



MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OCTOBER 14, 2025
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Young called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. All Board Members, County Manager Warren Cabe, Deputy Clerk Tammy Keezer, Finance Director Lori Carpenter, and County Attorney Eric Ridenour were present, as were a number of county employees, media, and citizens.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- (A) Ms. Keezer reminded board members that the November Board of County Commissioners meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, due to the observance of the Veterans Day holiday.
- (B) Ms. Keezer announced that there will be a Special Joint Meeting with the Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education on October 21, 2025, at 9:00 am in the Commissioner's Board Room located at 5 West Main Street, Franklin, NC 28734
- (C) Mr. Cabe shared that tonight is the last regular meeting for Finance Director Lori Carpenter. He and the board members expressed their appreciation to her and wished her the best in her future endeavors.
- (D) Mr. Cabe announced that Lindsay Leopard will be the Interim Finance Director beginning November 3, 2025.
- (E) Commissioner Shields reminded those present that Operation Green Light for Veterans will be observed from November 4, 2025, through November 11, 2025. He said the Board plans to pass a resolution tonight and read excerpts from it.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Chairman Young requested all in attendance rise and a moment of silence was observed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Commissioner Shields, the pledge to the flag was recited.

PUBLIC HEARING(S):

- (A) **5311 ADMIN GRANT** – Transit Director Darlene Asher explained that this grant is for fiscal year 2027 in the amount of \$230,232 and is an 80/5/10 grant, meaning the Federal share is 85 percent and the County share is 15 percent. The County's share amount is \$34,535. Ms. Asher said the grant pays for administrative salaries and benefits for 2.3 employees, drug and alcohol testing, office supplies, training, advertising, etc. Commissioner Young opened the public hearing at 6:07 p.m. With no one signed up to speak, Commissioner Young closed the public hearing at 6:07 p.m.

Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shields, to approve the grant request as presented. The vote was unanimous.

(B) **5310 ELDERLY AND/OR DISABLED GRANT** – Ms. Asher explained that this grant is for fiscal year 2027 in the amount of \$300,000 and is a 50/50 match. The County share is \$150,000 and will be met by using the EDTAP portion of the ROAP funds and contract revenues from agencies billed. Therefore, no County funds will be used as a match. Commissioner Young opened the public hearing at 6:08 p.m. With no one signed up to speak, Commissioner Young closed the public hearing at 6:09 p.m.

Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, to approve the grant request as presented. The vote was unanimous.

(C) **COMBINED CAPITAL GRANT** – Ms. Asher explained that this grant comes with a schedule for the replacement of capital items. She indicated that for fiscal year 2027, Macon County Transit is requesting the replacement of a van, along with the lettering and propane conversion kits, and four desktop computers with monitors. The total for this 80/10/10 grant is \$167,532, and the County's share will be \$16,754. Commissioner Young opened the public hearing at 6:10 p.m. With no one signed up to speak, Commissioner Young closed the public hearing at 6:10 p.m.

Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Antoine to approve the grant request as presented. The vote was unanimous.

(D) **CONCEPT GRANT** – Ms. Asher explained that this grant covers the WNC Express route picking up passengers from Jackson, Swain, and Haywood Counties. She indicated the request for this 50/50 grant was for \$200,000. Ms. Asher stated that no County funds would be used as a match since the match would be from billing Jackson, Swain, and Haywood transit agencies, fares, and other contract revenues. Commissioner Young opened the public hearing at 6:11 p.m. With no one signed up to speak, Commissioner Young closed the public hearing at 6:11 p.m.

Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Antoine to approve the grant request as presented. The vote was unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: **Pearl Phillips** spoke about domestic violence and shared that October is Domestic Violence Awareness month, and presented the Chairman with flags her family donated. She also requested that a resolution be approved by the board. **Betsy Baste** shared her support for the Pawsitive Shelter Volunteers. **Bill McLarney** indicated that he was speaking on behalf of the Water Quality Advisory Committee and offered voluntary consulting services to the board on issues within their expertise. **Katie Price** had signed up to speak but was unavailable at the time her name was called. **Carolyn Porter** was allowed to read a statement from Ms. Price sharing her concerns about the safety of E. coli in our water systems.

ADDITIONS, ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Upon a motion by Commissioner Breeden, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda, as presented.

REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS:

(A) NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (NCACC) HEROIC HANDS: CELEBRATING PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

– Ms. Keezer shared that the 2024-25 NCACC President launched the Heroic Hands initiative, which was designed to honor the often-unseen but deeply felt contributions of county staff and the essential roles of public service workers. She said nominees reflect the profound difference they make in their role, the lives they touch through their service, their dedication, and the positive impact they make in their county every day. Ms. Keezer read the nomination letter submitted to the NCACC, which was published in a book announcing the recipients. Assisted by County Manager Warren Cabe, Ms. Keezer presented the Heroic Hands Award to Human Resource Specialist Polly Crunkleton.

(B) PAWSITIVE SHELTER VOLUNTEERS PROPOSAL FOR ASSUMING

OPERATIONS OF THE ANIMAL SHELTER – Mr. Cabe introduced Meg Kramer from Pawsitive Shelter Volunteers. Ms. Kramer indicated that Pawsitive Shelter Volunteers have been side-by-side with the employees at the shelter as boots on the ground. She said that partnering with a 501(c)(3) would be beneficial to the County, as many of the projects could be funded through foundations and grants, and that they have reached out and received support from some individuals and foundations. Ms. Kramer said she hopes that by partnering, they can access resources to take some of the financial burden off the County and keep the shelter separate from animal control. She said Animal Control Officers need the law enforcement backing to do their job. Some discussion followed the presentation, but no action was taken.

OLD BUSINESS:

(A) UPDATE ON BURNINGTOWN-IOTLA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT – Mr.

Cabe reported that since the last meeting, we have entered in to a contract to have services carried out by Cowee Volunteer Fire Department, conducted a mediation session, signed an Agreement of Assets, transferred the deed, signed an Assignment of Lease, and have staff at the station today to complete the inventory. He said we may want to review the fire department contracts moving forward to see if we need to make any adjustments based on what we have learned in this process. No action.

(B) APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY FUNDING POOL APPLICATIONS –

Commissioner Breeden shared that there were five applicants and announced the recommended awards totaling \$37,000. He said that the only organization that was not funded was the Highlands Swim Team, leaving \$38,000 for future use. After some discussion about the selection process, Commissioner Breeden made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, to approve the awards as recommended. The vote was unanimous.

(C) CONSIDERATION OF THE REVISIONS TO THE LANDFILL DESIGN AND

CONSTRUCTION AGREEMENT – Mr. Cabe reported that we went back to bid on the landfill cell after the last board meeting, and that some changes had to be made for that to happen, and that is what is going to be shared tonight. Mark Cathey with McGill Associates explained the new proposal. Mr. Cabe said we also have a bid out for hauling services and should be able to provide final proposals at the November 13, 2025, meeting. He said there were six bidders that were pre-qualified this cycle and requested a motion for the

appropriation of \$97,000, a budget amendment from the Solid Waste fund, and to amend McGill's contract in the same amount. Commissioner Young made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shields, to approve the appropriation and amendment to McGill's contract as requested. The vote was unanimous.

(D) APPROVAL OF ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FOR NATIONAL GUARD

ARMORY RENOVATION - Mr. Cabe explained that a lease was entered into with Southwestern Community College in 2021, with expectations that we would remodel the facility to meet their needs. He said the funds for the remodel have been included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the last couple of years. Mr. Cabe indicated that three proposals have been received and shared details of those proposals. He requested that the proposal for Looper Architectural Services be approved for design development services for \$181,120.53 for design through construction. Mr. Cabe said we do not need the funding as it is already in a fund for SCC and just needs to be moved to the project fund. After some discussion, Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shearl, to approve the contract as requested. The vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS: NONE.

CONSENT AGENDA: Upon a motion by Commissioner Breeden, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, the board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented which includes: (A) Minutes of the September 9, 2025 regular meeting, (B) Budget Amendments #93-110, (C) Tax Refund for Realmark Otto, LLC, (D) Approval of Resolution in Remembrance of the One-Year Anniversary of Hurricane Helene [Attachment 1], (E) Approval of Resolution in Support of Operation Green Light [Attachment 2], (F) Approval of Resolution Exempting Professional Services for Macon County Recreation Park Project, (G) Tax releases for the month of September, 2025 in the amount of \$7,061.33, (H) Monthly ad valorem tax collection report for which no action is necessary.

APPOINTMENTS: NONE.

CLOSED SESSION: NONE.

ADJOURN: With no other business, at 7:43 p.m., upon a motion from Commissioner Antoine, seconded by Commissioner Breeden, the board voted unanimously to adjourn.



Warren Cabe
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board



Josh Young
Board Chair