

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 27, 2025 – REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Commissioners of Transylvania County met in a regular meeting on Monday, January 27, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Chambers at the County Administration Building, located at 101 S. Broad Street, Brevard, NC.

Commissioners present were Larry Chapman, Chairman Jason Chappell, Vice-Chairman Jake Dalton, Teresa McCall, and Chase McKelvey. County Manager Jaime Laughter, County Attorney Bill Bulfer, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan were also present.

Media: Laura Denon – *The Transylvania Times*

There were approximately 40 people in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jason Chappell presiding declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

WELCOME

Chairman Chappell welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Commissioners and staff in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following remarks reflect the opinions and viewpoints of the speakers.

Lisa Rodke: Ms. Rodke proposed a voluntary, donation-based rent stabilization reward program to incentivize landlords who choose not to raise rent. She suggested that the Tax Office administer the program at no cost to the County and that property taxpayers should be allowed to contribute voluntarily. She also congratulated recent election winners and emphasized the importance of listening to different perspectives to generate solutions for the community.

Ashley Hart: Ms. Hart commented on the presidential election, expressing support for the new administration's early actions, including executive orders and infrastructure efforts in Western North Carolina. She also urged those concerned about school repairs to direct their concerns to the appropriate governing bodies.

Leo Stevens: Mr. Stevens spoke about the need to prioritize school infrastructure improvements. He highlighted concerns about unsafe conditions at Brevard High School, including mold, leaks, and outdated ventilation, and called for meaningful action rather than temporary fixes. He urged the Board to prioritize student well-being over tourism investments.

Meredith Licht: Ms. Licht addressed the closure of the Brevard High School auxiliary gym and its impact on students, particularly the Marine Corps JROTC program. She advocated for reallocating funds to build a new facility rather than investing in repairs. She emphasized that modernizing school facilities would benefit students and the County's long-term economic health.

Cassie Broshears: Ms. Broshears expressed frustration over delays in funding school repairs. She questioned what further action the community needs to take for the Board to allocate funds and emphasized the urgency of addressing safety concerns. She urged the Board to act swiftly and decisively to fund the \$60 million needed for immediate school improvements.

Gretchen Hogan: Ms. Hogan added a business owner's perspective, stating that safe and reliable schools are essential for attracting and retaining employees. She supported previous speakers in calling for action on school funding.

AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

The Manager requested to remove Item E. Review and Approval of Community Center Grants under New Business pending a reconvening of the review committee to prioritize projects within the budgeted funds.

Commissioner Dalton moved to approve the revised agenda, seconded by Commissioner McCall and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, and unanimously approved.

The Board approved the following:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on January 13, 2025, and following met in a closed session (2) in which the minutes were sealed. The Board approved the minutes as submitted.

NOVEMBER 2024 RELEASE REPORT AND DECEMBER 2024 DISCOVERY, RELEASE, AND MONTHLY SETTLEMENT REPORT

Per N.C.G.S. § 105-312 (b), the Tax Administrator must see that all property not properly listed during the regular listing period be listed, assessed, and taxed. The Tax Administrator shall file such reports of discoveries with the Board of Commissioners. Per N.C.G.S. § 105-381 (b), the Tax Administrator must provide a monthly report to the Board of Commissioners of the actions taken by the Tax Administrator on requests for release or a refund, which shall be recorded in the minutes. For November 2024, releases totaled \$5,867.98. For December 2024, releases totaled \$7,177.67, and refunds amounted to \$2,807.43. The Board approved the November 2024 Release Report and December 2024 Discovery, Release, and Monthly Settlement Report as presented.

OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUEST TO ATTEND K-9 HANDLERS CONFERENCE

The Board of Commissioners requires approval of all out-of-state travel requests. Sheriff Chuck Owenby requested approval to send three K-9 deputies to attend the Hold the Line K-9 Handlers Conference in Myrtle Beach, SC on April 1-3, 2025. The Hold the Line K-9 Conference is comprised of three days of high-intensity training covering several aspects of police K-9 work. The conference will cover legal updates, interdiction, bite work and aggression control, narcotics, searches, and multiple other police K-9 topics. Funds have been included in the Sheriff's travel and training budget for this purpose. The Board approved Sheriff Owenby's request for out-of-state travel.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN GRANT OFFER

The State Fiscal Recovery Fund established in S.L. 2022-74 earmarked funds to assist local governments with meeting their water and wastewater infrastructure needs. Transylvania County received an earmark of \$7

million. On November 12, 2024, the Board of Commissioners reviewed updates on the utilization of NCDEQ At-Risk Funds for critical infrastructure projects and made some adjustments to projects due to funding limitations and regulatory requirements. The adjustments prioritized achievable projects with countywide benefits and aligned with funding deadlines, including the City of Brevard and Town of Rosman water interconnect project and the City of Brevard Gallimore Road sewer improvement at the Boys and Girls Club. To execute the funding offer, NCDEQ requires certain documentation, including a resolution approved by the local governing board accepting the offer of grant funds. The Board has already approved the project list and budgets and submitted those to the State. Staff will complete the items remaining in the funding offer packet and forward it to NCDEQ. The Board approved Resolutions #02-2025 and #03-2025 Acceptance of American Rescue Plan Grant Offer.

RESOLUTION BY TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Transylvania County has received an earmark for the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funded from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund established in S.L. 2021-180 to assist eligible units of government with meeting their water/wastewater infrastructure needs, and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality has offered American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding in the amount of \$1,955,037 to perform work detailed in the submitted application, and

WHEREAS, Transylvania County intends to perform said project in accordance with the agreed scope of work,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRANSYLVANIA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

That Transylvania County does hereby accept the American Rescue Plan Grant offer of \$1,955,037.

That Transylvania County does hereby give assurance to the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality that any Conditions or Assurances contained in the Award Offer will be adhered to.

That Jaime Laughter, County Manager, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with this project; to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required by the Division of Water Infrastructure.

Adopted this the 27th of January, 2025 at Transylvania County, North Carolina.



Date 1/27/2025

RESOLUTION BY TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Transylvania County has received an earmark for the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funded from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund established in S.L. 2021-180 to assist eligible units of government with meeting their water/wastewater infrastructure needs, and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality has offered American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding in the amount of \$5,044,963 to perform work detailed in the submitted application, and

WHEREAS, Transylvania County intends to perform said project in accordance with the agreed scope of work,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRANSYLVANIA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

That Transylvania County does hereby accept the American Rescue Plan Grant offer of \$5,044,963.

That Transylvania County does hereby give assurance to the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality that any Conditions or Assurances contained in the Award Offer will be adhered to.

That Jaime Laughter, County Manager, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with this project; to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required by the Division of Water Infrastructure.

Adopted this the 27th of January, 2025 at Transylvania County, North Carolina.



Date 1/27/2025

PRESENTATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

RECOGNITION OF CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Board of Commissioners recognized and expressed gratitude to citizens who have dedicated their time and expertise to serving on Transylvania County's citizen advisory councils. The Board recognized the following individuals for their service that ended during the period of July 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024:

- John Shoemaker – Transylvania Economic Alliance Board of Directors. (Chairman Chappell personally presented Mr. Shoemaker with a certificate of appreciation and an insulated mug featuring the County logo.)
- Isaac Allen – Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority. (The Board recognized Mr. Allen at the January 13 meeting.)

Chairman Chappell encouraged more residents to participate in County government by volunteering for citizen advisory councils.

NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

The Manager introduced the presentation by noting a significant increase in public records requests, many of which are extensive, spanning multiple years and thousands of documents. As the County considers drafting a policy to manage these requests, she emphasized the importance of first understanding the legal requirements outlined in North Carolina's public records laws. She then turned the presentation over to County Attorney Bill Bulfer.

Mr. Bulfer explained that public records laws continue to evolve, impacting the time and financial resources required for compliance. He outlined what constitutes a public record, which includes documents, letters, maps, books, and any tangible records stored by the County, whether in government systems or private spaces containing County-related information. However, he clarified that while the County must provide existing records, it is not required to compile or analyze data in response to a request.

Certain records are considered public and must be disclosed, while others—such as personnel files, legal documents, criminal investigative reports, and certain economic development records—are confidential and cannot be released. Additionally, even non-public records may, in some cases, be restricted due to legal or practical considerations.

Handling public records requests requires a thorough review of all requested materials to determine what can be disclosed. The County is legally obligated to respond within a reasonable timeframe, but this does not mean hiring additional staff to expedite requests. Response times vary based on request complexity and staff availability, ranging from hours to months.

With technological advancements, accessing and submitting requests has become easier. While these tools enhance transparency, they also require significant staff time to review and fulfill requests properly. Counties are permitted to direct requesters to existing online resources if the information is already publicly available.

Commissioner McCall inquired about response time requirements. Mr. Bulfer clarified that there is no statutory deadline; requests must be fulfilled within a reasonable timeframe, depending on staff workload and request complexity. He noted that delays can be mitigated when requesters are willing to refine their inquiries.

Chairman Chappell asked whether directing requesters to online sources satisfies legal obligations. Mr. Bulfer confirmed that referring requesters to a website where the information is publicly available is an acceptable response under the law.

Commissioner Chapman inquired about liability risks if an error occurs. Mr. Bulfer stated that if a public record is mistakenly withheld, a lawsuit could require its release. However, the greater risk comes from improperly disclosing confidential information, which could result in financial penalties.

The Manager highlighted the challenge of balancing records retention and storage. While the State provides retention guidelines, the County often keeps records beyond the required period. Given the increasing volume of digital files, staff may need to implement strategic purging to improve efficiency in responding to records requests.

Commissioner McCall asked whether requests for records beyond their retention period must be fulfilled. Mr. Bulfer clarified that the County is only required to provide records it currently possesses.

Commissioner McKelvey inquired about systems that could improve efficiency. Mr. Bulfer acknowledged that while technology can streamline record retrieval, implementing such systems requires significant upfront effort. The County is continually exploring ways to enhance accessibility, such as promptly publishing meeting minutes online.

Commissioner McCall asked whether large requests could incur fees. Mr. Bulfer confirmed that while requesters may be charged reasonable production costs, these fees do not necessarily offset the burden on staff. The Manager added that staff are reviewing policies to determine appropriate cost recovery measures for extensive requests, aligning with practices in other counties.

Commissioner McCall also inquired about the time staff spend fulfilling records requests. The Manager explained that the workload fluctuates. Some requests are simple, while others require extensive staff hours. For example, retrieving emails related to a specific document recently took over 10 hours due to the volume of records and the need for manual review. She emphasized the importance of staff training in records law to ensure proper handling of requests.

Mr. Bulfer concluded by noting that fulfilling records requests does not occur in isolation. A high volume of simultaneous requests can significantly extend response times. In some cases, counties have issued letters estimating that particularly complex requests could take years to complete due to staff constraints.

The Manager reiterated that the County is working on a formal policy to improve the efficiency of handling record requests while ensuring compliance with public records laws.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM HELENE

The Manager provided an update on the County's ongoing emergency response and recovery efforts following Hurricane/Tropical Storm Helene. She noted that while progress continues, updates will be provided as needed at future meetings.

- Helene survivors have until February 6, 2025, to apply for FEMA assistance.
- NC Emergency Management (NCEM) received a 24-month grant from FEMA to provide case management services. A case manager has been stationed in Henderson County's Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) since Transylvania County's center closed. Case managers are following up with individuals on the housing needs list, those using hotel vouchers, and others requiring assistance.
- As of last week, 23 households from Transylvania County were still using hotel vouchers. None of these households have expressed interest in FEMA's direct housing program or have been deemed eligible. On January 25, these households will be notified that they have three weeks to vacate the hotels. NCEM, NCDHHS, and FEMA will send teams to provide additional case management and help survivors develop individualized recovery plans.
- Three households remain approved for direct housing but are awaiting placement. One household is in the process of receiving a unit. Two households opted for FEMA's direct lease option, and FEMA is working to match them with available commercial rentals. To date, 48 households have received rental assistance.
- NCDOT has notified the County that its contractor is pulling out to allow U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) teams to continue debris removal work in the County. Any debris collected by USACE will be removed from the County. The County landfill cannot accommodate the large volume of storm debris due to the timeline between the current permitted landfill cell and the construction of a new cell.
- USACE has approved public right-of-way debris removal. Residents on private roads must complete a Right of Entry (ROE) form for assistance. The form is available on the County website: <https://www.transylvaniacounty.org/disaster-resources>. Residents are encouraged to report debris locations to the County for coordinated cleanup.
- County staff continue to work with NCEM on river debris removal, which requires state evaluation and approval before cleanup begins.
- The County will continue to push out detailed instructions to residents on properly placing debris in the right-of-way for pickup.

- The County is working with NCEM and property owners on hazard mitigation grants. Homeowners face challenges due to the lengthy application and approval process, and staff are working to expedite solutions.
- Any debris picked up by the Army Corps will be taken out of the County and not placed at the County landfill. The County does not have the capacity timeline between the current permitted cell and the new construction cell to accommodate a large increase in debris.

Chairman Chappell thanked the Manager and County staff for their efforts, especially in coordinating communication between state and federal agencies. He encouraged residents to share information on debris pickup with their neighbors.

MONTHLY CAPITAL UPDATE

The Manager provided an update on capital projects, noting a slight change in the reporting format to offer more detailed information.

Key Highlights

- Over \$150 million in capital projects are currently in development, underway, or planned.
- Approximately \$30 million in grant funding has been secured, excluding broadband funding allocated directly to local providers.
- While Hurricane Helene impacted some projects, most remain on track. However, capital improvements due to storm damage may cause delays in other projects.
- Regular updates will continue at the Board's second monthly meeting, and staff will schedule a capital workshop to revisit the capital modeling presented to the Board two years ago.

Fixing Transylvania County Schools – Step One: Investment in Capital Projects at All Nine Schools

- October: Bond sale completed; funds available in November.
- November/December: Interlocal agreement negotiated between the Board of Commissioners (BOC) and Board of Education (BOE).
- December: RFQs issued for architects for major renovation projects.
- January: Project Manager position funded and advertised.
- January 21 (BOE) & January 27 (BOC): Subcommittee representatives appointed; the first meeting will be scheduled once all appointments are finalized.
- February/March: Subcommittee selects architects and interviews project manager candidates.

The active projects list has been updated, but it does not include all education capital projects, as some are ongoing and managed directly by the School System. County-managed projects, in coordination with Transylvania County Schools (TCS), are highlighted in blue. Once hired, the project manager will provide monthly updates to both Boards. The subcommittee will help guide the process as outlined in the interlocal agreement. TCS manages all other projects unless they request County oversight.

Highlighted in yellow are funding differences between the updated five-year capital plan and the version issued in August. Three projects reflect minor financial adjustments, including the turf project, where funds from FY 2023 and the \$2.1 million allocated this fall have been combined, resulting in a total of \$2.4 million allocated. Funds have been shifted within Brevard High School's project scopes: the vestibule, cafeteria roof, and gym roof have moved from Scope #1 to Scope #2; design and construction phases have now been combined for efficiency. To expedite progress, the County fronted cash for project design last fall, allowing the RFQ process to begin before the bond sale in November. The updated scope aims to accelerate the roof replacement while minimizing disruption to students.

Major Education Projects Approved and Funded from 5 Year Plan

Project		Time Frame	Current Budget	Funding Method
RHS, RMS, RES, TCHES SOI Rosman Area Renovation Scope	Roofs, HVAC, Boilers, Electrical Upgrades, Exterior repairs, construct security vestibules where needed. <i>Note- some work will have to be completed in summer</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 16,707,282.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
BMS, BES, PFE, DRS SOI Brevard Area Renovation	Roofs, HVAC, Boilers, plumbing, electrical, window replacements, security vestibules where needed, exterior repairs <i>Note- some work will have to be completed in summer</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 14,673,792.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
BHS SOI Scope #2	Roofs, HVAC, Boilers, plumbing, electrical, window replacements, security vestibule <i>Note- some work will have to be completed in summer</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 10,477,407	FY 24 Bond Sale
SYS SOI Security System Upgrades	Security System Upgrades at all 9 schools	FY 25-28	\$ 2,954,495.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
BHS SOI Scope #1 Revised	Old Gym roof, masonry repair, window replacement <i>Can move forward while school in session. Design factored back in scope from 5Year Capital Plan</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 2,052,156	FY 24 Bond Sale
SYS Underground Storage Tank Professional Services	Prepare plan for removal of 8 aging oil storage tanks	FY 25	\$ 165,000.00	Cash
SYS Underground Storage Tank Construction	Removal and replacement as needed	FY 25-28	\$ 2,249,940.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
RHS Turf Field	Convert Football field to Turf Facility	FY 25-26	\$ 2,425,000	Cash
BHS SOI Pre-engineered Wrestling Facility	Wrestling facility to accommodate men and women long term	FY 25-30	\$ 1,200,000.00	Cash
RES SOI Playground	Playground Replacement	FY 25-30	\$ 500,000.00	Cash
SYS SOI Fencing	Fencing repair and/or placement at 8 school sites per safety plan	FY 25-28	\$ 364,678.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
BES SOI Playground	Replace Playground	FY 25-30	\$ 300,000.00	Cash
BHS SOI Softball Lighting	Replace and repair softball lighting	FY 25-30	\$ 150,000.00	Cash
RHS Retaining Wall Investigation	Structural Engineer Analysis to investigate stability and design and scope repairs if recommended. Construction project candidate for annual funding when results are known.	FY 25-30	\$ 50,000.00	Cash
SYS SOI Asphalt Improvements 1 Scope	Asphalt projects at all sites following completion of major construction FY 25-28	FY 28	\$ 1,255,784.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
Total :			\$ 55,525,534	

RHS, RMS, RES, TCHES SOI Rosman Area Renovation Scope	Roofs, HVAC, Boilers, Electrical Upgrades, Exterior repairs, construct security vestibules where needed. <i>Note- some work will have to be completed in summer</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 16,707,282.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
BMS, BES, PFE, DRS SOI Brevard Area Renovation	Roofs, HVAC, Boilers, plumbing, electrical, window replacements, security vestibules where needed, exterior repairs <i>Note- some work will have to be completed in summer</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 14,673,792.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
BHS SOI Scope #2	Roofs, HVAC, Boilers, plumbing, electrical, window replacements <i>Note- some work will have to be completed in summer</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 9,559,278.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
SYS SOI Security System Upgrades	Security System Upgrades at all 9 schools	FY 25-28	\$ 2,954,495.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
BHS SOI Scope #1 Design	Design with possible construction during school year	FY 25	\$ 205,488.00	Cash *Bond if no contract at sale
BHS SOI Scope #1 Construction	Cafeteria and Old Gym roofs, masonry repair, window replacement and construct security vestibule- <i>work can be done with students in buildings</i>	FY 25-28	\$ 2,764,797.00	FY 24 Bond Sale
SYS Underground Storage Tank Professional Services	Prepare plan for removal of 8 aging oil storage tanks	FY 25	\$ 165,000.00	Cash
SYS Underground Storage Tank Construction	Removal and replacement as needed	FY 25-28	\$ 2,249,940.00	FY 24 Bond Sale

Fixing Brevard High School Old Gym

- At the January 21 Board of Education meeting, a discussion took place regarding the possibility of redirecting funds for a new facility following a recommendation to restrict student access after the roof repair begins.
- The County Project Team is actively working with the Superintendent to gather necessary information for evaluation. Updates on the timeline and progress will be provided to both Boards.
- Any decisions made must be based on verified and accurate information to ensure transparency and public understanding. For public clarification:
 - The \$50 million in bond funds sold in October are designated for deferred maintenance projects identified across the school system. These projects were overdue and should have been completed earlier. The old gym roof replacement was flagged as a critical deferred maintenance issue. Without repairs, continued leaks could lead to further structural degradation. Bond funds are not a general pool of money; they are assigned to specific scopes of work.
 - If a new gym is pursued, the following legal and procedural steps must be adhered to as required by state statutes. These steps alone would require at least six months before any design or construction work can begin.
 - Architect Selection (RFQ Process): 90 days (3 months)
 - Public Bidding Process: 90 days (3 months)
 - State Reviews & Approvals: NCDPI approval for demolition and new construction plans. NCDOI review for buildings exceeding 10,000 square feet.
 - The glulam beams in the old gym have an expected lifespan of 15-25 years with annual maintenance. A structural engineer's 2021 report initially estimated a five-year lifespan if no action was taken. However, after implementing repair plans, the engineer revised the estimate, confirming a longer lifespan. The 2021 maintenance plan for the old gym was partially completed, focusing on decking and base-level beam repairs, but the protective capping was not installed. The structural engineer emphasized that wooden surfaces must remain sealed or painted to prevent water intrusion and rot. A letter of clarification (referenced below) from the engineer confirms that annual maintenance and inspections are required to ensure long-term structural stability. The \$117,000 beam repair project was completed in the fall of 2024, and a maintenance plan has been developed to prevent future deterioration. The engineer recently reaffirmed the structural integrity of the beams, stating there is no risk of failure.
 - The "forensic engineer" reference in discussions referred to an insurance representative, not an independent structural evaluation. After the hurricane, the School System consulted its insurance provider to determine whether any storm-related damage to the gym would be covered.
- County staff are working with the architect, engineer, and general contractor to move forward with repairs identified in the March reports.
- If the Board chooses to pursue a new gym construction instead of repairing the roof, the project will require at least three years due to the public processes involved. Unlike private sector projects, public construction must follow specific regulations and approval processes, which add significant time.
 - Not repairing the roof would result in three years without an auxiliary gym at BHS.
 - Delaying repairs will lead to structural deterioration, increasing costs, and potential safety concerns.
 - A roof replacement could be completed by the fall.
- For context, similar public projects have required several years from design to completion:
 - Sylvan Valley Industrial Phase II (County Project)
 - A shell industrial building with stand-tilt construction took 19 months from design, bidding, and construction.

- Schematics were not included in the timeline, as the footprint was based on a previous project, streamlining the process.
- Original School Bond Timeline (2020 Plan)
 - Nearly four years from contract negotiations with the architect and construction manager through project completion.
- Transylvania County Schools Grant Applications (FY 2019 & FY 2022)
 - New gym proposals for BHS estimated a three-year timeline from design to construction.
- BHS Option 1 – Approved Bond Plan
 - The initial plan, approved by both Boards, estimated a 32-month timeline for revising plans and completing construction.
 - This project did not move forward, but the timeline remains a reference for similar initiatives.



MEDLOCK & ASSOCIATES ENGINEERING, PA

January 23, 2025

Mr. David McNeil, Emergency Services Director
 Transylvania County
 101 South Broad Street
 Brevard, NC 28712

Subject: **Glulam Maintenance Program Recommendations – Lifespan Clarification**
Brevard High School - 609 N Country Club Rd, Brevard, NC 28712
 Project Number: 758221

Dear Mr. McNeil:

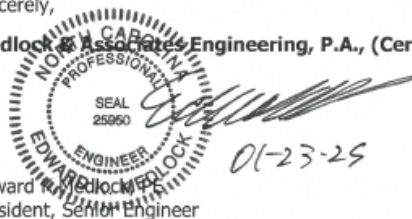
As requested, a Medlock & Associates Engineering, PA (MAE) has reviewed our Glulam Maintenance Program Recommendations report issued on May 6, 2024. The purpose of this report is to clarify the projected life span for the glulam beams that were repaired with our oversight approval. In the initial report, we mention that the anticipated age of the beam could be determined as 15 years based on our continuing 2-year repeating glulam observation and assessment. As long as the maintenance program is enacted and implemented with any future repair recommendations, the expected glulam life expectancy would be anticipated to extend approximately 25 years. Again, the key component is maintaining the glulam inspections every two years. These services may be provided by MAE or another engineer licensed in the state of North Carolina.

The scope of this report is limited to matters discussed herein regarding the scheduled maintenance program provided to the school. No opinion is offered, and none should be inferred, regarding other aspects of this structure or the structure taken as a whole. This report is based on presently known and available facts, data, and information. To the extent that additional or different facts, data, or information is developed or discovered after the issuance of this report, MAE reserves the right to amend, alter, or change the report as needed to reflect consideration of the additional or different facts, data, or information. Site observations are limited to visibly observable areas; we offer no opinion regarding structural conditions behind finishes or inaccessible areas. If signs of distress are observed or if new information is brought to our attention, invasive testing for further observations may be recommended. We are pleased to be of service. If you have any questions regarding this report or require further assistance, please call.

Sincerely,

Medlock & Associates Engineering, P.A., (Cert. #C3133):

Edward J. Medlock
 President, Senior Engineer



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01/27/2025

Chairman Chappell emphasized that even with ideal conditions, state review processes and potential rebidding requirements could extend project timelines.

Commissioner McKelvey raised concerns about the gym's usage and whether the school could manage without it for an extended period. He suggested reallocating funds originally intended for a separate wrestling facility to fully renovate the existing gym instead. The Manager noted that staff are exploring all options and will present alternatives based on cost, timelines, and facility needs.

Commissioner Chapman reiterated that school building maintenance falls under the Board of Education's responsibilities, while the Board of Commissioners provides funding. He expressed concerns that the Commissioners are often blamed for school facility conditions despite this distinction.

The Manager confirmed that the building has not been condemned, but student access is currently restricted for safety reasons. Engineers will reassess the structure to determine if partial use is possible.

Commissioner McCall explained that the bond funding is primarily allocated for deferred maintenance projects rather than new construction. Any significant changes in project scope could impact other critical school facility needs.

Protecting Transylvania Natural Resources: Clean Water, Sanitary Sewer, Solid Waste Disposal, and Streambank Restoration

- The US 64 corridor water and sewer project to Rosman is complete. Additionally, the Upper Transylvania Engineering Study for the Rosman-Burlingame system has been finalized.
- Streambank Restoration: The Emergency Water Protection (EWP) streambank restoration was near completion when Hurricane Helene caused damage. Since existing funds cannot be used for additional repairs, the County may seek another round of EWP funding.
- A project to connect the Town of Rosman and the City of Brevard's water systems for emergency use is moving forward. The contract begins on January 27, with construction expected to start within the next month. The County is funding the project, but ownership will transfer to Brevard and Rosman upon completion, based on engineered plans defining each entity's responsibilities. This interconnection has been a long-term goal since the County's 2014 water study highlighted its importance for system resiliency.
- Plans for a new landfill cell, which will extend the life of the County landfill, are being revised after the initial bid process failed to secure enough bidders. The County expects to rebid the project in March or April.
- The County has requested updated infrastructure planning documents from Brevard and Rosman as part of its capital planning process. Both entities received ARPA grants to update their asset inventories and capital improvement plans. These documents are essential for the County to evaluate funding requests and ensure compliance with legal funding restrictions. The \$10 million allocated by the State for community investment is a one-time funding opportunity, and the County aims to maximize its long-term impact.

Creating Jobs and Safe Community: New Space for Growing Businesses and Upgrading Public Safety

- EMS Main Station: Construction is complete.
- Sylvan Valley Industrial Building – Phase 2: Currently under construction; the County has requested an extension from Golden Leaf to complete project reporting upon finalization.
- Hart Road Emergency Access & Flood Mitigation: In the permitting stage; the grant period has been extended for six months to allow NCDOT time to finish. The project is expected to move forward in the spring.

- Courthouse at Public Safety Complex: Programming is nearly complete. Updated cost estimates and project details are expected to be presented to the Board at the second February meeting.
- Library Amphitheater Cover: Finalizing the preferred design in coordination with the Library Foundation. Staff will return to the Board with a project budget before proceeding.

Project Highlight: Sylvan Valley Industrial Building

- The original building, established in 2018, was funded by the County, a Golden Leaf grant, and City-donated property. It supports economic development and is managed by the Transylvania Economic Alliance.
- Current tenants include local employers Oskar Blues and Sylvan Sport.
- The facility provides growing businesses with leasing opportunities, allowing them to expand without the upfront cost of new construction.
- Phase 2 Expansion: A 40,000 sq. ft. addition is underway, funded by the County and another Golden Leaf grant. The stand-tilt construction method allows for faster building completion. The shell will be ready within 19 months, with tenant-specific upfit work to follow once occupancy is confirmed.

Chairman Chappell called for a 10-minute break at 7:50. The Board reconvened at 8:00 p.m.

APPOINTMENTS

COUNTY COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENTS

Commissioners serve on various boards and committees at the local, regional, and state levels. Each year, the Board reviews these appointments to confirm or update assignments as needed. A preliminary discussion took place on December 9, 2024, with final action scheduled for January.

The Board made the following appointments:

- **Board of Health:** Commissioner McCall's term expired on December 31, 2024. She expressed interest in continuing. *Motion by Chairman Chappell, seconded by Commissioner Chapman, unanimously approved.*
- **TC Tourism Development Authority:** Commissioner Chapman's term expired on December 31, 2024. He requested to remain in the role. *Motion by Commissioner Dalton, seconded by Commissioner McCall, unanimously approved.*
- **Personnel Board:** Commissioner McKelvey was appointed, replacing Commissioner Dalton. *Motion by Commissioner Chapman, seconded by Commissioner McCall, unanimously approved.*
- **Transylvania Economic Alliance Board of Directors (Alternate):** Commissioner McKelvey was designated as an alternate in case Commissioner Dalton is unable to attend. *Motion by Commissioner McCall, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, unanimously approved.*
- **Land of Sky Regional Council & Planning Organizations:**
 - **Land of Sky Regional Council:** Commissioner McKelvey was appointed as the alternate/secondary member (Chairman Chappell remains the primary).
 - **Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization:** Commissioner McKelvey was appointed as the primary member.
 - **French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization:** Commissioner was McKelvey appointed as a non-voting member. *Motion by Commissioner Chapman, seconded by Commissioner McCall, unanimously approved.*

JOINT SCHOOL BOND PROJECT COMMITTEE

The Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education authorized the County Manager and Superintendent to negotiate and execute an agreement to govern school capital projects funded by the bond. As part of this agreement, a Joint School Bond Project Committee was formed, consisting of two representatives from each Board, the County Manager, and the Superintendent. The committee will function as a public body, advising both Boards at key project milestones, including:

- Interviewing final candidates for the project manager role.
- Reviewing and recommending selections for professional service RFQs.
- Evaluating changes in project scope before bidding.
- Reviewing architectural plans at 50% completion and prior to bidding.
- Assessing any major modifications during construction.
- Meeting quarterly for project updates.
- Resolving concerns raised by either governing Board.

The Board of Education appointed Chair Tanya Dalton and Vice-Chair Greg Cochran as its representatives on January 21.

Commissioner McCall expressed initial reservations about the committee but supported it as long as it adhered to the interlocal agreement and did not attempt to override the project manager's role.

Commissioner McCall moved to appoint Chairman Chappell and Commissioner McKelvey as the County's representatives, seconded by Commissioner Chapman. Chairman Chappell commended the County Manager and Superintendent for their work on the agreement and emphasized that any changes must be approved by both Boards, ensuring no single individual can alter the process. Commissioner Chapman reminded the public that the committee's meetings will be advertised and open to the public. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

PLANNING BOARD

The terms of Kimsey Jackson and Rick Lasater are set to expire at the end of January. Both have served two full terms. Several applications were on file for the Board's consideration.

Commissioner McCall requested and moved an exception for Rick Lasater to remain on the Planning Board for an additional term, citing his role as chair while the board continues work on the comprehensive plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and approved unanimously. The County Manager estimated that the Comprehensive Plan would be completed by the end of the year, if not sooner.

To fill Kimsey Jackson's seat, **Commissioner Dalton moved to nominate and appoint Jeremiah McCall, seconded by Commissioner McCall. The motion was approved unanimously.**

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

David Carter concluded his service on the Transportation Advisory Committee at the end of May after serving multiple terms. The Board initially reviewed applications at its August 26 meeting but chose to table the appointment to seek representation from the upper end of the County. The Clerk to the Board advertised the vacancy, receiving only one additional application. Staff requested that the Board reconsider the applications on file or provide further directions.

