

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET WORK SESSION June 8, 2026

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Larry Yoder, Chairman
 Josh Lail, Vice-Chairman
 Kent Herman
 Marty Pennell
 Ronnie Reese

STAFF: Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney
 Gary Herman, PIO
 Jennifer Herman, Finance Director
 Josh Mitchell, Public Works / Facilities Director
 Justin Mundy, County Manager
 Bill Rogers, Chief Building Inspector
 Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a budget work session on Monday, June 8, 2026 at 5:30 PM in the Administration Building first floor conference room in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

FY 2026-2027 FEE SCHEDULE

Justin Mundy, County Manager, reviewed proposed fee adjustments for FY 2026-2027 as follows:

Building Inspections – included minimal increases for new residential and commercial construction, renovations, manufactured homes, decks, handicap ramps, plan review, and other related permits. Specifically, the fee for new residential construction will increase from 47 cents per square foot for conditioned space to 67 cents; however, a new fee of 31 cents for unconditioned space has been added, which will reduce costs for builders and homeowners in many cases. Larger increases were proposed for cell towers and in-ground commercial swimming pools, and a new special event inspection fee was added. In addition, the fee for 200-amp residential and commercial electrical trade permits (new service or change out) will decrease from \$88 to \$84.

Commissioner Reese expressed concerns with increasing residential permit fees, noting that he preferred to limit increases to commercial permits.

Mr. Rogers responded that the proposed fees were comparable to or lower than those charged by other counties in the region. He also explained that Alexander County does not

have sufficient commercial development for the Inspections Department to remain self-funded and, therefore, residential permit revenue must be relied upon to support operations.

Vice-Chairman Lail felt the proposed fees were fair. He also held the opinion that the Inspections Department would likely need an additional inspector soon to accommodate anticipated growth in the Bethlehem area.

The Board discussed the possibility of eliminating the fee for residential handicap ramp, but due to NC Building Code regulations, the fee must remain in the schedule. Following discussion, the Board agreed to reduce the fee from the current \$75 to \$50.

Emergency Management – revisions included increasing the EMS standby fee from \$50 per hour to \$100 per hour and increasing the overhead staff (IMT personnel) fee from \$25 per hour, per person to \$50 per hour, per person. A new paramedic standby fee of \$40 per person per hour was also proposed.

The Board instructed Mr. Mundy to consult with Daniel Fox, Emergency Management Coordinator, to verify that the proposed fees were adequate.

Fire Marshal – the fee for after-hours inspections was revised from a flat \$50 charge to a rate of \$50 per hour, per employee.

Commissioner Reese questioned whether the Fire Marshal's after-hours inspection fee should be comparable to the Building Inspection's after-hours fee. Mr. Mundy stated that he would review the matter and provide clarification.

Health Department – new fees for immunizations and Environmental Health services, including new construction permits, repair permits, redesigns, and swimming pools were approved by the Board at the March 2, 2026 BOCC/CHSB Meeting.

Library – a new notary service fee of \$5 was added as well as fees for legal and tabloid size copies.

Parks – due to limited availability at picnic shelters, the Board chose to eliminate the all-day rental option and change the hourly rental rate to \$25 per hour for a minimum rental period of two hours.

Planning – new \$50 fees were added for commercial accessory structures and change-of-use applications.

Pre-Trial Release – a new \$15 service fee to be collected by the Clerk of Court upon disposition of a court case was added.

Solid Waste – for the landfill, there is a 4.7% tipping fee increase included in response to a CPI increase by Foothills Environmental, bringing C&D fees to \$62.82 per ton and

household / commercial / industrial waste fees to \$73.29 per ton. The \$5 minimum charge at the landfill will also be increased to \$10 to divert smaller loads to convenience sites.

Mr. Mundy also reported that fees for black-and-white and color copies had been standardized across all departments to ensure consistency.

ALEXANDER COUNTY SCHOOLS

The Board reviewed Alexander County Schools' budget request totaling \$8,426,361, an increase of \$348,321 to cover a School Nurse funding shortfall (\$91,503, NC Pre-K funding shortfall (\$73,094), Media/Innovation Coordinator at Ellendale Elementary (\$41,575), and salary increases for employees paid with local funds (\$142,149).

Commissioner Herman mentioned receiving phone calls over the weekend indicating that members of the School Board were placing blame on the Board of Commissioners regarding recent decisions involving a band director and a nursing position at ACHS. He emphasized that the County has no authority over personnel decisions within the school system.

Commissioner Pennell said he was also aware of claims that County funding to the school system had been reduced, which is incorrect. He added that the County appropriation to Alexander County Schools had increased each year he has been a commissioner.

Chairman Yoder pointed out that the proposed reduction in the property tax rate would negatively impact the amount of ADM money received from the state.

Following discussion, Chairman Yoder made a motion to fully fund the request received from Alexander County Schools. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed 4 in favor (Commissioners Lail, Pennell, Reese, and Yoder) and one against (Commissioner Herman). The motion passed.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Vice-Chairman Lail noted that Alexander County's property tax rate for FY 2000-2001 was 65 cents per \$100 valuation. He further stated that the rate was 79.5 cents in 2014.

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

Chairman Yoder made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:52 PM to discuss contractual matters and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5 & 6). Vice-Chairman Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 PM.

Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board