



Agenda

Town Council Meeting – March 26, 2026

CALL TO ORDER Mayor

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Mayor

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS Mayor

COUNCIL COMMENTS Mayor

MANAGER UPDATES

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the [Tax Collector Report](#)
- B. Approval of Minutes-[March 12 Regular Meeting](#)
- C. Approval of Minutes- [March 12 Business Meeting](#)
- D. Approval of [Resolution 2026-06](#), Temporarily Pausing Zoning Text and Map Amendments
- E. Adoption of [Ordinance 2026-01](#), Amendment to Grant Project Ordinance- FEMA

ADVISORY BOARD/COMMITTEE UPDATES

[Agricultural Advisory Committee: Formal recommendation regarding the Floodplain Ordinance in the UDO](#)

REGULAR AGENDA

- A. Approval of the [Interlocal Agreement with Henderson County and Resolution 2026-04, Historic Preservation Ordinance](#)

Presented by Matthew McKirahan and a Henderson County representative

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Vision

The Town of Mills River preserves, sustains, and cultivates community

Mission

To foster community well-being

Values

Respect • Service • Integrity

STAFF REPORT

Town Council, Thursday, March 26, 2026

Title: Year To Date Tax Collection

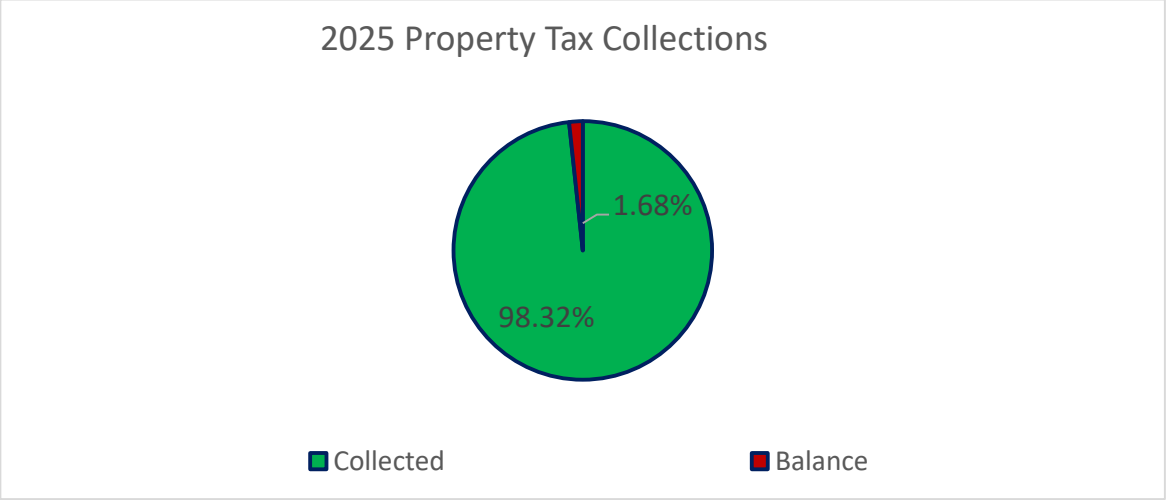
Speaker: Kristen Rintoul, Tax Collector

Prepared by: Tax Department

Approved by: Matthew McKirahan, Town Manager

Background

Per North Carolina General Statute 105-350 (7), the general duties of the Tax Collector include submitting to the governing body a report of the amounts collected on each year's taxes, the amount remaining uncollected, and the steps being taken to encourage the payment of uncollected taxes.



Beginning Balance		March 15		Year To Date		
Tax Year	Scroll Total	Adjustments	Collected	Adjustments	Collected	Balance to Collect
2025	3,817,612.64		22,712.43	59,945.57	3,811,703.62	65,854.59
2024	14,585.42		165.41	1,199.69	7,222.34	8,562.77
2023	9,036.14			381.96	1,708.70	7,709.40
2022	8,156.19			450.14	484.78	8,121.55
2021	6,157.10			450.14	127.23	6,480.01
2020	4,511.06			121.51	59.72	4,572.85
2019	3,774.49			0.00	15.96	3,758.53
2018	3,627.27			0.00	15.12	3,612.15
2017	2,758.29			0.00	15.12	2,743.17
2016	1,999.07			0.00	15.12	1,983.95
2015	696.87			0.00	9.44	687.43
Total Prev. Years	55,301.90	0.00	165.41	2,603.44	9,673.53	48,231.81

"Adjustments" include deferments, exemptions and exclusions received with the scroll from Henderson County as well as bills less than \$5.00, releases received from the County, underpayments less than \$1.00, discovery of taxable property during the year, utility properties billed through NCDOR, and disqualification of property from the Present Use Value program. These numbers are UNAUDITED.

Town of Mills River
Regular Meeting of the Town Council
Thursday, March 12, 2026

Mills River Town Council met on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 6:30 PM in Mills River Town Hall. The public was allowed to attend in-person or watch via internet streaming. Mayor Gonce called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council present: Mayor Shanon Gonce
Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Moore
Council member James Cantrell
Council member Sandra Goode
Council member Brian Kimball

Staff Present: Town Manager Matthew McKirahan
Town Clerk Patty Brown
Finance Director Julie Osteen
Planning Director Michael Malecek
Tax Collector Kristen Rintoul

Council member Kimball made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Council member Goode seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Darryl Fullam emailed members of Town Council expressing concern about recent proposed regulations. The [comment](#) is attached to these minutes.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Mayor Gonce and Council members Moore, Cantrell, Goode, and Kimball thanked the public for the emailed comments regarding the UDO project and for attending the UDO forum on Tuesday. Council member Moore asked for everyone to keep American troops in their thoughts and expressed concern over missing aircraft and crew overseas.

MANAGER UPDATES

Mr. McKirahan gave updates on major projects including the North Loop and the Community Survey bid proposal. Mr. McKirahan and Town Council welcomed attorneys Brian Gulden and Taylor Osborne to the team.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. [Approval of Tax Collector Report](#)
- B. [Approval of Tax Releases](#)
- C. Approval of Minutes- February 26 Regular Meeting
- D. Approval of Minutes- February 26 Business Meeting
- E. Approval of the [Cash Investment Policy amendment](#)
- F. Reappointment to the Planning Board, Mike Cole for a term ending 4/12/28
- G. Approval of [Ag Lease](#) on the Park Expansion property

Council member Moore made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Council member Kimball seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously by verbal assent.

REGULAR AGENDA

A. Public Hearing for Amendment to the Fee Schedule

Council member Moore made a motion to enter legislative public hearing for Adoption of Resolution 2026-05, amendment of the Fee Schedule to include ABC (Alcohol Beverage Control) permit fees. The motion was seconded by Council member Goode and passed unanimously. Ms. Rintoul and Ms. Osteen presented their [Staff Report](#). The public hearing was properly noticed in the Hendersonville Lightning on February 25. Council members asked staff to clarify the following facts: this requirement to have businesses acquire an ABC privilege license is mandated by the state for active state permits. The fees are set by the State of North Carolina, and the fees do not cover administrative costs. This license is annual.

There was no public comment.

Council member Moore made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Council member Kimball and passed unanimously.

Council member Kimball made a motion to adopt [Resolution 2026-05](#), amending the fee schedule to include ABC permit fees as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Moore and passed unanimously.

Ms. Rintoul and Ms. Osteen were thanked for their hard work in research on this subject.

B. UDO Discussion

Chad Meadows and Karen Mallo of CodeWright Planners [presented](#) to Council on the status update of the UDO project. Direction was given to bring a resolution to the March 26 meeting to temporarily cease text and map amendments until after the possible adopting of the UDO beginning April 1.

Council member Moore asked to be excused at 8:01 p.m. Mayor Gonce made the motion to excuse him. The motion was seconded by Council member Kimball and passed unanimously. The remaining timeline of the project was discussed. The timeline shows a public hearing on June 11. Since that date also was the proposed date for the budget hearing, Council member Goode made a motion to call for a special meeting on June 16 for the public hearing on the FY 26-27 budget. The motion was seconded by Council member Kimball and passed unanimously with 4 ayes (Council members Goode, Kimball, Cantrell, and Mayor Gonce).

Other Business –

Council member Cantrell thanked staff for bushhogging the North Loop and removing the stumps from the ditch on Hooper Lane. Mr. McKirahan praised Ms. Sweat and her Parks and Recreation department for handling that project.

