

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA )  
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COUNTY OF STOKES )  
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OFFICE OF THE  
COMMISSIONERS  
STOKES COUNTY  
GOVERNMENT  
DANBURY, NORTH  
CAROLINA  
MONDAY AUGUST 11, 2025

## **Regular Meeting of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners**

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a Regular Meeting in the Stokes County Administration Building in the Commissioners Chambers located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, August 11 at 6:00 pm with the following members present:

Board of Commissioners Present: Chairman Keith Wood, Vice-Chairman Wayne Barneycastle, Commissioner Brad Chandler, Commissioner Sonya Cox, and Commissioner Rick Morris.

County Administration Present: County Manager Jeff Sanborn, Assistant County Manager Amber Brown, Clerk to the Board Olivia Jessup, Director of Finance Tammy Keaton, and County Attorney Jennifer Michaud.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Wood called the meeting to order.

### **INVOCATION**

Chairman Wood invited those in attendance to join the Board in the Invocation, if desired.

Commissioner Chandler delivered the Invocation.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Wood invited those in attendance to join the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Wood entertained a motion to amend or approve tonight's agenda.

Clerk to the Board Olivia Jessup noted that the agenda needed to be amended to add a closed session.

Commissioner Morris moved to approve the agenda as amended.

Vice-Chair Barneycastle seconded the motion. The motion Passed.

### **Public Comments**

Chairman Wood noted that there were no individuals signed up to speak tonight in Public Comments.

### **COMMENTS - Managers/Commissioners**

Commissioner Chandler commented:

- I want to thank everyone for being here tonight in person, and as always, people that are tuning in via social media. I'll save some time and just say a couple things in public comments. I didn't want to add anything to our agenda for discussion. But one thing that I'd like to talk about, and it deals with transparency and being open. And I don't want to get into the Manager's presentation later, but on the survey document -- I've read it quite extensively, and one of the things that jump out at me, that I think that we need to improve on in the County is the part where we're below the regional average and also the national average, and we don't really score that High when it comes to communication with community.
- Now, I'm not saying it's just from the Board of Commissioners, but it's Stokes County government, and we lead Stokes County government, so, and I've always been open and transparent. So, the one thing that that I think that might be troubling people or vague in the agenda coming up on the consent agenda is the \$50,000 transfer money into accounts that we can spend for litigation. Well, the litigation is we were sued about eight weeks ago over the solar farm public record. It's been public record since the lawsuit was filed, you can read it. And that's really all I can say, but the County's been sued, and yes, we do have to pay an attorney to represent us.

Commissioner Morris commented:

- I welcome everybody. We appreciate your participation and feedback. As always. I don't want to get to Jeff's report, but this survey thing, I found it really interesting and the part about better communication that Brad just mentioned, over 300% I think we can put a focus on doing that, and that'll be a major improvement to our government and allowing us to do a better job for the folks that elected us. So, I'm really looking forward to getting into that and discussing it with the public. That's all I have.

Vice-Chair Barneycastle commented:

- Again, I'll reiterate what they said. Appreciate everybody being here tonight. Going back to the survey, I read over it and looked at it, and I thought there were some good

numbers come back on it. I see some weak areas in the county, and some things that we could work on. And I think it was a good thing.

- I would like to send out a special thank you to Chief Robertson, the Chief of City of King, was sworn in this weekend as president of the State Fire Association. So that's a big plus for our county, and he put a lot of hard work into that. So, our King should be proud that we've got someone to serve as president of the State Fire Association. That's all I got.

Commissioner Cox commented:

- Just welcome everybody that's here and watching online and like has been mentioned, the survey results that we're going to go over later. It's very eye-opening, very interesting. And I think this is something, I don't know if we'll do it yearly or every few years, however we decide. But I think we can take this and maybe look at some of the answers and tweak it a little bit. I don't foresee it to be the same questions every time, but maybe we can even drill deeper, do a deeper dive on some of the things that that have been brought out by the survey.
- I just thank everybody that took the time to take it and give us their feedback. I think it's important that we know what the climate of the county is at this time and moving forward and what we can do better at so I'm all for feedback. I think it's important, and it's important that we use that feedback. So that's all I've got. Thank you.

