

**BURNSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
AGENDA
Regular Meeting - Thursday, December 5, 2024, 6pm
Burnsville Town Hall**

1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. Consideration of Minutes
 - a. Regular meeting held on November 7, 2024
 - b. Closed session held on November 7, 2024
 - c. Special meeting held on November 22, 2024
4. Public Hearings
5. Presentations
 - a. David Connor, Military Aircraft Preservation Society Donation
6. Manager's Update - Heather Hockaday
 - a. Project updates
 - b. Personnel policy update
 - c. Tax Report
7. Clerk's Update
 - a. Christmas Parade
 - b. High Country COG Banquet
8. Department Updates
 - a. Public Works - Shane Dale
 - b. Finance - Leslie Crowder
 - i. Budget vs. Actual, previously provided to Council
 - ii. Consideration of opening an account, FEMA advance
 - iii. Project Ordinance, Bridge loan
 - iv. Line item transfer, Fire Department
 - c. Fire Department - Niles Howell
 - i. Consideration of appointments to Relief Fund board
 - d. Police Department - Brian Buchanan
 - e. Zoning/Code Enforcement/Flood Plain Administration - Brian Buchanan
 - f. Burnsville Town Center - Corbin Cooper
9. Council Members' Reports
10. Updates from Advisory Boards and Non-Profits
 - a. Yancey/Burnsville Chamber of Commerce
 - b. High Country Council of Governments
11. Closed Session
12. Next Town Council Meeting - Regular meeting on January 2, 2024, 6pm
13. Adjourn

BURNSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Meeting - Thursday, November 7, 2024, 6pm
Burnsville Town Hall

On Thursday, November 7, 2024, at 6pm, the Burnsville Town Council with Mayor Russell Fox and Councilors Judy Buchanan, Randy Ollis, Denise Collier, and Bill Wheeler present, held a regular meeting at the Burnsville Town Hall. Also in attendance were town staff members Heather Hockaday, Shane Dale, Brian Buchanan, Leslie Crowder, Niles Howell, and Chad Fox, and visitors. Mayor Fox called the meeting to order at 6pm and stated that the purpose of the meeting was to conduct regular business for the month of November 2024.

Adoption of the agenda - Mayor Fox requested to add James Keith to the presentations section of the agenda and have Council Member Reports follow. Judy Buchanan moved to adopt the agenda with the changes requested by Mayor Fox. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Public Comment

- Resident Robert Crumb spoke about seeing public officials jump into action and work hard for the people of Burnsville. He thanked the Town Council and staff for their effort.
- Former Mayor Danny McIntosh talked about the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, saying that it was an unprecedented time. He thanked the Town staff and mentioned the great effort of local officials and the incredible outpouring of support from outsiders. He spoke of new complications, ensuring that we will pull through.

Consideration of Minutes - Minutes from a regular meeting held on September 5, 2024 were considered. Randy Ollis made a motion to approve the minutes as read. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

- There were none.

Presentations

- James and Amanda Keith of the Nu Wray Inn and Carriage House were present and spoke about the many challenges that local Fire Departments faced in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. The Keiths, who recently organized a fundraiser to help support local fire departments, presented a check for \$12,244 to Burnsville Fire Chief Niles Howell for the Yancey County Fire Fighters Association. They thanked him and all of the firefighters for their service.

Council Members' Reports

- Judy Buchanan spoke about how proud she was of everyone that has helped during the storm recovery.
- Mayor Fox read a proclamation from Biloxi, Mississippi, attached to these minutes, acknowledging the strength and resilience of Burnsville's community and proclaiming solidarity with Burnsville during this challenging time. He followed by saying that he was blown away by the many acts of kindness and support of so many during one of the most difficult times in Burnsville's history. He recognized Danny and Sharon McIntosh, Katy Ledford, and the Layells for their time spent helping at the Fire Department. He acknowledged the sacrifices of Public Works Director Shane Dale and the Public Works crew, one of which lost his own home but still came to work to help others. He mentioned

Police Chief Brian Buchanan and the police officers that helped with security and performed many duties outside of their typical job. Mayor Fox talked about Fire Chief Niles Howell and the day after day dedication to serve the community. He said that Town Manager Heather Hockaday goes above and beyond, working hours on end. He expressed gratitude for the Town employees who helped with countless duties. He concluded by saying that the recovery is a long road but we are headed in the right direction and ahead of schedule because of the character of our people.

Manager's Update - Town Manager Heather Hockaday

1. Project updates
 - a. West Main Sewer Interceptor - Mrs. Hockaday reported that about half of the pipes were lined when the storm hit, which may have helped endure the storm. Work on the project is scheduled to start back on the following Monday.
 - b. Main Street Water Line Improvements - She said that bids on construction of the project are due November 26th.
 - c. Pine Swamp Waterwater Treatment Plant renovation - A County project, with bids expected Feb 5th on a new .5 plant. She said that there was damage to the facility but with help, the blowers are operational and running. She said that the Town was very fortunate to not have more damage at the wastewater plant.
 - d. New PWD/Police building - Bids for the renovation project are due on January 8th.
 - e. Raw Water Intake - The Town's primary damage from the storm was the raw water intake pump station. Mrs. Hockaday is in discussion with DEQ and FEMA about funding. She discussed estimates for a new system and how most of the expenses are eligible for FEMA funds.
 - f. Bolens Creek Intake - She said that, like the Pensacola intake, the Bolens Creek intake and lines leading to it were catastrophically damaged.
 - g. Pensacola Temporary Intake - Mrs. Hockaday said that the Raw Water Intake Temporary System is responsible for getting water back to the Town but is a constant maintenance nightmare. Pumps have failed and had difficulty pushing enough water to the water treatment plant. Engineers have estimated that the temporary system will end up costing \$2 million.
2. Memorandum of Transportation Agreement (IVC) - Mrs. Hockaday presented the involuntary commitment transportation agreement that addresses the transportation involved with an involuntary commitment order (IVC Order) inside Town limits. Bill Wheeler moved to approve the agreement. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.
3. Tax Report - Mrs. Hockaday presented Council with an updated tax report.
 - a. Tax exemption - Mrs. Hockaday reported that a property owned by Mitchell/Yancey Habitat for Humanity Inc. is now considered fully tax exempt after a recent approval by the Yancey County Commissioners. Judy Buchanan moved to approve removing the property from the tax rolls. Randy Ollis seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Clerk's Update - Town Clerk Chad Fox

1. CDBG-I Compliance Plans/Policies - Town Clerk Fox presented updates to policies required to maintain compliance with the CDBG-I grant for the W. Main Sewer Interceptor project. Randy Ollis moved to approve the Section 3 Action Plan Resolution and Action Plan, Language Access Policy & Plan, Equal Housing Opportunity Resolution, and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy & Plan. Denise Collier seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Department Updates

1. Public Works - Public Works Director Shane Dale updated the Council on water and sewer, saying that he has been amazed by the help received from organizations like Harper Contractors, Garney Contractors, Russell Underwood Pumps, The City of Raleigh, WithersRavenel, McGill, Sanford Electric, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. He shared with the Council how difficult it was to access the intake site immediately after the storm due to the damage and debris.

He also said that an 8-inch line has been installed under Cane River and is currently being flushed. He expects customers west of Cane River to have water by next week. He also gave an update on the wastewater treatment plant, saying that the system was not nearly as damaged as initially thought.

2. Finance - Finance Officer Leslie Crowder previously provided a budget vs actual and overtime report. She said that a budget amendment would likely be needed for the storm related expenses and the auditor recommended starting a new department to address them.
 - a. Open a Helene flood relief account & name signatories - Mrs. Crowder said that the account was primarily for donations to the fire department. Judy Buchanan moved to approve opening a Helene flood relief account and have Niles Howell, Heather Hockaday, and Leslie Crowder be the signatories. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.
 - b. Budget amendment, hurricane expenditures - Mrs. Crowder reviewed early estimates and a budget amendment accounting for damage to the Raw Water Intake and Bakers Creek Pump Station by hurricane Helene. Judy Buchanan moved to approve *Budget Amendment #2 FY:24/25*. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.
3. Fire Department - Fire Chief Niles Howell presented a call summary and mentioned that the department received 86 calls, most of which were storm related. He recounted many of the roles that the department assumed during the recovery efforts, saying that the fire department was the site of the field hospital, a kitchen that served multiple meals to over 200 people each day, a donations site, and the location for Sheriff Department Strike Teams, Fire Departments from across the state, Ambulance Strike Teams, and EMS.
 - a. Consideration of appointments to the Relief Fund board. Mayor Fox moved to table the appointments until the December meeting. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion which carried unanimously.
4. Police Department Update - Police Chief Brian Buchanan presented an activity log and talked about the large crowd for the Halloween on Main Street event.
5. Zoning/Code Enforcement Update - Zoning Administrator Brian Buchanan said that projects slowed during the storm recovery, but he has received a few applications for storm damage and housing projects.
6. Burnsville Town Center - Town Center Manager Corbin Cooper reported on cancelations, and said that the center served as the hub for volunteers, and hosted DSS immediately after the storm but is now fully operational. He also mentioned upcoming dinners for the public, crafts shows, and Christmas markets.

Updates from Advisory Boards and Non-Profits

Yancey Chamber of Commerce - Chamber Director Elaine Mann acknowledged the efforts of many that help get things back up and running. She talked about the Chambers roles during the first days following the storm as a co-working space with internet. She said that the Chamber felt that the

Halloween on Main Street would be a good way to help families get a break from the stresses of the storm and was happy to see such a great turnout. She mentioned the recent hiring of Kat Bauer as program manager and upcoming events such as the Christmas parade on December 7th and Merry Main Street on December 13th.

Recess - The Council recessed briefly at 7:05pm

Closed Session - After the recess, Mayor Fox moved to leave open session and enter into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6), to discuss Town personnel at 7:17pm. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Reenter open session - Mayor Fox moved to leave closed session and reenter open session at 8pm. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Action after reentering open session

- Judy Buchanan made a motion to amend the job description for Assistant Public Works Director, removing any provisions about zoning administration, building inspection, floodplain administration, or safety officer, add a salary range of \$45,600-\$67,000 into the pay classification plan, and authorize staff to post the position for seven days. Mayor Fox seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.
- Judy Buchanan moved to approve a bonus of \$7,500 for the salaried Public Works Director position reflecting Mr. Dale's countless hours committed to restoring water and sewer following the storm. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.
- Judy Buchanan moved to increase the Christmas bonus by \$250 for all employees. Randy Ollis seconded the motion which carried. All were in agreement.
- Randy Ollis moved to pay a \$7,500 bonus to Mayor Fox reflecting the many days spent conducting search and rescue efforts and helping to restore water and sewer for the Town of Burnsville. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Next Town Council Meeting - Regular meeting on December 5, 2024, 6pm.

Adjourn - With there being no further business, Randy Ollis moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06pm. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, meeting adjourned.

J. Chad Fox, Town Clerk

T. Russell Fox, Mayor

BURNSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Special Meeting - Thursday, November 22, 2024, 10am
Burnsville Town Hall

On Friday, November 22, 2024, at 10am, the Burnsville Town Council with Mayor Russell Fox and Councilors Judy Buchanan, Denise Collier, Randy Ollis, and Bill Wheeler present, held a special meeting at the Burnsville Town Hall. Also in attendance were town staff members Heather Hockaday, Leslie Crowder, and Chad Fox. Mayor Fox called the meeting to order at 9:56am.

Adoption of the agenda - Randy Ollis moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Denise Collier seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Consideration of the terms of an Emergency Bridge Loan Award for Hurricane Helene Infrastructure Damage from DEQ - Town Manager Heather Hockaday explained that the NC State Legislature has allowed for money in the form of a bridge loan to cover items such as emergencies like Hurricane Helene. She said that as the Town waits to get reimbursement from FEMA, the loan will allow the Town to pay any expenses related to water and sewer system repairs. She said that the loan requires all receipts and invoices to be submitted by October 28, 2028 and to be paid back in full by June 30, 2030.

Mayor Fox expressed that he felt the loan would be helpful if funds were needed to pay these bills. Manager Hockaday agreed, saying that cash flow could be a problem, with all of the other projects the Town currently has in progress.

The Council briefly discussed FEMA, how the reimbursements process might work, and submission of a damage inventory. Mrs. Hockaday said that FEMA will put the damage inventory items into separate projects, each with a scope of work, then obligate money with an established timeframe.

Judy Buchanan moved to approve the *Emergency Bridge Loan DWI Project No. HEL-0004* and the Resolution #2024.11.22.01, accepting the terms. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Adjourn - With there being no further business, Mayor Fox moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:06am. Denise Collier seconded the motion, meeting adjourned.

J. Chad Fox, Town Clerk

T. Russell Fox, Mayor

RESOLUTION TO AMEND APPENDIX A “JOB DESCRIPTIONS” TO THE TOWN OF BURNSVILLE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

WHEREAS, during certain times the Town may need to increase personnel capacity in the form of a temporary employee; and

WHEREAS, examples of times when a temporary employee may be needed may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Declared emergencies
- Retirement or separation of a regular employee
- Special Events/projects
- Where specific expertise is required for a limited period of time
- Other times when Town management or staff determine additional labor force for a period of time less than one year is needed

WHEREAS, a temporary employee is an employee on a temporary appointment, for a limited term, that shall not exceed eleven (11) consecutive months.

WHEREAS, a temporary employee is assigned to a temporary appointment, which can include job classifications and responsibilities in any of the Town’s departments and would report to the department head or supervisor for that position if he/she was a regular employee. Compensation for temporary employees shall be set by the Town Manager and shall be commiserate with the duties and responsibilities of the appointed position, employee’s experience and educational or certification requirements and/or other factors that may be relevant to the position.

Temporary employees do not:

- earn leave, including sick leave and vacation leave;
- receive total state service credit;
- earn retirement credit;
- earn career status

Temporary employees are ineligible for the following:

- health, dental or vision insurance benefits
- severance pay;
- priority reemployment consideration;
- promotional priority, or;
- allowed to grieve a disciplinary action and may be separated at any time during their temporary employment period.

WHEREAS, prior to offering a temporary employment position the Manager and Finance Department shall make a determination that the funding for the position’s pay is available.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Burnsville Town Council hereby amends the Town’s Employee Handbook Appendix A to include the following:

1. A temporary employee is an individual hired for a specific, predetermined period of time, not to exceed 11 consecutive months, to fulfill a short-term job need, typically for a project or to cover a temporary staffing gap, and who is not considered a permanent employee, not eligible for full employee benefits like health insurance or retirement plans.

2. A temporary employee is assigned to a temporary appointment, which can include job classifications and responsibilities in any of the Town's departments. Temporary employees will report to the assigned department head or supervisor for that position as he/she would if he/she was a regular employee.

3. Compensation for temporary employees shall be set by the Town Manager and shall be commiserate with the duties and responsibilities of the appointed position, employee's experience and educational or certification requirements and/or other factors that may be relevant to the position.

4. That the following terms and conditions of Temporary Employment with the Town shall be listed in the Town's Employee Handbook:

Temporary employees do not:

- earn leave, including sick leave and vacation leave;
- receive total state service credit;
- earn retirement credit;
- earn career status

Temporary employees are ineligible for the following:

- health, dental or vision insurance benefits
- severance pay;
- priority reemployment consideration;
- promotional priority, or;
- allowed to grieve a disciplinary action and may be separated at any time during their temporary employment period.

5. That the Town Manager shall hire any Temporary Employee upon consideration of the Town's needs for short-term labor after consultation with Town Department Heads and the Finance Department to determine the availability a funding for the position.

This the ___ day of _____, 2024.

TOWN OF BURNSVILLE

BY: _____
T. Russell Fox, Mayor

ATTEST:

J. Chad Fox, Clerk

Doug Matheson
Chair of the Board

Dennis Aldridge
Vice-Chair



Larry Fontaine
Secretary

Jeff Whitson
Treasurer

468 New Market Blvd.
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**Executive Board Meeting
November 18, 2024 | 7:00 p.m.
High Country COG Board Room**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Doug Matheson, Executive Board Chairman

II. CONSIDERATION OF OCTOBER 2024 MINUTES [ACTION]

Doug Matheson, Executive Board Chairman

III. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Caroline Briggs, Finance Officer

- Financial Highlights as of October 31, 2024 [ACTION]

IV. HUD & FEMA STATE RECOVERY PLAN

15 MINUTES

Sharlene Abbott, Senior CPD Representative - HUD

V. DIGITAL NAVIGATOR UPDATE

5 MINUTES

Zack Green, Area Agency on Aging Director

VI. CEDS ANNUAL REPORT RESOLUTION [ACTION]

10 MINUTES

Chris Grubb, Planning & Development Director

VII. REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

10 MINUTES

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director

VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

IX. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

- Meeting Time Discussion

X. OTHER BUSINESS

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

XII. ADJOURNMENT [ACTION]

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 21, 2024
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) met October 21, 2024, 2:00pm, in the HCCOG Board Room in Boone. The following members were present at the meeting: Todd McNeill, Greg Minton, Timmy Evans, Kelly Melang, Otis Church, Bill Wheeler, Larry Fontaine, Harley Masters, Teresa McCoy, Rocky Buchanan, Tom Hartman, Tim Futrelle, Dennis Aldridge, and Doug Matheson. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Kevin Leonard, Jeff Hedrick, Caroline Briggs, Chris Grubb, Zack Green, Misty Bishop-Price, Sarah Price, and Victoria Oxentine.