Commissioner McCall moved to appoint Ken Frady to the Transportation Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and approved unanimously.

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW

The terms of John Decker and Thomas Sweeny are set to expire at the end of January. Both individuals are eligible and willing to serve another term. There are no term limits for this board, and no additional applications were received.

Given the importance of maintaining full membership ahead of the upcoming property revaluation, **Commissioner Chapman moved to reappoint John Decker and Thomas Sweeny for another term. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously approved.**

NEW BUSINESS

EXTENSION OF WAIVED BUILDING PERMIT FEES FOR HURRICANE HELENE RECOVERY

The Board considered extending the deadline for waiving building and permitting fees for property owners still seeking to repair structures damaged by Hurricane Helene. To date, 106 permits have been issued, while 308 properties were assessed in the City of Brevard and Transylvania County.

HB 149 (S.L. 2024-51 Construction Fee Moratorium) prohibited counties from imposing permitting fees for repairs related to Hurricane Helene. The moratorium applied to applications dated on or after September 26, 2024, and expired on December 31, 2024. Other counties, including Buncombe and Henderson, reinstated their fees on January 1, 2025. The City of Brevard Planning Department has waived their permit fees indefinitely.

The estimated financial impact on the County could range between \$15,150 and \$60,600, depending on the extent of the damage per structure. Many homeowners are awaiting FEMA mitigation grant decisions, delaying their ability to move forward with repairs. Building & Permitting Enforcement Director Mike Owen emphasized the County's role in supporting citizens, stating that many have already lost so much and that waiving fees should continue.

Commissioner Chapman moved to extend the waiver of building permit fees through July 1, 2025, subject to renewal, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey. Commissioners acknowledged FEMA's slow response, noting that many homeowners are still awaiting approvals and cannot proceed with repairs. The Manager confirmed that substantially damaged homes must comply with the County's existing floodplain regulations. However, discussion of potential policy changes (such as raising structures two feet above base flood elevation, like the City of Brevard) should be addressed separately. Chairman Chappell clarified that the agenda item only pertained to the waiver of fees, and broader policy changes should be discussed at a future meeting. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

FY 2025 2ND QUARTER BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Budget and Management Analyst Jennifer Wright presented the FY 2025 2nd Quarter budget amendments for the Board's review and approval. Based on policies approved by the Board of Commissioners through their annual budget ordinance and the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, it is necessary for the Board of Commissioners to approve certain amendments to the budget ordinance.

Primarily, these are the types of budget amendments that by their nature require review/approval by a governing board:

- Recognition of new revenues and appropriations for related expenditures
- Appropriations of fund balance (whether assigned, committed, or restricted)
- Transfers from one fund to another fund, if permitted statute by statute
- Establishment of new special revenue funds, capital project funds, or fiduciary funds

A summary of the amendments for approval is below:

Budget Amendment 13: Reflect reallocations of funds from under-budget or canceled projects, as requested by the School System; new project budgets as approved by the Board of Education and the Board of Commissioners; and the phase 1 school bond projects as identified, scoped, and approved by both Boards (net fund budget increase of \$7,431,337). Effective 10/15/2024.

Budget Amendment 16: Recognize and allocate the Board-approved funds for initial architect fees for the new courthouse design. According to the contract with Sizemore Group, LLC, the total for pre-design, schematic design, design development, and construction documents is \$1,860,000. Effective 10/3/24.

Budget Amendment 17: Recognize and allocate the \$10,000 NC GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Child Health award for TC Strong awarded to the Public Health Department. Effective 10/3/24.

Budget Amendment 18: Recognize and allocate a \$24,000 Economic Opportunity Grant from Dogwood Health Trust to the Department of Social Services to support internship opportunities with the department through September 2025. Effective 10/7/24.

Budget Amendment 19: Recognize and allocate the federal COPS \$1,000,000 grant to purchase radios for the Sheriff's Office, as well as \$250,000 in matching funds from the Emergency Services Assigned Fund Balance. Effective 10/14/24.

Budget Amendment 20: Recognize and allocate a \$54,251 State Fiscal Recovery Funds Directed Grant that will be used to replace chairs throughout the Library. Effective 10/28/24.

Budget Amendment 21: Reflect \$167,423 in budgetary changes to the Brevard/Rosman Water System Interconnect Project, including the reallocation of a portion of the savings from the completed US 64 Water and Sewer Extension Project. Effective 10/28/24.

Budget Amendment 22: Allocate \$250,000 in education capital funds for professional services costs associated with the first school bond issuance. Effective 11/1/24.

Budget Amendment 23: Update the Education Capital Fund to include the following: 1) Brevard Campus HVAC Contracts: \$412,121 already approved, and \$500,000 to be reimbursable if invoices have been paid and/or directly paid by the County upon receipt of invoices; 2) Pisgah Forest Elementary Piping: Add \$100,000 to ensure all contracts signed are covered in the project budget; and 3) FY 2025 Capital Repairs: Add \$220,000. Effective 11/12/24:

Budget Amendment 24: Allocate \$200,000 in fund balance for insurance deductibles and other expenses that may be necessary to begin repair of County facilities after Hurricane Helene. Effective 11/12/24.

Budget Amendment 26: Transfer \$25,000 in WorkFirst Supportive Services funds to WorkFirst Emergency funds, at the request of the Director of Social Services. Effective 11/22/24.

Budget Amendment 27: Recognize and allocate a \$25,000 Natural Disaster Preparedness Local Grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to County Emergency Services. Effective 12/10/24.

Budget Amendment 28: Allocate \$123,103 for salary/benefits to hire a full-time project manager to manage specific school project scopes of work. Effective 12/10/25.

Budget Amendment 30: Recognize and allocate \$133,943 in essential services funding from the NC Department of Health and Human Services to the Transylvania County Department of Social Services for emergency rental assistance, essential services for vulnerable adults, and essential services for child welfare due to the impact of Hurricane Helene in the region. Effective 12/11/24.

Budget Amendment 31: Recognize and allocate \$25,000 in additional revenue from the Dogwood Health Trust to the Public Health Department for the Opioid/Substance Grant. Effective 12/17/24.

Budget Amendment 32: Recognize and allocate a two-year grant from the Dogwood Health Trust to Public Health for the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) Project. Effective 12/17/24.

Budget Amendment 33: Reflect a \$1,967 carryforward from the FY24 Silver Squirrels Grant and the new \$10,000 FY25 Silver Squirrels Grant from St. Philip's Episcopal Church Women to County Transportation. Effective 12/23/24.

