



Caldwell County  
North Carolina  
**Board of Commissioners Meeting**

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June 10, 2024 at 6:00 PM  
City-County Chambers  
905 West Avenue NW, Lenoir

## **MINUTES**

### **Attendance:**

Randy Church, Chairman  
Mike LaBrose, Vice Chairman  
Jeff Branch, Commissioner  
Donnie Potter, Commissioner  
Robbie Wilkie, Commissioner  
Donald Duncan, County Manager  
Abby Rich, County Clerk

Absent: David Lackey, County Attorney

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Church called the June 10, 2024, Board of Commissioners Meeting to order at 6:06 PM.

### **Public Comment Period**

At 6:01 PM Chairman Church began the public comment period. There was one individual signed up for public comment. Mr. Bryant Lindsey came to the podium to speak about the Overmountain Victory Trail. Mr. Lindsey provided a brief background about how the Overmountain Victory Trail was developed. He further stated that about 2.2 million dollars was put into the trail and our legislators helped to secure this funding. Mr. Lindsey continued by stating that one of the main parts of the trail comes through Caldwell County. Mr. Lindsey then spoke about America 250 NC. He told the Board that he wants the County to become a part of America 250 NC, and he would like for the County to pass a resolution creating a County committee to help get funds for the community and the trail. Mr. Lindsey said he feels the Overmountain Victory Trail and the County are on the same track. Mr. Lindsey concluded by saying he hopes the County is thinking about celebrating the 250th anniversary on July 4th, 2026, and celebrating the victory of Kings Mountain. Mr. Lindsey thanked the Board for their time.

### **Invocation**

Pastor Christopher Bass with Philadelphia Lutheran Church provided the invocation for those in attendance.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Commissioner Jeff Branch led the Pledge of Allegiance for those in attendance.

## **Agenda Amendments from the Board, Manager & Public**

The County Manager informed the Board of two amendments to the agenda. These were Item 24, a budget amendment for IT for a security system in the Health and Human Services Building, Item 25, a contribution to Tuttle State Forest from the Soil and Water Department, and Item 26, the approval of a fireworks application for the Town of Rhodhiss.

Vice Chairman LaBrose made the motion to adopt the agenda as the County Manager had presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

## **Agenda Items**

### **1. Call for Public Hearing for Naming of Unnamed Road- Gringer Lane**

GIS Administrator, Micah Kelly, came to the podium to request a public hearing to be held for the naming of a road, Gringer Lane. Commissioner Potter asked if there were any roads in the County with this name. Mr. Kelly provided there were not.

Commissioner Branch made the motion for a public hearing to be held July 8th, 2024. The motion carried unanimously.

### **2. 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget**

Chairman Church indicated there were no individuals signed up for the public hearing regarding the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget. The Chairman asked if there were any individuals that wanted to speak on the subject, but no one indicated they wanted to. Commissioner Wilkie made the motion to open the public hearing. The County Manager began going through the 2024-2025 budget presentation. Highlights of the budget included the property tax rate remaining at \$0.63, tax base growth, continuance of Merit I and Merit II for employees, expanded services for Veterans' Services, additional EMS staff, and continuance of the Community Grant Pool.

The County Manager continued his presentation by providing a breakdown of the budget. The proposed budget has \$28,110,897 allocated for Public Safety, \$26,099,636 allocated for Human Services, \$18,893,317 allocated for Education, \$13,973,925 allocated for General Government, \$9,140,257 allocated for Economic/Physical Development, and \$5,456,313 allocated for other expenses. The total requested budget is \$101,674,345.

Steven Watson of Kings Creek Fire Department, Chris Barlowe of Valmead Fire Department, and Greg Wilson of Sawmills Fire Department all spoke to the Board to explain why their departments are requesting increases.

Commissioner Potter made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

### **3. 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget Ordinance**

Commissioner Branch indicated that he would like to make a motion to approve the fire departments' budget, but not the fiscal year budget. Commissioner Branch was advised that this was not a motion that could be made.

Chairman Church made the motion to adopt the 2024-2025 Budget Ordinance. The motion carried by a vote of 4 to 1 with Commissioner Branch voting in opposition.

**4. Adopt 2024-2025 Fee Schedule**

Chairman Church made the motion to adopt the Resolution for the 2024-2025 Schedule of Fees.

The motion carried unanimously.

**5. Ambulance Franchise Agreement with Miller Transport**

EMS Chief Jonathan Cook came to the Board to report that North State Medical Transport will no longer be operating with Caldwell UNC Hospital at the end of this month. With their exit, Miller Ambulance Services is requesting a franchise agreement with the County. Mr. Gary Miller, owner of the company, came to the podium to provide a background of Miller Ambulance Services. Dr. Lowry, CEO of Caldwell UNC Hospital and Dr. Snyder, Caldwell County Medical Director, were both in attendance as well.

Chairman Church declared the public hearing open and with there being no individuals signed up to speak, the public hearing was declared closed.

Commissioner Potter made the motion to approve the amended franchise ordinance.

The motion carried unanimously.

The County Manager provided a point of order to correct the motion to approve the franchise agreement with Miller Ambulance Services.

**6. Ordinance Amendment- Emergency Medical Services Ordinance**

The County Manager told the Board the County found a need to adjust the insurance premiums previously adopted under the new ordinance.

Commissioner Potter made the motion to adopt the amendment.

The motion carried unanimously.

**7. Acceptance of Bid Offer for Patrol Vehicles**

Captain Steve Rich of the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office came to the podium to provide a background on the purpose of this bid for patrol vehicles.

Commissioner Wilkie made the motion to accept the bid offer for three patrol vehicles.

The motion carried unanimously.

**8. Lease Agreement for Hibriten Mountain Tower**

Vice Chairman LaBrose made the motion to approve the agreement.

The motion carried unanimously.

**9. Ordinance Amendment- Racetracks and Dragstrips**

There was a request by Tri County Speedway to review the Racetracks and Dragstrips Ordinance to allow for test and tune events. The Ordinance amendment will expire November of 2024 unless the Board decides to renew it.

Commissioner Wilkie provided comments about the Racetrack and the noise emitted.

Crate Payne with Tri-County Speedway came to the podium and provided comments in response to Commissioner Wilkie's concerns.

Commissioner Branch made the motion to adopt the amended ordinance.

The motion was carried by a vote of 4 to 1 with Commissioner Wilkie in opposition.

## Consent

**10. Hibriten Mtn. Communication Tower Lease Payment**

The County will pay back \$15,525.00 in lease payments owed for the Hibriten Communication Tower.

**11. Approval of Capital Expenditure for Stretchers**

This is a capital expenditure to be paid for with grant funding. This will not come out of the County's budget; it needs a vote as it is above the capital threshold.

**12. Approval of Grant Application Submission for 2024 Cops Hiring Grant**

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office is requesting to submit a grant application for the 2024 Cops Hiring Grant.

**13. Approval of Grant Application for Gary Sinise Foundation Grant**

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office is requesting to submit a grant application for the Gary Sinise Foundation Grant.

**14. Approval of Grant Application Submission for the 2024 Patrick Leahy Vest Partnership**

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office is requesting to submit a grant application for the 2024 Patrick Leahy Vest Partnership. The County would receive a 50% reimbursement on vests.

**15. Approval of Grant Application Submission for Black Rifle Coffee Company Funding**

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office is requesting to submit a grant application for the Black Rifle Coffee Company Funding.

**16. Approval of Grant Application Submission for AKC Reunite Adopt a K9 Cop Grant**

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office is requesting to submit a grant application for the AKC Reunite Adopt a K9 Cop Grant.

**17. HCCBG Funding 2024**

The approval of the 2024 HCCBG funding is requested. This amount is \$13,000 less than last fiscal year.

**18. Approval of JCPC 2024-2025 Funding Plan**

The approval of the 2024-2025 JCPC Funding Plan is requested.

**19. Memorandum of Agreement for Cooperative Extension**

The agreement provides for the County to match the funds provided by the State for Cooperative Extension.

**20. Economic Development Advisory Committee Reappointments**

Economic Development is requesting for Bonnie Caudle, Daniel Cobb, Jonathan Greer, Rick Coffey, and Max Dyer to be reappointed to the EDAC for a three year term.

**21. Approval of Fireworks Application for Tri-County Speedway**

Tri-County Speedway is requesting to host a fireworks display on July 6, 2024.

**22. Approval of Minutes from May 13, 2024 Meeting**

The approval of the May 13, 2024 meeting minutes is requested.

**23. Approval of Minutes from May 14, 2024 Meeting**

The approval of the May 14, 2024 meeting minutes is requested.

**24. IT Security System for HHS**

The old system is broken and cannot be repaired and a new system needs to be purchased. The cost of the system is \$102,375.

**25. Donation to Tuttle State Forest**

The Soil and Water Department is requesting to donate \$2,000 to Tuttle State Forest.

**26. Approval of Fireworks Application for the Town of Rhodhiss**

The Town of Rhodhiss is requesting to hold a fireworks show on July 6, 2024.

Vice Chairman LaBrose made the motion to adopt the consent agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

**Closed Session Pursuant to § 143-318.11 (a)(4)**

At 8:28 PM Chairman Church made the motion to enter into closed session pursuant to § 143-318.11 (a) (4) to discuss a matter related to Economic Development with the County Attorney, County Manager, Deputy County Manager, County Clerk, Chief Financial Officer, Economic Development Director, Economic Development Staff and any other personnel that may attend.

The motion carried unanimously.

**Adjourn**

Commissioner Wilkie made the motion to adjourn at 9:16 PM.

The motion carried unanimously.



**CALDWELL COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA  
BUDGET ORDINANCE  
FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025**

**2024-2025 BUDGET ORDINANCE**

Be it resolved by the Board of Commissioners of Caldwell County, North Carolina

**Section 1:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated for the operation of Caldwell County Government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, according to the following summary and schedules:

	<b>2024-2025</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>Adopted Budget</b>
General Fund	101,674,345
E911 Fund	232,501
Deed of Trust Fund	650,000
Sales Tax Reinvestment	2,350,000
Opioid Fund	598,927
DSS Trust Fund	250,000
Fines and Forfeitures Fund	350,000
Water Fund	4,723,863
Schools Sales Tax Capital Fund	6,300,000
Fire District Funds	6,809,500
Rescue Readiness Fund	<u>2,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$ 123,941,136</u></b>

**Section 2:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the General Fund for the operation of the county government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025

<b>GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>APPROPRIATIONS</b>
PUBLIC SAFETY	28,110,897
HUMAN SERVICES	26,099,636
EDUCATION	18,893,317
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	13,973,925
ECONOMIC AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	9,140,257
CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL	1,861,289
DEBT SERVICE	<u>3,595,024</u>
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</b>	<b><u>\$ 101,674,345</u></b>

**Section 3:** It is estimated that the following revenues will be available in the General Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025:

<u>Property Tax</u>	
Ad Valorem Tax - .63 per \$100 valuation	\$ 47,788,020
Less Discount	(725,000)
Penalties and Interest	500,000
Prior Year's Taxes	<u>1,325,000</u>
<b>Net Ad Valorem and Reimbursement</b>	<b><u>\$ 48,888,020</u></b>
<u>Other Revenue</u>	
Local Option Sales Tax	\$ 11,105,000
Vehicle Taxes Collected by the state	5,330,000
Other General Revenues	4,031,872
Fund Balance Appropriation	6,224,032
Transfers In from other Funds	670,000
Installment Purchase Financing Issued for Capital Outlay	1,608,247
Departmental Revenues	<u>23,817,174</u>
<b>Total Other Revenues</b>	<b><u>\$ 52,786,325</u></b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b><u>\$ 101,674,345</u></b>

**Section 4:** There is hereby levied a tax at the rate of **63** cents per one hundred dollars (\$100) valuation of property as listed for taxes as of January 1, 2024 for the purpose of raising the revenues listed as "Ad Valorem Tax" in the General Fund in Section 3 of this Ordinance.

The rate is based on the **total valuation** of property tax for the purpose of taxation of **\$7,820,000,000** and an estimated collection rate of 97% for property.

