

Cleveland County Board of Commissioners
February 3, 2026

The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners met on this date, at the hour of 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers of the Cleveland County Administrative Offices.

PRESENT: Kevin Gordon, Chairman
Deb Hardin, Vice-Chair
Johnny Hutchins, Commissioner
Doug Bridges, Commissioner
Tony Berry, Commissioner
Jonathan Sink, County Attorney
David Cotton, County Manager
Phyllis Nowlen, Clerk to the Board
Chris Martin, Planning Director
Philip Steffen, Finance Director
Rebecca Johnson, Social Services Director
Tiffany Hansen, Health Department Director
Logan Roberts, Staff Attorney
Betsy Harnage, Register of Deeds

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gordon called the meeting to order, and Commissioner Tony Berry led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and provided the invocation.

AGENDA ADOPTION

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Berry and unanimously adopted by the Board to, ***approve the agenda as presented.***

PRESENTATIONS

AMES COPPER GROUP

Chairman Gordon recognized Ames Copper Group (ACG) President of Operations, Dayne Willis, to give an update on the company's operations, economic impact, and future plans within Cleveland County. The ACG facility is located on Old Boiling Springs Road and is home to the first new copper smelter constructed in the United States in approximately 75 years. The facility operates as a copper recycling and smelting plant, processing recycled copper scrap rather than newly mined materials. Current operations produce approximately 100 million pounds of copper annually, with anodes refined to approximately 99.5% purity before being transported to Canada for further refinement. The Ames Copper is part of a broader network under Prime Materials/IMC, which collects and processes copper scrap throughout North America.

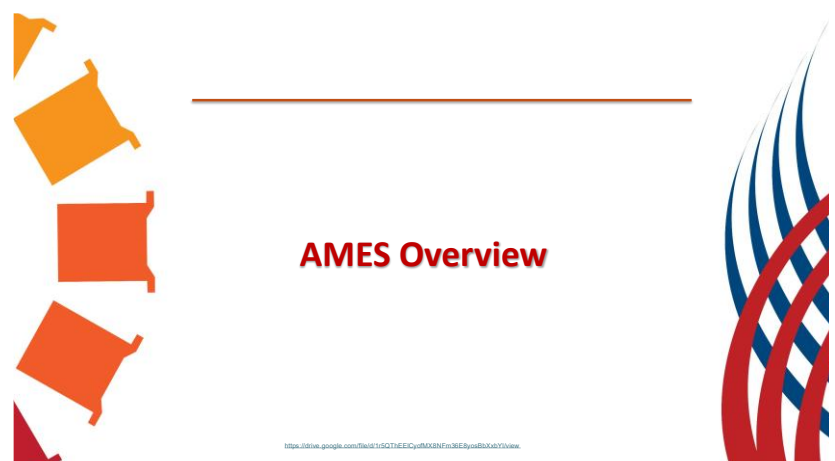
The strategic importance of copper is a critical mineral essential to infrastructure, energy, data centers, and emerging technologies. President Willis noted that the Cleveland County facility currently accounts for approximately 10% of the domestic copper supply, underscoring its national significance. Additionally, employment at the facility has grown to approximately 225 employees, with wages ranking among the top tier in the region and significantly higher than in prior operations at the site. He outlined future expansion plans, noting that the current facility represents Phase I of development and is configured in a "U" shape. Phase II will expand

operations inward to create a larger, more efficient footprint. Planned improvements include increasing smelting capacity from approximately 400,000 pounds per day to 1.2 million pounds per day over the next two and a half to three years, as well as adding a second, larger furnace.

Long-term plans include constructing a refining “tank house” on-site, which would allow the company to achieve full vertical integration by refining copper to 99.99% purity locally, eliminating the need to transport materials out of the country. President Willis spoke of the challenges related to increased truck traffic resulting from expanded operations, noting that truck volume has grown significantly, from approximately 50 trucks per week to as many as 150 trucks per day. To address these impacts, the company has implemented several mitigation strategies, including constructing an internal two-lane roadway system at multiple scales to allow trucks to queue off the main roadway. Additional measures include utilizing off-site locations for staging and logistics operations, including warehouse space in Lawndale, a staging area along Highway 74, and coordination with Cleveland County for overflow staging. Despite these efforts, representatives acknowledged recent traffic congestion and indicated that continued coordination with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC DOT) will be necessary as long-term roadway improvements are pursued.

Environmental and operational practices were also discussed. ACG is an “urban miner,” focusing on recycling copper materials to reduce reliance on traditional mining. The facility includes a gas treatment system designed to capture and treat emissions, including hydrocarbons and heavy metals, prior to release. Operations are conducted in accordance with state regulatory requirements, with ongoing testing and oversight by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality to ensure compliance.

President Willis highlighted the company’s commitment to community engagement and corporate citizenship. ACG is a family-oriented organization that prioritizes employee development and internal advancement. The company reported contributing nearly \$120,000 in community support over the past year through sponsorships, scholarships, and donations to local organizations, including schools, civic groups, and cultural institutions. Additional efforts included providing logistical support during hurricane response efforts by assisting with the transport of critical supplies. President Willis reiterated the commitment to responsible growth, continued partnership with Cleveland County, and proactive efforts to address operational challenges while contributing positively to the community. The following information and PowerPoint were presented to the Commissioners.



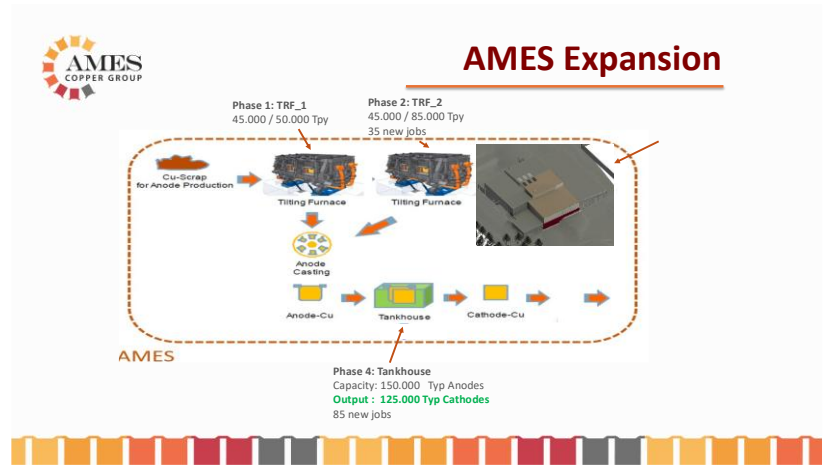
Copper is a Critical Mineral/Material

- Infrastructure and defense (US control of our own destiny)
- AI/Alternative Energy/Data Centers/Etc.
- Tariffs and investing in America
- 10% of the US Copper Supply...from Cleveland County
- Average salary in the top 75% in the region
- Actively pursuing Federal funding for further expansion in Cleveland County
- Need State, and County infrastructure improvements for continued growth.



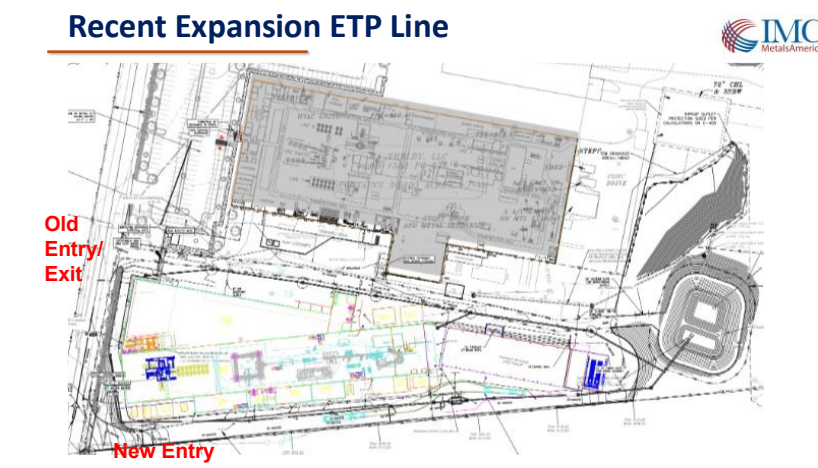
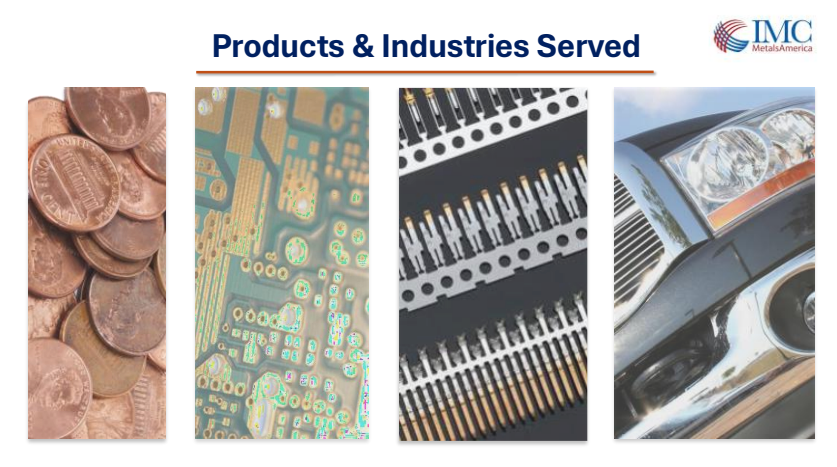
By the Numbers

- 55 Employees
- 1 Furnace @ 400,000 lbs. capacity daily
- 1 product – copper anode for electrolytic refining
- 585 anodes produced daily



By the Numbers

- 225 Employees
- 300,000 lbs. of melt capacity daily



Community Engagement

- Shelby Parks & Recreation Toy Drive
- Cleveland County Chamber
- Gaston Community Action Program
- Denver NC Girl Scouts
- Forest City Bulls Elite
- Cleveland County Schools
- Hickory Christian Academy
- Crest High School
- Cleveland Community College
- YMCA Jingle Bell Rockin' Run 5K
- One Blood
- The Don Gibson Theatre
- Cleveland County Reseach
- Cougars Elite Basketball League
- International Women's Prison Ministry
- Humble Hearts Mobile Mission
- Shelby Christmas Parade
- WNC Camper Donation
- Hurricane Helene Relief

Thank you!

Chairman Gordon opened the floor to the Board for questions and comments. Commissioners who had toured the facility noted positive employee morale and engagement. Board members expressed appreciation for the presentation and commended the company for its significant economic contributions, quality employment opportunities, and community involvement. They commented on the scale and complexity of the operation and

expressed pride in hosting such a nationally significant industry within Cleveland County. Commissioners also reaffirmed their commitment to working with state partners to address infrastructure needs associated with the facility, particularly roadway and traffic improvements.

CATAWBA NATION FOUNDATION

Chairman Gordon called Catawba Nation Executive Director Kristine Urrutia to the podium to give an update on the Catawba Nation Foundation regarding the Foundation's background, mission, and recent and upcoming grant activity impacting Cleveland County and the surrounding region. Ms. Urrutia explained that the Catawba Nation Foundation was established in 2021 as part of the Catawba Nation's compact with the State of North Carolina. She noted that the Foundation operates as a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, distinct from the Catawba Nation government, while maintaining a mission to serve the Catawba Nation, the eight state-recognized tribes of North Carolina, and local communities. The Foundation's work is primarily funded by proceeds from the Two Kings Casino. She outlined the Foundation's geographic and programmatic focus, noting that funding is directed to three primary areas: the Catawba Nation; tribal organizations across North Carolina; and Cleveland County and adjacent counties, including Gaston, Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, and Rutherford.

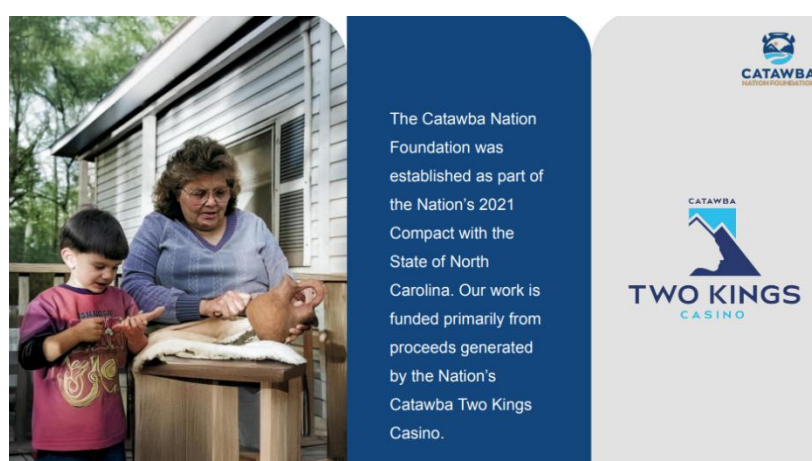
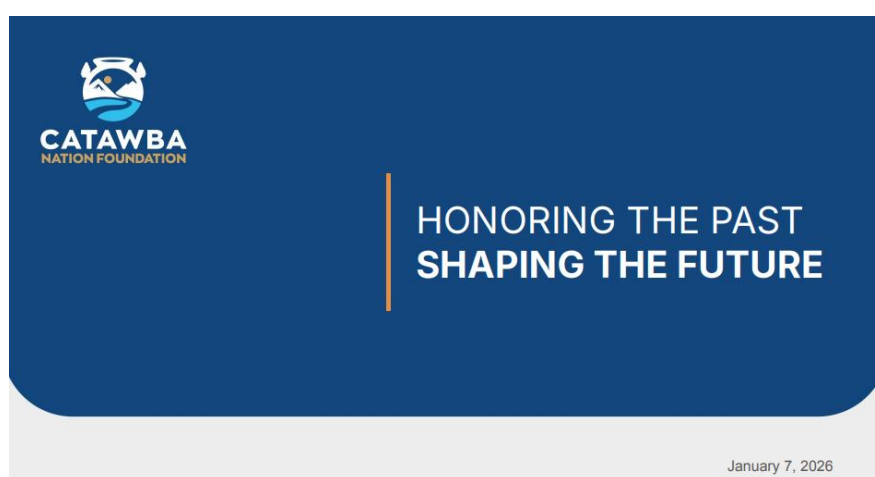
Ms. Urrutia explained that the Foundation's grantmaking priorities include educational advancement, cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and economic development. In addition to providing financial support, the Foundation seeks to serve as a collaborative partner in community development and nonprofit capacity building. Providing an overview of recent grant activity, Ms. Urrutia reported that the Foundation completed its first open, public grant application cycle in 2025, following an initial invitation-only cycle in 2024. During the 2025 cycle, the Foundation received a total of 81 applications, including submissions from the Catawba Nation, tribal organizations, and nonprofits within Cleveland County and the surrounding region. Of these, 53 organizations were awarded funding. Applicants collectively requested approximately \$5.3 million in funding, and the Foundation awarded approximately \$800,000 in total grants, with an average award of approximately \$17,500. She noted that the Foundation's funding rate of approximately 65 percent significantly exceeds the philanthropic sector average.

With specific regard to Cleveland County and adjacent counties, Ms. Urrutia reported that 45 applications were received, with requests totaling approximately \$3.2 million. Of those, 21 organizations were funded, representing a funding rate of approximately 47 percent and total awards of approximately \$240,000 for the region. She explained that in its early years, the Foundation had intentionally prioritized distributing funding across a broad range of organizations to build relationships and better understand community needs. Organizations receiving support in the Cleveland County area included a variety of educational, cultural, and service-based nonprofits such as the Boys & Girls Club of Cleveland County, Cleveland Community College, Cleveland County Schools Educational Foundation, Habitat for Humanity of Cleveland County, United Way of Cleveland County,

and Washington Outreach Ministries, among others. Ms. Urrutia also emphasized the Foundation’s role in strengthening the local nonprofit ecosystem beyond grantmaking.

She reported that the Foundation is actively collaborating with other philanthropic organizations, including the Hospice Foundation, Atrium Health Foundation, Foundation for the Carolinas, the Albemarle Foundation, and the Sober Foundation, to coordinate resources, provide training opportunities, and support nonprofit development across the region. She noted that the Foundation takes a supportive and accessible approach to grantmaking, often working directly with applicants to correct or complete submissions, particularly assisting smaller or emerging organizations that may lack formal grant-writing capacity. In discussing governance, Ms. Urrutia noted that the Foundation’s Board of Directors includes representation from the Catawba Nation, the eight North Carolina tribes, and local community leaders.

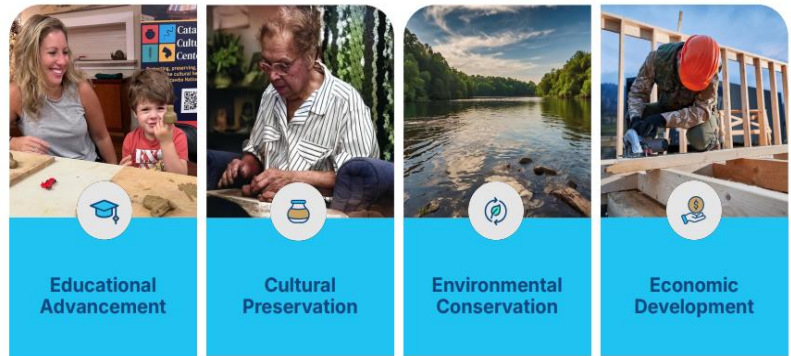
Cleveland County is represented by Commissioner Deb Hardin, along with Newton Craver, Omar Porter, and Philip Glover, among others. She expressed appreciation for the Board’s engagement, describing it as highly effective and collaborative. Ms. Urrutia outlined the upcoming 2026 grant cycle and related capacity-building initiatives. She noted that reporting from 2025 grant recipients is due March 31, and an informational virtual town hall for prospective applicants is scheduled for February 18. The application portal will open on March 1 and close on March 31, 2026, with funding decisions anticipated in the summer and awards distributed in August 2026. She further reported that the Foundation has recently hired a Finance Director who will lead training sessions to assist local nonprofits with budgeting and financial management, with the goal of strengthening overall organizational readiness for future funding opportunities. The following information and PowerPoint were presented to the Commissioners.



Who we fund



What we fund



2025 Grant Cycle Highlights

81 Grantee Applications Received

- 15 Catawba Nation
- 21 NC Tribal Organizations
- 45 Cleveland Co. Area

53 Recommended Grantee Organizations

- 12 Catawba Nation
- 20 NC Tribal Organizations
- 21 Cleveland Co. Area (Gaston, Mecklenburg, Cabaruss)

65% Grant Acceptance Rate



2025 Grant Cycle Highlights

\$5.3M Total Requested Amount

\$17,587 Average Award Amount

\$800K Total Giving



Cleveland County & Adjacent Co. Grantees – Counties Served

- Cleveland County
 - Gaston County
 - Cabarrus County
 - Mecklenburg County
 - Rutherford County
 - Union County
- \$3.2 M in request
- 21 of 45 Applications Funded = 47% Funding Rate
- Totaling \$240,000



Cleveland County

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland County
- Broad River Community Market
- Catawba Lands Conservancy – Carolina Thread Trail
- Cleveland Community College
- Cleveland Co. Arts Council
- Cleveland Co. Schools Educational Foundation
- Cleveland County Chamber
- Cleveland Vocational Industries
- Community Math Academy



Cleveland County

- Davidson Association
- Destination Cleveland Co.- Earl Scruggs Center
- Habitat for Humanity in Cleveland County
- Kings Mountain Historical Museum Foundation
- Mt. Calvary Community Builders
- Piedmont Council, Scouting America
- United Way of Cleveland County
- Washington Outreach Ministry



2026 Grant Cycle Cleveland County

2025 Grant Reports Due March 31st

February 18th
Town Hall Zoom
12 pm

Tuesdays
w/Tina

Application Portal
Opens: March 1
Closes: March 31



In unity there is Strength



Kristine Locklear Urrutia
Kristine@catawbanationfoundation.org
704-456-9599

Chairman Gordon opened the floor to the Board for questions and comments. Commissioners expressed their appreciation for the Foundation’s investment in Cleveland County and commended Ms. Urrutia’s leadership. Commissioners highlighted the Foundation’s meaningful contributions to local organizations, its focus on key

community needs, and its commitment to supporting and strengthening the nonprofit sector. The Board extended its gratitude to the Catawba Nation Foundation for its continued partnership and support of Cleveland County.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one signed up to speak.

CONSENT AGENDA

TAX ADMINISTRATION: ORDER TO ADVERTISE

Per North Carolina General Statute §105-369, uncollected taxes for the current year that are a lien on real property must be advertised in a newspaper having general circulation in the taxing unit. Upon receipt of the Tax Collector’s report in February, the governing body must order the Tax Collector to advertise the tax liens.

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, *authorize the tax collector to, during the time frame between March 18, 2026, and March 23, 2026, shall advertise tax liens on real property that remain unpaid as of March 8, 2026.*

Advertisements shall be made in the manner provided by North Carolina General Statute §105-369.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT: BUDGET TRANSFER SUMMARY

As required by North Carolina General Statute §159-15, all internal transfers shall be submitted to the Board of Commissioners. The budget transfer summary from January 10, 2026, through January 23, 2026, is included in Commissioner packets.

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and passed unanimously by the Board to, *approve the budget transfer summary as presented.*

County of Cleveland, North Carolina
 Manager’s Budget Summary
 Presented at the February 6th, 2026 Board Meeting
 Time Period Covered : 01/10/2026 to 01/23/2026
 For Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026

BUD #	DATE SUBMITTED BY DEPT	Fund #	DEPT #	DEPT NAME	EXPLANATION	Account Description	BUDGET AMOUNT
26089	6/30/2025	486	245	Cap Proj-Clev Co Fair	Btd To Carryover A Certain Amount Needed For Fy26	Maint Contracts-Equip	\$ 1,673.29
26089	6/30/2025	486	245	Cap Proj-Clev Co Fair	Btd To Carryover A Certain Amount Needed For Fy26 Invoice	Const In Progress	\$ (1,673.29)
26091	1/14/2026	010	440	School Resource Officers	Move Funds To Cover Mifi’S For Sro’S	Departmental Supply	\$ (498.00)
26091	1/14/2026	010	440	School Resource Officers	Move Funds To Cover Mifi’S For Sro’S	Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 2,463.00
26091	1/14/2026	010	440	School Resource Officers	Move Funds To Cover Mifi’S For Sro’S	Controlled Property Exp	\$ (310.00)
26091	1/14/2026	010	440	School Resource Officers	Move Funds To Cover Mifi’S For Sro’S	Capital Equipment	\$ (1,655.00)
26092	1/14/2026	010	441	Sheriff’S Office	Move Funds To Cover Repairs On Drone And Camera Sys	Repairs On Equipment	\$ 910.00
26092	1/14/2026	010	441	Sheriff’S Office	Move Funds To Cover Repairs On Drone And Camera Sys	Lease Purchase Payments	\$ (910.00)
26093	1/14/2026	010	444	Detention Center (Jail)	Move Funds To Cover Final Invoice Rec’D For	Laundry/Dry Cleaning	\$ (272.00)
26093	1/14/2026	010	444	Detention Center (Jail)	Move Funds To Cover Final Invoice Rec’D For Dishwasher Lease Terminated	Rental/Lease Equip/Other	\$ 272.00
26095	1/23/2026	054	474	Collections/Manned Sites	To Cover A Negative And An Invoice For Landfill Gate	Maint Bldg/Grounds	\$ 25,000.00
26095	1/23/2026	054	474	Collections/Manned Sites	To Cover A Negative And An Invoice For Landfill Gate	Motor Fuels/Oils	\$ (25,000.00)
26096	6/30/2025	010	446	Emergency Medical Service	Fy25 Last Minute Transfers	Departmental Supply	\$ 405.25
26096	6/30/2025	010	446	Emergency Medical Service	Fy25 Last Minute Transfers	Automotive Supplies	\$ 140.30
26096	6/30/2025	054	473	Disposal/Landfill	Fy25 Last Minute Transfers	Off Road Vehicle Supplies	\$ 804,878.54
26096	6/30/2025	010	446	Emergency Medical Service	Fy25 Last Minute Transfers	Cap Equip-Major	\$ (140.30)
26096	6/30/2025	054	473	Disposal/Landfill	Fy25 Last Minute Transfers	Cap Equip-Major	\$ (804,878.54)
26096	6/30/2025	010	446	Emergency Medical Service	Fy25 Last Minute Transfers	Cap Equip-Major Repairs	\$ (405.25)
26097	1/23/2026	010	998	Contingency	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New	Emerg & Contingency	\$ 10,456.52
26097	1/23/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New	Fund Balance	\$ (10,456.52)
26097	1/23/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New Amendment Was Sent To Me And I Misunderstood The	Summer Fun Activities	\$ (261.00)
26097	1/23/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New Amendment Was Sent To Me And I Misunderstood The	4H Program Enhancements	\$ (4,685.00)
26097	1/23/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New Amendment Was Sent To Me And I Misunderstood The	Summer Fun Activities	\$ (1,014.16)
26097	1/23/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New Amendment Was Sent To Me And I Misunderstood The	Corn Growers Assoc Activy	\$ (3,956.36)

26097	1/23/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New Amendment Was Sent To Me And I Misunderstood The	Horticulture Activities	\$ (40.00)
26097	1/23/2026	010	410	General Revenues	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New	Fund Balance	\$ 10,456.52
26097	1/23/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Btd There Was A Bna 024 That Was Incorrect And A New	Master Gardeners	\$ (500.00)
26098	1/23/2026	010	542	Animal/Rabies Control	Btd To Fund Contracted Services For Vet Contracted In	Salaries/Wages-Reg	\$ (28,000.00)
26098	1/23/2026	010	542	Animal/Rabies Control	Btd To Fund Contracted Services For Vet Contracted In	Contracted Services	\$ 28,000.00
2696	1/12/2026	486	245	Cap Proj-Clev Co Fair	Co 202653 To Carryover Exact Amount For An Invoice	Fund Balance Appropriated	\$ 42,679.72
2696	1/12/2026	486	245	Cap Proj-Clev Co Fair	Co 202653 To Carryover Exact Amount For An Invoice	Maint Contracts-Equip	\$ 42,679.72
2697	1/12/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Co 202654 Grg Donations	Grg Donations	\$ 1,582.42
2697	1/12/2026	010	495	Cooperative Extension	Co 202654 Grg Donations	Grg Donations	\$ 1,582.42
2698	1/14/2026	012	530	Health Administration	Carryover Left Over Workforce Development Grants	Federal Govt Grants	\$ 126,551.00
2698	1/14/2026	012	530	Health Administration	Carryover Left Over Workforce Development Grants	Contracted Labor	\$ 126,551.00
2699	1/14/2026	012	530	Health Administration	Co 202655 Hurricane Relief Grant	State Government	\$ 412,295.00
2699	1/14/2026	012	530	Health Administration	Co 202655 Hurricane Relief Grant	Emergency/Contingency	\$ 412,295.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Controlled Property Exp	\$ (5,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	License/Permit/Certificate	\$ (4,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	530	Health Administration	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Fund Balance	\$ (500,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Postage	\$ (1,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Hospital/Doctor Fees	\$ (300,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Medicine & Supplies	\$ (20,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Contracted Services	\$ (100,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Departmental Supply	\$ (10,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 5,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Hospital/Doctor Fees	\$ 300,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Contracted Labor	\$ 50,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Telecommunications	\$ 5,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Departmental Supply	\$ 10,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Contracted Services	\$ 100,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Telecommunications	\$ (5,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Contracted Labor	\$ (50,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Medicine & Supplies	\$ 20,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	License/Permit/Certificate	\$ 4,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Dues/Subscriptions	\$ (5,000.00)
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Controlled Property	\$ 5,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Postage	\$ 1,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Fund Balance Appropriated	\$ 500,000.00

BUD #	DATE SUBMITTED BY DEPT	Fund #	DEPT #	DEPT NAME	EXPLANATION	Account Description	BUDGET AMOUNT
2700	1/15/2026	012	530	Health Administration	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Fund Balance Appropriated	\$ 500,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Contracted Services	\$ 100,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 5,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Departmental Supply	\$ 10,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Medicine & Supplies	\$ 20,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Hospital/Doctor Fees	\$ 300,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Contracted Labor	\$ 50,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Controlled Property	\$ 5,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	License/Permit/Certificate	\$ 4,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Telecommunications	\$ 5,000.00
2700	1/15/2026	012	544	Dental Clinic	Co202657 Carryover Dental Clinic Leftover Amounts That Were In Accounts Like Contingency	Postage	\$ 1,000.00
2707	1/22/2026	027	434	Arp	Co 202658 Arp Fund Carrover Amounts	Grants	\$ 899,155.77
2707	1/22/2026	027	434	Arp	Co 202658 Arp Fund Carrover Amounts	Bud Acc Only-Other	\$ 8,355,320.23
2707	1/22/2026	027	434	Arp	Co 202658 Arp Fund Carrover Amounts	Emerg & Contingency	\$ 237,997.00
2707	1/22/2026	027	434	Arp	Co 202658 Arp Fund Carrover Amounts	Federal Govt Grants	\$ 1,251,735.00
2707	1/22/2026	027	434	Arp	Co 202658 Arp Fund Carrover Amounts	Bud Acc Only-Other	\$ 8,260,794.00
2707	1/22/2026	027	434	Arp	Co 202658 Arp Fund Carrover Amounts	Capital Equipment	\$ 20,056.00

HEALTH DEPARTMENT: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #040)

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, ***approve the following budget amendment:***

Account Number	Project Code	Department/Account Name	Increase	Decrease
012.533.4.310.83		Adult Health/Federal Govt Grant-BCCCP	\$400	
012.533.5.420.00		Adult Health/Contracted Services	\$400	

Explanation of Revisions: Budget allocation of \$400 in additional grant monies for the CVD (cardiovascular disease) Wisewoman Activity for related contracted services for the program.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #041)

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, ***approve the following budget amendment:***

Account Number	Project Code	Department/Account Name	Increase	Decrease
013.660.4.510.78		Employee Health/Wellness Tier 5-Pharmacy	\$200,000	
012.550.4.510.67		Primary Care/Pharmacy Fees-Primary Care	\$134,012	
013.660.5.230.01		Employee Health/Prescription Drugs-Employee	\$200,000	
012.550.5.230.01		Primary Care/Prescription Drugs-Primary Care	\$134,012	

Explanation of Revisions: Budget allocation of \$200,00 for the Wellness Tier 5 Pharmacy Fees and \$134,012 for Employee Health Pharmacy fees in drug rebate funds to offset these costs.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #042)

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, ***approve the following budget amendment:***

<i>Account Number</i>	<i>Project Code</i>	<i>Department/Account Name</i>	<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>
490.244.4.980.10		BOE/Contributions from PRI ED	\$46,000	
490.244.5.980.00		BOE/C-O Building	\$46,000	
010.410.4.991.00		BOE/Fund Balance Appropriated	\$46,000	
010.981.5.890.00		BOE/Interfund Transfers	\$46,000	

Explanation of Revisions: Budget allocation of \$46,000 for the Board of Elections renovation for furniture, signs, and blinds.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT: REQUEST TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2026, FOR PLANNING CASE 26-02 REQUEST TO REZONE 132, 136, AND 140 JIM PATTERSON ROAD FROM GENERAL BUSINESS-CONDITIONAL USE (GB-CU) TO GENERAL BUSINESS-CONDITIONAL USE (GB-CU) TO DEVELOP A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK

Jay Little is requesting to rezone 132, 136, and 140 Jim Patterson Road, a total of 12.24 acres on three parcels, from General Business – Conditional Use (GB-CU) to General Business – Conditional Use (GB-CU) for the purpose of developing a Recreational Vehicle Park. This property lies on the eastern side of Jim Patterson Road, approximately 1200 ft. north of the intersection with Dixon School Road. The surrounding uses consist primarily of residential, mixed with some agricultural uses on larger lots. The surrounding zoning districts are Residential to the east and south of the subject property. The land directly to the north and west, on the opposite side of Jim Patterson Road, is designated Residential Manufactured Homes and Parks. The Land Use Plan shows this area as a Primary Growth Area

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and was unanimously adopted by the Board, ***to approve setting the public hearing as requested.***

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: REQUEST TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026, FOR PROJECT MAPLE

Project Maple is a manufacturing employer in Cleveland County that is considering expansion in Shelby, North Carolina, and Chesnee, South Carolina. Labor and skill availability, operating costs, and tax climate, including incentives, are drivers for the expansion.

- 44 new jobs with \$53,529 average wage
- \$17,350,000 real and personal property investment over 3 years

PROJECT MAPLE INCENTIVE PROPOSAL: The proposed grant would be for three (3) years at 20% of the \$0.5475 tax rate.

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and was unanimously adopted by the Board, ***to approve setting the public hearing as requested.***

PUBLIC HEARING

PLANNING DEPARTMENT CASE 26-01: REQUEST TO REZONE 109 CATALINA COURT FROM RESTRICTED RESIDENTIAL (RR) TO RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RU)

Chairman Gordon called Planning Director Chris Martin to the podium to present Planning Case 26-01: a request to rezone 109 Catalina Court from Restricted Residential (RR) to Rural Residential (RU). Parcel 5023, consisting of approximately 4.75 acres, is located at 109 Catalina Court, a private road off Biggers Lake Road, just east of the Town of Patterson Springs. The property owner and applicant, Michael Myers, resides directly across from the subject parcel at 101 Catalina Court and is requesting the rezoning to allow greater land-use flexibility, specifically to permit non-residential accessory uses, such as storage buildings.

Mr. Martin provided an overview of the differences between the current Restricted Residential (RR) zoning and the proposed Rural Residential (RU) designation. He explained that the existing Restricted Residential (RR) district primarily allows single-family dwellings, certain larger residential structures, and limited institutional uses, with a minimum lot size of 0.5 acre. In contrast, the Rural Residential (RU) district requires a minimum lot size of one acre but allows a broader range of uses, including single-family dwellings, manufactured homes, agricultural uses, and certain rural-supporting non-residential uses such as storage buildings, garages, and limited commercial activities associated with rural settings. He noted that while the Rural Residential (RU) district imposes a larger lot-size requirement, it offers greater flexibility and better reflects a traditional rural character.

The surrounding area property is a rural residential setting characterized by a mix of larger tracts and approximately one-acre residential lots. Nearby zoning includes both Restricted Residential (RR) and Residential (R) classifications. The requested rezoning would introduce Rural Residential (RR) zoning in the immediate area while remaining consistent with the existing development pattern. The county’s future Land Use Plan (LUP) designates the area as Secondary Growth, which is intended to maintain a predominantly rural character while accommodating residential development and limited commercial uses along major corridors. Mr. Martin stated that the requested rezoning is consistent with this designation and supports the area's long-term vision.

The Planning Board reviewed the request and recommended approval, finding that the proposed rezoning is consistent with the Land Use Plan (LUP), compatible with surrounding properties, and appropriate for maintaining the area's rural residential character. The following information and PowerPoint were presented to the Commissioners.



Rezoning Request



Current District: Restricted Residential

- Single family residential
- ½ acre lot size
- Limited non-residential
- Agriculture

Requested District: Rural Residential

- Single family residential
- 1 acre lot size
- Garages and storage as primary use
- Type B home occupations
- Agriculture

4

Surrounding area



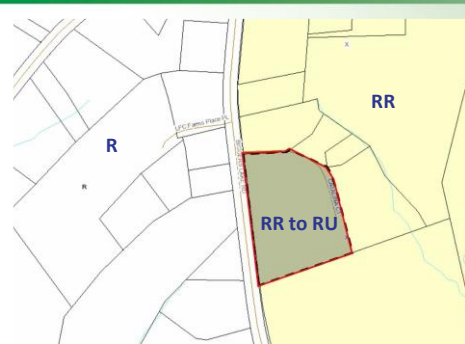
5

Google Streetview



6

Zoning Map



- Yellow: Restricted Residential (RR)
- White: Residential (R)
- Shaded: Rural Residential (RU) (Proposed)

7

Future Land Use

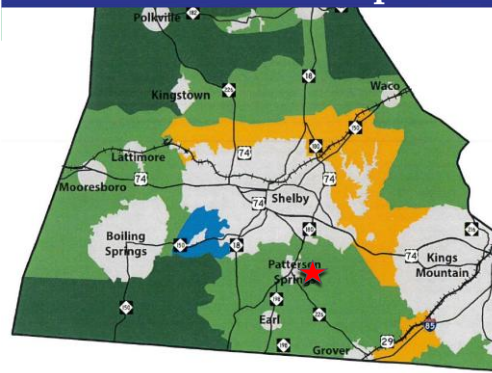


Secondary Growth

- Promotes new development at 1 unit per acre.
- Expected to retain a rural and agricultural character.
- Retail and service uses clustered at major crossroads.

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Future Land Use Map



- Red Star: Property location
- Dark Green: Rural Preservation
- Light Green: Secondary Growth
- Yellow: Primary Growth

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Planning Board



- **Recommends Approval**
- **Consistent with land use plan**
 - Secondary Growth area is expected to retain rural character
- **Rural Residential district is compatible with surrounding area.**

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Board Action



- **Public Hearing**
- **Consider:**
 - Comments
 - Land Use Plan consistency and surrounding area
 - Planning Board Recommendation
- **Approve or Deny**

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Chairman Gordon opened the Public Hearing at 6:46 p.m. for anyone wanting to speak for or against Planning Case 26-01: a request to rezone 109 Catalina Court from Restricted Residential (RR) to Rural Residential (RU). (GB-CU). (Legal Notice was published in the Shelby Star on Friday, January 23, and Friday, January 30, 2026).

Michael Myers, 101 Catalina Court, Shelby – is the applicant and stated that he has owned the property for several years and is seeking the rezoning primarily to allow for the placement of a storage building or similar accessory structure. He emphasized that he is not requesting any intensive commercial use and intends to maintain the property in a manner consistent with the surrounding rural setting.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Gordon closed the Public Hearing at 6:48 p.m.

Chairman Gordon opened the floor to the Board for questions and discussion. Commissioners reviewed the information presented and offered brief comments. Commissioner Hardin is familiar with the area and observed that the existing development pattern features homes spaced apart with open land between them, which aligns well with the Rural Residential (RU) classification.

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins and was unanimously adopted by the Board, *to approve the request to rezone parcel 5023, located at 109 Catalina Court, from Restricted Residential (RR) zoning to Rural Residential (RU), stating it is consistent with the Land Use Plan (LUP), compatible with surrounding properties, and appropriate for maintaining the area's rural residential character.*

REGULAR AGENDA

SANITARY DISTRICT BOARD

Chairman Gordon recognized County Attorney Jonathan Sink to present the Sanitary District board appointment. Don Melton, who had served on the Sanitary District Board for approximately twenty years, passed away on October 18, 2025, shortly before the general election in which he was a candidate for re-election. Despite his passing, Mr. Melton received the majority of votes in the November 4, 2025, election, creating a unique circumstance in which the elected candidate was unable to assume office.

Mr. Sink outlined the steps taken by local and state election officials to address the situation in accordance with applicable law. Following the election, the Cleveland County Board of Elections consulted with the North Carolina State Board of Elections, legal counsel for the Sanitary District, and the County Attorney's Office. On November 14, 2025, the Cleveland County Board of Elections formally declared the seat vacant, as the elected candidate was deceased and therefore unable to serve. This action initiated the statutory process for filling the vacancy. The Cleveland County Sanitary District Board operates as an independent and sovereign governing body, with members elected by the public in a manner similar to other local offices. However, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes, including provisions within Chapters 163 and 130A, the authority to fill such a vacancy ultimately rests with the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners. This authority is exercised upon recommendation from the Sanitary District Board.

Mr. Sink further advised that, in accordance with this process, the Sanitary District Board solicited interest from qualified individuals to fill the vacancy and received four letters of interest. After careful review and consideration, the Sanitary District Board unanimously voted to recommend Mr. Dewey Cook for appointment to the vacant seat. The Board subsequently submitted a formal letter to the Chairman of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners conveying its recommendation and requesting formal appointment in accordance with the statutory framework. The County Commissioners' role is to consider the recommendation submitted by the Sanitary District Board and, if deemed appropriate, proceed with the appointment of Mr. Cook to fill the unexpired term. He noted that this approach had been reviewed and agreed upon by all relevant parties, including the State

Board of Elections, the Cleveland County Board of Elections, and legal counsel for both the County and the Sanitary District, as the proper and lawful resolution to this unusual circumstance. Chairman Gordon reiterated that the appointment authority is placed with the Board of Commissioners by statute and clarified that the process before them was consistent with state law.

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and unanimously adopted by the Board, *to approve the appointment of Dewey C. Cook to fill the vacancy on the Cleveland County Sanitary District Board.*

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hutchins, and unanimously approved by the Board to appoint *Woody Edwards, Leon Martin, Judith Proctor as members of this board,* and *Dobbins Lattimore to serve as an alternate member of this board* for a three-year term, *scheduled to conclude on December 31, 2028.*

PLANNING BOARD

ACTION: Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Berry, and unanimously approved by the Board to *appoint Jason Lowery, and re-appoint Clinton Cook and David Caldwell to serve as members of this board* for a three-year term, **scheduled to conclude on December 31, 2028.**

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Berry – thanked the staff, first responders, and the Sheriff's Office for their continued hard work, especially the last few weeks with the winter storms that have come through.

Commissioner Hutchins – commented on social media posts regarding Cleveland County, the tax rate, and the possible implications of cutting the tax rate even further. He asked Chairman Gordon to further explain the county's budget and the value of a penny in it.

Chairman Gordon – began by referencing questions received from citizens regarding whether Cleveland County maintains a balanced budget. He cited North Carolina General Statute §159-8, part of the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, which requires that all local governments operate under an annually adopted balanced budget ordinance. He emphasized that compliance with this statute is mandatory for all counties, municipalities, and public authorities in the State. Chairman Gordon provided context regarding the County's overall budget and tax structure. It was noted that the Cleveland County's total budget is approximately \$240 million, with the General Fund accounting for approximately \$194.6 million. The current County tax rate was identified as 40.5 cents for general government, 14 cents for schools, and 7 cents for fire districts. The education funding accounts for approximately one-third of the General Fund and supports not only K-12 education but also community college funding and other related services.

As part of the upcoming budget development process, Chairman Gordon requested that staff prepare and present scenarios analyzing potential reductions in General Fund expenditures. Specifically, he requested an analysis reflecting a five percent reduction and a separate scenario reflecting a two-and-a-half percent reduction across General Fund departments. He emphasized that these scenarios should exclude reductions to critical and protected areas, including debt service obligations, public safety funding, employee compensation, and teacher supplements. These areas are either statutorily required or represent core priorities essential to maintaining County services, workforce stability, and educational support.

Additionally, it was requested that staff continue reviewing internal operations for potential efficiencies, including audits of vehicle fleets, cell phone and office phone usage, information technology systems, and other recurring expenditures that may no longer be necessary or fully utilized. Chairman Gordon emphasized the importance of ensuring that county resources are used efficiently and that unnecessary or duplicative costs are identified and eliminated where possible.

County Manager David Cotton – advised that each one-cent change in the tax rate equates to approximately \$1.4 million in revenue, with a four-cent adjustment representing approximately \$5.8 million and provided an overview of the balanced budget process, explaining that all aspects of County operations—including setting the tax rate, funding departmental services, supporting external agencies, and providing appropriations to the school system and community college—are dependent upon maintaining a balanced budget. He further explained that failure to adopt or maintain a balanced budget would result in intervention by the Local Government Commission (LGC), a division of the State Treasurer’s Office. Initial intervention would include guidance and direction to bring the budget into compliance; however, continued noncompliance could result in the LGC assuming control of the County’s financial operations, including setting the tax rate and overseeing fiscal management for up to seven years.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, Commissioner Hardin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bridges and unanimously adopted by the Board, *to adjourn*. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for *Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 6:00 pm* in the Commissioners’ Chambers.

*Kevin Gordon, Chairman
Cleveland County Board of Commissioners*

*Phyllis Nowlen, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board
Cleveland County Board of Commissioners*