Budget Amendment 34: Allocate \$75,000 from the Disaster Energy Assistance Program, at the request of the Social Services Department. The County will function as a vendor for payment for a portion of these funds, which will then be reimbursed by the State. Effective 12/27/24.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve the budget amendments as presented, seconded by Commissioner Dalton, and unanimously approved.

FY 2025 2ND QUARTER FINANCIAL SUMMARY & HELENE FINANCIAL REVIEW

Finance Director Meagan O'Neal presented the unaudited financial statements for the second quarter of FY 2025, ending December 31, 2024. The report included an overview of general fund revenues and expenditures, the enterprise fund (solid waste), and the financial impact of Hurricane Helene, including a cash request to cover costs while awaiting FEMA reimbursements.

General Fund Overview

- Total Revenue: \$40,028,338
 - Property Tax Revenue: \$27,502,895 (62% of the budgeted amount)
 - Collections trending 2.06% higher than the previous year.
 - The next quarterly report will reflect a higher total, given the January due date.
 - Sales Tax Revenue: \$3,711,124 (down 1%)
 - Investment Earnings: \$1,070,828
 - Permits, Fines, Sales & Services- \$2,514,549
- Total Expenditures: \$34,695,234
 - Personnel expenses: \$16,909,734 (49.9% of the annual budgeted amount)
 - Operating expenses: \$900,614
 - Contracted Services: \$1,229,511

Enterprise Fund (Solid Waste)

- Total Revenue: \$1,780,136
 - Woodruff Fees: \$1,156,307
 - Sticker Sales: \$339,744
 - Miscellaneous Fees: \$82,480
 - Investment Earnings: \$201,604
- Total Expenditures: \$1,457,416
 - Personnel expenses: \$805,167 (56% of the budgeted amount)
 - Contracted services \$226,719

- Operating expenses \$222,678
- Net income: \$322,720 (as of the end of Q2)

Finance Department Updates

- Delayed audit finalization due to increased workload from Hurricane Helene and FEMA Public Assistance reporting.
- Bond reporting to EMMA software.
- RFQs for multiple projects in progress.
- Bi-weekly meetings with FEMA representatives to process reimbursements.
- Preparing for the upcoming budget season.

Commissioner Dalton moved to receive the report, seconded by Commissioner Chapman and unanimously approved.

Tropical Storm/Hurricane Helene Expenditure Updates

- Total anticipated expenditures to date: \$2,091,773
- Deadline to identify issues and submit to FEMA for reimbursement: March 3, 2025
- FEMA-recognized categories (County qualifies for A-G and Z): (A) Debris Removal; (B) Emergency Work; (C) Roads & Bridges (Permanent Repairs); (D) Water Control Facilities; (E) Buildings & Equipment; (F) Utilities; (G) Parks, Recreational & Other Facilities; and (Z) Administrative Costs (Reimbursement Management).

The Finance Department continues to track Helene-related expenditures and work towards timely FEMA reimbursement. A detailed chart outlining expenditure tracking is highlighted below:

Category	Description	Storm Impact	Expedited Funds	Approved by Ins.	FEMA Reimb Request	Comments
A	Debris Removal	-	-	-	-	Corp of Engineers handling- No Cost Expedited funding 50% up front- Detailed list below
B	Emergency Work	909,235	454,618	-	454,618	
C	Roads & Bridges	200,000	-	-	200,000	Landfill road damage and culvert
D	Water Control Facilities	50,000	-	-	50,000	Sediment pond debris and silt damage
E	Buildings & Equipment	267,988	-	-	267,988	B&E classified under \$500k deductible
E	Buildings & Equipment	465,955	-	410,955	55,000	B&E classified under \$25k deductible
G	Parks, Recreational & other Facilities	31,324	-	-	31,324	P&R classified under \$500k deductible
G	Parks, Recreational & other Facilities	167,270	-	167,270	-	P&R classified under \$25k deductible
		2,091,773	454,618	578,225	1,058,930	

Key Notes:

- Landfill expenses fall under Category B (Emergency Work), not Category A (Debris Removal).

- Category A (Debris Removal) is currently blank since the Army Corps of Engineers is handling debris removal. If the County contracts a private company for debris removal, those expenses will then fall under Category A.

Category B (Emergency Work)

- Includes any expenses during and after the storm to ensure public safety and well-being.
- FEMA offers an expedited funding option for Category B expenditures.
 - If the County provides a reasonable estimate, FEMA will reimburse 50% upfront without documentation.
 - Estimated request for expedited funding: \$454,618 (subject to change if additional expenses arise).
 - Ms. O'Neal is meeting with FEMA on Thursday to refine the figures and submit the request.

Category E (Buildings & Equipment)

- Deductibles:
 - \$500,000 for structures in the floodplain
 - \$25,000 for other properties
- Expenditures are broken down into:
 - Recreation Facilities
 - Buildings
 - Equipment

Category G (Recreational Facilities)

- Includes damage to Rosman Community Park and Ninja Warrior Park.
- Insurance payments received:
 - Two payments processed
 - Third payment pending
- Remaining deductible expenses (below \$500,000) will be requested from FEMA.

Category B (Emergency Work) Detailed Breakdown (see chart below)

Personnel Costs

- FEMA allows reimbursement for personnel costs related to work beyond regularly scheduled hours.
- The exempt personnel bonus, approved by the Board of Commissioners, can be requested but is not guaranteed for approval.
 - FEMA requires a specific personnel policy stating that exempt employees receive overtime, which the County does not currently have.

Equipment Costs

- FEMA reimburses at an hourly rate for all equipment used during and after the storm.
 - Covered equipment includes:
 - Patrol cars used during emergency response
 - Maintenance trucks and trailers delivering water
 - Generators running communications towers
 - Reimbursement rates cover:
 - Fuel
 - Oil changes
 - Repairs
- Final reimbursement amounts may exceed estimates once all equipment usage and rates are fully reviewed.

Facility & Displacement Costs

- Animal Shelter: Reimbursement requested for lost space, damages, and costs of housing displaced citizens' pets.
- Rental Space for Parks & Recreation:
 - Requesting reimbursement for programming revenue losses while facilities were in use for storm response.
- Disaster Recovery Centers & Initial Public Meetings:
 - Requesting reimbursement for space used at the Community Services Building and Library based on FEMA's square footage reimbursement rates.

Lost Revenue Reimbursement Request

- FEMA has not decided if they will reimburse lost revenue, but staff will submit a request.
- Key lost revenue sources include:
 - Building permit fees
 - Landfill fees
 - Environmental health fees
- Reimbursement request strategy:
 - If the County waives fees, they cannot be reimbursed.
 - If the County covered the costs on behalf of citizens, it may qualify for reimbursement.
 - The final determination depends on FEMA's review and approval.

Emergency Repairs on Private Roads

- Under Category B (Emergency Work), the County can perform emergency repairs on private roads if they pose an immediate safety risk.
- Key repair sites:
 - Turkey Pen Road – Major failure identified during the storm.
 - Additional roads – At least three or four known issues, with more possibly emerging before the March 3 deadline.
- FEMA allows up to \$40,000 per repair for emergency road access.
- If identified before March 3, emergency repairs can be completed and submitted for reimbursement.

Breakdown of items included in Category B	Approximate Amount
Personnel OT during & after storm	122,935
Exempt Bonus	90,000
Grinding storm related debris at landfill	72,000
Equipment/Vehicle usage	300,000
Fuel not included in equipment usage	12,500
Animal Shelter use and damage	30,000
Misc private roads needing emergency repairs	200,000
Food & misc expenses during storm	22,600
Building Permit Fees	17,000
Landfill Fees	30,000
Environmental Health Fees	2,200
"Rental" of County facilities for Storm matters	10,000
Total:	909,235

County staff requested a budget amendment of \$860,000 from the fund balance to cover expenses incurred by Tropical Storm Helene. This funding will front costs eligible for FEMA reimbursement, which may take several fiscal years to receive.

Financial Overview

- Total storm-related impact: Just over \$2 million
- Expedited FEMA funding request: \$454,000 (50% of Category B expenses)
- Insurance approvals to date: \$578,000
- Out-of-pocket costs: Just over \$1 million
- Previously approved funding: \$200,000
- Additional amount requested: \$860,000
-

Potential Reimbursement Risks

- Permit fees – Only waived for storm-affected properties
- Exempt employee bonuses – No policy in place allowing overtime conversion during emergencies
- Estimated impact: Approximately \$100,000 (could be absorbed using fund balance)

The County Manager commended Finance Director Meagan O’Neal for her diligence in identifying all possible reimbursement opportunities. Her thorough approach may offset costs previously overlooked in past disaster claims.

Commissioner McCall moved to approve a budget amendment for \$860,000 to front costs associated with Hurricane/Tropical Storm Helene while awaiting FEMA reimbursement, seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously approved.

2025 BUDGET PROPOSAL TO NORTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Mike Clampitt has requested the submission of Transylvania County’s budget priorities for consideration of State funding by February 10. While funding is not guaranteed, Representative Clampitt will advocate for the County’s needs. Senator Corbin will also be copied on the submission, particularly regarding capital project needs. Past requests have resulted in funding for infrastructure projects in the County, as well as the City of Brevard and the Town of Rosman, NCDEQ At-Risk Funds, and EMS Base grants.

The Board reviewed and modified the previous year’s list as follows:

- Removed
 - Radio replacements (funded by a federal grant)
 - Wilson Road water/sewer extension (project not moving forward)
 - Sylvan Valley Industrial Park (project already underway)
- Added / Updated
 - Historic Courthouse renovations (staff to estimate costs for interior work)
 - New Courthouse – elevated to top priority
 - High School Improvements – Adjust request amount following bond sale; Manager to consult with the Superintendent on potential additional needs (e.g., new school, activity buses, major equipment)

2024 Budget Proposal: Capital Project/Need	Estimated Costs
County Courthouse	\$50 million
Blue Ridge Community College Campus	\$35 million - \$80 million
High School Improvements	\$100 million

Middle and Elementary School Improvements	\$20 million
Land for Industrial Park	\$4 million
Relocated Facilities for Industrial Park	\$8 million
Sylvan Valley Industrial Park addition	\$4 million
Radio replacement needs in Emergency Services/Sheriff's Office/First Responders	\$2 million
Communications Tower	\$1 million

2024 Budget Proposal: Capital Project/Need	Estimated Costs
City of Brevard Wastewater Needs	\$65 million
Pisgah Labs/Pisgah Forest Area Water and Sewer Extension	\$5 million
Wilson Road Community water/sewer extension	\$10 million
Water intake/water treatment plant to serve county needs	\$45 million
Town of Rosman/Lake Toxaway Area Water/Sewer Expansion Needs:	\$35 million
Azalea Community Extension (failing septic)	\$3 million

Some infrastructure projects have received partial funding, such as the \$10 million allocation for Rosman's \$30 million water/sewer expansion request.

The City of Brevard has already submitted a list of projects.

State funding allocations often have spending deadlines, but extensions have been granted in the past.

The Board reached a consensus for the Manager to compile and submit the updated list, with a copy provided to all Commissioners.

MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager provided updates on several key initiatives and projects:

- County Administration Repairs: Work continues to address damage from Tropical Storm Helene. Access to Chambers may be restricted at times as interior repairs progress.
- Housing Plan Update: The timeline has been revised, with recommendations expected in June or July.
- Budget Kickoff: The next two Board of Commissioners meetings will feature six-month department updates. Each speaker is limited to five minutes but may submit additional materials.
- Capital Projects Update:
 - Pisgah Labs Extension: A meeting with Land of Sky and the City of Brevard is scheduled this week.
 - Gallimore Road Sewer Project: The County-funded project to support the Boys & Girls Club expansion is progressing through design. The County will assist with project administration under the grant.
- Solid Waste Kudos: Danny Bowman of Pisgah Forest shared praise for the Pisgah Forest Convenience Site Team for their willingness to assist him as he recovers from surgery.

Mr. Bulfer announced that the Manager has been invited to present on continuing legal education at the School of Government's annual winter meeting. She will be part of a panel providing training for attorneys serving local governments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following remarks reflect the opinions and viewpoints of the speakers.

David Morrow: Mr. Morrow announced that the submarine anchor will be placed tomorrow in front of the Veterans History Museum using a crane. Once painted and the plaque is installed, a dedication ceremony will be planned. The Museum will reopen on March 1, running Tuesday through Saturday.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Chapman shared a citizen's request for better markings for the County transportation bus pickup locations and clearer schedules. The Manager responded that staff are working with grant funds to improve signage but face challenges in securing easements from property owners. She requested assistance from the Commissioners in securing signed easements.

Chairman Chappell shared the passing of Genelle Chapman, a former longtime County employee and Assistant Tax Collector, and expressed his thoughts and prayers for her family.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Commissioner Chapman moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m., seconded by Commissioner McKelvey and unanimously carried.**

Jason R. Chappell, Chairman
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board