being no further comments, Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve Rezoning Case RZ-26-02 based on consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Vice-Chairman Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VAYA HEALTH PRESENTATION

Zack Shepherd, Vaya Community Relations Regional Director, gave a slide show presentation that included the following information:

- NC DHHS is preparing for the Rural Health Transformation Program that will increase access to care and improve health outcomes for NC rural residents. RHTP funding is expected to total $50 billion nationally over a 5-year period with the first $25 billion split evenly among states and the second distributed at the discretion of the Center for Medicaid Services. NC is expected to receive $100 million per year for the first 5 years.

- The General Assembly's "mini budget" includes $600 million in Medicaid funding, which falls below NC DHHS's projections. Vaya's Single Stream funding was reduced by approx. $6 million.

- Vaya has partnered with the Alexander County Resource Center to develop a regional hub for residents to receive resources and support such as peer support, food insecurity support, harm reduction services, hygiene products and case management or referral. Vaya has allocated $350,000 in start up funds.

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE PARTICIPATION IN NEW NATIONAL OPIOIDS REMNANT DEFENDANTS SETTLEMENT

Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney, presented a resolution authorizing participation in a new proposed national opioids settlement entitled "Six Remnant Defendants Settlement" that has been reached with 6 regional distributor / dispenser defendants (Associated Pharmacies / American Associated Pharmacies, J.M. Smith Corporation, Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Morris and Dickson Company, NC Mutual Wholesale Drug Company, and United Natural Foods to also include its subsidiaries SuperValu and Advantage Logistics). The total nationwide settlement is projected at approx. $97.6 million that will be distributed directly to local government participants. Alexander County will likely receive a one-time payment of $50,000 based on the percentage of previous settlement allocations.

Mr. Faulkenberry recommended approval of the resolution that also gives signatory authority to the County Manager or County Attorney on settlement agreements.

Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to approve the Opioid Settlement Resolution. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT #25

Justin Mundy, County Manager, requested approval of Budget Amendment #25 to increase the EMS budget for a new ambulance that has been backordered and for estimated Medicaid reimbursements for the remainder of FY 2026.

Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #25. Vice-Chairman Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Tax Abatements & Adjustments ($4,725.70) and Tax Refunds ($1,369.11) for February 23 – March 24, 2026.
B. Minutes from the March 2, 2026 Regular Meeting and March 2, 2026 Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting.
C. Line-Item Transfer Report for March 2026.
D. FY 2026 Audit Contract with Martin Starnes & Associates.
E. Line Worker Appreciation Day Proclamation.
F. Request from Sheriff Chad Pennell to surplus the following firearms to trade for equipment at Lyndon's Riverview Sports – Remington .22 rifle, Toros PA-1225 12-gauge shotgun (Serial #21PA-2170), Henry H001 .22 long-rifle (Serial #718859H), Beretta APX 9mm (Serial #A129566X), Smith & Wesson M&P Shield 9mm (Serial #HZA2264), Taurus 9mm (Serial #TMA93379D), SCCY CPX-1 9mm (Serial #307750), Mossberg 702 .22 rifle (Serial #EDF128217), KelTec P32 .32 with black holster (Serial #CJR77), Springfield XD9 9mm (Serial #MG916653), Arms Company .22 revolver (Serial #20239), Stevens 20-gauge shotgun (Serial #156972P), Clerke 1st .32 (Serial #823839), CBC SB 12-gauge single shot shotgun (Serial #C1283242), Ruger LCP .380 (Serial #379160995), RG RG14 .22 revolver (Serial #L679291), Ruger Blackhawk .357 (Serial #37-22067), Remington Speedmaster .22 with scope (Serial #1429691), Marlin 30AW 30-30 (Serial #03070786), SS Kresge .22 long rifle (Serial #835625), Rohm RG 14 .22 (Serial #43897), Big Derringer .22 long rifle (Serial #90077), Etro 12-gauge (Serial #SA085641), Snake Charmer II (Serial #6486), Savage .22 (Serial #P951583), Marlin 60 .22 (Serial #96416485), Ruger .357 Max (Serial #600-09371), Smith & Wesson .38 Special (Serial #DCN8095), Ruger CLP .380 (Serial #37322890).
G. Request from Public Works to surplus a Caterpillar 924K articulating wheel loader, VIN #CAT0924KJPWR01746 11688 with 11,688 hours.

Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice-Chairman Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

RECOGNITION OF BOY SCOUTS TROOP #275

Chairman Yoder recognized Scouts Mason Lackey and Rowdy Tarleton along with Pack Leader Chad Lackey who were attending tonight's meeting to earn their Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge. Each were given a County lapel pin.

CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5 & 6) CONTRACTUAL & PERSONNEL

Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:13 PM to discuss contractual matters and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5 & 6). Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PLANNING BOARD APPOINTMENT

Upon returning to Open Session, Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to appoint Brian Lineberry to the Planning Board as an alternate member for a term of 3 years. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to adjourn at 8:17 PM. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board