There being nothing further, the meeting was adjourned on the motion of Council member Goode and seconded by Council member Kimball at 8:25 p.m. It passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved:

Patty Brown, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Shanon Gonce
Mayor

**Town of Mills River
Business Meeting of the Town Council
Thursday March 12, 2026**

Mills River Town Council met on Thursday, March 12, 2026, in Mills River Town Hall after their regular meeting. The public was allowed to attend in-person or watch via internet streaming. Mayor Gonce called the meeting to order.

Council present: Mayor Shanon Gonce
Council member James Cantrell
Council member Sandra Goode
Council member Brian Kimball

Council absent: Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Moore (excused)

Staff Present: Town Manager Matthew McKirahan
Town Clerk Patty Brown
Finance Director Julie Osteen
Planning Director Michael Malecek

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

The meeting was called to order after the adjournment of the regular meeting on motion and second of Council members Kimball and Goode at 8:26 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Moore was an excused absence.

A. Potential Future Agenda items

There was general discussion about the March 26 Business Meeting agenda. There was consensus of Council to include draft language discussion on the Nuisance Ordinance, discussion on the NCDOT speed study results, and discussion on the UDO with CodeWright Planners, Chad Meadows and Karen Mallo attending virtually. On the March 26 Regular Meeting agenda, there will be an item for consideration on an Interlocal agreement with Henderson County regarding the Historic Preservation Committee.

The meeting was adjourned on the motion of Council member Kimball and seconded by Council member Cantrell at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Approved:

Patty Brown, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

Shanon Gonce
Mayor

STAFF REPORT

Town Council, Thursday, March 26, 2026

Title: Adoption of Resolution 2026-06, A Resolution Initiating a Temporary Pause on Zoning Text and Map Amendments

Prepared by: Administration

Discussion

At the March 12 Town Council meeting, during the presentation by CodeWright Planners about the UDO project, it was suggested to place a temporary pause on processing zoning text and land map amendments after April 1, 2026 until after consideration of the UDO to avoid confusion.

This resolution states Town Council's desire to place this pause.

Strategic Plan Alignment: N/A

Vision

The Town of Mills River preserves, sustains, and cultivates community

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TOWN OF MILLS RIVER
RESOLUTION TEMPORARILY PAUSING ZONING TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENTS

WHEREAS, the Town of Mills River is in the process of developing a new Unified Development Ordinance (“UDO”), with a new Official Zoning Map, which is estimated to come before Town Council for consideration in June of 2026;

WHEREAS, in order to implement the UDO, Town Council will need to process the proposed UDO as a zoning text amendment and a map amendment;

WHEREAS, Town Council finds that allowing continued processing and consideration of text amendments and map amendments of the Town’s current land use and development codes during the UDO approval process may result in unnecessary confusion between the Town’s current land use and development codes and the new proposed UDO as it relates to such text and map amendments;

WHEREAS, Town Council is desirous of avoiding hearing multiple, concurrent text or map amendments before Town Council during the adoption of the UDO;

WHEREAS, Town Council finds that a temporary pause on the processing of text and map amendment applications under the Town’s current land use and development codes is a reasonable and necessary measure to avoid conflicts, ensure uniform development, and protect the integrity of the Town’s planning process; and

WHEREAS, to prevent confusion, Town Council recommends a temporary pause on processing and consideration of new text and map amendment applications beginning April 1, 2026, and continuing through July 1, 2026, after the new UDO has been voted upon.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY the Town Council of the Town of Mills River, North Carolina that:

1. Town Staff shall implement a temporary pause on processing any new text and map amendment applications beginning on April 1, 2026, and continuing through July 1, 2026.
2. Applications for text and map amendments under the Town’s current land use and development codes may continue to be submitted to Town staff; however, the application shall not be brought before the Planning Board until after July 1, 2026, when the new UDO may be in effect.
3. Town Staff shall accept and process all other applications made to Town Staff during this time.
4. This temporary pause does not impact an applicant’s rights under North Carolina General Statutes §160D-108 and §143-755 as it relates to permit choice.

ADOPTED this the 26th day of March, 2026

Shanon Gonce
Mayor

ATTEST By:

Patty Brown, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk

STAFF REPORT

Town Council, Thursday, March 26, 2026

Title: **Budget Amendments – Grant Project Ordinance - FEMA**

Speaker: Julie Osteen, Finance Director

From: Administration

Background

With the completion of the Damaged Inventory for the Town of Mills River, additional funds will need to be added to the project ordinance to cover the costs of Hurricane Helene damages identified.

Discussion

The budget for the FEMA Grant Ordinance needs to be amended to reallocate the costs for the N Loop repairs.

Recommendation

Adopt the amendment to the Grant Project Ordinance 2026-01 to reallocate funds from Debris Removal to cover North Loop Repairs.

Fiscal Impact

At this time, there will be no fiscal impact to the budget as we are merely reclassifying funds between categories.

Attachments - Ordinance 2025-25 and Ordinance 2026-01

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR HELENE DISASTER RECOVERY

BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council for the Town of Mills River, North Carolina that, in Council assemble that pursuant to section 13.2 of chapter 159 of the general statutes of North Carolina, the following grant project ordinance is hereby amended:

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

This ordinance is to establish a budget for projects related to the Helene Hurricane Disaster Response (FEMA Disaster 4827) that will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance Program. Through its Public Assistance Program (PA), FEMA provides Federal grant assistance for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities. Expenses may be eligible for FEMA reimbursement in the following categories:

Emergency Work

Category A: Debris Removal -- Expenses related to clearing debris from public property, including roads, parks, and other infrastructure.

Category B: Emergency Protective Measures -- Costs for actions taken to protect public health and safety, such as: search and rescue operations; sheltering and evacuation; and medical care and emergency response.

Permanent Work

Category C: Roads and Bridges -- Repairs and restoration of transportation infrastructure, including highways, streets, and bridges.

Category D: Water Control Facilities -- Restoration and repair of drainage systems, levees, and other flood control measures.

Category E: Buildings and Equipment -- Repairs or replacements of public buildings, such as schools, community centers, and related equipment.

Category F: Utilities - Repair and restoration of essential utility systems, such as power grids, water treatment plants, and communication systems.

Category G: Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other -- Repair or replacement of parks, recreational areas, and public spaces.

Administrative Work

Category Z: Management Costs -- Administrative costs related to the overall management of disaster response and recovery efforts, which are capped at a certain percentage of eligible project costs.

SECTION 2: ESTIMATED REVENUES

The following revenues are amended to be available to fund Helene disaster recovery costs as follows:

Source	Amount	As Amended
FEMA PA Reimbursements	\$255,500	\$300,500
NC DST Disaster Cashflow Loans	222,346	222,346
FEMA Debris Henderson County Lease	94,500	102,375
NCLM Insurance Proceeds	13,300	13,300
Transfer from General Fund	0	\$45,000
Total Revenues	\$585,646	\$683,521

SECTION 3: APPROPRIATIONS

The following amounts are amended for Helene disaster recovery costs as follows:

Category	FEMA PA Category	Amount	As Amended
Debris Removal	Category A	\$165,300	\$165,300
Emergency Protective Measures	Category B	11,500	11,500
Road Repairs	Category C	91,540	91,540
Water Control Facilities	Category D	10,100	10,100
Public Buildings & Equipment	Category E	30,860	30,860
Public Utilities (Sewer)	Category F	10,860	10,860
Parks, Recreational Facilities	Category G	24,140	122,015
Administrative Costs	Category Z	55,000	15,000
Contingency		4,000	4,000
Cashflow Loan Repayment		222,346	222,346
Total Appropriations		\$585,646	\$683,521

SECTION 4: FUND SOURCE

This project shall be accounted for in a Special Revenue Fund as required for grant project ordinances under G.S. 159-13.2.

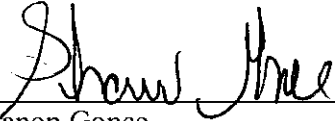
SECTION 5: FINANCE OFFICER DUTIES

The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of the grantor agency and the grant agreements. The Finance Officer must report the financial status of the project to the governing board on a quarterly basis.

SECTION 6: ADMINISTRATION

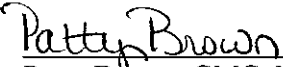
Copies of the amended grant project ordinance shall be furnished to the Budget Officer, the Finance Officer and to the Clerk to City Council.

Amended and signed, effective December 11, 2025.



Shanon Gonce
Mayor

Attest:



Patty Brown, CMC, NCMC
Town Clerk



AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR HELENE DISASTER RECOVERY

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Permanent Work

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Administrative Work

Category Z: Management Costs -- Administrative costs related to the overall management of disaster response and recovery efforts, which are capped at a certain percentage of eligible project costs.

SECTION 2: ESTIMATED REVENUES

The following revenues are amended to be available to fund Helene disaster recovery costs as follows:

Source	Amount	As Amended
FEMA PA Reimbursements	\$300,500	\$300,500
NC DST Disaster Cashflow Loans	222,346	222,346
FEMA Debris Henderson County Lease	102,375	102,375
NCLM Insurance Proceeds	13,300	13,300
Transfer from General Fund	\$45,000	\$45,000
Total Revenues	\$683,521	\$683,521

SECTION 3: APPROPRIATIONS

The following amounts are amended for Helene disaster recovery costs as follows:

Category	FEMA PA Category	Amount	As Amended
Debris Removal	Category A	\$165,300	\$1,950
Emergency Protective Measures	Category B	11,500	11,500
Road Repairs	Category C	91,540	91,540
Water Control Facilities	Category D	10,100	10,100
Public Buildings & Equipment	Category E	30,860	30,860
Public Utilities (Sewer)	Category F	10,860	10,860
Parks, Recreational Facilities	Category G	122,015	245,365
Administrative Costs	Category Z	15,000	55,000
Contingency		4,000	4,000
Cashflow Loan Repayment		222,346	222,346
Total Appropriations		\$683,521	\$683,521

SECTION 4: FUND SOURCE

This project shall be accounted for in a Special Revenue Fund as required for grant project ordinances under G.S. 159-13.2.

SECTION 5: FINANCE OFFICER DUTIES

The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of the grantor agency and the grant agreements. The Finance Officer must report the financial status of the project to the governing board on a quarterly basis.

SECTION 6: ADMINISTRATION

Copies of the amended grant project ordinance shall be furnished to the Budget Officer, the Finance Officer and to the Clerk to Town Council.

Amended and signed, effective March 26, 2026.

Shanon Gonce
Mayor

Attest:

Patty Brown, CMC, NCMC
Town Clerk



Council Members

Shanon Gonce, Mayor
Jeff Moore, Mayor Pro Tem
James Cantrell
Sandra Goode
Brian Kimball

THE TOWN OF MILLS RIVER
124 Town Center Drive
Mills River, North Carolina 28759

The Agricultural Advisory made the following recommendations to the Mills River Town Council at their March 20, 2026 meeting regarding the Imagine Mills River Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) project and Town-wide rezoning discussion:

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends Town Council revise the Hazard Prevention Ordinance to exempt all Bonafide farms and agriculture before it is adopted into the UDO.

This recommendation was passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORT

Town Council, Thursday, March 26, 2026

Title: **Discussion on Henderson County Historic Resources Commission**

Speakers: Matthew McKirahan, Town Manager

Background

The Henderson County Historic Resources Commission endeavors to preserve historic districts and landmarks across the county. The Commission seeks to “(1) to safeguard the heritage of the County and its municipalities by preserving districts and landmarks therein which embody important elements of its culture, history, architectural history, or prehistory; and (2) to promote the use and conservation of such districts and landmarks for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of the residents of the County and beyond.” Potential landmarks must be, at minimum, 100 years old and meet other standards to be considered. There are no requirements for the property owner to participate.

In December 2025, members of the Henderson County Historic Resources Commission met with Town staff to discuss opportunities for the commission and Town to join an interlocal agreement. The interlocal agreement would require the Town of Mills River to adopt the Henderson County Historic Landmark Ordinance (§ 49 – Historic Resources, Preservation of). If adopted, Historic Resources Commission staff will provide services to the Town of Mills River under the ordinance.

Services include:

- Review of applications
- Communications with property owners, municipality, and tax department
- Presentation of applications to the Historic Resources Commission

Resource impact:

- Town staff will provide assistance to the staff liaison when possible or necessary. Workforce resource requirements are minimum.
- Henderson County will keep any and all fees collected related to the ordinance.
- County and Town will work together to promote historic sites, as defined with participating property owners.

At the February 26, 2026 Town Council meeting Staff was directed to bring a Resolution adopting the Historic Landmark Ordinance and an Interlocal Agreement with Henderson County for enforcing the Historic Landmark Ordinance.

Discussion

Council may consider participating with the Historic Resources Commission. If amenable, Council could adopt the resolution and authorize the Town Manager to sign the Interlocal agreement.

Fiscal Impact

None.

Strategic Planning Goals Alignment

Goal 3: Encourage and cultivate thoughtful use of land

Attachment

1. Resolution 2026-04
2. Interlocal Agreement with Henderson County

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF HENDERSON

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT, made this the 26th day of March 2026 by and between Henderson County, hereinafter "the County", a body politic and corporate by the State of North Carolina, and the Town of Mills River, hereinafter "Town", a duly incorporated municipal corporation and body politic.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS the County and Town have adopted the County's Preservation of Historic Resources Ordinance, hereinafter "Ordinance" and the related design standards;

WHEREAS County staff, tax department, boards and Board of Commissioners are responsible for the approval of historic properties and enforcement of the Ordinance; and

WHEREAS County and Town are desirous of collaborating on the implementation of this Ordinance in the incorporated and unincorporated areas;

NOW, THEREFORE IN THIS AGREEMENT, that for and in consideration of the mutual promises and other good and valuable considerations as provided for herein below, the parties mutually agree as follows:

- 1) Town agrees to adopt the Ordinance, its design standards and all future amendments or changes to this Ordinance.
- 2) Henderson County will provide the following services:
 - a. Review applications
 - b. Work with applicants
 - c. Prepare materials for Historic Resources Committee, Zoning Board of Commissioners
 - d. Notify tax department when properties are designated
 - e. Enforce Ordinance on participants
- 3) Town permits Henderson County to enforce the Ordinance on participants within municipal boundaries.
- 4) Henderson County will keep any and all fees collected related to this Ordinance.
- 5) Town and County will work together to promote historic sites, give technical assistance to protect historic properties and provide information regarding historic properties, upkeep, and designation.
- 6) This Agreement may be revoked by either party in writing with 30-days' notice.

In witness hereof, all parties have caused this Amendment to the Interlocal Agreement to be duly approved, spread upon the minutes of each, and to be executed in duplicate, each to have the force and effect of an original.

FOR THE TOWN OF MILLS RIVER

By: _____

Shanon Gonce, Mayor

Attest: _____

Patty Brown, CMC, NCCMC

Town Clerk

HENDERSON COUNTY

By: _____

TOWN OF MILLS RIVER
RESOLUTION ENFORCING HISTORIC LANDMARK ORDINANCE OF HENDERSON COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Town of Mills River seeks to cooperate with other governing bodies to safeguard the heritage of the County by preserving landmarks therein that embody important elements of its culture, history, architectural history, or prehistory; and

WHEREAS, Henderson County passed the Preservation of Historic Resources Ordinance, hereinafter “the Ordinance” and this Ordinance recognizes historic properties in the County; and

WHEREAS, municipalities may adopt this Ordinance and related design standards to protect historic properties within their boundaries; and

WHEREAS, Henderson County is desirous of encouraging the protection of historic properties and the creation of a list of all historic properties within Henderson County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Town of Mills River through resolution of its governing body, adopts the Ordinance and related design standards.
2. Henderson County, through its Historic Resources Committee Staff Liaison, will provide the Town of Mills River services under the Ordinance. These services include review of applications, communications with property owners, municipality, and tax department, and present applications to the Historic Resources Commission. The Staff Liaison will also prepare materials for the Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Board of Commissions who approve all applications.
3. The Town of Mills River will permit Henderson County to enforce the Ordinance within municipal boundaries.
4. The Town of Mills River will provide assistance to the County’s Staff Liaison when possible or necessary.
5. This resolution will be effective upon the date of adoption. The Town of Mills River adopts any further amendments or changes to the Ordinance. To revoke the Ordinance, the Municipality must adopt a revocation resolution and notify Henderson County.

ADOPTED this the 26th day of March, 2026

Shanon Gonce
Mayor

ATTEST By:

Patty Brown, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk