POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Public Hearing & Regular Meeting
October 20, 2025 - 5:00 PM
Bryant H. Womack Justice & Administration Building
40 Courthouse Street Columbus, NC 28722
MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Yoder, Vice-Chairman Moore, Commissioner Beiler, Commissioner Melton, and Commissioner Hargett. Also in attendance were Manager Pittman, Clerk to the Board Freeman, and citizens.

ABSENT: Attorney Berg

1. Public Hearing

   A. Call to Order the Public Hearing -The purpose of the Public Hearing is to take public comment on the proposed new road name; ZEL Ridge - Private Road – Off of Manus Chapel Road– SR 1327. The Public Hearing was properly advertised in the Tryon Daily Bulletin.

   B. Citizen Comments

   There were no citizen comments.

   C. Adjourn Public Hearing

   Commissioner Melton moved to adjourn the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Beiler, and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Call to Order the Regular Meeting - Chairman Yoder

3. Invocation - Chairman Yoder

4. Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Beiler

5. Approval of Agenda

   A. Items may be added or removed at this time.

   Manager Pittman requested to remove items 8.G. and 12 from the agenda.

   Commissioner Melton moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Consent Agenda

   A. Approval of the September 15, 2025, Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes.

   B. Schedule a Public Hearing for proposed new road names to be considered on Monday, November 17, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the Bryant H. Womack Justice & Administration Building.

C. Tax refund request through October 1, 2025, in the amount of $502.29.

D. Declare one (1) Agricultural Economic Development vehicle as surplus to be sold by electronic auction. Asset details are attached.

E. Hurricane Helene Disaster Response and Recovery Grant Project Budget Ordinance.

F. Re-appoint Scott Woodworth to the Jury Commission for a two-year term as required in § 9-1.

G. 2025 Domestic Violence Awareness Proclamation.

H. Budget amendment to appropriate general fund balance and capital project fund balance to fund the ineligible amount for the 911 Communication radio purchase.

Commissioner Melton moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Beiler, and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

There were two citizen comments.

8. Regular Agenda Items

A. Consideration and approval of the proposed new road name subsequent to the public hearing - Attorney, Jana Berg.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the proposed road name, seconded by Vice-Chairman Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Foothills Humane Society Update - Carol Parker, Board of Directors President.

Ms. Parker introduced Kayla Shealey, Interim Director of the Foothills Humane Society. Mrs. Shealey provided an update on shelter operations and introduced one of their shelter dogs. Mrs. Shealey and Ms. Parker explained the importance of Foothills Humane Society and community support. Ms. Parker also announced the upcoming Mutt Strutt fundraising event to be held the following Saturday and encouraged everyone to attend.

C. American Viticulture Association Certification - ~~Jordan Barnes~~, Cory Lillberg, and Lita Lilly.

Lita Lilly, Owner of Overmountain Vineyards, and Cory Lillberg, Vineyard Manager of Parker-Binns Vineyard gave a presentation which detailed the history of viticulture in Polk County. Mrs. Lilly and Mr. Lillberg announced that on September 29, 2025, they were notified that they had received the federal "American Viticulture Area" designation (AVA). Mrs. Lilly said that the designation is expected to go into effect on October 29th, 2025.

D. Schedule a public hearing to review and discuss approval of text amendments to the Subdivision Ordinance on Monday, November 17, 2025, at 5:00 pm in the Bryant H. Womack Justice & Administration Building, 40 Courthouse St. Columbus, NC. (A copy of the current Subdivision Ordinance is available for review online at https://www.polknc.gov/ordinances.php or in the County Manager's office).

Cathy Ruth, Planning and Economic Development Director requested scheduling a public hearing to review and discuss text amendments to the Subdivision Ordinance concerning combinations/recombinations.

Vice-Chairman Moore moved to schedule the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion caried unanimously.

E. Polk County HR Policy Annual Review and Update - Tommy Oakman, Human Resources Officer.

Vice-Chairman Moore moved to approve the HR Policy updates, seconded by Commissioner Beiler, and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Appearance Commission Kudzu Inventory Grant - Don Dicey, Commission Member.

Mr. Dicey presented a grant to the board that the commission has been working towards. He explained that the grant would fund a project which will use drone, digital, and satellite technology to map how much Kudzu is in the county. He said that the goal of this mapping will be to help target and remove the Kudzu more effectively.

Manager Pittman explained to the Board that the proposed grant would use taxpayer funds for work on private property rather than public property, which would require the Board to change the policy. He clarified that no decision is needed at this time, however, it may be a topic of discussion in the future.

~~G. Request to create a part-time regular position for an Office Assistant in Solid Waste - Travis Ballard, Solid Waste Director.~~ **Removed during item 5.A.**

H. Approval of purchase order request and budget amendment to transfer undesignated spending to capital from the enterprise fund for the purpose of a CAT Wheel Loader to be used for Solid Waste - Travis Ballard, Solid Waste Director.

Mr. Ballard informed the Board that this is a new piece of equipment and will be covered by a 10-year warranty. He also clarified that the funding for this purchase has already been budgeted and they will be transferring the funds from the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund, which does not consist of any taxpayer dollars.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the purchase order request and budget amendment, seconded by Vice-Chairman Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

I. Budget Amendment to fund an increase in the retirement rate as an active member in the State Health Plan - Sandra Hughes, Finance Director.

Mrs. Hughes explained that the State Treasurers office is now requiring all participants in the State Health Plan to contribute 2.4% of their retirement rate in order to remain in the plan. She said that because the County participates in the State Health Plan, approval of the budget amendment is necessary to cover the additional expense.

Commissioner Beiler moved to approve the budget amendment, seconded by Vice-Chairman Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

9. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items

There were no citizen comments.

10. Volunteer Board Applications

A. Animal Cruelty Investigators - There is one vacancy and one applicant; Pauline (Paula) Spinale.

Vice-Chairman Moore moved to appoint the applicant to the Animal Cruelty Investigators, seconded by Commissioner Beiler, and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Commissioner Comments

The Commissioners thanked everyone for attending.

~~12. Closed Session~~

~~A. Motion to go into Closed Session for the purpose of Attorney-Client Privilege.~~

~~B. Motion to return to open session.~~ **Removed during item 5.A.**

13. Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Moore moved to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

Kennedy Freeman
Kennedy E Freeman
Clerk to the Board

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Myron Yoder
Myron Yoder
Chairman