

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’
BRIEFING OF JANUARY 4, 2022 AT 3:00 P.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on January 4, 2022, in the Commission Chambers, 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 3:00 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 (virtually)
Amanda Edwards, Vice Chair
Robert Pressley, Commissioner
Parker Sloan, Commissioner
Terri Wells, Commissioner
Al Whitesides, Commissioner

Staff present: Avril Pinder, County Manager; Sybil Tate, Assistant County Manager; Dakisha Wesley, Assistant County Manager; Jennifer Barnette, Budget Director; Tim Love, Intergovernmental Relations; Sheriff Quentin Miller; Stoney Blevins, Health & Human Services Director; Tiffany Iheanacho, Justice Services Director; Rafael Baptista, Strategy & Innovation Director; Lamar Joyner, Clerk to the Board; Michael Frue, Senior Staff Attorney

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

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

Review the Board’s Agenda.

Staff Updates:

COVID-19/Vaccine Update. Stacie Saunders, Public Health Director, and Dr. Bill Hathaway, HCA Healthcare, provided information on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic data and trends, vaccination update, and metric data (2 categories coded red). The infection rate of COVID and hospitalizations remain high for the Omicron variant. Vaccinations continue to be performed by the County with walk-in availability and information about vaccinations, vaccination boosters, and testing was detailed during the discussion.

Jail Population Trends. Tiffany Iheanacho, Justice Services Director, and Lee Crayton, Strategy & Innovation, summarized the trends from the pre-pandemic state to the current time frame at the jail. Management strategies and potential opportunities with court partners were discussed as efforts to control the jail population.

NC Workforce Development Board Consolidation Study. Nathan Ramsey, Mountain Area Workforce Development Board Director, presented information of the study with the Governor’s suggestion that the workforce boards should be consolidated to eight, which align with the eight prosperity zones in North Carolina. The proposed workforce board region in WNC would include 13 counties (7 counties in the Southwestern Commission region, 4 counties in the Land of Sky region and 2 counties in the Foothills region).

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

LAMAR JOYNER, CLERK
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BROWNIE NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS