

T. Scott Efirm
Chairman

Bill Lawhon
Vice Chairman

Mike Barbee
Commissioner

Patty Crump
Commissioner



Trent Hatley
Commissioner

Brandon King
Commissioner

Billy Mills
Commissioner

**Stanly County
Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 11, 2026 – 6:00 PM**

1. Call to Order & Welcome

The Stanly County Board of Commissioners (the "Board") met in regular session on Monday, May 11, 2026, in the Gene McIntyre Meeting Room, Stanly Commons. Chair Efirm called the meeting to order at 06:02 PM with Commissioner Crump giving the invocation and leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present:

Chairman T. Scott Efirm
Vice Chairman Bill Lawhon
Commissioner Paul Michael Barbee
County Commissioner Patty Crump
County Commissioner Trent Hatley
Commissioner Brandon King
County Commissioner Billy Mills

2. Approval / Adjustments to the Agenda

Commissioner Hatley moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

3. Public Comment

- Paul Wilkins, Regional Director for Christian Recovery Centers, Inc. (CRCI), expressed his gratitude to the Board for their continued financial support of the center and the significant impact it is making on the community. He specifically acknowledged the hard work and efforts of County Manager Lucas, Health & Human Services Director Dolly Clayton and Human Services Program Specialist Wendy Growcock.

- Marcus Berry, a Certified Peer Support Specialist with the Stanly Peer and Recovery Reentry (SPARE) non-profit program, expressed his appreciation to the Board for their continued financial support, which is essential for them to continue their work in the community.

4. Scheduled Agenda Items

A. FY 25-26 Audit

Presenter: Toby Hinson, Finance Director

The Finance Office received a proposal from Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co. to provide audit services for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Mr. Hinson noted that this firm has conducted the County audit since 2017.

The proposed fee is \$67,500, which includes the Medicaid portion of the audit. This represents a \$2,750 increase over the previous year. For comparison, Martin Starnes & Associates, the only other major firm performing county audits in North Carolina, quoted \$75,000 for these services three years ago.

Based on these factors, staff recommended approving Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co. for the FY 2025-2026 engagement. During the presentation, Director Hinson addressed questions regarding the volume and location of audits conducted by Thompson compared to other firms. He also noted that there are currently no firms located in Stanly County with the capacity to conduct the audit.

Following the discussion, Commissioner Crump moved to approve Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co. for the FY 2025-2026 audit engagement. Vice Chair Lawhon seconded the motion, and it passed with a 7-0 vote.

B. Convention & Visitors Bureau Appointment Request

Presenter: Kasey Brooks, CVB Director

Stanly County has two (2) seats on the CVB Board which are appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Each representative serves a three-year term with no term limit.

Candice Lowder, who currently serves as one (1) of the county's representatives, has a term expiring on June 30, 2026. Ms. Lowder has expressed her willingness to serve another term if reappointed.

By motion, Commissioner King moved to reappoint Candice Lowder to the CVB Board for a three-year term effective July 1, 2026 — June 30, 2029. Commissioner Hatley seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

C. ZA 26-01 - R20(Residential) Rezoning Request at 4849 Plank Road, Norwood, NC 28128

Presenter: Bailey Cline, Planning Director

Brittany McGuire submitted a request to rezone a .5-acre parcel at 4849 Plank Road, Norwood, NC (Tax # 32152) from General Business (G-B) to Residential (R-20).

The existing home is currently a non-conforming structure because the G-B district does not permit residential use. Additionally, because the home has been vacant for more than 180 days, it cannot be occupied or renovated under its current zoning status. Ms. McGuire intends to

renovate the property for use as her primary residence, but she cannot obtain the necessary permits without this rezoning.

The R-20 district was selected because the lot does not meet the 3-acre minimum required for the Residential-Agricultural (R-A) district. The R-20 designation will bring the lot into compliance with the size standards outlined in Section 701 of the Zoning Ordinance. The property is served by public water and a septic system.

County staff notified all adjoining property owners and posted a sign on the property; no complaints or inquiries were received. The Planning Board met on April 13, 2026, and unanimously recommended approval of the rezoning requested.

Following brief discussion, Chair Efird declared the public hearing open. During the hearing, Ms. McGuire came forward in support of the requested rezoning. With no one else coming forward, the hearing was closed.

Vice Chair Lawhon moved to approve ZA 26-01, the R-20 Rezoning request by Brittany McGuire for an approximately 0.5-acre tract located at 4849 Plank Road. The motion is based on the fact that the request meets the dimensional requirements for the district and the use of the property will no longer be non-conforming. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion, which passed by 7-0 vote.

D. FY 26-27 Dependent Care Health & Dental Premium Rates for Approval

Presenter: Andy Lucas, County Manager

For Board approval, County Manager Lucas presented the recommended bi-weekly rates for health and dental dependent coverage beginning July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027:

Dental

Employee/Children \$23.45

Employee/Spouse \$16.13

Family \$39.70

Health

Employee/Children \$220

Employee/Spouse \$328

Family \$557

Commissioner King moved to approve the biweekly health and dental rates as presented, seconded by Commissioner Crump and carried by a 7-0 vote.

E. FY 26-27 Opioid Settlement Fund Recommendations

Presenter: Andy Lucas, County Manager

The County issued a request for grant proposals from local agencies in February 2026. The RFP for the FY 26-27 grant application process specifically focuses on the following priorities and areas:*

Recovery housing

* Recovery support services (including transportation and peer support)

* Post overdose response

- * Evidence-based treatment programs
- * Re-entry programs for incarcerated individuals
- * Addiction treatment for incarcerated persons and early intervention

A \$235,000 grant request cap was set for the FY 26-27 funding cycle to ensure longer-term financial sustainability for the Opioid Settlement funding. The anticipated reserve balance for the Opioid Settlement Fund as of June 30, 2026, is \$1,500,000. Further, the County is anticipated to receive \$550,000 in additional funds during FY 26-27.

The following ten (10) programs totaling \$812,479 are recommended for funding from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027:

- Stanly County Health & Human Services \$2,000
- Bridge to Recovery \$85,000
- EMS - \$168,615
- Nazareth \$71,219
- Christian Recovery Centers, Inc. \$124,000
- SPARE - \$104,000
- Uwharrie Harm Reduction \$105,145
- Will's Place - \$ 70,000
- Daymark Recovery Services \$75,000
- Safe Communities \$7,500

Following the presentation, County Manager Lucas addressed several specific questions. The discussion covered who is responsible for making these recommendations and provided details on the services that would have been supported for agencies that received less funding than requested. Additionally, the process for becoming a certified peer support specialist was explained by Marcus Berry with the SPARE program.

By motion, Commissioner King moved to approve the recommended programs and authorize the appropriation of funds via resolution from the County's Opioid Settlement Fund from July 1, 2026– June 30, 2027, as presented. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

See Exhibit A
A Resolution by the County of Stanly
To Direct the Expenditure of Opioid Settlement Fund

F. Centralina Workforce Development Board Appointment

Presenter: Andy Lucas, County Manager

One of Stanly County's Private Sector representatives, Carmen Davenport,'s term on the Centralina Workforce Development Board (CWDB) will expire June 30, 2026. Ms. Davenport has agreed to serve again if reappointed and is eligible to do so.

It was requested the Board appoint Ms. Davenport as a Private Sector representative on the CWDB for a two (2) year term effective July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028.

Commissioner Crump moved to reappoint Carmen Davenport as requested, seconded by

Commissioner Hatley and passed by unanimous vote.

G. FY 2026-2027 Manager's Recommended Budget Presentation

Presenter: Andy Lucas, County Manager

Prior to the presentation, County Manager Lucas acknowledged the Department Heads for exercising sound fiscal judgment in preparing their departmental budget requests and thanked County staff for their time and effort in the development of the proposed budget.

County Manager Lucas presented the recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2026-27, which totals just over \$102.1 million and reflects a 3.5% increase from the previous year. The budget is based on a recommended tax rate of \$0.51 per \$100 of assessed valuation.

This proposed budget allocates a significant portion, \$84.7 million, to mandated services. The top three categories that receive the majority of local property and sales tax revenues totaling \$56.7 million are Education Services at \$26.05 million (36.3%), Public Safety at \$20.9 million (29.2%), and Health & Human Services at \$9.71 million (13.5%).

During the presentation, some of the specific items highlighted were:

Increased funding for Education:

- * Stanly County Schools: \$725,000 (4%) in additional funding for SCS operations, a \$200,000 (15%) increase to the County's existing teacher supplement grant, a \$50,000 (16%) increase for classified employee bonuses, and \$4+ million in capital outlay tied to the anticipated sales tax amounts.
- * Stanly Community College: \$76,600 (4%) increase for operations and \$525,000 for capital outlay (75% increase)

Human Capital:

- * Eight (8) new full-time positions, one (1) part-time and one (1) reclassification is recommended as follows: two (2) new Utility Maintenance Mechanics, two (2) Dental Hygienists (1 starting 7/1/26 and the other on 1/1/27), one (1) Dental Assistant (starting 1/1/27), one (1) Dentist (starting 1/1/27), one (1) Sheriff's Office Sex Offender Registry Deputy, one (1) Program Coordinator and one (1) part-time Senior Office Specialist for West Stanly Senior Services, and one (1) Reclassification from Library Assistant to Digital Navigator (starting 1/1/27).
- * 3% COLA for all employees effective 7/1
- * Merit funding consistent with the prior fiscal year effective 1/1/27
- * Increase the County's 401k plan match from 1% to 2% effective 1/1/27

Outside agencies: Convention & Visitors Bureau allocation of \$35,000

Funding for Capital & Technology Priorities:

- * Vehicles - One (1) ambulance, seven (7) Sheriff's Office Durangos, three (3) APS service trucks and one (1) SCUSA van, all recommended to be financed in FY 26-27.
- * Facilities - Replace Courthouse Air Handlers, Dental Clinic expansion, Agri-Civic Center Restroom upfit, Courthouse rescaling, replace two (2) HVAC units in Central Permitting, and replace the SCUSA shop lift.
- * Technology - New 911/EOC Radio Tower Connectivity, Jail access control & water control system, and replace the EMS Base 2's generator.

Additional Funding for Public Safety:

- * Salary supplements to bring EMS, Sheriff and 911 up to the starting salaries of neighboring counties
- * Additional funding to assist VFDs with radio purchases
- * Increases for EMS enhancements such as pre-hospital blood transfusion and iPad replacements

Recommended Fee Changes: Various departmental fee changes for the Agric-Civic/Livestock Arena, Airport, EMS, Environmental Health, Health Department, Inspections and SCUSA

Volunteer Fire Districts: Aquadale VFD is seeking a rate increase from \$0.10 to \$0.12 to pay for incentives per call for volunteers to respond, and to provide additional cash flow due to their limited tax base and annual revenue.

Enterprise Funds:

- * Utilities: A 4% rate increase is recommended for both water and sewer rates for Stanly Utilities, Piney Point and Greater Badin. West Stanly WWTP is recommended to increase the base rate to \$6.45, which is a 4% increase.
- * Airport: \$7,651 increase in the total budget over the prior year's adopted budget. The budget includes a \$447,211 appropriation from General Fund Balance.
- * Fire/EMS/911: Total budget of \$1,552,232, which represents a \$1.2 million decrease from the prior year's budget. Staff will recommend an increase before the budget is adopted once there is more certainty on how much the \$2.4 million facility grant for the 911/EOC/EM facility remains.

The public hearing for the recommended budget will be held at the Board's next regular meeting on Monday, June 8, 2026. Dates for the budget workshops will also be set at that time.

The presentation was for information only, with no action taken.

5. Consent Agenda

Vice Chair Lawhon moved to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Mills and passed by unanimous vote.

A. Minutes

B. April 2026 DMV Refunds

C. March Monthly Finance Report

D. Insurance settlement funds

E. Budget Amendment 2026-70

F. Records Retention & Disposition Schedules

G. Town of Richfield ETJ Appointment

H. Budget Amendment - Foster Care - 2026-74

I. Satisfaction of Deed of Trust Involving CDBG Funds (Exhibit B)

6. Board Comments, Announcements & Committee Reports

Commissioner Barbee expressed his appreciation to the first responders in Oakboro and EMS for their quick response to a recent call involving a family member. Additionally, he also shared that two of his grandchildren graduated from college over the weekend, and that he is very proud of their accomplishments.

Commissioner Mills congratulated the baseball and softball teams from West Stanly, North Stanly, and South Stanly high schools on their championship wins this season.

Vice Chair Lawhon recently participated in a farm tour sponsored by the Ag-Extension Agents. He shared statistics regarding the number of farms in the county and the total acreage currently being farmed. He thanked them for the invitation, adding that he enjoyed the tour and the information provided.

Chair Efird stated that the 25th Kerri D. Efird Bike Run event in April raised just over \$20,000. There were 175 motorcycles and 450 people in attendance. As a result, eight (8), \$1,000 scholarships and five (5), \$500 scholarships will be awarded to twelve (12) West Stanly High School seniors on Thursday.

7. Adjourn

Commissioner Crump moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hatley seconded the motion which passed unanimously at 7:17 p.m.

T. Scott Efird, Chairman

Tyler Brummitt, Clerk