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Chairman Matheson called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Harley Masters led the Pledge of Allegiance and Dennis Aldridge offered the invocation.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Todd McNeill moved to accept the minutes of the August 19, 2024 meeting, seconded by Tom Hartman. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial Highlights

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented the Financial Highlights as of September 30, 2024 (Attachment A) and discussed revenues versus expenditures. Tim Futrelle made a motion to approve the Financial Highlights as of September 30, 2024. Todd McNeill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Budget Amendment #1

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented Budget Amendment #1 (Attachment A1) which is an increase of \$615,063.00 since the actual Area Agency on Aging and Workforce Development funding has been awarded. Tom Hartman made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #1. Otis Church seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Digital Inclusion Grant Project Ordinance

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented a grant project ordinance for Digital Inclusion awarded to the Planning and Development department in the amount of \$800,000 to appoint a full-time Digital Inclusion & Equity Coordinator and establish a regional funding pool (Attachment A2). This grant project ordinance will run through December 31, 2026. Tom Hartman made a motion to approve the Digital Inclusion Grant Project Ordinance. Timmy Evans seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Area Agency on Aging Choosing Home Grant Project Ordinance

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented a grant project ordinance for a Choosing Home grant awarded to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) department to support housing needs for vulnerable older adults in the amount of \$132,889.00 (Attachment A3). This grant project ordinance will run through December 31, 2026. Otis Church made a motion to approve the AAA Choosing Home Grant Project Ordinance. Greg Minton seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Area Agency on Aging ARPA Grant Project Ordinance Amendment

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented a grant project ordinance amendment extending the end date for ARPA funding awarded to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) department (Attachment A4). This grant project ordinance will now run through September 30, 2025. Todd McNeill made a motion to approve the AAA ARPA Grant Project Ordinance Amendment. Otis Church seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CEDS UPDATE

Chris Grubb, Planning and Development Director thanked Executive Board members that were able to attend and applauded their hard work in the region, in the wake of Hurricane Helene. Mr. Grubb reminded the Executive Board that the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a 5-year document, last adopted on November 21, 2022. The annual report will be due by December 1, 2024. Mr. Grubb discussed the progress of our CEDS program and will have an annual report resolution to bring forth for adoption at the November 2024 meeting.

HURRICANE HELENE DISASTER RECOVERY DISCUSSION AND RESOURCES

Chris Grubb, Planning and Development Director noted that the COG is preparing to help however we can with FEMA applications, recovery efforts, grant writing, etc. He also noted that we understand some of our counties and towns were more fortunate than others, so we are prepared to work with them business as usual and work with our more affected areas on disaster relief and recovery efforts. Mr. Grubb opened the floor for discussion amongst board members. Chairman Matheson asked board members to discuss their jurisdiction's status and current needs. After much disaster recovery discussion amongst board members, Todd McNeill introduced Kevin Leonard, NC Association of County Commissioners Executive Director. Mr. Leonard thanked the board for allowing him to sit in on the conversation. Mr. Leonard wants to work with the COGs in the affected WNC region and the League of Municipalities to get compiled lists of needs to present to the General Assembly in early November. It was decided that Victoria Oxentine, Communications Manager, would send out a digital form for Executive Board members to complete for each of their jurisdictions. Board members will submit their most dire 3-5 needs for disaster recovery, knowing that the needs are ever changing. Mrs. Oxentine will then compile the High Country list and send it to Mr. Leonard in early November.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Matheson noted that it was great to be together and have this discussion. Chairman Matheson thanked Kevin Leonard for attending and helping get the list of needs to the General Assembly.

OTHER BUSINESS

Victoria Oxentine, Communications Manager noted that Julie Wiggins, Executive Director sent her deepest regrets for not being able to attend the Executive Board meeting. She was attending the NADO conference in Louisiana. Mrs. Oxentine also noted that the Fall ReCOgnition

newsletter will be paused for now and that she will work with Julie Wiggins on a plan to announce the 2024 Annual Banquet award winners soon. Sarah Price, Resiliency Planner discussed the FEMA grants portal and public assistance documentation. Misty Bishop-Price, Workforce Development Director announced a new grant her department has received in the wake of the recent disaster. The Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief Employment Grant (Attachment B) provides funding to offer temporary disaster-relief employment opportunities to assist with local recovery efforts. All seven COG counties are eligible.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other comments or business, Otis Church made a motion to adjourn. Kelly Melang seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:37 pm.

Chairman, Doug Matheson

Clerk to the Board, Victoria Oxentine

Date _____

Doug Matheson
Chair of the Board

Dennis Aldridge
Vice-Chair



Larry Fontaine
Secretary

Jeff Whitson
Treasurer

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Financial Highlights – November 18, 2024

OCTOBER 31, 2024		
		2023
Total Fund Balance - Governmental Funds		\$ 2,122,917
Restricted Fund Balance - GF		\$ 22,457
Assigned Fund Balance - GF		\$ 553,514
Unassigned Fund Balance - GF		\$ 1,546,946
	2025	
Total Expenditures - YTD	\$ 1,556,255	\$ 6,719,237
Total Fund Balance as % of General Fund Expenditures*	33.52%	31.59%
Unassigned Fund Balance as % of General Fund Expenditures*	24.42%	23.02%
*FY2025 Budget Expenditures	FISCAL YEAR 2025	
\$6,334,217	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Total Revenue		
General	\$ 410,575	\$ 255,995
Planning/Development	\$ 984,072	\$ 307,852
Resilience Contractual	\$ 73,627	\$ 28,313
Area Agency on Aging	\$ 2,886,385	\$ 454,489
Workforce Development	\$ 1,979,558	\$ 255,603
	\$ 6,334,217	\$ 1,302,252
Total Expenditures		
General	\$ 410,575	\$ 264,077
Planning/Development	\$ 984,072	\$ 278,884
Resilience Contractual	\$ 73,627	\$ 17,701
Area Agency on Aging	\$ 2,886,385	\$ 661,531
Workforce Development	\$ 1,979,558	\$ 334,062
	\$ 6,334,217	\$ 1,556,255
Revenues over (under) expenditures		\$ (254,003)

Doug Matheson
Chair of the Board

Dennis Aldridge
Vice-Chair



Larry Fontaine
Secretary

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FY2025 PROJECT ORDINANCES					
DESCRIPTION	FISCAL YEAR	BUDGET	REVENUE	EXPENSE	
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)	2022	\$ 593,750	\$ 234,620	\$ 289,054	
DISASTER RECOVERY NCARCOG	2023	\$ 331,250	\$ 331,250	\$ 331,250	
DOGWOOD HEALTH TRUST	2025	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 1,730	
DIT DIGITAL CHAMPION	2025	\$ 800,000	\$ 21,693	\$ 6,030	
CHOOSING HOME SFRF	2025	\$ 132,889	\$ -	\$ -	
ASU FALLS PREVENTION	2023	\$ 251,959	\$ 164,142	\$ 210,943	
AGELESS ACCESS DIGITAL NAVIGATOR	2025	\$ 98,058	\$ -	\$ 3,683	
OMB LOC 6 - ARPA	2024	\$ 15,425	\$ -	\$ -	
ARPA FCSP	2023	\$ 125,769	\$ 54,721	\$ 57,704	
ARPA P&A		\$ 147,189	\$ 44,200	\$ 60,554	
ARPA OMB		\$ 10,456	\$ 8,754	\$ 10,278	
ARPA EBHP		\$ 39,013	\$ 33,318	\$ 33,318	
ALLEGHANY COUNCIL ON AGING ARPA		\$ 58,120	\$ 58,120	\$ 58,120	
GENERATIONS ASHE ARPA		\$ 114,666	\$ 88,158	\$ 113,804	
AVERY SENIOR SERVICES ARPA		\$ 71,006	\$ 71,006	\$ 71,006	
MITCHELL SENIOR CENTER ARPA		\$ 66,601	\$ -	\$ -	
WATAUGA PROJECT ON AGING ARPA		\$ 146,001	\$ 131,901	\$ 134,778	
BROC ARPA		\$ 154,860	\$ 131,184	\$ 132,947	
WILKES SENIOR RESOURCES ARPA		\$ 107,181	\$ 96,429	\$ 102,699	
RUBY PARDUE BLACKBURN ADC ARPA		\$ 13,792	\$ 13,522	\$ 13,522	
YANCEY COMMUNITY CENTER ARPA		\$ 77,944	\$ -	\$ -	
LEGAL AID OF NC ARPA		\$ 27,000	\$ 16,620	\$ 17,820	
			\$ 1,159,598	\$ 747,933	\$ 806,551
NCWORKS SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER RECOVERY		2023	\$ 200,000	\$ 124,738	\$ 125,444
NCWORKS SMALL BUSINESS WORK-BASED LEARNING	2023	\$ 750,000	\$ 463,840	\$ 466,783	
DOGWOOD WORKBASED LEARNING	2025	\$ 310,000	\$ 310,000	\$ -	
TOTALS		\$ 4,717,929	\$ 2,473,216	\$ 2,241,469	
Cash Balances					
Operating Account		\$ 190,017			
NCCMT Account		\$ 1,871,756			
		\$ 2,061,773			