County Manager Sanborn commented:

- I'd like to comment on one thing. I think everybody knows that there's a lot of concern and uncertainty out there about where we're going with improvement and final adoption of this new fire service contract. So, I wanted to update everybody on that. A couple of days before your last meeting, I sent over a recommendation to the Fire Commission on how we might move forward together. And a day after your last meeting, I got confirmation back from Steven Robertson that they agreed with that framework, and they are moving forward. With that framework now, I just want to share that with everybody.
- The Fire Commission is working to provide direct feedback in the form of a red line to the existing draft, and to do that, they're holding a series of special meetings and the idea is that they would be able to get that back to me by the end of August, and then then turn that around and give that feedback to you as well as the any other helpful comments that I can add to what their to their recommendations and then during the month of September, you as the Board of County Commissioners would approve the next version of the draft, and then we would turn around and send that that out for comment to all the various fire departments, and those fire departments would have about a month to provide feedback to us.
- Then myself and the Fire Commission would get together and consider that feedback and again make another red line version that we can bring back to you, hopefully by about the end of November, for your consideration, approval or modification where you see fit. Then we would be able to get back out to the to the Fire Chiefs again for their contemplation, with their boards on final adoption.

- The timeline that I proposed would allow for us transitioning to that new contract on the first of February, but we all recognize that sometimes there are complications, and so if we need to slip that back, we can. But at least, given the fact that we have this decision-making process kind of codified on paper, we'll know whether we're on track or not, and whether or not we're going to need to make adjustments. So that's where we're headed.

Assistant County Manager Brown commented:

- Just welcome everybody. I think most people know by now, but former Commissioner Mendenhall's mother passed away last week, and I think her services were this past weekend, if I'm not mistaken. I didn't get to be there but just remember them in our thoughts and prayers.

Chair Wood commented:

- I was honored to be with Jeff to have breakfast with Senator Ted Budd last Friday. It was an invitation only. Wayne was out of town, not able to make it. It was Assistant Chairs and County Managers and all the mayors. I didn't hear that much politics discussed. It was just lunch with Ted Budd, so that was that was fun. Other than that, let's get this meeting going.

### **Conflicts Of Interest**

No conflicts of interest were stated by the Board.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

All attachments presented on the Agenda are available in the attachments of the Agenda on the County Website and are available upon request from the Clerk, with the exception of the minutes approved which are located on the County Website under the minutes tab.

Minutes

Pine Hall Facility Deed

Budget Amendments

Chairman Wood entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Chandler moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Commissioner Cox seconded the motion. The motion Passed.

### **INFORMATION AGENDA**



All attachments presented on the Agenda are available in the attachments of the Agenda on the County Website and are available upon request from the Clerk, with the exception of the minutes approved which are located on the County Website under the minutes tab.

### **North Carolina Forest Service Stokes County Annual Report**

Chairman Wood turned the floor over to Stokes County Ranger Jonathan Young to present the North Carolina Forest Service Stokes County Annual Report 2025.

Young went over data for causes of fires and how many acres of land and homes had been protected. He highlighted the two largest fires dealt with during FY 2025. Additionally, he covered other areas of forestry such as insect and disease protection and forest management.

The Board thanked Young for his work around the County and for his presentation.

### **Resident Survey Results 2025**

Chairman Wood turned the floor over to County Manager Jeff Sanborn to present the Resident Survey Results 2025.

Sanborn presented the results from the first residential survey and how it was designed for legitimacy and diversity of the County population. He highlighted the areas of Stokes County that residents had deemed more important to them and their feelings on how well the County was doing in those aspects. Additionally, he covered which areas Stokes County was behind or ahead of regional and national averages.

