

Continued Meeting – June 1, 2026

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Monday, June 1, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. for a continued meeting in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. All board was present. Also, present Manager Brady Cody, Finance Director Stacy Carpenter and Clerk Kim Crisp. Prior to the meeting being called to order, Commissioner Orr stated that she would have to leave early and would give her proxy to Chair Smith.

1. Chair Smith called the continued meeting to order.
2. Chair Smith asks that the board make unbiased decisions on the budget with a clear heart and keep the best interests of the citizens in mind. Chair Smith stated that we are up against a rock wall and we cannot continue to use the avenue of increasing taxes, she understands some of the other board members have more experience than she does but what has been done for the last few years is not working. Chair Smith stated that they have tried to balance this budget without raising taxes but at the end of the day they must do what is best for the citizens. Chair Smith asks Manager Cody to proceed with the budget discussion.
3. Manager Cody stated that there were some changes to the budget which includes a second audit for \$90,000.00, the auditors are going to be able to get us caught up within this fiscal year; unexpected sanitation repairs of \$12,000.00 for the tipping floor; and retirement corrections for employees that were imposed a waiting period of \$90,000.00 which is the employer's portion. Manager Cody stated that the retirement system will give the employee an opportunity to pay the employee portion.
4. Manager Cody stated that recreation now has 1.5 employees instead of 2.5 and stated that we partnered with Graham County Schools for the purchase of a GPS Robot that will mark the fields for football, baseball and softball. Manager Cody stated that we will have an annual fee of \$4200.00 per year but the cost will be offset with the savings on manpower hours. Manager Cody stated that the system is designed to have sponsorship logos which could lower our yearly fee.
5. Manager Cody stated that our consultant with the Local Government Commission agreed with recommending a mil rate increase due to our small contingency. Manager Cody stated that he and Finance Director Carpenter did review the budget again and if more cuts are made then services will be impacted. Commissioner Cody stated that he was not in favoring of reducing services and needed further discussion on the number of hours at our sanitation sites. Commissioner Williams stated that she has received a lot of complaints about the sanitation hours and they are mad about us shutting them down, they are upset because Attorney Coward was asked to do an ordinance two years ago and it is still not completed. Commissioner Williams stated that we need to enforce the penalties instead of shutting down the sites. The board discussed the sites and the needed hours of service. Commissioner Williams stated that we cannot shut Stecoah site down, we cannot justify that to the citizens. The board discussed cameras at each site with real time. Commissioner Orr asks how many positions were cut at sanitation. Manager Cody stated that the original number is (14) employees and after the cuts we now have (9) employees including part-time workers. Manager Cody stated that they are at a crossroads and need board directions. Commissioner Cody stated that he wanted Stecoah Sanitation Site opened back up due to the number of complaints, Commissioner Williams agreed because the public wants to know why fines are not being imposed. Commissioner Williams stated that the public wants

the fines and we need the ordinance completed. Manager Cody stated that we were going to have four part-time employees, four full-time employees with reduced schedules. Manager Cody stated that we have two part-time employees budgeted at twenty-eight hours. Commissioner Williams stated that is not enough time. Manager Cody stated that the board needed to decide the schedule. Chair Smith stated that the savings are not that great when closing the sites and feels that they should be opened back up. Commissioner Williams stated that if they use the ordinance with cameras and then shut the sites at night it could work. The board discussed the cameras. Manager Cody stated that Starlink would be very expensive and if the cameras are real-time the data usage would be very high. Manager Cody stated that this cost estimate is unknown at this time. Manager Cody stated that at our main site we have people climbing in the dumpsters and those people are not going to pay. Commissioner Williams stated that they may not, but the majority would pay. Commissioner Williams stated that she could see the main site closing at night, but the Stecoah site needed to remain open. Chair Smith asks if the truck drivers can assist in watching sites. Manager Cody stated that we are down one truck driver and one will be retiring and their schedules are five eight hour days. Commissioner Orr asks if the truck drivers work full-time. Manager Cody stated that they do. Manager Cody stated that private business could do the commercial pick up and we would still get the tipping fees. Manager Cody stated that if Stecoah remains open seven days a week, we need two part time workers. Commissioner Williams stated that they needed to utilize the camera systems. Manager Cody stated that trash cannot be on the ground. Commissioner Williams stated that if we enforce the ordinance, we can control the sites. Clerk Crisp stated that if you leave Stecoah Site open, Swain County residents will come to that site, and businesses will dump there as well. Manager Cody discussed stickers for the cars to dump here which will come with a fee. Commissioner Orr asks how Clay County does their system. Manager Cody stated that the fee is added to the tax bill. Chair Smith stated that we need to decide. Commissioner Williams stated that we need to enforce the fees.

6. Manager Cody asks for any questions or concerns from the board. Commissioner Nelms asks that the Senior Center funding be restored as it was submitted with no cuts to staff.
7. Chair Smith stated that she received a call regarding the Inmate Work Program. The board asks if they can go to Cherokee County and get the inmates for the program. Commissioner Cody stated that they should wait until after the election to see what the newly elected Sheriff will want to do. Manager Cody stated that the Jail Budget is lean and he is concerned about the inmate mental health component.
8. Manager Cody stated that he will know if we receive the Paramedicine Grant in a week or two.
9. Manager Cody stated that in building maintenance our director will be retiring in August and we may need to use outside vendors for the more complicated repairs. Manager Cody stated that our director was certified in HVAC and Refrigeration. Manager Cody stated that we need to continue an ordering freeze and hiring freeze. The board agreed. Director Carpenter stated that we needed to allow necessary spending only. Commissioner Orr stated that she did not want to raise taxes again ever, but the motion was made however, and she didn't realize they were going to slash the amount that was needed which was recommended by the previous finance officer. Clerk Crisp stated that the increase in pay for safety positions was given and the minutes reflect that we would use fund balance.
10. The board discussed the sheriff budget and the employees that have left. The board discussed the positions and the needs for IT.

11. Commissioner Cody asks Finance Director for the recommendation of the mil rate. Director Carpenter stated that her recommendation is \$.065 cents. Commissioner Cody made the motion to accept the Finance Director's recommendation and to raise the mil rate to \$.065 cents. Commissioner Nelms asks to add the senior center position back and the sanitation sites. Director Carpenter stated that the mil rate should have never been cut. Manager Cody stated that we needed to continue the spending freeze to keep a healthy contingency. Commissioner Orr stated that she would never raise the taxes again, but it was recommended by the previous finance officer. Chair Smith asks about the acres of land that is being turned over to conservation. Manager Cody stated that it has already been done. The board discussed land swaps with the forest service. Chair Smith stated that we needed to find a way to get land. Commissioner Cody stated that our senators and representatives would have to get this done by legislation. The board discussed people attending church services on the clock. Commissioner Orr stated that she has a strong component that if you are clocked in you need to be working. Director Carpenter gave the board the amount of revenue if the mil rate is set at sixty-five cents. Commissioner Orr asks how much the county paid on the Greene property. Clerk Crisp stated that the amount was a little over \$300,000.00. Commissioner Nelms asks what amount is needed now that the changes have been made. Commissioner Orr stated that she would have to go and had asked permission to give her proxy to Chair Meggan Smith. Manager Cody stated that they were almost finished. Director Carpenter stated that her recommendation is \$.065 cents. Commissioner Nelms seconded the motion to raise the mil rate to \$.065. Vote called. Commissioner Cody, Nelms and Orr voted yes. Commissioner Smith and Williams voted no. Motion carried three to two.
12. The board discussed sanitation hours. Commissioner Orr stated that we need to know this schedule prior to the days needed. The board discussed EMS. The board discussed paramedicine and the captains. Chair Smith stated that patients do not need to be turned away when one of the captains is attending a church service. Commissioner Williams stated that the abuse needed to stop.
13. Chair Smith stated that we needed to approach the forest service for land around the lake.
14. 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, contracts and personnel. Commissioner Cody made the motion to go into closed session. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
15. Chair Smith asks for a motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Williams made the motion as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
16. Chair Smith made the motion to approve Budget Amendment #47, #48 and #49. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
17. Chair Smith asks for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cody made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Williams 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