

*Kevin Austin, Chairman of Board
David Moxley, Vice Chairman
Cliff Collins, Commissioner
Marion Welborn, Commissioner
Frank Zachary, Commissioner*



*Ed Powell, County Attorney
Lisa Hughes, County Manager
Tanya Gentry, Clerk to the Board*

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

June 14, 2024

Advocacy Days

Board Chair Kevin Austin, Vice-Chair David Moxley and I attended the NCACC Advocacy Days earlier this week in Raleigh. It provided us opportunities to sit in on steering committee meetings concerning education, emergency management, tax, agriculture, finance and public safety. We also heard from Senator Pro Tempore Phil Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore talk about the short session and the State budget. Wednesday morning, we heard Governor Cooper also talk about the State budget and his initiatives surrounding education and Medicaid expansion before we met with Senator Settle. This is one of the ways we stay connected with State government and advocate for the needs of counties.

Vacancy Report

This week we still have 20 vacancies. Human Services continues to have a significant number of vacancies this week, with 12, 9 of which are in the Social Services Division. One of the vacancies is in the Sheriff's Office (Detention) and 3 in Emergency Services. The Tax Assessor's Office has 1 vacancy. Seventeen of these positions have been vacant over 30 days, with 12 of them being in Human Services. Nine of them have been vacant over 100 days. Two of these positions has been vacant over 300 days, which in accordance with the County's Personnel Policy positions vacant for 12 months are eliminated. One of these is recommended in the FY2025 Budget to be reclassified to a higher pay grade and given an additional 6 months (thru December 2024) to be filled before elimination.

School Resource Officers (SROs)

In 2010, there were two (2) school resource officers in Yadkin County, one at each high school. In 2013, the School Board approached the County about funding a grant match to provide school resources officers at the two middle schools. The Board of Commissioners approved the creation of the additional SRO positions in the Sheriff's Office and agreed to provide the required grant match of \$28,000 for these positions.

In August 2022 during a joint meeting between the Board of Education and the Board of Commissioners, School Superintendent Todd Martin told both boards that the school system was applying for multiple safety grants, including one that would provide funding for three (3) additional SROs. These SROs would be assigned as follows: one shared at Courtney

Elementary and Forbush Elementary, one assigned to Yadkin Success Academy and one would be shared between West Yadkin Elementary and Fall Creek Elementary. Dr. Martin explained that these four elementary schools were not within municipalities and that the schools within municipalities have police departments that can provide resources to them. He further explained that the grants cover salaries and benefits only (not equipment or vehicles) and required an \$11,000 match per position. During the Board's December 19, 2022 meeting, the Board of Commissioners created these 3 additional SRO positions and agreed to provide the grant match as requested by the School Board.

In FY2024, the Sheriff's Office requested two additional SRO positions that were included in the recommended budget and these positions were created as part of the FY2024 budget. During the FY2024 budget public hearing, Dr. Martin addressed the Board of Commissioners in supporting the SROs positions.

Yadkin County currently has nine SROs in its schools outside municipalities. The request from Sheriff Smitherman is to provide additional SROs in the remaining elementary schools that are located within municipalities and an additional Sergeant position to supervise all of the SROs. His request has each of the SROs at the Deputy II rate of pay, which currently is \$40,938, with his requested pay increase of 16%, the rate of pay would be \$48,488. With benefits at the Sheriff's requested rate of pay, each SRO position would cost \$70,736 plus workers compensation, uniforms, equipment, vehicle, fuel, etc. The Sergeant position would cost \$76,954 in personnel costs plus workers compensation, uniforms, equipment, vehicle, fuel, etc.

Watershed Dam

We continue to use two pumps at the dam near HWY 67 in Boonville to get the water levels low enough so that we can find out why it's not draining. Progress is being made and we hope be able to remove the debris from the vertical pipe, but if it is the horizontal pipe that is more involved.

Legislative Goals

It's time to start thinking about Legislative Goals to submit to the NCACC. This is another opportunity to advocate for the needs of counties. The submission process will kick-off this month. Please be thinking about what you would like to submit. In the past, the Board has submitted an average of 4-6 goals. The goals will be in any of the following areas: Agriculture, Environment, General Government, Health and Human Services, Justice and Public Safety, Public Education and/or Tax and Finance. The Legislative Goals Handbook is in Exhibit A.

Conferences and Trainings

The Upcoming Dates section below includes several Conferences and meetings that require pre-registration. As a County, we try to be good stewards of County funds and take advantage of early bird registrations, when registration fees are at their lowest point. Most of these registrations, as well as hotel registrations, have cancellation dates to receive full refunds or partial refunds. If these cancellation dates are not met, the registration fees and / or hotel fees are not-refundable.

Attending Conferences and Trainings is beneficial to employees and Commissioners, however, we all need to be cognizant of the costs involved and the commitments to attend once registered.

Please note the early bird registrations in the Upcoming Dates below and ask Tanya about cancellation dates in the event you register and are later not able to attend. Tanya is the point of contact for the Commissioners to register for Conferences and Trainings.

<i>Upcoming Dates</i>

The NACo Annual Conference & Exposition is **July 12-15** in Hillsborough County, Florida. Please let Tanya know if you are interested in attending.

The NCACC Annual Conference will be held **August 8-10** in Forsyth County, with the special event on August 7th pertaining to the use of Opioid Settlement Funds. Please let Tanya know if you are interested in attending the Conference and/or the August 7th special event. Registration is required for the special event as well as the Conference.

Legislative Goals Handbook

Spring 2024



The NCACC Legislative Goals Process

Mission Statement

The Association’s Legislative Goals process is thoughtful, deliberative, inclusive, and fair. The investment of time and energy, and value of full discourse, strengthens our Association as we advocate for counties. The process is designed to create an informed grassroots organization and to build a cohesiveness of purpose within the organization that, in turn, grants a degree of credibility to the Association. All counties and all county officials are invited and encouraged to participate in the Legislative Goals process.

Contents

This handbook is intended to offer the reader an overview and guidance about the rules and processes used to develop the legislative agenda of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. Information is presented in a format that tracks the chronological course of action for the goals adoption process.

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Background & 2024-2025 Timeline

Every two years, in the months preceding a long session of the General Assembly, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners engages in a process to determine the legislative goals it should pursue in the best interest of the counties. The process is thorough, deliberative, and time intensive. It is designed to allow for input from as many county commissioners, county officials and stakeholders as possible. By maximizing participation from so many of the organization's members, it is possible to reach agreement on goals that are important to all members of this diverse organization.

NCACC goals-setting process begins in May of each even-numbered year and consists of five stages. These stages are described in detail in this handbook.

Below is the timeline for the 2024 legislative goals process:

Legislative Goals Process Timeline	
When	What
May-September	Submission of county goal proposals
Mid-September	Review and voting of goal proposals and Guiding Principles by Steering Committees
October	Legislative Goals Committee reviews Steering Committee recommendations, approves Core Values and package of goals for Board of Directors Board of Directors finalizes package to be presented to full membership
November 14-15	Membership adopts goals at Legislative Goals Conference

Stage 1 — Seeking Goal Proposals

The Association's goals-setting process begins with an effort to solicit proposals that members think should be part of the county legislative agenda for the upcoming legislative biennium. The Association solicits proposals from county boards of commissioners. Suggested goals can be submitted by:

- Adopted resolutions from full boards,
- A letter from Board Chairs on behalf of the full boards,
- A letter from the president of an affiliate and related county organizations (which are groups of county officials/staff organized by function)

Affiliate Organizations include but are not limited to:

- Association of North Carolina Boards of Health
- N.C. Association of Assessing Officers
- N.C. Association of County Boards of Social Services
- N.C. Association of County Attorneys
- N.C. Association of County Clerks to the Board
- N.C. Association of County Directors of Social Services
- N.C. Government Finance Officers Association
- N.C. Association of Emergency Medical Services Administrators
- N.C. Association of Local Health Directors
- N.C. Association of Registers of Deeds
- N.C. Tax Collectors' Association

The Association casts a wide net to encourage inclusiveness and full membership participation. Discussion and action on proposed goals by full boards of commissioners is requested because this interaction contributes to the deliberative process and builds consensus.

Goal proposals must be submitted via the NCACC online form. Proposals should be in the form of a policy statement and include background information on the impetus of the proposal.

Stage 2 — Steering Committee Appointment Structure

NCACC's seven Steering Committees assist the Board of Directors in setting policy for the Association in the areas of Agriculture, Environment, General Government, Health and Human Services, Justice and Public Safety, Public Education, and Tax and Finance. Each year, the NCACC President appoints committee chairs to lead and represent each Steering Committee on the Board of Directors. The Steering Committees review guiding principles and legislative goals proposals from each of the respective subject areas set forth by the Association.

Steering Committee membership is done through a nomination process and ultimately appointed by the Association President. Membership is limited to county commissioners; county staff and affiliates can participate in steering committees as non-voting attendees.

Nominations for Steering Committees open in the summer and appointments are made in early September. Members can be self-nominated or nominated by someone else. The goal of this committee structure is to identify a group of dedicated county commissioners who are eager to become subject matter experts in a policy issue area and can strategically advise the Association on the development of the legislative agenda.

Stage 3 — Steering Committee Review

The Steering Committee review of guiding principles and goal proposals is the first step in the legislative goals development process. The Association has seven Steering Committees, organized by subject matter. These are permanent, standing committees.

The guiding principles are general declaration of ongoing positions that give guidance on broad policy objectives, such as “no mandates without funding.” These statements also guide the staff in dealing with unanticipated issues that arise in the legislative context or that affect the counties in other ways, as with proposed administrative rules and regulations or state agency policies. The Steering Committee will review these as the first step of the legislative goals process prior to reviewing specific goals proposals.

Proposed goals are sorted according to subject matter by NCACC staff and referred to the appropriate Steering Committees for review. Steering Committees may hear from county officials who submit goal proposals and may review staff research and analysis. The participation of county staff on Steering Committees provides professional expertise that can be critically important when Steering Committees deliberate. Prior to the meeting of Steering Committees, NCACC staff may consolidate similar proposals and put forth proposed language for consideration.

Though staff expertise is critical, particularly at this early stage, it is ultimately elected county commissioners who will decide the legislative goals package as the goals-setting process moves forward. The committees are empowered to develop their own suggested goals, as needed. Each committee submits its proposed goals to the Legislative Goals Committee.

During the goal-setting process the Steering Committee members are asked to make specific recommendations and take action on each submitted goal. Committee actions include:

- Favorable — A goal is approved to send to the Legislative Goals Committee for further discussion and consideration.
- Amend — The committee may revise or amend a proposal. Amendments and revisions shall be relevant to the originally proposed goal. The Chair shall decide any question of relevancy to the original goal.
- Unfavorable — The committee declines to send the goal forward.
- Needs Further Study — The committee has insufficient information to make an informed decision, and the goal will not move forward in legislative goals process.

Motions can be made by any county commissioner present and voting. Seconds are not required for motions. Only county commissioners present at the meeting may vote.

At the direction of the Chair, staff may be asked to propose alternate language to approved or proposed goals and bring them for consideration at the next step of the process.

Process for Motions

Motions must be approved by a two-thirds majority of members present. Only county commissioners present at the meeting may vote.

Should any motion receive two-thirds majority vote, the motion carries. Should a motion fail to receive two-thirds, the following process should be followed:

- Should a favorable motion fail to receive two-thirds majority vote, the goal will not move forward.
- An unfavorable motion only requires a simple majority to pass.
- Should an amendment motion fail to receive two-thirds, the original goal shall remain on the floor.
- Should a needs further study motion fail to receive two-thirds, the goal shall remain on the floor.

Stage 4 — Legislative Goals Committee

The Legislative Goals Committee is a non-standing committee. The committee membership is traditionally no more than 35 members. Members and the President may make nominations to the committee with final appointments made by the President. Members may nominate others or themselves.

The committee is newly appointed every two years and meets as needed. Members are selected to ensure balance with respect to political affiliation, county population, race, and gender to accurately reflect the diversity of Association membership. Two co-chairs, a Republican and a Democrat, are appointed by the NCACC President to lead the Legislative Goals Committee.

The members of the Legislative Goals Committee include:

- Legislative Goals Committee Chairs
- Steering Committee Chairs
- NCACC Board of Trustees Chair or their designee
- An elected commissioner from each of the Association's 18 districts
- Other members as appointed by the President.

The Legislative Goals Committee reviews the recommendations of the Steering Committees. Steering Committee chairs present their committees' recommendations and relay to the committee discussion regarding each proposal. The committee may also review research and analysis related to the proposals provided by NCACC staff. Goals presented to the Legislative Goals Committee will be considered individually.

The Legislative Goals Committee may and is encouraged to narrow the list of proposals. It also reconciles conflicts or duplication between Steering Committee recommendations. Possible motions for the committee:

- Favorable – A goal is approved to send to the Legislative Goals Committee for further discussion and consideration.
- Amend – The committee may revise or amend a proposal. Amendments and revisions shall be relevant to the originally proposed goal. The Chair shall decide any question of relevancy to the original goal.
- Unfavorable – The committee declines to send the goal forward.
- Needs Further Study – The committee has insufficient information to make an informed decision, and the goal will not move forward in the legislative goals process.

The proposals and guiding principles are then submitted to the Board of Directors for consideration. Goals forwarded to the Board of Directors must pass the voting thresholds outlined in this handbook.

Core Values Statement Review

The Legislative Goals Committee is also charged with reviewing the Association's core values statement. This statement provides fundamental policy guidance regarding the Association's advocacy efforts. The Legislative Goals Committee may review, evaluate, and make suggested changes to periodically update these core values to recognize changing advocacy environments. The committee shall include the core values statement along with its recommendations to the Board of Directors for inclusion in the goals package to be presented to the full membership.

Stage 5 — Board of Directors

As the Association's goals-setting process moves forward, the elected county commissioners become more involved in the decision-making process. The Board of Directors is almost exclusively elected commissioners, with the one exception of a non-voting county manager, and the NCACC Executive Director.

At its October meeting, the board reviews the recommendations of the Legislative Goals Committee. As is customary during earlier stages of the process, the board may hear presentations, review research and analysis, and add, delete, or amend proposals to the core values and guiding principles statements. The goals reviewed at the Board of Directors meeting will be presented en bloc by the Legislative Goals Committee Chairs, alternating by committee. Any board member may make a motion to pull a goal from the bloc to review individually. Motions do not require seconds. The remaining goals in a steering committee bloc will be considered together.

Possible motions:

- Favorable – A goal is approved to send to the Legislative Goals Committee for further discussion and consideration.
- Amend – The committee may revise or amend a proposal. Amendments and revisions shall be relevant to the originally proposed goal. The Chair shall decide any question of relevancy to the original goal.
- Unfavorable – The committee declines to send the goal forward.
- Needs further study – The committee has insufficient information to make an informed decision, and the goal will not move forward in the legislative goals process.

Goal proposals approved by the board must receive a two-thirds majority vote.

The board gives final approval to a package of goal proposals, Association core values, and guiding principles that are to be voted on by the full membership at the Legislative Goals Conference in November. This process provides individual county boards of commissioners' time and opportunity for a full review prior to the conference.

Stage 6 — Legislative Goals Conference

The final stage of the Association's Legislative Goals process is the Legislative Goals Conference, to which all Association members are invited. Historically, more than 85 counties have been represented. The goals conference is conducted according to rules designed to encourage member participation and consensus.

Goals Voting Process and Procedures

- *Prior to the Conference:*
 - NCACC staff coordinate with the President, the Legislative Goals Committee Chairs, and the parliamentarian to review the voting process and procedures.
 - Every member county appoints a voting delegate. A letter requesting notification of the county's voting delegate shall be sent from the Association to each county.
- *During the Conference:*
 - Voting delegates register to obtain appropriate voting credentials.
 - Every county in attendance has one vote. The voting delegate can be any county official, including non-elected officials, and a county may choose an alternate. No proxies are allowed.
 - Goals are presented individually by each Steering Committee subject category. Goals Committee Chairs present the goals to the membership. The Association President or presiding officer is responsible for action.
 - All motions will be ruled on by the Association President or presiding officer.
 - Seconds are not required.
 - The President of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners will appoint a parliamentarian for the conference.
 - Two-thirds majority votes are required to approve or amend the proposed goals.
 - Following approval of the goal proposals, members will be asked to select five priority goals. These represent goal proposals that address the most critical need of counties.
 - Pursuant to Article VIII, Section Three of the NCACC Constitution, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority on questions not covered by the Constitution or by this handbook.
- *Bringing New Proposals to the Floor*
 - Any voting delegate may submit a new goal proposal for consideration that has not previously been considered during the process. New goal submissions must be submitted by the stated deadline at the conference.
 - The Presiding Officer, in consultation with the Legislative Goals Co-Chairs, will determine eligibility of new goals for consideration.
 - Any proposal for eligible new goals to be considered may be brought to the floor with two-thirds vote.
 - All motions will be ruled on by the Association President or presiding officer.

Conclusion

All goals and policies approved at the Legislative Goals Conference are included in the official NCACC legislative agenda. The official document containing the Association's core values, legislative goals, and guiding principles shall be delivered to all 100 counties and presented to each member of the North Carolina General Assembly, to the Governor, and to other executive branch leaders.

Guidance Outside of Legislative Goals Process

Throughout the legislative biennium, new issues will arise that were not anticipated or considered during the Association's legislative goals process. The Association Steering Committees have the authority and responsibility to study new issues, to research and analyze the effect or implications of proposed legislation, and to make recommendations to the NCACC Board of Directors. Any such action is communicated on a regular basis to the Association members.

Upon recommendation of the Legislative Goals Committee Chairs, the committee may meet between the legislative long and short sessions to review goal progress and make suggestions to the board related to goal priorities, especially given an ever-changing legislative environment.



NCACC Legislative Goals Handbook

Spring 2024

[Click here](#) to learn more about NCACC's Legislative Goals and Reporting.