The discount rate for July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 will be 2% in July and 1% in August.

**Section 5:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the E911 Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025:

E911 Revenues	\$	232,501
E911 Fund Expenditures	\$	232,501

**Section 6:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the Sales Tax Reinvestment Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 .and ending June 30, 2025:

<u>Revenues:</u>		
Economic Development	\$	2,000,000
Interfund Transfer Out	\$	350,000
Subtotal	\$	<u>2,350,000</u>
<u>Expenses:</u>		
Intergovernmental Revenues	\$	600,000
Fund Balance Appropriated	\$	1,750,000
Subtotal	\$	<u>2,350,000</u>

**Section 7:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the Water Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025:

Revenues	\$	4,146,675
Fund Balance Appropriation	\$	577,188
Subtotal	\$	<u>4,723,863</u>
Expenses	\$	<u>4,723,863</u>

**Section 8:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the Deed of Trust Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025:

Revenues	\$	650,000
Expenses	\$	650,000

**Section 9:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the DSS Trust Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025:

Revenues	\$	250,000
Expenses	\$	250,000

**Section 10:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the Fines and Forfeitures Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025:

Revenues	\$	350,000
Expenses	\$	350,000

**Section 11:** It is estimated that the following revenues will be available in the Rescue Readiness Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025

Prior Year's tax collections	\$	2,000
Expenses	\$	2,000

**Section 12:** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the Opioid Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025

Revenues	\$	598,927
Expenses	\$	598,927

**Section 13:** The County shall continue to account for the sales tax receipts designated for the school system in a capital project fund. Sales Tax revenues that are required by state law to be used for public school capital shall be deposited into this fund. Debt Service on borrowings for school construction shall be paid from this fund. Each month an amount equal to the sales tax revenues actually received that month less one twelfth of the annual debt service shall be paid to the school system. The budget for this fund shall be as follows:

Revenues	
Sales Tax	\$ 5,600,000
Interfund Transfer in from Capital Project Fund (524)	700,000
Subtotal	<u>\$ 6,300,000</u>
Expenditures	
Debt Service Payments	\$ 2,596,000
Capital Funds paid to School System	3,704,000
Subtotal	<u>\$ 6,300,000</u>

**Section 14:** It is estimated that the following revenues will be available in the Volunteer Fire Department Funds for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025:

<u>Department</u>	<u>Fire Tax Rate *</u>	<u>Rescue Tax Rate *</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Gamewell	10.00	3.00	725,000
North Catawba	13.80	4.00	1,285,000
Patterson	11.70	1.25	360,000
Valmead	10.00	5.00	230,000
Little River	9.30	4.00	385,000
Sawmills	12.50	3.85	765,000
Grace Chapel	9.00	-	755,000
Collettsville	13.00	0.85	420,000
Yadkin Valley	7.00	5.00	145,000
Kings Creek	8.50	5.00	379,000
Bethlehem	4.30	1.00	18,500
Hudson	14.00	1.00	916,000
Blowing Rock	5.00	5.75	261,000
Granite Falls	14.15	0.85	165,000
Totals			<u>\$ 6,809,500</u>

\* Tax Rate shown in cents per one hundred dollars (\$100) of tax value

**Section 15:**  
following programs:

The County Manager is hereby authorized to implement the

- a. The County Manager shall continue to have the annual discretion to implement individual salary and pay plan adjustments that reflect the current job market rate as well as internal equity so long as such actions are consistent with an overall pay plan that ensures adequate recruitment and retention of employees.  
In the event the County Manager needs to make a pay adjustment that is not consistent with the overall pay plan such adjustments shall not be made final until the board of commissioners are informed. The County Manager shall have the authority to implemenent the merit pay plan as presented to the board during the budget presentation. The County Manager and or Chief Financial Officer shall have the authority to move funds from the merit pay pool line item to the appropriate department line items in order to fund merit pay increases.
- b. Travel reimbursement will be set at **IRS rate** for the period effective July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025.
- c. The County Manager may adjust rates for services provided by departments when such adjustments will comply with formal Medicare and or Medicaid reimbursements rates for counties. Such adjustments must be formally presented to the Commissioners by way of memorandum.
- d. The County Manager shall be permitted to transfer existing funds within departments. The authority shall be granted based on the conditions stated below:
  - ◆ The transfer shall not result in the creation or funding of additional staff positions without prior approval by the Board of Commissioners.
  - ◆ The transfer shall not obligate additional local, state or federal funds not previously approved by the Board of Commissioners in budget amendment form.
  - ◆ The transfer shall not result in the initiation of a new program or policy not previously approved by the Board of Commissioners.
  - ◆ Capital Asset purchases must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.
  - ◆ Non Capitalized asset purchases may be administratively approved under the restraints identified in this section
  - ◆ The County Manager may transfer contingency funds for use in any area of the general fund up to the total amount budgeted for contingency but this authority is limited by the constraints listed above. The Board of Commissioners must be notified at the next regular board meeting and it shall be recorded in the minutes.
- e. The County Manager, or designee, is hereby authorized to execute contractual documents under the following conditions:
  - ◆ He may execute contracts for construction, repair projects or design services requiring the estimated expenditure of less than \$50,000.
  - ◆ He may execute contracts for: (1) purchases of apparatus, supplies and materials, or equipment which are within budgeted appropriations, (2) leases of personal property for a duration of one year or less and within budgeted appropriations, and (3) services which are within budgeted appropriations
  - ◆ He may execute grant agreements to or from public and non-profit organizations, which are within budgeted appropriations, unless a grantor requires execution by the Board of Commissioners.
  - ◆ He may execute contracts, as the lessor or lessee of real property, which are of one-year duration or less, if funds therefore are within budgeted appropriations.
- f. Department Heads shall have authority to adjust line items in their departments subject to approval by the County Manager and or the Chief Financial Officer

g. The county's per diem rate for travel shall be as follows:

In State Travel:

Breakfast	\$	13
Lunch	\$	15
Dinner	\$	26

All county employees who travel for county business shall be subject to the per diem. Department Heads will have the option of paying employees the per diem rate or making them turn in receipts for meals. If they turn in receipts the meal must not exceed the amount of the per diem. This remains in effect regardless of how the meal is paid for (i.e. county credit card). There may be certain instances when it is appropriate to exceed the per diem rate but this requires prior approval by the County Manager and or Chief Financial Officer.

**Section 16:** The County's capitalization threshold shall be continued at \$5,000. The threshold for tracking of "non capital" equipment shall be set at \$1,500.

**Section 17:** All purchasing should be coordinated through the purchasing agent in the finance department. The threshold for a purchase requiring a purchase order to be issued shall be established at \$1,000

**Section 18:** Copies of this Budget Ordinance shall be furnished to the Clerk of the Board of Commissioners and to the County Manager and Chief Financial Officer to be kept on file by them for their direction in the disbursement of funds.

Adopted this 10th day of June 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy Church, Chairman  
Caldwell County Board of Commissioners

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Abby Rich  
Clerk to the Board

# RESOLUTION

08-2024



## ADOPTION OF FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE 2024/2025 FISCAL YEAR BY THE CALDWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**WHEREAS**, the Caldwell County Board of Commissioners understand the necessity to review Caldwell County's schedule of fees and modify these fees based on the cost of labor, materials, and other factors that may contribute to the fluctuation of fees; and

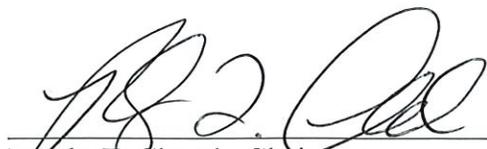
**WHEREAS**, this fee schedule was drafted using input and recommendations from various departmental personnel; and

**WHEREAS**, the fee schedule presented for the 2024/2025 Fiscal Year shall become effective as of July 1, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, these fees may be amended by resolution at any time if such a need were to occur over the 2024/2025 Fiscal Year; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Caldwell County Board of Commissioners adopts this schedule of fees for the 2024/2025 Fiscal Year to be effective as of July 1, 2024.

Adopted this 10 day of June 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy T. Church, Chairman

Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Abigail Rich". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Abigail Rich, County Clerk