

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Cabarrus met for a Budget Meeting in the Multipurpose Room at the Cabarrus County Governmental Center in Concord, North Carolina at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 4, 2025.

Present - Vice Chair: Laura Lindsey
Commissioners: Jeff Jones
Larry G. Pittman
Kenneth Wortman
Lynn Shue (electronic means)

Also present were Sean Newton, County Manager; Kelly Sifford, Deputy County Manager; Aalece Pugh, Assistant County Manager; and Lauren Linker, Clerk to the Board.

Commissioner Pittman provided an invocation.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Lindsey called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Cabarrus County FY 2026 Budget Review

Rosh Khatri, Budget Director, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the FY2026 budget. His presentation highlighted the following key areas:

- Budget Process and schedule
- Recommended FY26 Budget: **\$399,511,247** in revenues and expenditures (balanced)
- Revenue growth: property tax, sales tax, intergovernmental funds, permits/fees, sales/services, investment income, other financing sources
- Expense increases: personnel, benefits, services/charges, contributions to other funds
- Expense decreases: supplies, operating costs, maintenance, capital outlay
- Summary Recap
- Five-Year Financial Plan for General Fund
- School funding discussed: Cabarrus County Schools, Kannapolis City Schools, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College

There was discussion throughout the presentation; Mr. Khatri and Sean Newton, County Manager; and Kelly Sifford, Deputy County Manager, responded to questions from the Board.

General Board Discussion

Board members engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the following:

- Teacher supplement increase
- Removal of \$2 million allocation for animal shelter engineering drawings
- The reduction in vehicle schedules (police cars and ambulances)
- Maintaining current property tax rate to minimize impact on residents

Dr. Kopicki, Cabarrus County Schools Superintendent, was invited to speak regarding the School Board's budget and present FY26 needs. Dr. Kopicki stated he supports raising teacher pay and supplements, even though they were not included in the school board's budget request. He emphasized that his primary concern is the county's rapid growth and resulting school capacity issues, noting the urgent need for a new elementary school in northwest Cabarrus and improvements to Northwest Senior High School.

He explained that realignment would not fully resolve overcrowding and stressed that funding for these projects should not be delayed, as some schools are already over capacity. Dr. Kopicki highlighted building the new elementary school by 2027 and securing funding for Northwest High as top priorities. He further noted that Cabarrus County Schools currently serves 35,000 students and requires a 12.69% funding increase for a fully funded budget, excluding new construction.

A discussion ensued regarding the topic of GEO bonds. During the discussion, it was brought up regarding whether the School System could be prepared with full permitting to proceed if funding is secured.

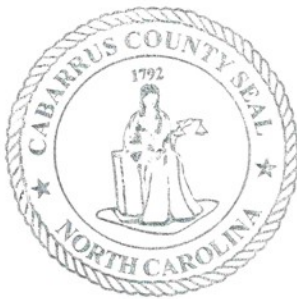
Kelly Sifford, Deputy County Manager, explained Bond Anticipation Notes (BAN) financing and Limited Obligation Bonds (LOBS) as potential options to fund school construction projects. The question arose as to what would occur if the Board did not fund the new construction and what obligations existed under the general statute. Ms. Sifford noted that a LOB would be feasible with the Local Government Commission (LGC), provided the School System was fully permitted. Additionally, the County currently has the debt capacity to secure \$50 million without raising the tax rate, though it is uncertain whether this would fully cover the cost of a new elementary school and maintenance needs at Northwest High School.

Upon continued discussion regarding School Board needs and funding, there was a consensus that a LOB should be used for the new elementary school, and a GEO Bond should be used for Northwest High School.

Lastly, funding for public safety, EMS and law enforcement was discussed. James Lentz, EMS Chief, spoke regarding funding for ambulances and safety concerns.

Adjourn

UPON MOTION of Commissioner Pittman, seconded by Commissioner Wortman and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.



Ariadne Olvera
Ariadne Olvera, Clerk to the Board