

Regular Meeting – July 21, 2026

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, July 21, 2026, for their regular monthly meeting in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. All board was present. Also, present Manager Brady Cody, Attorney JK Coward and Clerk Kim Crisp.

1. Chair Smith called the meeting to order.
2. Chair Smith asks Commissioner Cody to give the Invocation.
3. Chair Smith asks Commissioner Orr to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chair Smith asks for changes to the agenda. Manager Cody asks that they add new CDBG Fund; Travel and Tourism Board Vacancy and a reminder of the Southwestern Commission Annual Meeting. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the agenda with the stated changes. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chair Smith asks for a motion to approve the June 16, 2026, Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes and the June 29, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chair Smith stated that we are privileged to have our District Attorney present and asks District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch to speak. D.A. Hornsby thanked the board for their time and thanked the audience for their support in electing her as District Attorney. D.A. Hornsby stated that she took her maiden name back after her divorce and would no longer go by Welch. D.A. Hornsby thanked Graham County for allowing her to be on their agenda she was trying to figure out how to thank Graham County for the graciousness, patience and kindness shown to her and her whole office during the removal of the former Sheriff. D.A. Hornsby stated that she knew that was a horrible position for everyone to be particularly the county manager and all of the administration office and I know that and just wanted you to know that what was done was not taken lightly and not without enormous thought and prayer for a very long time. D.A. Hornsby stated that when she came here she did not know what to expect, she anticipated and expected the sheriff office that was left would be angry and hostile and for the public too that may show up at the courthouse and she was ready but instead what she saw was a group of professional sheriff's officers and by day three she realized that the gentleman that was assigned to her to try and keep her safe was positioning himself to take a bullet for her and I could not believe it. D.A. Hornsby stated that the county welcomed her and her office, fed her every day, which was not anticipated, you trusted in me and you allowed me to do my job. D.A. Hornsby stated that she is so grateful. D.A. Hornsby stated that the justice system is something not thought highly of and part of the justice system is law enforcement and it is her job as district attorney to keep people safe, to uphold the constitution and the rights of everyone, every single person. D.A. Hornsby stated that the sheriff's job is to keep people safe and to protect their rights. D.A. Hornsby stated that when she realized that rights were being violated it was her job to do the right thing and one of the hardest things she had ever had to do is police the police. D.A. Hornsby stated that she loves law enforcement, she always has been a law enforcement lover, and when she realized what was happening, she had to act and instead of turning me away because she is not from Graham County and she is not up here a whole lot, ya'll welcomed her in and kept her safe, kept my office safe and she wanted to thank you immensely and thank the people of Graham County. D.A. Hornsby stated that it was a struggle not to tell you that she was sorry because it

was not her office that betrayed your trust, but you will not get I'm sorry from the people that you need the I'm sorry from and that was very clear. D.A. Hornsby stated that as representative of our justice system and someone who took an oath to uphold the constitution she will tell you on behalf of that system that she is sorry. D.A. Hornsby stated people's rights in Graham County are not going to be betrayed under her watch no matter how unpopular that is. D.A. Welch stated that she cannot thank you enough she did not know of another way, she thought about taking an ad out in the paper or having a Town Hall meeting but she has realized that every time that she has come up here it is an added burden for law enforcement, they protect her and keep her safe and she is so grateful for that. D.A. Hornsby stated, the gentleman who protected me, who is now the Chief Deputy, she had never had the privilege of meeting him and she is so grateful that during one of the most horrible events, she got to meet ya'll and was able to meet your Chief Deputy who is a hero in law enforcement even when you were all shook in the past few years and rightfully so and I hope that you never have to deal with that again and as long as she is here, she promises that she will support you. D.A. Hornsby thanked the county for their patience and grace. D.A. Hornsby stated that she is an open book, and she would answer all their questions, and she thanked them so much. D. A. Hornsby stated that you should be so proud of your community and the people in your community. Chair Smith thanked D. A. Hornsby for her, and she knew that it was not easy for her either and we saw you every day during the trial and she is sure that you had to work very hard to prepare for this trial and she appreciated her for fighting for us. D.A. Hornsby stated if this county ever needed her assistance, we knew where to find her.

