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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS **ALEXANDER COUNTY**
REGULAR MEETING July 13, 2026 **STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

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

STAFF: Gary Herman, PIO
Josh Mitchell, Assistant County Manager
Justin Mundy, County Manager
Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, July 13, 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

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

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chairman Yoder announced that the Alexander Independence Concert would be held at Courthouse Park on Saturday, July 18th featuring The Extraordinaires. A fireworks display will follow the concert at ACHS.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

*****SPECIAL RECOGNITION*****

The Board recognized the ACHS Varsity Boys Baseball Team for an outstanding season. Under the leadership of Head Coach Pete Hardee, the team won the Catawba Valley Easter Baseball Classic, posted a 9-1 conference record, captured the Conference Tournament Championship, and came up just short in the Western Regional Finals.

Team members include Kade Church, Sawyer Chapman-Mays, Koa Mikeal, Gunnar Johnson, Jude Carter, Graham Hoke, Maddix Reese, Wyatt Smith, Ty Matheson, Carter Bowman, Isaac Chapman, Colton Pierce, Braxton Lewis, Aiden Daigle, Eli Queen, Caiden Johnson, Gavin Bentley, Rhett Myers, Josh Martin, Jarod Zientek, Cam McLain, Brad Zadlo, and Austin Sellers. Coaches are Pete Hardee, Josh Hubbard, Jon Hoppes, Justin Cook, and Daryl Carter.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Andy Warren expressed concern that the proposed FY 2026-2027 property tax rate was further reduced after the public hearing on the budget had closed, leaving citizens with no opportunity to respond or ask questions. He suggested the Board reopen public comment whenever changes are made to a proposal after a public hearing is held.

Brian Whitener thanked the Board for its continued support of the Alexander County Fire Training Facility, noting that a junior firefighter training program was held there in May with 28 participants representing Alexander, Lincoln, Caldwell, Catawba, Surry, Burke, Davie, Iredell, and Wilkes counties. He also conveyed appreciation to local companies and emergency services organizations whose support helped make the event a success.

2027 SCHEDULE OF VALUES PRESENTATION

Doug Fox, Tax Administrator, and Jimmy Tanner with Tanner Valuation Group presented a revaluation update along with the completed Schedule of Values. Mr. Tanner explained that the goal of a reappraisal was to adjust property values to the current market value as required by NC law. He gave a slide show presentation that included information related to the revaluation process, tax value vs. market value, appeals, etc. and he noted that the market value of residential property was established by buyers and sellers, while commercial property values were determined by rent, leases, and sales.

A public hearing will be held at the August 3, 2026 Commissioners' Meeting with adoption of the Schedule of Values planned for September. Valuation notices are expected to be mailed to property owners in February or March 2027. Each notice will provide the new assessed value as of January 1, 2027 and include information about the appeal process.

Mr. Tanner also discussed two pieces of legislation that could affect the revaluation process including Senate Bill 889, which imposes a reappraisal moratorium on certain counties in 2026

and House Bill 1089, a proposed constitutional amendment that would limit property tax increases by local government.

A copy of the Schedule of Values is available at the Tax Office and Administration Office.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT SPECIAL UPDATE

The following information was presented to the Board:

- **2025-2026 End of Year Outcome Summary Report** – Billie Walker, Health Director, presented report details and statistics as follows:

    - Review of Public Health Ten Essential Services – all of the activities conducted by the Health Department must fall under one or more of these categories. This information must be reported to the state each year under the Aid to County Report.

        1. Monitoring health status to identify and solve community health problems:
            - Monitoring chronic disease.
            - Monitoring of health and safety in food (restaurants and food establishments).
            - Continual monitoring of communicable diseases.

        2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards:
            - Continual monitoring of communicable diseases.
            - Monitoring of health and safety in food (restaurants and food establishments).
            - Preparedness planning in community with various partners.

        3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues:
            - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).
            - Educate the schools on dangers of SUD, vaping, and Speedway to Healthy.
            - STD and teen pregnancy prevention in the schools.
            - Dental prevention education in schools.

        4. Mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems:
            - Healthy Alexandrians.
            - Local Aging Council Team.
            - Alexander Resource Center (ARC).
            - Substance Use Disorder Coalition.
            - LEPC.

- Multimodal Grant Team.
- JCPC participation.
- School Health Advisory Council participation within schools.
- Rural Health Transformation Grant with Vaya Health.
- Tobacco Free – Region 4.

5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts:
    - Continual process of annually developing policies and plans (Preparedness).
    - Created a Nurse Shelter Plan.
    - THIRA.
    - Pan Flu TTX.
    - Measles TTX exercises.

6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety:
    - Continual process throughout the year.

7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of healthcare when otherwise unavailable:
    - BH (RHA).
    - PORT (MOA for patient transportation).
    - WIC.
    - CMARC/CMHRP.
    - Alexander Resource Center (ARC).

8. Assure competent public and personal health care workforce:
    - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).
    - Certified Public Health Nurse Course.
    - Environmental Health Specialist Authorization.
    - Ensure all licensed staff are up to date with required trainings and certifications.
    - Public Health Law Training.
    - CPR.

9. Evaluate effectiveness of accessibility and quality of personal and population-based health services:
    - Family Planning Quality Improvement Plan.
    - ADA Assessment.
    - Patient satisfaction surveys.
    - Review complaints monthly and assess where changes are needed.

10. Research for new insight and innovative solutions to health problems:
    - Signed IRB with LRU adjunct faculty.

- Workforce Development (Accreditation F.2) – this year the discussion has been focused around setting goals for the future of the Health Department's workforce by utilizing the Workforce Development Plan Policy (Adm. 5.50). Due to a spike in employee departures, the department remains committed to identifying areas of concern that could affect the long-term sustainability of our workforce. Ms. Walker provided the following staffing demographics:

  - Current number of positions – 36
  - Current number of employees – 33
  - Turnover rate – 20%
  - Male – 12%
  - Female – 88%
  - White – 94%
  - Hispanic – 6%
  - > 50 years of age – 51%
  - Management Team retention rate / < 10 years from retirement – 67%
  - Employee retention rate / < 5 years from retirement – 18%
  - Comparisons to population of Alexander County given.

  Ms. Walker explained that the Workforce Assessment looks at demographics and competencies of staff along with employee feedback and performance elevations to forecast workforce needs and help build strategies for a stronger workforce.

  - Collaborative process with the HR Department with onboarding.

  - Department goals:
    - The Health Educator has increased promotion of public health positions/careers at junior high and high school career fairs.
    - Continue having staff develop their skill set and on the job knowledge through classes/courses, meetings (in-house and outside the department), and cross-training.
    - Continue the orientation/staff training system to increase training and professional development through NeoGov.

- Social Determinants of Health (Accreditation E.1.2.3) – this helps identify at-risk patients with unmet non-medical needs such as housing instability, food insecurity, transportation, interpersonal safety, etc. that may negatively impact health outcomes. Most programs have a standardized screening tool to determine SDOH. If unmet needs are identified, staff will begin the early intervention process to meet the need by making referrals, bringing in other providers, and providing education resources.

- Summary of Services Provided to the Public – Ms. Walker provided the following chart of services:

Health Department Program Numbers			
Program	Total 2025/2026	Total 2024/2025	Total 2023/2024 Year
Behavioral Health	0	41	91
Child Health	220	129	120
Dental Health	2652	2,886	2,817
Family Planning	380	239	233
Immunizations	705	841	1,043
Maternal Health	33	41	55
Primary Care	803	618	605
STD	173	175	185
TB	327	248	247
Totals	5293	5218	5451

❖ **Bad Debt Write-Off (Accreditation I.2)** – a list of uncollectable, outstanding client balances is prepared twice a year and presented to the Health Director and the Board per the Alexander County Health Department Fee and Eligibility Policy. The balances approved by the Health Director and the Board will be written off. Currently, accounts in the areas of Family Planning and Dental Health have outstanding balances that meet the definition of uncollectible totaling $4,465.40 for the period of January 1 – June 30, 2026. Ms. Walker explained that per Debt Management Policy and NC Accreditation Benchmark 33 Financial Accountability (Activity I.2.1), the Health Director has the authority to write-off any bad debt owed to Alexander County Health Department with approval by the Board of County Commissioners. The procedures for this process have been followed per policy and the total amount of $4,465.40 is being requested for write-off.

Commissioner Pennell made a motion to approve bad debt write-off as presented. Vice-Chairman Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

❖ **Annual BOH Assessment of Rules, Ordinances, & Policies (Accreditation K)** – As a requirement for reaccreditation, all local health departments must conduct at least one assessment of current and potential Board of Health rules and policies during each reaccreditation cycle. The assessment must contain 3 sections – all Board of Health rules in affect for the local health department, a survey of potential rules that may be needed to improve the health of the community, and a review of any Board policies that need to be considered.

Due to the timing of the newly implemented rule and the fast-approaching reaccreditation site visit, additional time is needed to complete this project. The project needs a comprehensive tool to facilitate the review of agency rules and ordinances. Once the tool is developed and approved, each rule and ordinance can then be systematically reviewed to ensure compliance with the new requirements. Because these activities cannot reasonably be completed between now and November, Ms. Walker introduced the new rules and provided examples of tools that could be used to accomplish the required review process. She also requested an extension for this activity until a review tool has been selected and implemented. Granting this extension will allow sufficient time to develop or adopt the appropriate tool and complete a thorough review of all agency rules and ordinances to ensure compliance with the new accreditation requirements.

Lastly, Ms. Walker reminded the Board that annual approval by the Board of Health (BOCC) is required for all Health Department policies included in the Board of Health section of the Local Health Department Policies, as outlined in the Policy on Policies. She presented the proposed Administrative Manual policy revisions and the Dental Health policy revisions for review. These were sent to the Board prior to meeting via email for review.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT #1

Justin Mundy, County Manager, requested approval of Budget Amendment #1 to increase the Sheriff's Office budget to use Federal Equitable Share funds to purchase night vision goggles and to also increase the budget for round two of the NC Department of Military and Veterans Affairs grant to match the funds available to spend in FY 2027.

Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #1. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Tax Abatements & Adjustments ($1,181.34) and Tax Refunds ($445.27) for May 26 – July 5, 2026.
B. Minutes from the June 1, 2026 and June 15, 2026 Regular Meetings, June 1, 2026 Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting, and June 8, 2026 Budget Work Session.
C. Line-Item Transfer Report for June and July 2026.
D. Renewal of lease agreement for Economic Development Office space on Highway 16 North.
E. Resolution supporting the NC Division of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention legislative request for increased recurring funding for JCPC and other juvenile rehab service programs.
F. DSS Energy Programs Outreach Plan for 2026-2027.
G. County Employee Training / Certification Reimbursement Agreement.

H. Agreement with the Town of Taylorsville to provide a School Resource Officer at Alexander Early College and the ACHS Student Success Center.
I. Amendment to Section 92.04 (7) of the Prohibited Noises Ordinance.
J. Request from Sheriff Chad Pennell to surplus the following Holosun SCS MOS-Gr green dot duty weapon sights to be traded for other law enforcement equipment – MS043213, MS043229, MS043231, MS043193, MS043360, MS043299, MS043354, MS043200, MS043326, MS043172, MS043331, MS042822, MS042756, MS043124, MS043180, MS043207, MS043166, MS043357, MS043186, MS042951, MS043353, MS042953, MS042317, MS043335, MS042816, MS043189, MS043170, MS043190, MS043294, MS043177, MS043168, MS063238, MG003808, MS042794, MS043370, MS043362, MS043232, MS043327, MS043196, MS063138, MS055062, MS043352, MS055107, and MS043310.

Commissioner Pennell requested clarification on the differences between the proposed SRO agreement with the Town of Taylorsville and the previous agreement approved in 2023. He also emphasized the importance of ensuring that every school has an officer on campus throughout the entire school day.

Sheriff Chad Pennell explained that, under the previous agreement, the Alexander County Sheriff's Office provided SROs for Taylorsville Elementary School, Alexander Early College, and the ACHS Student Success Center. Following recent discussions between County and Town staff and officials, the Taylorsville Police Department indicated the ability and desire to provide SRO coverage for Taylorsville Elementary School. As a result, under the proposed 3-year agreement, the Sheriff's Office will provide an SRO only for Alexander Early College and the ACHS Student Success Center. Additionally, Sheriff Pennell advised that his office follows a standard protocol for securing backup officers to cover SRO absences due to illness, vacation, or emergencies, ensuring that an officer is assigned to each school at all times during the school day.

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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 7:09 PM to discuss contractual matters and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5 & 6). Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Lail made a motion to adjourn at 8:02 PM. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board