

Budget Meeting – March 20, 2026

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Friday, March 20, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building, Manager's Office located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC for a budget meeting. Board present Meggan Smith, Connie Orr and Natasha Williams. Board absent Lynn Cody and Jacob Nelms. Also, present Manager Brady Cody, Finance Director Stacy Carpenter and Clerk Kim Crisp.

1. Chair Smith called the meeting to order.
2. Chair Smith asks Manager Cody and Finance Director Carpenter to proceed with the discussion of the budget. Manager Cody stated that they have good updates for the board. Manager Cody stated that the board needed to review the budgets for health department, DSS, Cemetery and Special Appropriations.
3. Manager Cody discussed the possible trash tax which will take time for the tax assessor to code each parcel, and this will need to be completed no later than June. Commissioner Williams asks if we issue a universal tax to begin with and then impose a commercial tax later. Manager Cody stated that Clay County imposes residential tax only. The board discussed a fee of \$50.00 for residential purposes and \$100.00 for commercial. Manager Cody stated that the board would need to hold a public hearing to have discussions with the public. Manager Cody stated that there are around 4000 homes in the county and vacant properties do not count. Manager Cody stated that one-half cent in taxes equates to \$75,000.00.
4. Manager Cody stated that the board needed to discuss the operation of the jail with the Interim Sheriff. Manager Cody stated that a raise could be possible if they structure the jail correctly. Manager Cody stated that they are left medical as it was, due to the uncertainty. Manager Cody stated that sheriff came in with a \$25,000.00 cut to the Sheriff Budget. Chair Smith stated that we must get the Justice Center built. Chair Smith stated that our new mechanic has more experience, which should help with the vehicle repairs. Commissioner Williams stated that he is a Ford Certified Mechanic.
5. Manager Cody stated that the county supports the health department at 8% and their budget came in with a \$200,000.00 savings. Manager Cody stated that two positions were cut in this department, and they shifted the front desk vacancy to a part-time position instead of full-time. Manager Cody stated that they gave the Opioid Settlement Funds its own fund, this was inflating the health department numbers. Manager Cody stated that the health director did ask for help from our Health Environmental Department. Commissioner Orr asks if an Intern could help in this department. Manager Cody stated that they must have an environmental degree. Manager Cody stated that increasing permit fees will help pay for a part time position. Manager Cody stated that they are still receiving support from the Dogwood Health Grant for the Provider.
6. The board wanted to look at all the fees. Director Carpenter stated that she was asked for a fee sheet from the NCACC, we do not currently have a fee sheet for every department at this time, but they will work on obtaining all this information. Director Carpenter stated that they look at the revenues and expenses for Dental and they are currently at a \$134,000.00 surplus since they are billing now.
7. The board discussed the paramedicine program and wanted to discuss with the employee to see if this can be done by the EMS Captains.
8. Director Carpenter stated that DSS is funded with 44% County funds. Manager Cody stated that there were some raises added to the budget, but he removed them.

9. Chair Smith asks for a motion to go into closed session under G.S. 143.318.11(a)(1)(6) for privileged or confidential information and personnel. Commissioner Williams made the motion to go into closed session as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
10. Chair Smith made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
11. Manager Cody discussed the Sheriff's restricted accounts and Sheriff Moody stated that he would spend that money first before using the county dollars.
12. Manager Cody stated that the board needed to discuss the special appropriations. The board agreed to cut the funding to special appropriations unless we are statutorily obligated to pay.
13. The board discussed the NC Forest Service. Manager Cody stated that we are obliged to pay 35%.
14. The Board discussed Tri-County Community College and agreed to leave the funding as it is until such time there is progress on the Graham County Campus.
15. The board discussed Mental Health, this would remain the same.
16. The board discussed the library and will keep the amount the same due to the in-kind donations that are received from the county. Those in-kind services are maintenance, ground maintenance, custodial with supplies, utilities, internet and insurance on the building. The board learned that they could add market value rent on the building as in-kind as well.
17. The board discussed Fire and Rescue and needed to cut the amount back to \$35K for each department which will save the county \$50,000.00.
18. The board discussed animal control and Commissioner Nelms is taking care of the dangerous dogs by our ordinance.
19. The board discussed the Heritage Festival and the Historical Association. The board discussed Stecoah Valley Center. Director Carpenter stated that the Local Government Commission is requesting documentation on the special appropriations.
20. The board discussed the school, State of Franklin, Burial, Cancer, and Yuletide.
21. The board discussed the Jail and the discussion by the Jail Inspector. Manager Cody stated that Sheriff Moody is making positive changes in the Jail and Scharlene Wesley was named as the Administrator. The board learned of the newly proposed law regarding Mental Health evaluations for inmates. The board discussed possible partnerships for this coverage.
22. Manager Cody stated that they will make replacements for half of the computers this fiscal year and complete the rest of the next fiscal budget.
23. The board discussed the possible trash tax with a sliding scale for our seniors.
24. Director Carpenter stated that she did have Budget Amendment #23 to move money between departments. Chair Smith made the motion to approve Budget Amendment #23 as stated. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
25. Manager Cody asks for a directive to change the scope on the Directed Grant Funds and use them to purchase the computers. Chair Smith made the motion to allow for the Directed Grant Funding scope change and use those funds to purchase the computers and shift money into the IT Department to allow for this expense. Chair Smith made the motion to approve the change of scope for the Directed Grant Funds. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
26. Chair Smith asks for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Meggan Smith, Chair

Lynn Cody, Vice-Chairman

Jacob Nelms, Member

Connie Orr, Member

Natasha Williams, Member

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board