7. Chair Smith stated that Cope Architects have agreed to partner with Graham County to build the Justice Center. Chair Smith stated that the county has acquired the property for the new Justice Center and we are in the final steps of getting the property surveyed, we now need to decide on a design and hope to break ground soon. Chair Smith asks Cayce Petko, AIA, President of Cope to speak. Ms. Petko stated that they are very experienced and will be committed to the county to deliver their project. Ms. Petko introduced her company to the public and presented a slide presentation for review. Ms. Petko stated that they have a very strong team and they do have the capacity to do the project, they are currently working with Graham County Schools for the new Elementary School. Ms. Petko stated that she worked with Swain County when Kevin King was the manager and he reached back out to us in Jackson County. Ms. Petko stated that they can design a facility that is efficient while being sufficient. Ms. Petko stated that her team will do a site assessment with a cost estimate and present the data to the board so that they can make the best decision for the county. Chair Smith stated that they look forward to working with them. A gentleman asks from the audience if the building will be economically feasible, not corner cutting because we need to keep our inmates safe. Chair Smith stated that this is the first time the board has met with Cope Architecture and they will have further discussions once the contract is in place. Another member of the public asks what the projected cost is, the other company presented a price tag of over \$36,000,000.00. Chair Smith stated that this board will explore all options.
8. Chair Smith stated that we would now go to public comment and stated that everyone will have a three-minute time limit. Chair Smith asks Brittney Holder to speak. Ms. Holder stated that she runs the Graham County Animal Refuge and she is here to talk about animal control and before she begins, she wanted to tell a little story. Years ago, I had a job at the local nursing home, I did my job correctly and ensured that all my duties were performed before I went home. A lot of my

coworkers did not like me because they said I did too much. I did more than what I needed to do but that was my job and just because I got done in a more timely manner, I had more time to do extra so nobody really wanted to work with me. Me and Meggan worked a lot together and I feel like I did my job correctly and I feel that it is time for some of the local government workers fulfill their duties that is in their job description whether or not the previous staff did it or not it is state mandated that it should be done according to state law. There shouldn't be any way around it and because the person ahead of you didn't do it that doesn't mean that you shouldn't do it. I am just an average citizen, and it is not my job to put in all this time and effort trying to provide an essential animal program, you all are responsible to provide this for our community. I have also spent my own time researching and studying the statute. During my research I was looking at the local health department website, and I found a very interesting document, the Graham County Animal Control Ordinance, the document says pretty much everything that I have been asking for about two years. One very important section, out of the very long document, is all the points that I have been trying to get put in the paper for two years. This document dates back years ago and to me if we can't enforce an ordinance that has been in place in our county for (15) years then we got problems. I had a few more highlighted but since I only have a four-minute time limit I will get the more important. Section 3 says that animal control enforcement is assigned to the health director or his/her designee or subordinate. This ordinance shall be enforced by all non-sworn officers which is health director or a designated employee and have all the rights and powers and abilities granted in this ordinance and sworn law enforcement officers in the county. The Health Director Angie Knight, Jessica Yates and Caleb Turpin are all really nice people, and I have known them my whole life and this is not a personal thing that I am throwing at them, but this is the ordinance. If this wasn't to be enforced, why did you put this document in place so why does this county ordinance exist if nobody is going to do what it says. So, in my opinion, having documents like this makes it seem like we are doing something, but we are not and this is not how we are going to get our county out of this hole. I feel like that this is a state mandated service and this is written then they deserve for it to happen, and this has been fifteen years in the making. Somebody felt like this was important and I am not sure if it was Connie Commissioner Orr that signed here and Kim Crisp signed it and people know that it does exist and that this document is in place. Every time I spoke about it, it seems like that will never happen in Graham County, can't do that, if we can't do it in fifteen years something is wrong and something needs to change. It does read that the county may provide shelter access which means you are not required to have a shelter in the county but what a lot of people don't realize is you are required to have a holding facility, you have to have somewhere to put these dangerous dogs and you also have to have a place for a 72 hour stray hold, this is the statute and we have to have that. Just because it doesn't say we don't have to have an animal shelter you have to have something that performs like a shelter. If nobody claims those strays within 72 hours then they have to be vetted, adopted, or held for research and that is what the state statute says. At the end of the day, that's what the state statute says, and we need to be enforcing these things and just because it is not being called a shelter you still have to run it as a shelter. I am a non-profit animal rescue, but I still have to take these animals in, I vet them, I adopt them out and put them on transport that's what shelters do. Chair Smith stated that she would give everyone five minutes. Chair Smith asks Attorney Coward if he was aware of this ordinance that she is speaking of. Brittney Holder stated that this one is different, she found this one online on the health department

page and it is very thorough. Manager Cody stated that it is dangerous dogs and rabies is the animal control ordinance. Commissioner Orr asks if we have a copy of that. Manager Cody stated that they will certainly provide it. Brittney Holder stated that it also talks about rabies control and the health department is responsible for doing and it talks about you make sure that your citizens have their dogs up to date on the rabies tags and this is state statute and we are supposed to be doing it. Manager Cody asks if she has a site for the 72-hour hold. Brittney Holder stated yes, she does and she would get it to him. Chair Smith stated that as far as rabies and dangerous dogs she will have to look into this, she has not read it but she did know the health department is involved but she will have to look into this and she cannot answer questions, this is something that she does not deal with at the health department but they will look into this. Brittney Holder stated that she had knew recently that a deputy was seriously injured by a dog that happened recently I have been involved through the owner of the dog's girlfriend and the dog is put at Valley River but they will not take any of our animals so are they picking and choosing which animals, I was told that the dog was put down and the head was sent off to check for rabies but if the dog is that aggressive then that is what should be done so where is the dog, does anyone know where the dog is. Commissioner Nelms stated that is not true and the dog is under confinement . Brittney Holder asks who made those decisions, you. Commissioner Nelms stated that the health department initiated the hold. Brittney Holder stated that the officer was responding to a call and the dog attacked him. Commissioner Nelms stated that the dog is being cared for.

9. Chair Smith asks Deborah Cheney to speak. Ms. Cheney thanked Jacob Nelms and Meggan Smith for meeting with her, and she was asked to send information to the board for review. Ms. Cheney stated that she found one, it is an ordinance which would work very well for Graham County, it is not as strict, it basically could be constructed to address breeders and believes that they can come up with an ordinance that makes everyone happy. One of the things that Brittney Holder had approached you about, would you be willing to donate an acre of property for a shelter that will provide a place for animals to go to in hopes to adopt them out. Ms. Cheney stated that as part of this endeavor, they would build a facility, three-fourths of the facility will be for the animals, and the remaining portion could hold a thrift store that sells cat and dog foods for discounted prices. Ms. Cheney stated this would help us sustain the kennel, hopefully on their own. Ms. Cheney stated that she went into Walgreens and was approached by a young man asking if we had a facility and her reply was, they are working on it, he then said he and his girls would volunteer to work in that facility. Ms. Cheney stated that he then asked when and she stated three to five years, but she has people who own construction companies that have said, if you get a site we will build it for you. Ms. Cheney stated that this is how important this is to the community. Ms. Cheney stated that she found properties that are owned by Graham County and had three pages of location. Ms. Cheney stated that some of the properties did not list an address, they just listed a road, so you don't know where on this road that Graham County owns this property. Ms. Cheney stated it did not stop there, she also found another listing of properties outside the town of Robbinsville, not realizing that we are in the real estate business. Ms. Cheney stated that some of the properties is the courthouse and some out on P and J Road but there is property out here that we can easily build a shelter, we have two men that are offering to build the shelter for us so I am leaving this up to ya'll, in your hands, Jacob, yours too. Ms. Cheney stated we can make this happen, all you have to do is give us an acre of property that is easily accessible

and they will make it happen. Ms. Cheney stated that she did send the ordinance information, a very simple ordinance, to where we would take the animals and give them their rabies shots, a tag, a permit when you adopt the animals and this is what they did from where she came from. Ms. Cheney stated you could pay a fee for this tag, say \$10.00 for every animal and then make the fine double that amount which is incentive for you to take your animals to get their shot and tag for half of what the fine will cost you and also we create the ordinance to cover the hunters and the breeders, one permit for all the dogs on their property, the hunters could have a little higher fee but it would cover every animal on their property. Ms. Cheney stated that this will show that all animals are well kept and that they have their rabies shot, that is what she is asking, we just need your support and an acre of land, and we can make it work. Commissioner Orr thanked Ms. Cheney and do you possibly have a plan in place for the board to make decisions from. Ms. Cheney stated that she could get one. Commissioner Orr stated that should be done first. Ms. Cheney stated that everyone that knows me knows that I am constantly thinking and once they get a facility and everyone donates hours or materials, they will give them advertising on this facility. Commissioner Orr stated that Ms. Cheney has a lot of good ideas and asks again that she present the plan to the board so they can make a decision on the entire plan, I think that would be helpful, she didn't know what the rest of the board thought of that. Chair Smith stated that after their meeting on Friday, she forwarded that ordinance to the board so they would have a chance to look at it and as she discussed in the meeting we will have more conversation in closed to discuss land and they will talk about that tonight but she did agree with what Commissioner Orr is saying about a business plan and a plan of how big the shelter would be, if it would be a prefab building, which would be great, and asks that they be working on the plan and the board will begin the discussion on the land and working with our attorney on the ordinance to start this process. Ms. Cheney stated the ordinance she presented was their plan and we could actually modify that to fit our needs and thanked the board for their time.

10. Chair Smith asks Lorita Eller to speak. Ms. Eller stated that when she retired from the Health Department, she never dreamed that she would be here at this podium, but she can say it is much easier as a member of the community instead of being an employee of the county. Ms. Eller stated basically to touch on what Brittney Holder said, with her experience in the health department for twenty-eight years she was there when the ordinance came about and it was mandated by the state and consultants stated that we had no choice. Ms. Eller stated that the health department functioned on minimal staff because of funds and all we were able to do and did do was dangerous dogs and rabies prevention and Commissioner Jacob Nelms recently stated that he did not do animal control but he did dangerous dogs and dog bites, and she can vouch for the times that she was at the health department that is all that was done. Ms. Eller stated we need an animal control officer in Graham County; there were efforts over the years to work with the Town of Robbinsville and other entities to share someone that would come in and do animal control. Ms. Eller stated that they need one consistent person that law enforcement works with, shelters to work with, that is what we need to have. Ms. Eller stated ten counties in North Carolina, after she did her research, have went under significant litigation related to the lack of animal control policies that were not being performed. Ms. Eller stated that Graham County does not need any more litigation, we need this enforced. Ms. Eller stated that the health department has recently hired an environmental health associate, this falls directly with the health department, and the goal is rabies prevention. Ms. Eller stated with that being said

this is the prime opportunity, if you are looking for three to five years down the road for a shelter, let's get an animal control officer in place and with you having a new position in the health department doing environmental health, I am aware more than anyone that the health department employees wear multiple hats. Ms. Eller stated her job description said this, but I did xy and z, that is just the way that it is. Ms. Eller stated right now the best fix to this is one individual to be responsible to be the animal control officer, it is not a full-time job, there are so many resources and people that they can work with, we need a contract with a neighboring county for shelter services. Ms. Eller stated those are two things that can be fixed within weeks, it is available and now is the time to do it. Ms. Eller stated it is now time, fifteen years with an ordinance, it is time to do this now. Ms. Eller stated that this is her spill concerning animal control and now she wanted to speak on the property tax increase. Ms. Eller stated there is lots of frustration, lots of anger in the community about the rising of the property taxes, but one thing that we all need and understand is what it takes to do county business, nothing is free, everything has a cost. Ms. Eller stated that that she was not happy about the raising of the taxes but it is a done deal, what we need to look at is where we are with our finances, there are so many rumors going around in the county right now that the county is broke, the last information that she could find in her research and she can do research because she is retired now, my husband finds it ironic I care about the finances when an amazon box is delivered to my house every day but with that being said the last audit, the independent audit we had out and is accessible online is the 2023-2024 Audit which has been presented at these meetings, if you attend the meetings you find this stuff out, so at that time the general fund balance was \$2,100,000.00 odd dollars. Ms. Eller stated that the general fund is the balance that the county operates on and that was two years ago, so last week she sent admin and the board a request for this meeting or at a future meeting to give the most current general fund balance so that the county residents can know what is in that account, putting an end to the rumors and so people do not have to sit and worry about what the future of Graham County finances is. Ms. Eller said just to wrap up what she is saying is for any of us to expect anyone sitting behind these tables, board, county admin related, or the commissioners to fix all the problems that has taken generations to occur is not going to happen. Ms. Eller stated that the people that come into their places will not be able to fix it, the only ones that can fix it is our heavenly Father, we are doing the best that we can, but we have got to be informed, we have got to be reported, does she agree with all the decisions from the board, no, and if she was in that position everybody would not like the decisions that she made but we have to work together and it will take generations to come to repair what is broken and all that I have for you is to please leave us in a better shape than how you found us. Chair Smith stated that she did like the idea of a shared person and the responsibilities being shared with the Town of Robbinsville and Graham County and she has spoken with Brittney various times on the percentage of animals that are actually found in the city limits and it is pretty high, I am not sure if that information has reached out to the Town of Robbinsville but she would love to work with the Town of Robbinsville and she is familiar with that position that Ms. Eller was speaking of and wanted the community to understand that the new position that they have, he will be doing environmental health, he will be doing project management because we do not have a project manager right now and as you know we have this big justice center project that we keep talking about, so she just wanted you to know that he has a lot of roles already but we can definitely consider that suggestion and she appreciated the comments.

11. Chair Smith asks Cindy Mease to speak. Ms. Mease stated that she is following up on a question that had been asked at the last meeting, you couldn't get any answers because you were not there, so I wanted to follow up and will share it with everyone tonight. Ms. Mease stated that the question was, in a nutshell, it appears that we have been appropriating public funds, tax dollars for a private purpose, related to cemetery upkeep and digging graves, etc., etc. Ms. Mease stated that this is against state law, and she is wondering how and why because we have a big ole budget for cemetery and we are taking care of (62) private cemeteries in this county, how is this allowed and that is a lot of money when we are a poor county. Ms. Mease asks how is this acceptable to her, it is against the law what we are doing. Chair Smith asks Commissioner Lynn Cody to explain that as far as the law and the ordinance, and Attorney Coward may need to speak on it as well. Commissioner Cody stated that if you weren't aware in 1957, Ms. Mease said yep, she is aware the law was put in place just for Graham County. Commissioner Cody stated that the law has not changed, Ms. Mease stated that it was actually appealed in 2011, Commissioner Cody stated that in 2011 it had a provision, but the law never changed and the law still stands. Ms. Mease stated that she begged to differ with you, Commissioner Cody stated that it has a resolution, that took one part of that law out, the funding, that funding was to be able to allow the cemetery commission to write off millions of dollars that was owed to them. Commissioner Cody stated that was removed and Graham County made a resolution in 2011-2012 and that is where it took and relieved those funds where the county did not have to pay that balance but, in that resolution, it stated that they will pay or continue to keep the cemetery commission and fund that commission to provide services for the cemeteries in Graham County. Ms. Mease stated that she believes that what he is referring to is what Graham County did in 2012 but we are over the limits of 2012, in 2011 the State actually appealed what happened in 1957, Commissioner Cody stated that one section was repealed and one section that would be verbalized in the new resolution. Ms. Mease read the section concerning cemeteries. Commissioner Cody stated that the law removed that section concerning finances but did not remove the law. Ms. Mease stated that she did not think that is accurate, but she will be happy to talk about it. Commissioner Cody stated that the law is still happening and is still on the books. Ms. Mease stated that whatever happened in 2011, the state actually said that Graham County now needs to abide by the general state law in regard to private cemeteries. Commissioner Cody stated no. Ms. Mease stated that it does and she has read it several times. Commissioner Cody stated that she had the wrong interpretation. Ms. Mease stated that is her interpretation and we would save a whole of money if we did not do this and tried to get a meeting with Manager Cody, Commissioner Cody and Commissioner Orr but that didn't happen. Commissioner Cody stated that he is on the cemetery commission and I support the cemetery commission because they take care of the cemeteries, there have been so many cemeteries that have been transferred to the cemetery commission and there are some cemeteries that are owned by churches and individuals. Ms. Mease stated that she wonders why the churches are not taking care of their own cemeteries. Commissioner Cody stated that the cemeteries are under control of the cemetery commission, the cemetery commission by statute in 1957 appointed the commission to oversee that and over the years the board members have changed out and it is our responsibility to see that all cemeteries within this county are taken care of and that is what we do. Ms. Mease asks if this is according to state law or just Graham County. Commissioner Cody stated that it is Graham County under the general statutes. Commissioner Cody stated that the state law did not oversee the

1957 law, the state law states that all counties have to abide by all cemetery ruling by the state statute, but Graham County has the 1957 Law that was established for our cemeteries. Commissioner Cody stated that Ms. Mease may disagree with him, but it is still there. Ms. Mease stated she would be happy to share a document with him. Commissioner Cody stated that he has all the documents on it and they have discussed it. Commissioner Orr asks Ms. Mease if she has a copy of the 1917 law, your friend that spoke at a previous meeting. Ms. Mease stated that she did not know she is just following up from the last meeting. Commissioner Orr stated that she was presented a law that was dated 1917, a one-page law, when you read all the way to the last paragraph, even though it said such and such was responsible for that cemetery, if cemeteries was abandoned then the care of those cemeteries was turned over directly to the county. Ms. Mease asks if there is a list of those counties. Commissioner Orr stated that she has it at her house, she would give her a copy and if you will give me your address she would mail it to you. Chair Smith stated that this was something that she, as a commissioner, did have a lot of questions and received education on this and she has a pretty good understanding and she has spoken with a lot of citizens and previous generations were not taking care of the cemeteries and she hates that it is a tax burden on the county but she has to think about respect for the residents and she does not want the cemeteries to be overgrown again and she feels like this fiscal year the commission compromised with us to have a seasonal worker and in the future maybe we can look at volunteers or the churches to assist. Ms. Mease stated that she knows that some disagree with her but she would love to sit down with you and show you what she has, she is not trying to stir things up but I think that we are breaking state law and I don't think any of us want to be doing that, I am not trying to do anything but bring this to your attention, you have so many things in this county that is going backwards and if we could save some money I would be happy to help raise money to take care of cemeteries but let's do it according to state law, that's all she is saying.

12. Chair Smith asks Lynn Cody to speak. Commissioner Cody stated that some of our residents have received a letter from Frontier, if you have a landline, using copper wire for their telephone is coming to an end. Commissioner Cody stated that in the Stecoah Community people rely on their phones because we do not have access to cellphone. Commissioner Cody stated that the sheriff's department makes daily welfare checks which is a critical need for people who do not have family. Commissioner Cody stated that the phones are set to be discontinued in November and he worry's about what our residents will do, the suggestion from Frontier is to get a new provider or cellular plan but we live in areas where that is not possible. Graham County has cell towers but not coverage in certain areas. Commissioner Cody wanted the board to be aware, some of the residents want answers about what to do. Commissioner Orr stated that a lot of residents rely on lifelines as well and they work off landlines. The board all agreed that we need to reach out to the utility commission. A member of the public stated that Balsam West would be a good resource to contact.
13. Chair Smith asks for a motion to recess the meeting for five minutes. Commissioner Orr made the motion as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
14. Chair Smith called the meeting back to order.
15. Chair Smith asks for the manager's report. Manager Cody stated that Finance Director Stacy Carpenter is on vacation and he will be providing the financial reporting as provided by Director Carpenter. Manager Cody stated that he had amendments for the board's review and approval. Those amendments are:

- a. Amendment #1 End of year adjustments
- b. Amendment #2 End of year adjustments
- c. Amendment #3 Health Department WIC Funding
- d. Amendment #4 Sheriff Insurance Proceeds
- e. Amendment #5 Health Department Healthy Communities
- f. Amendment #6 PSAP Fund 80
- g. Amendment #7 Dangerous Animals Expense
- h. Amendment #8 Health Department Family Planning
- i. Amendment #9 Jail Budget IVC Funds
- j. Amendment #10 Sheriff Fleet

Manager Cody stated that Chair Smith would need to be recused from Health Department Amendments 2; 3; 5; 8. Commissioner Williams made the motion to recuse Chair Smith from the stated amendments. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

16. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve Budget Amendments 2; 3; 5; 8. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
17. Chair Smith made the motion to approve Budget Amendments 1,6,7,9,10. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
18. Manager Cody stated that the revenues and the expenditure balanced on June 30, 2026, for the FY 25/26 at \$24,596,742.83.
19. Manager Cody stated that revenues to year end were \$23,301,262.57, which is \$1,201,892.83 higher than last year.
20. Manager Cody stated that the expenditure to year end was \$22,693,183.16 which is lower by \$416,353.83 than last year.
21. Manager Cody stated that our revenues exceeded our expenditure by \$608,079.41. The expenditure exceeded our revenues in the past year by \$1,010,167.25. Manager Cody stated that things are much healthier due to the cost-cutting measures. Chair Smith thanked Brady, Stacy and Kim for all the hard work and this is much better.
22. Manager Cody stated that Director Carpenter did submit an appeal to the Local Government Commission for the late audit. Manager Cody stated that the goal is to complete the 24/25 audit by October and the 25/26 audit by March then we will be back on track and have all audits completed.
23. Manager Cody stated that he needed approval for the Releases \$10,711.17 and the Discoveries \$2685.36. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the releases and discoveries. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
24. Manager Cody stated that our Sanitation Ordinance has been completed and asks when the board would like to schedule another public hearing to discuss with the public. The board agreed to have the public hearing at the next regular meeting August 18, 2026, and this will allow for public comment.
25. The board discussed having two regular commissioner meetings per month instead of one. The board wanted to move the DSS meeting to the 1st Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. and hold a regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. then have the next regular meeting on the third Tuesday of the month with the workshop beginning at 5:00 p.m. Clerk Crisp stated that she would prepare the resolutions to be approved at the next meeting.
26. Manager Cody stated that they did receive three quotes for sanitation haul but after closer inspection Director Colvard did not use the correct numbers due to the increase in loads taken to Ballground. Manager Cody asks that the board reject all bids and mail the bids back to the bidder and in the event the board decides they can go through with RFP's and the procurement policy and we will not have prior

knowledge of the quote amounts. Chair Smith made the motion to reject all bids for the sanitation haul. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

27. Manager Cody stated that he has the corrected NC Forest Service Contract for approval. Chair Smith made the motion to approve. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
28. Manager Cody asks for the appointment of the NCACC Delegate FY 26/27.
Commissioner Orr made the motion to appoint Manager Brady Cody. Chair Smith seconded the motion. Vote unanimous.
29. Manager Cody asks for the appointment with the NCACC Alternate Delegate FY 26/27. Chair Smith made the motion to appoint Stacy Carpenter. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
30. Manager Cody asks for the reappointment of Road Naming Board members Debbie Beasley and Marshall McClung effective 8/1/2026. Chair Smith made the motion to approve. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
31. Manager Cody asks for the reappointment of Health Advisory Board Members Katy Lynch, Jill Raymer, Aaron Stewart, and Meggan Smith effective 8/1/2026.
Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
32. Manager Cody asks for the reappointment of RDA Board Member Daniel Allison.
Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve. Chair Smith seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
33. Manager Cody asks for the reappointment of RDA Board Members Billy Brown, Brady Cody, Connie Orr effective 8/1/2026. Chair Smith made the motion to approve. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
34. Manager Cody asks for discussion on the Advent Health proposal for possible wall construction. The board will discuss it further.
35. Manager Cody asks about the bill for Attorney Coward. The board will discuss it further.
36. Manager Cody stated that the Senior Celebration will be held September 18th at 9:30 a.m. in Bryson City and stated that if a board member would like to attend, please let the senior center know.
37. Manager Cody gave a breakdown of the county employees. Graham County employees (152) full time; (35) part time and prn's; (7) elected and (38) seasonal.
38. Manager Cody asks Clerk Crisp to discuss the policies for approval. Clerk Crisp stated that portions of these policies are included in the county personnel manual but not as a stand-alone policy, the grants that we have been applying to ask for a stand-alone policy. Clerk Crisp stated that she prepared the policies for grant compliance and the policies will be available for every department. Manager Cody asks that the board approve:
 - a. Fair Promotion Practices
 - b. Complaint Procedures and Investigations
 - c. Protection Against Retaliation
 - d. Reasonable Accommodation
 - e. Record Keeping for EEO Policies and Trainings
 - f. EEO Guidelines in Hiring and Recruitment
 - g. Confidentiality Policy
 - h. Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity
 - i. Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation EEO
 - j. Conflict of Interest

Chair Smith made the motion to approve the policies as stated. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

39. Manager Cody stated that he received notice of a CDBG Funding announcement. Manager Cody stated that \$44,000,000.00 is portioned to award projects, with Tier 1 receiving \$5,000,000.00 but we are no longer Tier 1, and we do not qualify for that. Manager Cody stated the focus is on work force housing and after he spoke with Russ Harris at Southwestern Commission regarding Eco King, they wanted to discuss the scope of this grant and what the board would be interested in doing for a CDBG project. Manager Cody stated that we have had multi-family housing non-profit reach out to us previously about wanting a project in Graham County and this would be a good time to try and facilitate this project with a maximum of \$950,000. Manager Cody stated that there are other projects that can be explored and will talk with the Southwestern Commission about potential eligibility. Manager Cody stated the grant can be for parks, greenways, playground equipment, potential acquisition, and development of sites and trails which will be good for the community as well. Manager Cody stated that he would like to explore that and engage the board's input and what we have done previously was in remediation and repair but unfortunately, we are no longer as competitive as we once were when we were Tier 1 and that is unfortunate for our citizens. Commissioner Orr stated that our needs have gone up. Manager Cody stated it is not shown due to our annual wage being increased due to the work on the mountain, we are still the highest in the region, and it surprises everyone that Graham County has the highest average wages. Commissioner Williams stated that they do not account that most of our employment is done out of town. Manager Cody stated that a lot of people in our county still qualify for assistance due to income based. Chair Smith stated that the housing with Eco King is something that we need to look into but she feels that the public as a whole needs to have something to look at and see as progress and she really likes the idea of a recreation park at the health department and feels that we need to explore that as a potential project.
40. Manager Cody stated that we have two vacant seats on the Travel and Tourism Board and asks if the board wanted to entertain discussion. Commissioner Williams made the motion to put Meggan Smith as an accommodation partner on this board. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Commissioner Orr stated that the Travel and Tourism Board makes a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. Chair Smith asks Commissioner Orr if she has opposition to her being on the board. Commissioner Orr stated no, but the procedure is for the Travel and Tourism Board to make the recommendation. Chair Smith stated that she has been approached by several citizens and as an occupancy taxpayer herself she is asked a lot of questions on how do we approve access to things in town and she is very interested in helping. Commissioner Orr stated that she would very much like for her to be, but the travel and tourism board makes the recommendation. Attorney Coward stated that there are some new state laws governing this board on how this board must spend their money, he will check into this and get back to the board. Chair Smith asks if we need to make a motion to table this decision. Clerk Crisp stated that they needed to rescind their motion. Commissioner Williams and Commissioner Nelms rescinded their motion.
41. Manager Cody stated that the Southwestern Commission Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, July 27 and they are asking for the board RSVP. Commissioner Orr and Commissioner Williams will be attending along with Manager Cody.
42. Chair Smith asks for a motion to go into closed session under G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1)(3)(5)(6) for privileged or confidential information, attorney client privilege, personnel and contracts. Commissioner Williams made the motion to go

into closed session as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

43. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to go back into open session.

Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

44. Chair Smith asks for a motion to approve the Closed Session Minutes for the 6/16 Regular Meeting; 6/26 Budget Meeting and the 6/29 Special Meeting. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion.

Vote unanimous.

45. Chair Smith asks for a motion to continue this meeting until Tuesday, August 4th at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Williams made the motion to continue. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Meggan Smith, Chair, Graham County Commissioner

Lynn Cody, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Jacob Nelms, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Natasha Williams, Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board