The financial information in the report reflects the HCCOG's overall financial position for the fiscal year through July 31, 2025 and is for the management discussion purposes only.

Caroline Briggs, Finance Officer

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

2023 UPDATE

October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024



High Country Council of Governments

November 18, 2024

High Country Council of Governments

468 New Market Boulevard

Boone, NC 28607

828-265-5434

Introduction

The most recent CEDS developed by HCCOG was adopted on November 21, 2022. The next full CEDS update is planned for 2027. The High Country Workforce Development Board (HCWDB) serves as the Strategy Committee to assist HCCOG staff in developing the CEDS. The HCWDB is comprised primarily of private-sector representatives.

The CEDS analyzes regional demographics, infrastructure, economic sectors, and economic development efforts. It also identifies economic development goals and objectives, local economic development projects, projects deemed vital to the region, and performance measures by which to gauge implementation of the CEDS.

This Update discusses changes to the CEDS document and process, and provides update on the CEDS implementation.

Adjustment to the Strategy

There are no adjustments to the 2024 High Country Council of Governments CEDS.

Report on Economic Development Activities

Significant economic development initiatives in the District in FFY 2023-24 include:

- Continued Development of the Ashe County Industrial Park
- Development of the Masthead Tech Hub in Wilkes County
- Development of Outdoor Recreation Plans in Ashe, Wilkes, and Watauga counties
- Continued redevelopment of the Pinebridge Complex in Town of Spruce Pine by Mayland Community College
- Development/Implementation of High Country Digital Inclusion Plan
- Development of Workforce Housing Analysis for Avery County
- Begin Crossnore Comprehensive Plan Update
- Begin Watauga County Comprehensive Plan Update

Major activities undertaken by High Country COG staff in FFY 2024 to support implementation of the CEDS include:

- Continued administration of the High Country Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RPO)
- Maintained GIS data for Towns of Wilkesboro, North Wilkesboro, Banner Elk, West Jefferson, and Blowing Rock

- Maintained E911 road and address data for Town of Beech Mountain, and Wilkes and Avery Counties
- Developed the following grant applications:
 - Watauga County Slaughter Facility (ARC, EDA)
 - Ashe County Livestock Facility (ARC)
 - Town of Jefferson Streetscape (ARC, NCDOT)
 - Mayland Community College Three Peaks Kitchen (EDA)
 - Ashe County Industrial Park (Golden LEAF Foundation)
 - Town of West Jefferson Asset Inventory and Assessment – Water (NCDEQ)
 - Town of West Jefferson Asset Inventory and Assessment – Sewer (NCDEQ)
- Continued administration of the following projects:
 - Avery County Broadband Expansion – Phase 2
 - Ashe Agricultural Center
 - Jefferson/West Jefferson Water Interconnect Feasibility Study
 - Middle Fork Greenway
 - Town of Boone Deck Hill Water Tank CDBG
 - Town of Boone Asset Inventory and Assessment
 - Watauga Slaughter Facility
 - NC GoldenLeaf Foundation CBGI Program grants for the following projects:
 - Ashe County Industrial Park
 - Town of Spruce Pine NC Hwy. 226 Waterline
 - Watauga CDBG-CV
 - Ashe CDBG-CV
 - Town of Spruce Pine Highway 226 Water Line Project
 - Town of Burnsville Main Sewer Interceptor (West)
 - Town of Burnsville Main Sewer Interceptor Improvements (East)
 - Town of Burnsville Bakers Creek Pump Station Improvements
 - Town of Burnsville Bolens Creek Raw Waterlines & Cane River Intake
 - Town of Burnsville Main St/Bennett St/Glendale Ave. Waterline Improvements
 - Avery County Domestic Violence Shelter CDBG-NR
 - Ashe County Business Park Grading and Shell Building

Evaluation of Progress on Action Plan and Goals

The 2022 High Country Council of Governments CEDS contains the following goals (with example project from 2023 in District):

1. Connect employers to a skilled workforce

2. Accreditation of Wilkes Community College's Associate Degree Nursing program from the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA)
2. Maintain and improve the district's infrastructure to meet future demand
 - Establishment of fixed-route transit service in Town of Spruce Pine
3. Increase tourist visitation to the district
 - Continued development of Town of Wilkesboro Community Commons and Pavilion
4. Increase industrial and commercial activity in the district
 - Expansion of NAPCO, Inc. in Alleghany County
5. Expand entrepreneurial activity in the district
 - Development of the Masthead Tech Hub in Wilkes County
6. Increase agricultural output
 - Ashe County Agricultural Facility

The EDD's work in FFY 2024 directly addressed each of the six goals.

The 2022 High Country Council of Governments CEDS contains the following performance measures:

- Announced job creation
- Announced private-sector investment
- Increases in average household wages and income
- Number of new businesses
- Federal, state, and local investment in the district
- Educational attainment
- Work Ready Community designations
- Number of self-employed
- Retail sales
- Tourism revenue
- Agricultural impact
- Number of CEDS strategies advanced or accomplished

During FFY 2022, there were 24 new jobs and \$342,000 in private investment announced in the District (Economic Development Partnership of NC).

The following tables depict recent data at county level that illustrate the unemployment numbers. Source- NC Commerce September, 2024

Alleghany	3.5%
Ashe	2.5%
Avery	2.5%
Mitchell	2.9%
Watauga	2.5%
Wilkes	3.5%
Yancey	3.7%

Taxable Revenue by County- NC Department of Revenue

County	Taxable sales and purchases Aug 2024(\$mil)
Alleghany	14.883
Ashe	38.652
Avery	55.814
Mitchell	20.974
Watauga	135.718
Wilkes	76.334
Yancey	20.757

The table below shows most current available data from NC Commerce on certain CEDS performance measures.

County	Tourism Expenditures 2023 (\$mil)	Jobs from Tourism 2023
Alleghany	48.31	283
Ashe	112.59	554
Avery	259.45	1531
Mitchell	46.60	239
Watauga	517.51	3064
Wilkes	114.47	701
Yancey	74.55	361

Schedule of Goals for the Next Year

For FFY 2024, the High Country COG will work on the following strategies:

1. Assist local governments to apply for and administer grants for economic development projects
2. Assist local governments with economic development planning
3. Assist local governments with planning for and incentivizing workforce housing projects
4. Assist local governments in securing funding for physical infrastructure projects that support economic development (water, sewer, broadband, transportation)
5. Assist local governments in developing/expanding outdoor recreation infrastructure to support tourism in the district
6. Assist local governments with value-added agricultural projects



**A RESOLUTION OF THE HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF
GOVERNMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs)**

WHEREAS, High Country Council of Governments is designated an Economic Development District by the Economic Development Administration, United States Department of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Administration Reform Act of 1998 identifies a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as a requirement to apply for assistance under the Economic Development Administration's public works and economic adjustment programs; and

WHEREAS, successful economic development depends upon careful planning and setting priorities, together with identification of the region's potentials, problems, and resources; and

WHEREAS, continuous development and maintenance of the region's infrastructure, including water and sewer systems and transportation, is fundamental to economic development.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments, representing the seven counties of Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey and the nineteen included municipalities in northwestern North Carolina, fully endorses and supports the 2022 High Country Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and advocates the implementation of the action plans presented therein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments urges the utilization of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to coordinate the efforts of individuals, organizations, local governments, and private industries concerned with economic development.

ADOPTED BY THE HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS ON THE 18th DAY OF November, 2024.

Doug Matheson, Chairman

Larry Fontaine, Secretary