

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’
BRIEFING OF MAY 4, 2021 AT 3:00 P.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on May 4, 2021, in the Commission Chambers, 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3 p.m. where and when the following business was transacted:

The Chairman called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Brownie Newman, Chairman
Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Commissioner
Amanda Edwards, Commissioner
Robert Pressley, Commissioner
Parker Sloan, Commissioner
Terri Wells, Commissioner
Al Whitesides, Vice Chair

Staff present: Avril Pinder, County Manager; Sybil Tate, Assistant County Manager; Dakisha Wesley, Assistant County Manager; Rachael Nygaard, Strategic Partnerships Director; Tim Love, Intergovernmental Relations; Nathan Pennington, Planning Director; Lamar Joyner, Clerk to the Board; Michael Frue, Senior Staff Attorney

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

During the meeting, the Board and staff will review and discuss agenda items and receive staff updates with discussions as noted:

Staff Updates:

COVID-19/Vaccine Update. Stacie Saunders, Public Health Director, provided information on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic data and trends, vaccination update, and metric data (no category coded red). Vaccinations performed by the County will consolidate into one site at A-B Tech with an introduction of walk-in availability. Outreach will continue for homeless, homebound, detention center, migrant farmworkers, and African Americans communities.

Opioid Settlement. Brandon Freeman, Staff Attorney, updated the Board on the latest information concerning the opioid settlement. Between 2000 – 2019, more than 16,000 North Carolinians have lost their lives to the opioid crisis and the federal lawsuits against the associated companies are holding them accountable. The settlement funds in NC will be distributed in the following fashion: 80% to local governments, 15% to the state, and 5% to the county incentive fund.

Addendum to Weaverville Tax Collection Agreement. Michael Frue, Senior Staff Attorney, stated that agreement will extend for three years and allow for funds to be deposited to the town by electronic means.

Early Childhood Education Modular Classroom. Rachael Nygaard, Strategic Partnerships Director, introduced this item for consideration at the following regular meeting. The urgency is due to the need for completion before the start of the new school year.

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. Nathan Pennington, Planning Director, and Gillian Phillips, Planning, provided the timeline and current process status for the formation of this committee. The plan is to have the committee established around August/September 2021. Equity will be a factor included in the process.

Broadband Update. Tim Love, Intergovernmental Relations, informed the Board of the progress for the broadband project. Challenges, costs, statutes, and data information were some of the topics covered in the presentation. The Buncombe County Broadband Workgroup is continuing to work towards finding solutions for increased and better access.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

LAMAR JOYNER, CLERK
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BROWNIE NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS