



BLACK MOUNTAIN TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

October 7, 2024 | Emergency Called Town Council Meeting Minutes | Time: 3:30 P.M.

Town Hall Council Chambers | 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711

**Emergency meeting of the Town Council due to ongoing State of Emergency from Hurricane Helene*

The Black Mountain Town Council held an Emergency Called Meeting on Monday, October 7, 2024 at Town Hall, 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, NC 28711. The purpose of this meeting was due to Hurricane Helene recovery efforts.

Mayor C. Michael Sobol called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. with the following members in attendance: Mayor C. Michael Sobol, Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller, Council Member Alice Berry, Council Member Doug Hay, Council Member Pam King, Council Member Ryan Stone.

Several staff members and members of the public were also in attendance.

Consideration of Resolution Amending Administrative Policies and Invoking Emergency Exception for Emergency Purchases during Federally, State, and Locally State of Emergency Disaster Declaration

The purpose of this resolution was to ensure that the Town of Black Mountain continues to function and provide resources needed within a Federal, State, or Local State of Emergency. This resolution is an amendment to solicitation requirements, purchase order thresholds, contracts and agreements authority, utility billing due date and disconnection date.

Council Member Doug Hay made a motion to approve the following resolution. A vote of 5-0 in favor.

RESOLUTION AMENDING ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND INVOKING EMERGENCY EXCEPTION FOR EMERGENCY PURCHASES DURING FEDERALLY, STATE, AND LOCALLY STATE OF EMERGENCY DISASTER DECLARATION

Resolution # R-24-34

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statutes § 143-129 allows for exceptions to the general statutory requirement for competitive solicitations in “cases of special emergency involving the health and safety of the people or their property;” and

WHEREAS, Section 5.2 (Emergency Purchases) of the Town Procurement Policy, allows exceptions to the general requirement for competitive solicitations and procurement of supplies or services whose immediate procurement is essential to prevent delays in work which may affect the life, health, or safety of the Town of Black Mountain employees or citizens; and

WHEREAS, on September 25, 2024, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order No. 315 which declared a State of Emergency in North Carolina anticipating the impacts from Helene; and

WHEREAS, on September 28, 2024, President Joseph R. Biden Jr., approved Governor Roy Cooper's expedited request declaring a Federal Major Disaster Declaration for the state of North Carolina due to Tropical Storm Helene, in order to protect the health, safety, and well-being of all people within multiple municipalities within Western North Carolina;

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2024, a State of Emergency was declared in the Town of Black Mountain by Mayor C. Michael Sobol due to the impacts of Hurricane Helene; and

WHEREAS, FEMA-4827-DR, North Carolina Disaster Declaration as of September 28, 2024, defines the Incident Period as September 25, 2024 and continuing; and

WHEREAS, FEMA's Office of Response and Recovery has determined that with the President's Emergency Declaration, exigent and emergency circumstances currently exist; and

WHEREAS, local, state and federal action in response to the Tropical Storm Helene emergency continues to be present, immediate and existing and requires using the exception to North Carolina's public bidding laws to expeditiously procure goods, construction, and repair services to mitigate impacts on the health and safety of residents, and assist employees of the Town of Black Mountain to deliver necessary government services and secure necessary resources to address threats to public life, health, and safety.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Town of Black Mountain Council hereby:

1. Authorizes the Town Manager and his designees to procure goods and services under the emergency exception to the public bidding laws, G.S. 143-129(e)(2), and Section 5.2 of the Town Procurement Policy without following the formal solicitation requirements to address and mitigate the Town's procurement needs in response to the Emergency Declaration for Tropical Storm Helene for the duration of the special emergency affecting the public life, health, and safety as determined by FEMA, the North Carolina Governor's declaration of a State of Emergency and the local declarations of state of emergency for so long as the emergency continues to be present, immediate and existing; and
2. During any Federally, State, or Locally declared State of Emergency that is applicable with the Town of Black Mountain, the Town Manager shall have the authority to enter into any contract or agreement on behalf of the Town of Black Mountain reasonably required to provide for the restoration or continuation of Town services during the state of Emergency, in consultation with the Town Attorney; provided however that any such contract or agreement entered into by the Town Manager pursuant to the authority of this paragraph which require the approval of Town Council shall be presented back to the Council for ratification as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Town shall indemnify and hold harmless the Town Manager and the Town Attorney for actions pursuant to the authority of this paragraph; and

3. During any Federally, State, or Locally declared State of Emergency that is applicable with the Town of Black Mountain, the Town Manager shall have the authority to temporarily increase the Town's purchase order threshold to \$5,000. The Town Manager shall have the authority to authorize said purchases and authorize a manual purchase order under extenuation circumstances when the normal purchase order process is unavailable due to the emergency; and

4. During any Federally, State, or Locally declared State of Emergency that is applicable with the Town of Black Mountain, the Town Manager shall have the authority to amend the normal utility billing due date and disconnection date whenever the utility system has been impacted during the emergency; and

5. Makes this determination retroactive to the beginning of the federal declarations of the incident period beginning September 25, 2024 through the present.

Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Black Mountain, North Carolina on this 7th day of October, 2024.

Resolution Authorizing Increase in Micro-Purchase Threshold

Purchases by non- Federal entities (state and local governments) made with Federal funds must follow the competitive procurement standards set by the Federal Uniform Guidance regulations unless the amount of the purchase is below the micro-purchase threshold. The Federal micro-purchase threshold is currently \$10,000 which means that the Town does not have to solicit competitive bids or quotes for purchases under \$10,000 if the Town deems the price to be "reasonable based on research, experience, price history or other information and is filed accordingly."

In 2020, the U. S. Government revised the Federal Uniform Guidance to allow local governments to increase the micro-purchase threshold to a threshold up to \$50,000 which is the State's threshold for non- Federal purchases. Pursuant to the annual adoption of the attached resolution, the Town can now increase the Federal micro-purchase threshold from \$10,000 to the stated amounts below:

- \$30,000 for the purchase of "apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment"
- \$30,000 for the purchase of "construction or repair work"
- \$50,000 for the purchase of services not subject to competitive bidding under North Carolina law.
- \$50,000 for the purchase of architectural, engineering, and surveying services (subject to the " Mini- Brooks Act") where the Town has exercised, in writing, an exemption to the Mini- Brooks Act for a particular project.

Increasing the micro-purchase threshold to mirror North Carolina purchasing laws will provide consistency as the Town expends Federal funds. Federal law requires that the Town adopt an annual resolution to remain in compliance with the higher micro-purchase for spending Federal

funds. Staff plans to include this resolution as part of the annual Budget Ordinance for each future year.

Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. A vote of 5-0 in favor.

**RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING INCREASE IN MICRO-PURCHASE THRESHOLDS**

Resolution # R-24-33

WHEREAS, from time to time, the Town of Black Mountain purchases goods and services using federal funding subject to the procurement standards in [2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart D](#); and

WHEREAS, the Town of Black Mountain's procurement of such goods and services is subject to the Purchasing and Procurement Policy, as most recently amended on September 13, 2021 effective as of September 13, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Black Mountain is a non-Federal entity under the definition set forth in [2 C.F.R. § 200.1](#); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to [2 C.F.R. 200.320\(a\)\(1\)\(ii\)](#), a non-Federal entity may award micro-purchases without soliciting competitive price or rate quotations if the non-Federal entity considers the price to be reasonable based on research, experience, purchase history or other information and documents that the non-Federal entity files accordingly; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to [2 C.F.R. 200.320\(a\)\(1\)\(iii\)](#), a non-Federal entity is responsible for determining and documenting an appropriate micro-purchase threshold based on internal controls, an evaluation of risk, and its documented procurement procedures; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to [2 C.F.R. § 200.320\(a\)\(1\)\(iv\)](#), a non-Federal entity may self-certify on an annual basis a micro-purchase threshold not to exceed \$50,000 and maintain documentation to be made available to a Federal awarding agency and auditors in accordance with [2 C.F.R. § 200.334](#); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to [2 C.F.R. § 200.320\(a\)\(1\)\(iv\)](#), such self-certification must include (1) a justification for the threshold, (2) a clear identification of the threshold, and (3) supporting documentation, which, for public institutions, may be a "higher threshold consistent with State law"; and

WHEREAS, [G.S. 143-129\(a\)](#) and [G.S. 143-131\(a\)](#) require the Town of Black Mountain to conduct a competitive bidding process for the purchase of (1) "apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment" where the cost of such purchase is equal to or greater than \$30,000, and (2) "construction or repair work" where the cost of such purchase is greater than or equal to \$30,000; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina law does not require a unit of local government to competitively bid for purchase of services other than services subject to the qualifications-based selection process set forth in Article 3D of Chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statutes (the "[Mini-Brooks Act](#)"); and

WHEREAS, [G.S. 143-64.32](#) permits units of local government to exercise, in writing, an exemption to the qualifications-based selection process for services subject to the Mini-Brooks Act for particular projects where the aggregate cost of such services do not exceed \$50,000; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to [2 C.F.R. 200.320\(a\)\(1\)\(iv\)](#), the Council of the Town of Black Mountain now desires to adopt higher micro-purchase thresholds than those identified in [48 C.F.R. § 2.101](#).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Black Mountain that:

Section 1. In accordance with [2 C.F.R. § 200.320\(a\)\(1\)\(iv\)](#) and the applicable provisions of North Carolina law, the Town of Black Mountain hereby self-certifies the following micro-purchase thresholds, each of which is a “higher threshold consistent with State law” under [2 C.F.R. § 200.320\(a\)\(1\)\(iv\)\(C\)](#) for the reasons set forth in the recitals to this resolution:

- A. \$30,000, for the purchase of “apparatus, supplies, materials, or equipment”; and
- B. \$30,000, for the purchase of “construction or repair work”; and
- C. \$50,000, for the purchase of services not subject to competitive bidding under North Carolina law; and
- D. \$50,000, for the purchase of services subject to the qualifications-based selection process in the Mini-Brooks Act; provided that such threshold shall apply to a contract only if the Unit has exercised an exemption to the Mini-Brooks Act, in writing, for a particular project pursuant to [G.S. 143-64.32](#). If the exemption is not authorized, the micro-purchase threshold shall be \$10,000.

Section 2. The self-certification made herein shall be effective as of the date hereof and shall be applicable until the June 30, 2025 but shall not be applicable to Federal financial assistance awards issued prior to July 1, 2024, including financial assistance awards issued prior to that date under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Support (CARES) Act of 2020 ([Pub. L. 116-136](#)).

Section 3. In the event that the Town of Black Mountain receives funding from a federal grantor agency that adopts a threshold more restrictive than those contained herein, the Unit shall comply with the more restrictive threshold when expending such funds.

Section 4. The Unit shall maintain documentation to be made available to a Federal awarding agency, any pass-through entity, and auditors in accordance with [2 C.F.R. § 200.334](#).

Section 5. The Finance Director and the Town Manager of the Town of Black Mountain is hereby authorized, individually, and collectively, to revise the Purchasing Policy of the Town of Black Mountain to reflect the increased micro-purchase thresholds specified herein, and to take all such actions, individually and collectively, to carry into effect the purpose and intent of the foregoing resolution.

Duly adopted by the Town Council of Black Mountain on this the 7th day of October 2024.

Hurricane Helene Grant Project Ordinance and Budget Amendments

This agenda item is to consider the creation of a new Grant Project Ordinance and budget amendment for Hurricane Helene. The Town of Black Mountain is included in FEMA-4827-DR,

North Carolina Disaster Declaration. Initial funding for this Grant project must come from the Town's General Fund Balance. Authorization of this project and applicable budget amendment will result in the Town's fund balance falling below the 30% fund balance requirement set forth within the Town's Fund Balance Policy. The fund balance will be restored to its policy requirements with the Ad Valorem revenues received from Buncombe County for September and October collections. General Funds not needed due to other funding sources will be returned to the general fund. The Finance Department requests to appropriate \$2,000,000 of revenue from the from the general fund balance. Staff recommends approving the grant project ordinance and budget amendment as presented and recommended.

Council Member Ryan Stone made a motion to approve the Grant Project Ordinance as presented. A vote of 5-0 in favor.

Town of Black Mountain Hurricane Helene Grant Project Ordinance

Ordinance: O-24-15

BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Board of the Town of Black Mountain, North Carolina, that, pursuant to the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control a local government may, in its discretion, authorize and budget for a capital project or a grant project in a project ordinance adopted pursuant to G.S. 159-13.2. A project ordinance authorizes all appropriations necessary for the completion of the project and neither it nor any part of it need be readopted in any subsequent fiscal year; the following Grant Project Ordinance is hereby adopted as follows:

Section 1. Project Defined

The Town of Black Mountain defines a "Grant Project" as a project financed in whole or in part by revenues received from the Federal and/or State Government for operating or capital proposed as defined by the grant contract. The project may include expenditures that span across multiple fiscal years.

Section 2. Project Authorization

The project authorized is Hurricane Helene. Beginning September 25th, 2024 the Town of Black Mountain entered into a State of Emergency within North Carolina. September 28th, 2024 a Federal Major Disaster Declaration for the State of North Carolina due to Tropical Storm Helene was issued. September 30th, 2024 the Town of Black Mountain declared a State of Emergency. FEMA-4827-DR, North Carolina Disaster Declaration as of September 28, 2024, defines the Incident Period as September 25, 2024 and continuing.

Section 3. Funding

This project is to be funded in whole or part by FEMA-4827-DR. FEMA's Office of Response and Recovery has determined that with the President's Emergency Declaration, exigent and emergency circumstances currently exist. FEMA Assistance for this project has been declared for 100% of approved expenditures.

Initial Funding for this project will need to be provided by a budget amendment from the General Fund Balance. Authorization of this project and applicable budget amendment

will result in the Town's fund balance falling below the 30% fund balance requirement set forth within the Town's Fund Balance Policy.

The fund balance will be restored to its policy requirements with the Ad Valorem revenues received from Buncombe County for September and October collections. General Funds not needed due to other funding sources will be returned to the general fund.

Section 4. Directives

The officers of the Town of Black Mountain are hereby directed to proceed with the federal and/or state grant project within the terms of the rules and regulations of those grants and the budget contained. The Town Manager is hereby directed to act on behalf of the Town Council in all matters associated with the project within the terms of all contracts, agreements, and legal requirements binding on the project and within limits of the funds appropriated.

Section 5. Revenues

The following anticipated Revenues are hereby adopted:

Budgeted Revenues	
Revenue Type	Anticipated Revenues
Transfer In	\$2,000,000.00
Total Funds	\$2,000,000.00

Section 6. Expenditures

The following anticipated appropriations are hereby adopted:

Budgeted Expenditures	
Expense Type	Anticipated Expenditures
Salaries	\$500,000.00
Contract Services	\$1,300,000.00
Emergency Preparedness	\$200,000
Total Expenditures	\$2,000,000.00

Section 7. Funding

Funds may be advanced from other Town of Black Mountain fund accounts for the purpose of making payments as due. Reimbursement requests should be made to any applicable grantor agency following the regulations and rules of the grant.

Section 8. Records and Reporting

The Finance Director is hereby directed to maintain within the Capital Project Fund sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the disclosure requirements of all the contractual agreements, if applicable.

Section 9. Official Copies

Copies of this Capital Project Ordinance shall be furnished to the Town Clerk and shall be held in the Finance Department for the direction in carrying out this project.

Section 10. Project Expiration

This project ordinance expires when the project has been completed and Project Funds have been obligated and expended for all project expenditures by the Town OR by the date set forth within the grant funding contract, if applicable, whichever occurs sooner.

Duly adopted this 7th day of October 2024.

TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN BUDGET AMENDMENT REPORT
BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of The Town of Black Mountain, North Carolina, that the following amendments be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

Adjustment Number	Summary	Description	Account Number	Account Name	Account Type	Amended Amount
BA25-000054	BAMEND - Hurricane Helene Grant Project	Transfer Fund Balance to Hurricane Helene	100-0000-48900	Appropriated Fund Balance	Revenue	-\$2,000,000.00
			100-7000-59510	Transfer Out	Expense	\$2,000,000.00
			425-8806-55021	Emergency Disaster Preparedness Expense	Expense	\$200,000.00
			425-8806-52020	Contract Services	Expense	\$1,300,000.00
			425-8806-50102	Salaries - Overtime	Expense	\$500,000.00
			425-8806-48590	Transfers In	Revenue	-\$2,000,000.00

Budget Amendment to Appropriate Fund Balance from General Fund for Replacement of Revenue Loss from Suspension of Building Permits and Fees through June 30, 2025.

The purpose of this item is to appropriate Fund Balance from the General Fund for replacement of revenue loss from suspension of building permits and fees in the amount of \$173,000.

Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller made a motion to approve the budget amendment as presented. A vote of 5-0 in favor.

TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN BUDGET AMENDMENT REPORT
BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of The Town of Black Mountain, North Carolina, that the following amendments be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

Adjustment Number	Summary	Description	Account Number	Account Name	Account Type	Amended Amount
BA25-000055	BAMEND - Suspend Permits and Fees	Appropriate Fund Balance for Additional Funding needed for the suspension of permits and fees for the remainder of the fiscal year	100-0000-48900	Appropriated Fund Balance	Revenue	-\$173,000.00
			100-7000-59510	Transfer Out	Expense	\$173,000.00
			210-4810-44410	Permits and Fees	Revenue	\$173,000.00
			210-7000-48590	Transfers In	Revenue	-\$173,000.00

Resolution Ratifying and Authorizing Execution of a Revision to the North Carolina Statewide Emergency Management Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement

Since it is not financially feasible for a local government to own, maintain and staff all of the resources that might be needed to respond to significant emergencies or disasters, local government leaders, the N.C. League of Municipalities, the N.C. Association of County Commissioners, and the N.C. Division of Emergency Management developed a model mutual aid and assistance agreement for statewide use. The mutual aid system is available on a voluntarily basis, which cities and counties may choose to join. The benefit of joining is having access to all of North Carolina's response capability, without incurring the costs to purchase or maintain an inventory of underused resources.

Every county in North Carolina and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians are signatories to the existing statewide agreement. The North Carolina Division of Emergency Management has

requested that all parties that are signatories to the existing agreement execute the 2023 revised version to reestablish a statewide standard for requesting or providing mutual aid assistance.

The agreement is modified from time to time. While there is no schedule for updates, it can be anticipated that after significant events, disasters, or changes in law, the agreement will be updated and future requests for approval will be made to the Board.

Council Member Doug Hay made a motion to approve the mutual aid agreement. A vote of 5-0 in favor. A copy of the mutual aid agreement is attached at the end of these minutes as "Appendix A."

NC Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network Mutual Aid & Assistance Agreement for Water and Wastewater Utilities (NC WaterWARN)

This Agreement is made and entered into by public and private Water and Wastewater Utilities in North Carolina that have, by executing this Agreement, manifested their intent to participate in an Intrastate Program for Mutual Aid and Assistance.

This Agreement is authorized under Section 160A-318 of the North Carolina General Statutes which provides that public and private Water and Wastewater Utilities may contract with each other to provide mutual aid and assistance in restoring water and sewer in the event of natural disasters or other emergencies.

Vice Mayor Archie Pertiller made a motion to approve the mutual aid and assistance agreement as presented. A vote of 5-0 in favor. A copy of the mutual aid agreement is attached at the end of these minutes as "Appendix B."

There being no further business, Mayor C. Michael Sobol adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

C. Michael Sobol, Mayor

ATTEST:

Wesley M. Barker, Town Clerk

Attachments: Appendix A & B

2023 STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

FOR THE CITY/COUNTY/TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN

THIS AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO BETWEEN THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, AND ITS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND BY EACH OF THE ENTITIES THAT EXECUTES AND ADOPTS THE UNDERSTANDINGS, COMMITMENTS, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS CONTAINED HEREIN:

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina is geographically vulnerable to a variety of natural disasters.

WHEREAS, Chapter 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes, entitled the North Carolina Emergency Management Act, recognizes this vulnerability and provides that its intended purposes are to:

1. Reduce vulnerability of people and property of this State to damage, injury, and loss of life and property;
2. Prepare for prompt and efficient rescue, care, and treatment of threatened or affected persons;
3. Provide for the rapid and orderly rehabilitation of persons and restoration of property;
4. Provide for cooperation and coordination of activities relating to emergency and disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 166A-19.12(1) the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management is delegated the powers and duties from the Governor and Secretary of Public Safety to coordinate the activities of all State agencies for emergency management within the State;

WHEREAS, in addition to the State, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recognized the importance of the concept of coordination between the State and local governments;

WHEREAS, under Chapter 166A and other chapters of the North Carolina General Statutes, entities entering into mutual aid and assistance agreements may include provisions for the furnishing and exchanging of supplies, equipment, facilities, personnel and services; and

WHEREAS, the entities which have chosen to become signatories to this Agreement wish to provide mutual aid and assistance amongst one another at the appropriate times.

THEREFORE, pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.72 and Article 20 of Chapter 160A, these entities agree to enter into this Agreement for reciprocal emergency management aid and

2023 STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

assistance, with this Agreement embodying the understandings, commitments, terms, and conditions for said aid and assistance, as follows:

SECTION I. DEFINITIONS

"Agreement" means this document, the North Carolina Statewide Emergency Management Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement.

"Aid and assistance" include personnel, equipment, facilities, services, and supplies.

"Authorized Representative" means a party's employee who has been authorized, in writing by that party, to request, to offer, or to otherwise provide assistance under the terms of this Agreement. The list of Authorized Representatives for each party executing this Agreement shall be attached to the executed copy of this Agreement. (In the event of a change in personnel, unless otherwise notified, the presumption will be that the successor to that position will be the authorized representative.)

"Disaster declaration" means a gubernatorial declaration that the impact or anticipated impact of an emergency constitutes a Type I, II, III disaster as defined in G.S. 166A-19.21(b)

"Emergency" means an occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or man-made accidental, military, paramilitary, terrorism, weather-related, public health, explosion-related, riot-related cause, or technological failure or accident, including, but not limited to, a cyber incident, an explosion, a transportation accident, a radiological accident, or a chemical or other hazardous material incident or which may be otherwise be defined in G.S. § 166A-19.3(6).

"Emergency Area" The geographical area covered by a state of emergency.

"Incident" means an occurrence, natural or manmade, that necessitates a response to protect life or property. In this Agreement, the word "incident" includes planned events as well as emergencies and/or disasters of all kinds and sizes.

"Local Emergency Management Agency" means a county agency charged with coordination of all emergency management activities for its geographical limits pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.15. It also means any incorporated municipalities emergency management agencies or joint county and incorporated municipalities emergency management agencies.

"Party" means a governmental entity which has adopted and executed this Agreement.

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“Planned Event” means an incident that is a scheduled nonemergency activity including but not limited to elections, sporting event, concert, parade, funeral coverage, or fairs.

"Provider" means the party which has received a request to furnish aid and assistance from another party in need (the "Recipient").

"Recipient" means the party setting forth a request for aid and assistance to another party (the "Provider").

“State of Emergency” means a finding that an emergency exists by the Governor or General Assembly acting under the authority in G.S. 166A-19.20 or by a governing body of a county or a municipality, or by a mayor or chair of the board of county commissioners acting under the authority of G.S. 166A.

SECTION II. INITIAL RECOGNITION OF PRINCIPLE BY ALL PARTIES; AGREEMENT PROVIDES NO

RIGHT OF ACTION FOR THIRD PARTIES

As this is a reciprocal contract, it is recognized that any party to this Agreement may be requested by another party to be a Provider. It is mutually understood that each party's foremost responsibility is to its own residents. The provisions of this Agreement shall not be construed to impose an unconditional obligation on any party to this Agreement to provide aid and assistance pursuant to a request from another party. Accordingly, when aid and assistance have been requested, a party may in good faith withhold the resources necessary to provide reasonable and adequate protection for its own community, by deeming itself unavailable to respond and so informing the party setting forth the request.

Given the finite resources of any jurisdiction and the potential for each party to be unavailable for aid and assistance at a given point in time, the parties mutually encourage each other to enlist other entities in mutual aid and assistance efforts and to enter into such agreements accordingly. Concomitantly, the parties fully recognize that there is a highly meritorious reason for entering into this Agreement, and accordingly shall attempt to render assistance in accordance with the terms of this Agreement to the fullest extent possible.

Pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.60 and as elaborated upon in Section X of this Agreement, all functions and activities performed under this Agreement are hereby declared to be governmental functions. Functions and activities performed under this Agreement are carried out for the benefit of the general public and not for the benefit of any specific individual or individuals. Accordingly, this Agreement shall not be construed as or deemed to be an Agreement for the benefit of any third parties or persons and no third parties or persons shall have any right of action under this Agreement for any cause whatsoever. All immunities provided by law shall be fully applicable as elaborated upon in Section X of this Agreement.

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SECTION III. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING ASSISTANCE

(i) Mutual aid and assistance shall not be requested unless Recipient deems its resources are inadequate to respond to an imminent or actual emergency. When Recipient becomes affected by an emergency, incident or planned event and deems its resources inadequate, it may request mutual aid and assistance by communicating the request to Provider, indicating the request is made pursuant to this Agreement. The request shall be followed up with a notification to the Division of Emergency Management's 24-Hour Watch whether directly, through WebEOC, or through the appropriate Division of Emergency Management Operations Regional Branch. The Division shall maintain a record of the notification.

A. REQUIRED INFORMATION: Each request for assistance shall include the following information, in writing or by any other available means, to the extent known:

1. Emergency Area and Status: A general description summarizing the condition of the community or emergency area (i.e., whether the emergency and/or disaster declaration is needed, imminent, in progress, or has already occurred) and of the damage sustained to date;
2. Services: Identification of the service function(s) for which assistance is needed and the type of assistance needed;
3. Infrastructure Systems: Identification of the type(s) of public infrastructure system for which assistance is needed (water and sewer, storm water systems, streets) and the type of work assistance needed;
4. Aid and Assistance: The amount and type of personnel, equipment, materials, and supplies needed and a reasonable estimate of the length of time they will be needed;
5. Provider's Traveling Employee Needs--Unless otherwise specified by Recipient, it is mutually understood that Recipient will provide for the basic needs of Provider's traveling employees. Recipient shall pay for all reasonable out-of-pocket costs and expenses of Provider's traveling employees, including, without limitation, transportation expenses for travel to and from the stricken area. Further, Recipient shall house and feed Provider's traveling employees at its (Recipient's) sole cost and expense. If Recipient cannot provide such food and/or housing at the emergency area, Recipient shall specify in its request for assistance that the Provider's traveling employees be self-sufficient.
6. Facilities: The need for sites, structures, or buildings outside Recipient's geographical limits to serve as relief centers or staging areas for incoming emergency goods and services; and

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Meeting Time and Place: An estimated time and a specific place for a representative of Recipient to meet the personnel and resources of any Provider.

B. STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE: Recipient shall be responsible for coordinating requests for state or federal assistance with its (Recipient's) Local Emergency Management Agency

SECTION IV. PROVIDER'S ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES AND ABILITY TO RENDER ASSISTANCE

When contacted by the Recipient/Local Emergency Management Agency, Provider's authorized representative shall assess Provider's own local situation in order to determine available personnel, equipment, and other resources. If Provider's authorized representative determines that Provider has available resources, Provider's authorized representative shall so notify the Recipient/Local Emergency Management Agency (whichever communicated the request). Provider shall complete a written acknowledgment, whether on the request form received from Recipient or on another form, regarding the assistance to be rendered (or a rejection of the request) and shall transmit it by the most efficient practical means to the Recipient/Local Emergency Management Agency for a final response. Provider's acknowledgment shall contain the following information:

1. In response to the items contained in the request, a description of the personnel, equipment, and other resources available;
2. The projected length of time such personnel, equipment, and other resources will be available to serve Recipient, particularly if the period is projected to be shorter than one week (as provided in the "Length of Time for Aid and Assistance" section [Section VI] of this Agreement.)

3. The estimated time when the assistance provided will arrive at the location designated by the Authorized Representative of the Requesting Party; and

4. The name of the person(s) to be designated as Provider's supervisor (pursuant to the "Supervision and Control" section [Section V] of this Agreement.)

Where a request has been submitted to the Local Emergency Management Agency, the Local Emergency Management Agency shall notify Recipient's authorized representative and forward the information from Provider. The Recipient/Local Emergency Management Agency shall respond to Provider's written acknowledgment by signing and returning a copy of the form to Provider by the most efficient practical means, maintaining a copy for its file.

SECTION V. SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

Provider shall designate one of its employees sent to render aid and assistance to Recipient as a supervisor or point of contact for equipment only missions. As soon as

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practicable, Recipient shall assign work tasks to Provider's supervisor, and unless specifically instructed otherwise, Recipient shall have the responsibility for coordinating communications between Provider's supervisor and Recipient. Recipient shall provide necessary credentials to Provider's personnel authorizing them to operate on behalf of Recipient.

Based upon such assignments from the Recipient, Provider's supervisor shall:

1. Have the authority to assign work and establish work schedules for Provider's personnel. Further, supervisor shall retain direct supervision and control of Provider's personnel, equipment, and other resources. Provider should be prepared to furnish communications equipment sufficient to maintain communications among its respective operating units, and if this is not possible, Provider shall notify Recipient accordingly;
2. Maintain daily personnel time records, material records, and a log of equipment hours;
3. Report work progress to Recipient at mutually agreed upon intervals.

SECTION VI. LENGTH OF TIME FOR AID AND ASSISTANCE; RENEWABILITY; RECALL

Unless otherwise provided, the duration of Provider's assistance shall be for an initial period of seven days, starting from the time of arrival. Thereafter, assistance may be extended in daily or weekly increments as the situation warrants, for a period agreed upon by the authorized representatives of Provider and Recipient.

As noted in Section II of this Agreement, Provider's personnel, equipment, and other resources shall remain subject to recall by Provider to provide for its own citizens if circumstances so warrant. Provider shall make a good faith effort to provide at least twenty-four (24) hours advance notification to Recipient of Provider's intent to terminate mission, unless such notice is not practicable, in which case as much notice as is reasonable under the circumstances shall be provided.

SECTION VII. REIMBURSEMENTS

Except as otherwise provided below, it is understood that Recipient shall pay to Provider all documented costs and expenses incurred by Provider as a result of extending aid and assistance to Recipient. The terms and conditions governing reimbursement for any assistance provided under this Agreement shall be in accordance with FEMA Public Assistance Guidelines in addition to the following provisions, unless otherwise agreed in writing by Recipient and Provider. Recipient shall be ultimately responsible for reimbursement of all eligible expenses. The Provider may waive some or all requirements for reimbursement, however such an agreement must be documented in the request and/or offer of assistance.

A. Personnel-- During the period of assistance, Provider shall continue to pay its employees according to its then prevailing ordinances, rules, and regulations. Recipient

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shall reimburse Provider for all direct and indirect payroll costs and expenses including travel expenses incurred during the period of assistance, including, but not limited to, employee retirement benefits as provided by Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). However, as stated in Section IX of this Agreement, Recipient shall not be responsible for reimbursing any amounts paid or due as benefits to Provider's personnel under the terms of the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act (Chapter 97 of the North Carolina General Statutes).

- B. Equipment-- Recipient shall reimburse the Providers for the use of equipment during the period of assistance according to either a pre-established local or state hourly rate or according to the actual replacement, operation, and maintenance expenses incurred. For those instances in which costs are reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the FEMA-eligible direct costs shall be determined in accordance with general policies for determining allowable costs which are established in 2 CFR 200, subpart E or other applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies as may be in effect at the time the expenses are incurred. Exceptions to those policies as allowed in 2 CFR 200, subpart E and 2 CFR 200.102 are explained in 44 C.F.R. 206.228 or other applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies as may be in effect at the time the expenses are incurred. Provider shall pay for all repairs to its equipment as determined necessary by its on-site supervisor(s) to maintain such equipment in safe and operational condition.

At the request of Provider, fuels, miscellaneous supplies, and minor repairs may be provided by Recipient, if practical. The total equipment charges to Recipient shall be reduced by the total value of the fuels, supplies, and repairs furnished by Recipient and by the amount of any insurance proceeds received by Provider.

- C. Materials And Supplies—Recipient shall reimburse Provider for all materials and supplies furnished and that are used or damaged by Recipient during the period of assistance, except for the costs of equipment, fuel and maintenance materials, labor, and supplies, which shall be included in the equipment rate established in subsection B of this section (Section VII), Recipient will not be responsible for costs where such damage is caused by gross negligence, willful and wanton misconduct, intentional misuse, or recklessness of Provider's personnel. Provider's personnel shall use reasonable care under the circumstances in the operation and control of all materials and supplies used during the period of assistance. The measure of reimbursement shall be determined in accordance with general policies for determining allowable costs which are established in 2 CFR 200, subpart E or other applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies as may be in effect at the time the expenses are incurred. Exceptions to those policies as allowed in 2 CFR 200, subpart E and 2 CFR 200.102 are explained in 44 C.F.R. 206.228 or other applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies as may be in effect at the time the expenses are incurred. In the alternative, the parties may agree that Recipient will replace, with like kind and quality as determined by Provider, Provider's materials and supplies used or damaged in a reasonable time. If such an agreement is made, it shall be reduced to writing and transmitted to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management.

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D. Record Keeping-- Recipient and North Carolina Division of Emergency Management personnel shall provide information, directions, and assistance for record-keeping to Provider's personnel. Provider shall maintain records and submit invoices for reimbursement by Recipient or the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management using the format used or required by FEMA publications, 2 C.F.R. Part 200 or other applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies as may be in effect at the time the expenses are incurred, applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, state and local laws and regulations.

E. Payment; Other Miscellaneous Matters as to Reimbursements-- The reimbursable costs and expenses with an itemized notice shall be forwarded as soon as practicable after the costs and expenses are incurred, but not later than sixty (60) days following the period of assistance, unless the deadline for identifying damage is extended in accordance with 44 C.F.R. Part 206 or other applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies as may be in effect at the time the expenses are incurred. Recipient shall pay the bill or advise of any disputed items, not later than sixty (60) days following the billing date. These time frames may be modified in writing signed by both parties by mutual agreement. This shall not preclude Provider or Recipient from assuming or donating, in whole or in part, the costs and expenses associated with any loss, damage, or use of personnel, equipment, and resources provided to Recipient.

F. Contracting – If recipient or provider contracts with a third party to perform any aid or assistance under the provisions of this agreement, then the entity shall follow any applicable local, state, or federal contracting requirements.

SECTION VIII. RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGED OF PROVIDER'S EMPLOYEES

Pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.60 whenever Provider's employees are rendering aid and assistance pursuant to this Agreement, such employees shall retain the same powers, duties, immunities, and privileges they would ordinarily possess if performing their duties within the geographical limits of Provider.

SECTION IX. PROVIDER'S EMPLOYEES COVERED AT ALL TIMES BY PROVIDER'S WORKER'S COMPENSATION POLICY

Recipient shall not be responsible for reimbursing any amounts paid or due as benefits to Provider's employees under the terms of the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act, Chapter 97 of the North Carolina General Statutes, due to personal injury or death occurring during the period such employees are engaged in the rendering of aid and assistance under this Agreement. It is mutually understood that Recipient and Provider shall be responsible for payment of such workers' compensation benefits only to their own respective employees. Further, it is mutually understood that Provider will be entirely responsible for the payment of workers' compensation benefits to its own respective employees pursuant to G.S. 97-51.

2023 STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT**SECTION X. IMMUNITY**

Pursuant to G.S. 166A-19.60 all activities performed under this Agreement are hereby declared to be governmental functions. Neither the parties to this Agreement, nor, except in cases of willful misconduct, gross negligence, or bad faith, their personnel complying with or reasonably attempting to comply with this Agreement or any ordinance, order, rule, or regulation enacted or promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this Agreement shall be liable for the death of or injury to persons or for damage to property as a result of any such activity.

SECTION XI. PARTIES MUTUALLY AGREE TO HOLD EACH OTHER HARMLESS FROM LIABILITY

To the extent allowed by applicable law, each party (as indemnitor) agrees to protect, defend, indemnify, and hold the other party (as indemnitee), and its officers, employees and agents, free and harmless from and against any and all losses, penalties, damages, assessments, costs, charges, professional fees, and other expenses or liabilities of every kind and arising out of or relating to any and all claims, liens, demands, obligations, actions, proceedings, or causes of action of every kind in connection with or arising out of indemnitor's negligent acts, errors and/or omissions. Indemnitor further agrees to investigate, handle, respond to, provide defense for, and defend any such claims, etc. at indemnitor's sole expense and agrees to bear all other costs and expenses related thereto. To the extent that immunity does not apply, each party shall bear the risk of its own actions, as it does with its day-to-day operations, and determine for itself what kinds of insurance, and in what amounts, it should carry. Each party understands and agrees that any insurance protection obtained shall in no way limit the responsibility to indemnify, keep, and save harmless the other parties to this Agreement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, to the extent that each party does not purchase insurance, it shall not be deemed to have waived its governmental immunity by law.

SECTION XII. ROLE OF THE DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Pursuant to GS 166A-19.12(19) and under this agreement, the responsibilities of the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management are: (1) to serve as the central depository for executed Agreements, to maintain a current listing of entities with their authorized representatives and contact information, and to provide this listing to each of the entities on an annual basis; (2) to coordinate the provision of mutual aid and assistance to a requesting party, pursuant to the provisions of this Agreement; (3) to keep a record of all requests for assistance and acknowledgments; (4) to report on the status of ongoing emergency or disaster-related mutual aid and assistance as appropriate; and (5) if the parties so designate, to serve as the eligible entity for requesting reimbursement of eligible costs from FEMA and provide information, directions, and assistance for record keeping pursuant thereto.

2023 STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT**SECTION XIII. AMENDMENTS**

Manner-- This Agreement may be modified at any time upon the mutual written consent of the Recipient and Provider Addition of Other Entities--Additional entities may become parties to this Agreement upon: (1) acceptance and execution of this Agreement; and (2) sending an executed copy of the Agreement to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management.

SECTION XIV. INITIAL DURATION OF AGREEMENT; RENEWAL; TERMINATION

This Agreement shall be binding for not less than one (1) year from its effective date, unless terminated upon at least sixty (60) days advance written notice by a party as set forth below. Thereafter, this Agreement shall continue to be binding upon the parties in subsequent years, unless canceled by written notification served personally or by registered mail upon the Director of North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, which shall provide copies to all other parties. The withdrawal shall not be effective until sixty (60) days after notice thereof has been sent by the Director of the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management to all other parties. A party's withdrawal from this Agreement shall not affect a party's reimbursement obligations or any other liability or obligation under the terms of this Agreement incurred prior to withdrawal hereunder. Once the withdrawal is effective, the withdrawing entity shall no longer be a party to this Agreement, but this Agreement shall continue to exist among the remaining parties.

SECTION XV. HEADINGS

The headings of various sections and subsections of this Agreement have been inserted for convenient reference only and shall not be construed as modifying, amending, or affecting in any way the express terms and provisions of this Agreement.

SECTION XVI. SEVERABILITY: EFFECT ON OTHER AGREEMENTS

Should any clause, sentence, provision, paragraph, or other part of this Agreement be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder of this Agreement. Each of the parties declares that it would have entered into this Agreement irrespective of the fact that any one or more of this Agreement's clauses, sentences, provisions, paragraphs, or other parts have been so declared invalid. Accordingly, it is the intention of the parties that the remaining portions of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect without regard to the clause(s), sentence(s), provision(s), paragraph(s), or other part(s) invalidated.

In the event that parties to this Agreement have entered into other mutual aid and assistance contracts, for example pursuant to Chapter 160A of the North Carolina General Statutes, those parties agree that to the extent a request for mutual assistance is made pursuant to this Agreement, those other mutual aid and assistance contracts are superseded by this Agreement.

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SECTION XVII. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Agreement shall take effect upon its approval by the entity seeking to become a signatory to this Agreement and upon proper execution hereof.

2023 STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the parties have caused this North Carolina Statewide Emergency Management Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement to be duly executed in its name and behalf by its Chief Executive Officer, who has signed accordingly with seals affixed and attested with concurrence of a majority of its governing board, as of the date set forth in this Agreement.

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT/DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

BY:

Eddie M. Buffaloe, Jr.
Secretary

Department of
Public Safety

Date:

BY:

William C. Ray, Director
Division of Emergency
Management

Date:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT

By:

Chief Executive Officer/Local
Government Name:

Title:

Date:

Witness:

APPROVED AS TO PROCEDURES:

BY:

Office of General Counsel/Department of Public Safety

Date:

2023 STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT**Attachment 1****List of Authorized Representatives to Contact for Emergency Assistance**

The Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement signed by _____ on _____ authorizes: _____ to maintain and update the primary and alternative representatives. The primary and alternatives may be updated as needed without the formal re-execution of the Statewide Mutual Aid agreement.

PRIMARY REPRESENTATIVE

NAME:

TITLE:

DAY PHONE:

NIGHT PHONE:

CELL PHONE:

FAX:

FIRST ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE

NAME:

TITLE:

DAY PHONE:

NIGHT PHONE:

CELL PHONE:

FAX:

SECOND ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE

NAME:

TITLE:

DAY PHONE:

NIGHT PHONE:

CELL PHONE:

FAX:

North Carolina Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network

Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement For Water and Wastewater Utilities

This Agreement is made and entered into by public and private Water and Wastewater Utilities in North Carolina that have, by executing this Agreement, manifested their intent to participate in an Intrastate Program for Mutual Aid and Assistance.

This Agreement is authorized under Section 160A-318 of the North Carolina General Statutes which provides that public and private Water and Wastewater Utilities may contract with each other to provide mutual aid and assistance in restoring water and sewer in the event of natural disasters or other emergencies.

ARTICLE I. **PURPOSE**

Recognizing that emergencies may require assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and supplies from outside the area of impact, the signatory utilities established an Intrastate Program for Mutual Aid and Assistance. Through the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program, Members coordinate response activities and share resources during emergencies whether localized to the utilities or a declared disaster. This Agreement sets forth the procedures and standards for the administration of the Intrastate Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

ARTICLE II. **DEFINITIONS**

A. Authorized Official— An employee or officer of a Member that is authorized by the Member's governing board or management to:

- request assistance;
- offer assistance;
- Refuse to offer assistance or;
- Withdraw assistance under this Agreement.

B. Disaster – An emergency event that reaches a specific financial threshold related to magnitude of loss and property damage.

C. Confidential Information – Information defined NCGS 132-1.2 as confidential information or NCGS 132-1.7 as sensitive public security information.

D. Emergency— An unanticipated and/or sudden natural or manmade event that requires immediate action and is, or is likely to be, beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of a Mutual Aid and Assistance Program Member.

E. Incident Command System (ICS) – A standardized on-scene emergency management system designed for use for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel procedures, and communications operating within a common organization structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents.

F. Indemnity – Security against hurt, loss, or damage. An exemption from incurred penalties or liabilities.¹

G. Indemnitee – A party to this Agreement that is entitled to be indemnified by another party to this Agreement pursuant to the terms of Article X.

H. Indemnitor – A party to this Agreement that is obligated to indemnify another party to this Agreement pursuant to the terms of Article X.

I. Large water and or wastewater utility— A utility that is represented with a population in excess of 10,000.

J. Member— Any public or private Water or Wastewater Utility that manifests intent to participate in the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program by executing this Agreement.

K. Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement – A formal agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries when required; either by an emergency that exceeds local resources or a disaster

L. National Incident Management System (NIMS) — A national, standardized approach to incident management and response that sets uniform processes and procedures for emergency response operations.

M. The North Carolina Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (NCWaterWARN) - A network of public and private water and wastewater utilities united under an agreement to provide and receive mutual aid and assistance to signatories to the agreement during emergencies ranging from those that may arise from declared disasters or are specific to a single utility.

N. Period of Assistance — A specified period of time when a Provider assists a Recipient. The period commences when personnel, equipment, materials, or supplies depart from a Provider's facility and ends when the resources return to their facility (portal to portal). All protections identified in the agreement apply during this period. The specified Period of Assistance may occur during response to or recovery from an emergency, as previously defined.

O. Provider — A Member that responds to a request for assistance under the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

P. Recipient — A Member who requests assistance under the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

¹ Merriam-Webster. Retrieved August 22, 2007, from Merriam -Webster.com website:
<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Q. Small water and or wastewater Utility— A utility is represented with a population less than 10,000.

R. Private Water Utility— An entity that is not a unit of government that owns or operates a water and/or wastewater utility, whether on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis.

S. Public Utility— A unit of government that owns or operates a water and/ or wastewater utility.

ARTICLE III. ADMINISTRATION

The Mutual Aid and Assistance Program shall be administered through the North Carolina Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (NCWaterWARN) Committee in coordination with the North Carolina Rural Water Association (NCRWA). The purpose of the NCMWaterWARN Committee is to provide coordination of the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program before, during, and after an emergency. The NCMWaterWARN Committee, under the leadership of an elected Chairperson, shall meet quarterly as deemed necessary by the Chair to address Mutual Aid and Assistance Program issues.

The administration of NCMWaterWARN will be through the NCMWaterWARN Committee. The committee shall consist of a chair and vice chair, an eastern regional section, a western regional section, and (3) At-Large members. The NCMWaterWARN Committee shall consist of an eastern regional section with three (3) seats representing large and small public water and wastewater utilities and private water systems. The western regional section shall consist of three (3) seats representing large and small public water and wastewater utilities and private water systems. Also, there shall be three (3) At-Large seats for additional representatives from either large and small public water and wastewater utilities or private water systems.

NCWaterWARN regional sections are divided along the NC Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) regional office areas. A map of the regional sections is included in Appendix A of this agreement.

Representatives from large and small public water and wastewater utilities and private utilities shall be elected at the NCMWaterWARN Annual Meeting. Election and voting procedures will be described in the NCMWaterWARN Ops Plan.

Under the leadership of the NCMWaterWARN Committee Chair, NCMWaterWARN Committee Members shall plan and coordinate emergency preparedness and response activities for the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program. The NCMWaterWARN Committee Chair (or his/her designee) shall maintain a master list of all members of the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

The NCMWaterWARN Committee shall elect a Chair and a Vice Chair. The first Chair and Vice Chair will serve a two (2) year term and subsequent Chairs and Vice Chairs will serve one (1) year thereafter.

The NCMWaterWARN Committee shall:

- A. Convene an annual meeting for members.
- B. Provide for the development and maintenance of a database of all participating utilities through one of the members, sponsor agencies, or participating agencies or associations.

- C. Meet as a NCWaterWARN Committee at least quarterly, as needed and at the discretion of the Chair, to address and resolve concerns, create and modify procedures and any additional policy or legal issues related to NCWaterWARN.
- D. Provide for the development and maintenance of a secure website.
- E. Include an advisory board in its meetings to provide input based on the expertise of their agency.

The additional responsibilities of the Chair are described throughout the agreement. Those duties will be highlighted in the agreement for review by the NCWaterWARN Committee and the Sponsors. Those duties will be listed together in the protocols.

The NCWaterWARN shall have an advisory board that consists of representatives from partner agencies and stakeholders. Representatives to the advisory board from the respective agencies shall be named by those agencies. The advisory board is not a voting member. NCWaterWARN Advisory Board may include at least one representative from the following agencies:

- North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality; Division of Water Resources; Public Water Supply Section
- North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality; Division of Water Resources; Water Quality Regional Operations Section
- North Carolina Section of the American Water Works Association and Water Environment Association
- North Carolina Rural Water Association
- North Carolina Waterworks Operators Association
- North Carolina Emergency Management
- North Carolina League of Municipalities
- Eastern Water and Wastewater Network
- Environmental Protection Agency Region IV
- Department of Homeland Security Protective Security Advisor

Other agencies may be invited to join or have representation on the advisory board at the discretion of the NCWaterWARN Committee.

ARTICLE IV. PROCEDURES

In coordination with other response partner agencies, *the* NCWaterWARN Committee shall develop operational and planning procedures for the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program. These procedures shall be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary.

ARTICLE V.
PRE-EVENT PLANNING

Members shall identify resources available for deployment and develop plans for housing and providing for the necessities and maintenance of personnel and equipment deployed to provide mutual aid and assistance when a request for assistance is made by the member.

In addition, Members shall provide training to their response personnel related to:

- NIMS compliance
- Mutual aid response protocols
- Required documentation for providing mutual aid and assistance and for receiving mutual aid and assistance

ARTICLE VI.
REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

Member Responsibility: Members shall identify an Authorized Official and alternates, provide contact information including 24-hour access, and maintain resource information made available by the utility for mutual aid and assistance response.

In the event of an Emergency, a Member's Authorized Official may request mutual aid and assistance from a participating Member. Requests for assistance can be made orally or in writing. When made orally, the request for personnel, equipment, materials, and supplies shall be prepared in writing as soon as practicable. Requests for assistance shall be directed to the Authorized Official of the participating Member. The Chair will be notified of all activations of the agreement. Specific protocols for requesting aid shall be provided in the required procedures (Article IV).

Prospective NCWaterWARN members must, if not already active, become and maintain an active membership with the North Carolina Rural Water Association (NCRWA) and must attach proof of its membership with NCRWA to this agreement. NCWaterWARN Members must also provide written notice to the acting NCWaterWARN Chairman of its termination of membership with NCRWA which also results in termination with its membership and benefits associated with NCWaterWARN. NCWaterWARN members are responsible for completing their system's profile information, once an account is assigned, in their member account on the current NCWaterWARN platform. Failure to comply may result in both an inaccurate member directory and omission from automated NCWaterWARN communications to the membership.

Response to a Request for Assistance: After a Member receives a request for assistance, the Authorized Official evaluates whether resources are available to respond to the request for assistance. Following the evaluation, the Authorized Representative shall inform, as soon as possible, the Recipient whether it has the resources to respond. If the Member is willing and able to provide assistance, the Member shall inform the Recipient about the type of available resources and the approximate arrival time of such assistance.

Discretion of Provider's Authorized Official: Execution of this Agreement does not create any duty to respond to a request for assistance. When a Member receives a request for assistance, the Authorized Official shall have absolute discretion as to the willingness to respond and/or availability of resources. An Authorized Member's decisions on the availability of resources shall be final.

ARTICLE VII. PROVIDER PERSONNEL

National Incident Management System: When providing assistance under this Agreement, the Recipient and Provider shall be organized and shall function under the National Incident Management System if State or Federal preparedness funding is desired. *Control:* Provider personnel shall remain under the direction and control of the Provider. The Recipient's Authorized Official shall coordinate response activities with the designated supervisor(s) of the Provider(s). Whenever practical, Provider personnel must be self-sufficient for up to 72 hours.

Food and Shelter: The Recipient shall supply reasonable food and shelter for Provider personnel. If the Recipient is unable to or fails to provide food and shelter for Responding personnel, the Provider's designated supervisor is authorized to secure the resources necessary to meet the needs of its personnel. The cost for such resources should not exceed the State per diem rates for that area without further justification of good faith efforts to secure accommodations within the per diem. The Recipient remains responsible for reimbursing the Provider for all costs associated with providing food and shelter, if such resources are not provided.

Communication: The Recipient shall provide Provider personnel with radio equipment as available, or radio frequency information to program existing radio, in order to facilitate communications with local responders and utility personnel.

Status: Unless otherwise provided by law, the Provider's officers and employees retain the same privileges, immunities, rights, duties, and benefits as provided in their respective jurisdictions.

Licenses and Permits: To the extent permitted by law, Provider personnel who hold licenses, certificates, or permits evidencing professional, mechanical, or other skills shall be allowed to carry out activities and tasks relevant and related to their respective credentials during the specified Period of Assistance. Members should comply with NIMS credentialing where applicable.

Right to Withdraw: The Provider's Authorized Official retains the right to withdraw some or all of its resources at any time. Notice of intention to withdraw must be communicated to the Recipient's Authorized Official as soon as possible.

ARTICLE VIII. COST REIMBURSEMENT

Unless otherwise mutually agreed in whole or in part, the Recipient shall reimburse the Provider for each of the following categories of costs incurred while providing aid and assistance during the specified Period of Assistance. Such cost may include damage or loss to equipment.

Personnel: Provider personnel are to be paid for assigned duty during a specified Period of Assistance (refer to definition of period of assistance in Article II) according to the terms provided in their employment contracts or other conditions of employment. Either Member may require Provider's personnel to observe a rest period prior to travel back to the Provider's base of operations to ensure safety of personnel. The Provider designated supervisor(s) must keep accurate records of work performed by personnel during the specified Period of Assistance. Recipient reimbursement to the Provider must consider all personnel costs, including salaries or hourly wages, costs for fringe benefits, and indirect costs.

Equipment: The Recipient shall reimburse the Provider for the use of equipment during a specified Period of Assistance, including but not limited to, reasonable rental rates, all fuel,

lubrication, maintenance, transportation, and loading/unloading of loaned equipment. All equipment shall be returned to the Provider in similar condition to its condition at the time of the request for mutual aid and assistance. As a minimum, rates for equipment use must be based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Schedule of Equipment Rates. If a Provider uses rates different from those in the FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates, the Provider must provide such rates in writing to the Recipient prior to supplying resources. Mutual agreement on rates other than FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates must be reached in writing prior to dispatch of the equipment. Reimbursement for equipment not referenced on the FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates must be developed based on actual recovery of costs. If Provider must lease a piece of equipment while its equipment is being repaired, Recipient shall reimburse Provider for such rental costs.

Materials and Supplies: The Recipient must reimburse the Provider in kind or at actual replacement cost, plus handling charges, for use of expendable or non-returnable supplies. The Provider must not charge direct fees or rental charges to the Recipient for other supplies and reusable items that are returned to the Provider in a clean, damage-free condition. Reusable supplies that are returned to the Provider with damage must be treated as expendable supplies for purposes of cost reimbursement.

Payment Period: The Provider must provide an itemized bill to the Recipient for all expenses it incurred as a result of providing assistance under this Agreement. The Provider must send the itemized bill to the authorized official not later than ninety (90) days following the end of the Period of Assistance. The Recipient must pay the bill in full on or before the one hundred eightieth (180th) day following the billing date. Unpaid bills become delinquent upon the one hundred eighty-first (181st) day following the billing date, and, once delinquent, the bill accrues interest at the rate of prime, as reported by the *Wall Street Journal*, plus two percent (2%) per annum.

Records – Each Provider and their duly authorized representatives shall have access to a Recipient's books, documents, notes, reports, papers, and records which are directly pertinent to this Agreement for the purposes of reviewing the accuracy of a cost bill or making a financial, maintenance, or regulatory audit. Each Recipient and their duly authorized representatives shall have access to a Provider's books, documents, notes, reports, papers, and records which are directly pertinent to this Agreement for the purposes of reviewing the accuracy of a cost bill or making a financial, maintenance, or regulatory audit. Such records shall be maintained and made accessible for at least three (3) years or longer where required by law.

**ARTICLE IX.
DISPUTES**

Any claim arising out of or relating to this agreement shall be subject to mediation as a condition precedent to the institution of legal or equitable proceedings by any Member. The parties shall share the mediator's fee and any filing fees equally. Mediation shall be held in the County of the Providing Member if a place has not been mutually agreed upon. Agreements reached in mediation shall be enforceable as settlement agreements in any court of competent jurisdiction. Claims not resolved by mediation shall be decided by a court of competent jurisdiction unless the parties mutually agree otherwise.

**ARTICLE X.
LIABILITY**

Each Member shall be responsible for any and all claims, demand, suits, actions, damages and causes of action related to or arising out of or in any way connected with its own actions, and the actions of its personnel, in providing mutual aid and assistance rendered or performed pursuant to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE XI.
INDEMNIFICATION**

To the extent permitted by applicable law, in the event of a liability, claim, demand, action, or proceeding of whatever kind or nature arises out of a specified Period of Assistance, the Members who receive and provide assistance during said Period of Assistance shall indemnify and hold harmless those other Members, NCWaterWARN Committee and Sponsor Agencies which had no involvement with the transaction or occurrence that is the subject of the aforementioned claim, action, demand, or other proceeding of whatever kind or nature is limited to execution of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE XII.
WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS**

Recipient shall not be responsible for reimbursing any amounts paid or due as benefits to Provider's employees under the terms of the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act, Chapter 97 of the General Statutes, due to personal injury or death occurring during the period of time such employees are engaged in the rendering of aid and assistance under this Agreement. It is mutually understood that Recipient and Provider shall be responsible for payment of such workers' compensation benefits only to their own respective employees. Further, it is mutually understood that Provider will be entirely responsible for the payment of workers' compensation benefits to its own respective employees pursuant to G.S. 97-51.

ARTICLE XIII.
NOTICE

A Member who becomes aware of a claim or suit that in any way, directly or indirectly, contingently or otherwise, affects or might affect other Members of this Agreement shall provide prompt and timely notice to the Members who may be affected by the suit or claim. Each Member reserves the right to participate in the defense of such claims or suits as necessary to protect its own interests.

ARTICLE XIV.
CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Pursuant to NCGS 132-1.7, and to the extent permitted by applicable law, any Member shall maintain in the strictest confidence and shall take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent the disclosure of any confidential information shared between Members under this Agreement. If any Member, third party, or other entity requests or demands, by subpoena or otherwise, that a Member disclose any confidential information disclosed under this Agreement, the Member shall immediately notify the owner of the confidential information and shall take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent the disclosure of any confidential information.

ARTICLE XV.
EFFECTIVE DATE

This Agreement shall be effective after both the Water and/or Wastewater Utility's authorized representative executes the Agreement and presents proof of dual membership with North Carolina Rural Water Association (NCRWA). An executed copy will be provided to the NCWaterWARN Committee Chair as soon as possible.

ARTICLE XVI.
WITHDRAWAL

A Member may withdraw from this Agreement by providing written notice of its intent to withdraw to NCWaterWARN Committee Chair. Withdrawal takes effect sixty (60) days after the NCWaterWARN Committee Chair receives notice.

Membership may be suspended or revoked by the NCWaterWARN Committee for failure to comply with the Articles of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE XVII.
MODIFICATION**

Modifications to this Agreement may be made to incorporate programmatic operational changes to support the Agreement. Modifications require a two-thirds majority vote of Members. The NCWaterWARN Committee Chair must provide written notice to all Members of proposed modifications to this Agreement sixty (60) days in advance of the vote. The NCWaterWARN Committee Chair must provide written notice to all members of approved modifications to this Agreement. Approved modifications take effect sixty (60) days after the date upon which notice of the approved modifications are sent to the Members.

No provision of this Agreement may be modified, altered, or rescinded by individual parties to the Agreement.

**ARTICLE XVIII.
SEVERABILITY**

The Members agree that if any term or provision of this Agreement is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal or in conflict with any law, the validity of the remaining terms and provisions shall not be affected, and the rights and obligations of the parties shall be construed and enforced as if the Agreement did not contain the particular term or provision held to be invalid.

**ARTICLE XIX PRIOR
AGREEMENTS**

This Agreement supersedes all prior Agreements between Members to the extent that such prior Agreements are inconsistent with this Agreement.

**ARTICLE XX. MULTIPLE
AGREEMENTS**

When multiple mutual aid and assistance agreements exist between two Members, if inconsistencies exist between the agreements, the conditions of this Agreement take precedence except by mutual written acceptance of an alternate agreement of both Members for that specific event.

**ARTICLE XXI.
PROHIBITION ON THIRD PARTIES AND ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS/DUTIES**

This Agreement is for the sole benefit of the Members and no person or entity must have any rights under this Agreement as a third-party beneficiary. Assignments of benefits and delegations of duties created by this Agreement are prohibited and must be without effect.

ARTICLE XXII.
INTRASTATE AND INTERSTATE MUTUAL AID AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

To the extent practicable, Members of this Agreement shall participate in Mutual Aid and Assistance activities conducted under the North Carolina Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement and the Interstate Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Members may voluntarily agree to participate in an interstate Mutual Aid and Assistance Program for water and wastewater utilities through this Agreement if such a Program were established.

Now, therefore, in consideration of the covenants and obligations set forth in this Agreement, the Water and Wastewater Utility listed here manifests its intent to be a Member of the Intrastate Mutual Aid and Assistance Program for Water and Wastewater Utilities by executing this Agreement on this _____ day of _____ year of _____.

Legal Name of Water/Wastewater Utility: _____

Authorized Representative

Title

Please Print Name