

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DURING THE COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY**

(As Amended on August 4, 2020, and on November 5, 2020)

WHEREAS, Eddie D. Settle, Chairman of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners (hereinafter “the Board of Commissioners”) did, under date of March 13, 2020, pursuant to the authority of Article 1A of Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes, N.C.G.S. §166A-19.22, and the Wilkes County State of Emergency Ordinance adopted effective January 1, 1988, issue a Declaration of State of Emergency with regard to COVID-19, to be applicable within Wilkes County and the Towns of Wilkesboro, North Wilkesboro, and Ronda, the same being hereinafter collectively referred to as “the Declaration”; and

WHEREAS, the Declaration has been amended subsequently by Wilkes County and the Towns of Wilkesboro, North Wilkesboro, and Ronda, in various forms, and was most recently amended by that Continuation of Wilkes County, Wilkesboro, North Wilkesboro, and Ronda Declared COVID-19 State of Emergency issued on May 8, 2020; and

WHEREAS, by virtue of the foregoing, the Declaration remains in effect at this time; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of North Carolina has, by various Executive Orders issued commencing on March 10, 2020, and continuing through the present time (hereinafter “the Executive Orders”), declared a state of emergency in North Carolina to coordinate response to and take protective actions with regard to preventing the spread of COVID-19 within the state; and

WHEREAS, in response to the Declaration and the Executive Orders, the Board of Commissioners adopted a Policy for Attendance at Meetings of the Board of Commissioners During the COVID-19 State of Emergency under date of April 7, 2020 (hereinafter “the Policy”); and

WHEREAS, THE Board of Commissioners amended the Policy under date of August 4, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners now desires to further amend the Policy and to restate the same in its entirety, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the same is hereinafter referred to as “the Amended Policy”; and

WHEREAS, in this Amended Policy the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners is referred to as “the Chairman” and Wilkes County is referred to as “the County”;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt this Amended Policy, the terms of which are as follows:

Section 1. The Board of Commissioners will hold all of its regularly scheduled, special called, and emergency meetings at the Wilkes County Agricultural Center, 416 Executive Drive, Wilkesboro, North Carolina, subject to such applicable guidelines as may be prescribed under Executive Orders duly issued by the Governor of the State of North Carolina. Social distancing as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (“NCDHHS”) shall be observed at all times by those in attendance.

Section 2. For those desiring to continue to attend meetings of the Board of Commissioners remotely, the County will take such reasonable steps to ensure public and media access to all Board of Commissioner meetings (except for duly called closed sessions) as may be technically and financially feasible, in order that the public and media may hear and/or see said meetings in real time without having to attend in-person. In the event a remote meeting is held by the Board of Commissioners while this Policy remains in effect, as “remote meeting” is defined in N.C. Session Law 2020-3 adopted by the North Carolina General Assembly under date of May 2, 2020, all applicable provisions thereof shall apply during such remote meeting.

Section 3. All public hearings will be held in-person; provided, that for the benefit of persons who may desire not to attend public hearings in-person, the Board of Commissioners shall adopt adequate and reasonable provisions for the timely submission and receipt of written public comments and will advertise said provisions in the public notice for such hearing. Accordingly, all public hearings shall continue to be governed by the applicable provisions of N.C. Session Law 2020-3 adopted by the North Carolina General Assembly under date of May 2, 2020

Section 4. A public comment period will be held at the second regular meeting of each month, in accordance with the provisions of the Wilkes County Public Comment Policy adopted by the Board of Commissioners under date of October 6, 2015 (“the Public Comment Policy”); provided, that for the benefit of persons who may desire not to attend the public comment period in-person, public comment will continue to be taken electronically at the second regular meeting of each month pursuant to the following guidelines: (1) any public comment must be submitted by email to wcmanger@wilkescounty.net by 5:00 p.m. the day before said meeting; (2) the public comment must comply with the Public Comment Policy, a copy of which will be furnished to any person at no cost upon request; (3) the public comment must be no more than 350 words in length; and (4) the Wilkes County Manager will read all such public comments, along with the name and address of the person submitting the same, at the meeting of the Board of Commissioners for which said comments are timely submitted.

Section 5. This Policy, insofar as it varies from the terms and provisions of the Resolution for Establishing Schedule of Regular Meetings for the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners duly adopted under date of December 2, 2019, and the Wilkes County Public Comment Policy duly adopted under date of October 6, 2015, constitutes a temporary modification of the same and is adopted solely due to the COVID-19 state of emergency currently in effect in Wilkes County and the State of North Carolina.

Section 6. This Amended Policy shall take effect beginning with the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Commissioners on the 17th day of November, 2020, and, unless modified or terminated sooner by the Board of Commissioners, shall automatically terminate upon the rescission or termination of the Declaration.


ADOPTED this the 5th day of November, 2020.



By: 

Eddie D. Settle, Chairman
Wilkes County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:


Sarah D. Call, Clerk