The Board discussed their interest in the findings and the areas that require improvement.

### **Stokes County Health Dept. SOTCH Report and Strategic Plan**

Chairman Wood turned the floor over to Health Director Tammy Martin to present the Stokes County Health Department SOTCH Report and Strategic Plan.

For the SOTCH Report, Martin discussed the new Community Health Assessment, the reduction of overdoses in the county, flu clinics, co-op classes, the increased use of the diaper bank, and doing Narcan education in the community.

For the Strategic Plan, Martin noted that it is updated annually, and they are planning to increase Mental Health and Substance Abuse services. There are also plans to increase physical activity in the community and access to care through telehealth, as well as decrease the wait time for environmental health inspections.

The Board appreciated the work being done to serve the community and requested updated numbers for overdoses in the community when next available.

### **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

All attachments presented on the Agenda are available in the attachments of the Agenda on the County Website and are available upon request from the Clerk, with the exception of the minutes approved which are located on the County Website under the minutes tab.

### **SCOPE Funding Request**

Chairman Wood turned the floor over to Health Director Tammy Martin to present the SCOPE Funding Request.

Martin presented the SCOPE funding resolution which had been amended to ensure that their current position would stay at the current rate of pay and not be brought to the same level as the new position.

After some discussion, the Board moved the item to the action agenda for tonight's meeting.

### **Salary Study Results**

Chairman Wood turned the floor over to HR Director Jamie Clark to present the Salary Study Results.

Clark presented the findings from the internal salary study. The study involved a comprehensive review of each department's pay scale, with particular attention given to areas where salary disparities were noted. It was shown that there needed to be an increase in the Department of Social Services as well as Emergency Management Services.

With some discussion, the Board moved the item to the action agenda for tonight's meeting.

### **ACAB Bylaws Amendments**

Chairman Wood turned the floor over to Animal Control Director Tommy Reeves to present the Animal Control Advisory Board Bylaws Amendments.

Reeves noted that due to the busyness around the Health Department Director, it was decided to amend the Animal Control Advisory Board bylaws to remove the requirement for her to serve and for the position to be replaced by a member that serves as a representative for a hunting organization. Additionally, it was added that the Board would appoint someone to serve as the Chair of the ACAB for 4 years.

With some discussion, the Board moved the item to the action agenda for tonight's meeting.

### **ACTION AGENDA**

All attachments presented on the Agenda are available in the attachments of the Agenda on the County Website and are available upon request from the Clerk, with the exception of the minutes approved which are located on the County Website under the minutes tab.

### **SCOPE Funding Request**

Chairman Wood entertained a motion to approve the item as presented.

Commissioner Cox moved to approve the SCOPE Funding Request.

Commissioner Morris seconded the motion. The motion Passed.

### **Salary Study Results**

Chairman Wood entertained a motion to approve the item as presented.

Commissioner Chandler moved to approve the Salary Study Results.

Vice-Chair Barneycastle seconded the motion. The motion Passed.

### **ACAB Bylaws Amendments**

Chairman Wood entertained a motion to approve the item as presented.

Commissioner Morris moved to approve the ACAB Bylaw Amendments.

Vice-Chair Barneycastle seconded the motion. The motion Passed.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Chairman Wood entertained a motion to enter closed session at 7:30 pm.

Commissioner Cox moved to go into closed session for the following rationales:

- To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged pursuant to G.S. 143-318011(a)(3)

Commissioner Chandler seconded the motion.

With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

The Board entered closed session.

### **Adjournment**


The Board reentered open session.

Chairman Wood entertained a motion to adjourn.

Vice-Chair Barneycastle moved to adjourn at 8:05 pm.

Commissioner Chandler seconded. The motion Passed.

  
Olivia Jessup  
Clerk to the Board

  
Keith Wood  
Chair