

Budget Message  
2026-2027

Presented herein is the Town of Pinetops Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. The budget is balanced in its entirety as is required by the North Carolina General Statutes. The budget is a plan for the Town activities for the upcoming year. The budget continues our services at the same level as the current year.

The Town of Pinetops proposes no raise to the current tax rate of \$.58 per hundred dollars of assessed valuation. The rate is based on a total valuation of property for the purposes of taxation of \$ 65,595,000 and an estimated rate of collection of 93.88%. Back in 2020 the town contracted with Edgecombe County to collect its taxes to ensure the town remains aggressive with its collection.

The Town of Pinetops charges its customers a sanitation fee which covers the cost of collecting and disposing of garbage, bulk items, and yard debris. Even with increased gas prices the town proposes no increase in the sanitation fee. The town will need to review rates yearly to see if any adjustment needs to be made.

The Town of Pinetops does propose a 4.50% electricity rate increase. The electricity rates increased last fiscal year due to the City of Wilson increasing its electricity rate to the town, which meant the town was forced to increase the rates for our customers. Due to the City of Wilson increase last year, the town held off on the 1.75% rate increase as suggested by the NCRWA rate study. However, this year the town will need to implement this increase plus the 2.75% rate increase as suggested by the rate study. The suggested rate increases from the NCRWA rate study covers a reserve/contingency needed for depreciation and infrastructure costs. Residential Customers will pay a base charge of \$15.49 a month. The cost per KWH will be \$0.15424. Commercial Customers will pay a base charge of \$19.78 a month. Commercial customers who use 0-1400 KWH pay \$0.22541/KWH. Customers who use over 1400KWH pay \$0.14609/KWH.

Currently the budget doesn't propose any water increases but does propose a rate increase of 5.75% in the sewer. This increase applies to both inside and outside sewer customers. The 5.75% increase will be applied to both the Basic Charge and cost/1000gals. on each tier. The last sewer increase was in 2025. Moving forward the Board may have to look at implementing additional increases at specified times to help offset the expenses associated with ongoing infrastructure issues. The town has been classified as a distressed unit meaning it needs to look at ways to develop a short-term and long-term plan for infrastructure repair, maintenance, and management. The town will need to implement long-term financial management to ensure the public water system and wastewater system will generate enough revenue to adequately fund management, operations, personnel, and appropriate levels of maintenance.

The budget does contain a Storm Water Fee of \$2.00 per customer per month for water customers within the town limits. This fee was implemented on July 1, 2022, to help deal with storm water issues throughout town such as drainage.

This fiscal year, employees will receive their dental and vision insurance through MetLife. The dental increased by 6%, the vision had no rate increase. The employee's health insurance will be through BCBS and TransAmerica GAP Plan. The health insurance will increase by 10%. The year before last the town had to seek new providers since the NC League of Municipalities no longer offered coverage.

Currently, the proposed budget does contain a 2.5% COLA for employees. The COLA is being implemented due to the 2026 inflation forecast centering between 2.4% and 2.8%. The town proposed adding a full-time position to the Public Works Department as well as a full-time position for the office in the upcoming fiscal year.

The proposed budget does contain several debt payments. Debt payments in the general fund consist of the garbage/recycle truck as well as a portion of two police vehicle grants. The annual general fund cost of the USDA grant/loan is \$60,936. Debt payments in the electric fund consist of the remaining portion of the two police vehicle/public works grants. The annual electric fund cost of the USDA grant/loan is \$10,751. The water & sewer department carries the biggest annual debt payment load for the town. The annual cost of the NCDEQ loan is \$99,324. This debt is comprised of rehab on the Pinetops 200,000 gallons and Crisps 100,000 gallons elevated water tanks as well as the replacement of Crisps Well #4 & installation of approximately 1,050 Antenna for conversion to a drive-by meter read system. Debt in the water & sewer fund could see an increase in the upcoming years due to the age of the system. The town is looking into qualifying for a \$4,000,000 grant/loan from DEQ for WWTP Rehabilitation Project. This project would require pre-approval from the Local Government Commission since the amount is over \$1,000,000.

The total 2026-2027 proposed budget is \$ 5,345,364 which is a increase of \$ 90,987. The proposed inter-fund transfer for FY 2026-2027 is \$ 312,924 which is a decrease of \$ 44,824 over last year. The amount transferred from the electric fund to general fund remains high, which is one of the main reasons a town gets on the Local Government Commission (UAL) Unit Assistance List.

The town needs to focus more in the upcoming fiscal year and beyond on ways to help control the increasing expenditures in the general fund. The town's main objective should be to create a balanced budget within each fund without any inter-fund transfers being needed or having to rely on the appropriated fund balance. The town should not rely on transfers as a revenue source to balance the budget each year. By continuing this practice, the town is not only jeopardizing the net position of the enterprise funds but also depleting the Appropriated Fund Balance in the General Fund. At the end of the day the town is a business and must operate itself as such.

There is no doubt the town will continue to face tough decisions in the upcoming years, not only trying to control the increasing expenses and infrastructure problems facing small towns but doing this without jeopardizing the services it currently provides its citizens.

As always, the Town Board and staff will continue to strive to provide services to the citizens of Pinetops by the most effective means possible. Even though we are facing uncertain times and having to make some tough decisions we can and will make it through, together.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Keesler, Finance Officer

Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Town of Pinetops Budget Ordinance

WHEREAS, the Town Finance Officer prepared and presented a proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Town of Pinetops budget at the June 2nd ,2026 Board of Commissioners meeting, and

WHEREAS, the Town properly advertised and held a public hearing on the proposed budget on June 25, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners meeting room, and

WHEREAS, the proposed budget has been available for public inspection in Town Hall for all citizens to review.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE TOWN OF PINETOPS THAT:

1. That for the purpose of financing the Town of Pinetops, North Carolina for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 that the following appropriations of expenses are hereby made:

**GENERAL FUND**

<u>DEPARTMENTS</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT TOTALS</u>
Administration	155,303
Governing Body	26,709
Fire	49,850
Police	757,920
Safety Telecommunicators	118,637
Streets	80,212
Sanitation	132,636
Debt Payments	60,937
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$1,382,204</b>

**ELECTRIC FUND**

Electric Expenses	2,589,707
Safety Telecommunicators	118,637
Debt Payments	10,752
Transfer to General Fund	312,924
<b>TOTAL ELECTRIC FUND</b>	<b>\$3,032,020</b>

<b>WATER &amp; SEWER FUND</b>	
Water Expenses	375,937
Sewer Expenses	391,538
Storm Water Management Costs	14,340
Debt Payments	99,325
<b>TOTAL WATER &amp; SEWER FUND</b>	<b>\$881,140</b>

**POWELL BILL FUND ALLOCATION** \$ 50,000

**TOTAL ALL FUNDS EXPENDITURES** \$5,345,364

- For the purpose of raising revenue to defray expenses for the above services the Board of Commissioners hereby levies a tax of fifty-eight cents (\$0.58) on each one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of the assessed valuation of real and personal property within the corporate limits of the Town of Pinetops. These taxes hereby levied shall be due and collectible on September 1, 2026.
- There is hereby levied an annual municipal vehicle tax at the rate of \$2 per registered vehicle with an address in Pinetops City Limits; for the purpose of raising the revenue for any lawful purpose by the municipality as authorized by NCGS 20-97.
- The following revenues are hereby appropriated:

<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<u><b>REVENUES</b></u>
Property Taxes	413,000
Local Option Sales Tax	15,300
State-Shared Disbursements	405,300
Sales Tax Refund	16,000
Garbage	167,835
Other General Revenue	51,845
Electric Transfer to General	312,924
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$1,382,204</b>

<b>ELECTRIC FUND</b>	
Electricity Sales	2,825,500
Electric Sales Tax	118,000
Electric Utility Franchise Tax	17,500
Other Electric Revenue	71,020
<b>TOTAL ELECTRIC FUND</b>	<b>\$3,032,020</b>

<b>WATER &amp; SEWER FUND</b>	
Water & Sewer Sales	858,000

Storm Water Fees	14,340
Other Water & Sewer Revenue	11,800
<b>TOTAL WATER &amp; SEWER FUND</b>	<b>\$881,140</b>

<b>POWELL BILLS FUND ALLOCATION</b>	50,000
<b>TOTAL ALL FUNDS REVENUE</b>	<b>\$5,345,364</b>

5. The Finance Officer is hereby authorized to make transfers of appropriated funds between items listed above. Allocations between funds must be reported to the Board of Commissioners.
6. Adopted this the \_\_\_\_ th day of June, 2026.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tammy Keesler, Finance Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda Harrell, Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# FEE SCHEDULE

Effective 07/01/2026

NOTARY FEES	\$ 10.00 G.S. 10B-31
FAX	\$ 1.00 PER PAGE
XEROX COPIES	\$ 1.00 PER PAGE
FINGERPRINTING/POLICE	\$ 25.00
VEHICLE UNLOCK/POLICE	\$ 25.00
CIVIL CITATIONS/POLICE	\$100.00
POLICE REPORTS	\$ 5.00
SANITATION FEE	\$ 25.00 Garbage, Bulk, Leaves & Limbs
LATE FEE	\$ 20.00
DELINQUENT FEE	\$ 45.00
ZONING PERMIT	\$ 25.00
SPECIAL USE PERMIT	\$125.00
AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE,MAP,TEXT	\$200.00
RETURN CHECK FEE	\$ 35.00 G.S. 25-3-506
SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION	\$ 25.00
CEMETERY PLOTS:	\$700.00 RESIDENTIAL \$900.00 NON-RESIDENTIAL
COMM. BLDG. RENTAL DEPOSIT	\$225.00 + \$50 Refundable Deposit \$300.00 + Deposit (Non-Residential/Business) \$400.00 + Deposit Out of Town Business
WATER TAP FEES – INSIDE	\$1,350.00
WATER TAP FEES – OUTSIDE	\$1,400.00
SEWER TAP FEES – INSIDE	\$1,000.00
SEWER TAP FEES – OUTSIDE	\$1,250.00
SECURITY LIGHT	\$ 150.00
SECURITY LIGHT WITH POLE	\$ 250.00
DAMAGE TO TOP METER SENSOR	\$ 50.00 1 <sup>ST</sup> DAMAGE NO CHARGE
DAMAGE TO BOTTOM METER	\$250.00 1 <sup>ST</sup> DAMAGE NO CHARGE
UTILITY DEPOSITS :	
HOME OWNER	\$ 75.00 ELECTRIC      \$ 50.00 WATER
RENTAL PROPERTY	\$350.00 ELECTRIC      \$125.00 WATER

COMMERCIAL	\$450.00 ELECTRIC	\$125.00 WATER
RETURN CUSTOMER AFTER 90 DAYS (LEFT OWNING UTILITY BILL)	\$425.00 ELECTRIC	\$175.00 WATER
TEMPORARY SERVICE	\$ 50.00	

**NON-COMPLIANCE ZONING ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS :**

1st OFFENSE	\$ 50.00 PER DAY IN NON-COMPLIANCE
2 <sup>nd</sup> OFFENSE	\$100.00 PER DAY IN NON-COMPLIANCE
3 <sup>rd</sup> OFFENSE	\$250.00 PER DAY IN NON-COMPLIANCE
SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES	\$500.00 PER DAY IN NON-COMPLIANCE

Adopted this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 2026

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tammy Keesler, Finance Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda Harrell, Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_