MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PRE-AGENDA MEETING

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a pre-agenda meeting on Monday, November 3, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, Burke County Services Building, 110 N. Green Street, Entrance E, in Morganton, North Carolina. The meeting was streamed live on the County's YouTube channel, BurkeCountyNC, and it was broadcast on the local cable systems. The agenda, in its entirety, was posted to the County's website, www.burkenc.org, several days prior to the meeting. Pursuant to Resolution No. 2024-17, adopted and effective on August 20, 2024, the Burke County Board of Commissioners conferred upon itself all the power, duties, and responsibilities of the Board of Health and the Social Services Board. Those present were:

COMMISSIONERS:
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Phil Smith, Vice Chairman
Brian Barrier
Randy Burns
Mike Stroud

STAFF:
Brian Epley, County Manager
Margaret Pierce, Finance Director/Deputy County Manager
Dylan Laws, Wilson, Lackey, Rohr & Hall P.C.
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brittain called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended, with the removal of Consent Item No. 8.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Phil Smith, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeff Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

PRESENTATIONS

BCUW — PROCLAMATION FOR BURKE COUNTY NONPROFIT DAY

Abigail Taylor, Marketing & Campaign Manager, Burke County United Way, requested approval of a proclamation declaring December 2nd as 1BurkeGives Day in Burke County. An initiative of Burke County United Way, 1BurkeGives, is a 24-hour day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration.

This will be the 6th annual event, the first of which was in 2020 during the Covid Pandemic. There are 32 nonprofits slated to participate this year.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments and expressed appreciation to Burke County United Way for organizing the event and for the positive impact it has on numerous local nonprofits. There being nothing further, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CM - FOSTER CARE INTRODUCTION OF BEVERLY MORTON

Brian Epley, County Manager, announced that he will introduce Beverly Morton, a member of the first class of the 2025 Citizens Academy, who was a foster care mom for many years, to share her lived experience at the regular meeting.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CM - RECOGNITION OF THE GRADUATING CLASS OF THE 2025 CITIZENS ACADEMY

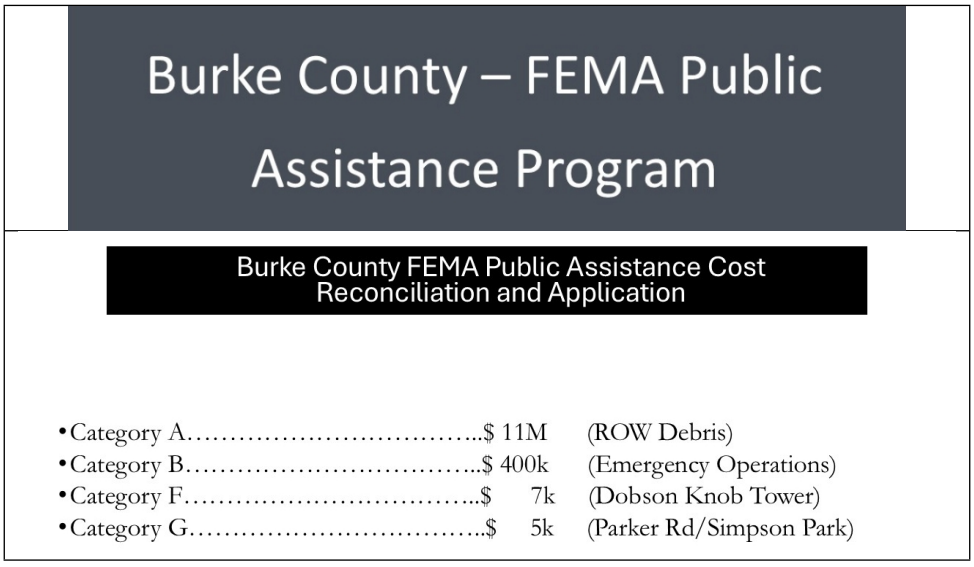
Brian Epley, County Manager, requested that the Board recognize the 2025 Citizens Academy graduating class at their regular meeting.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

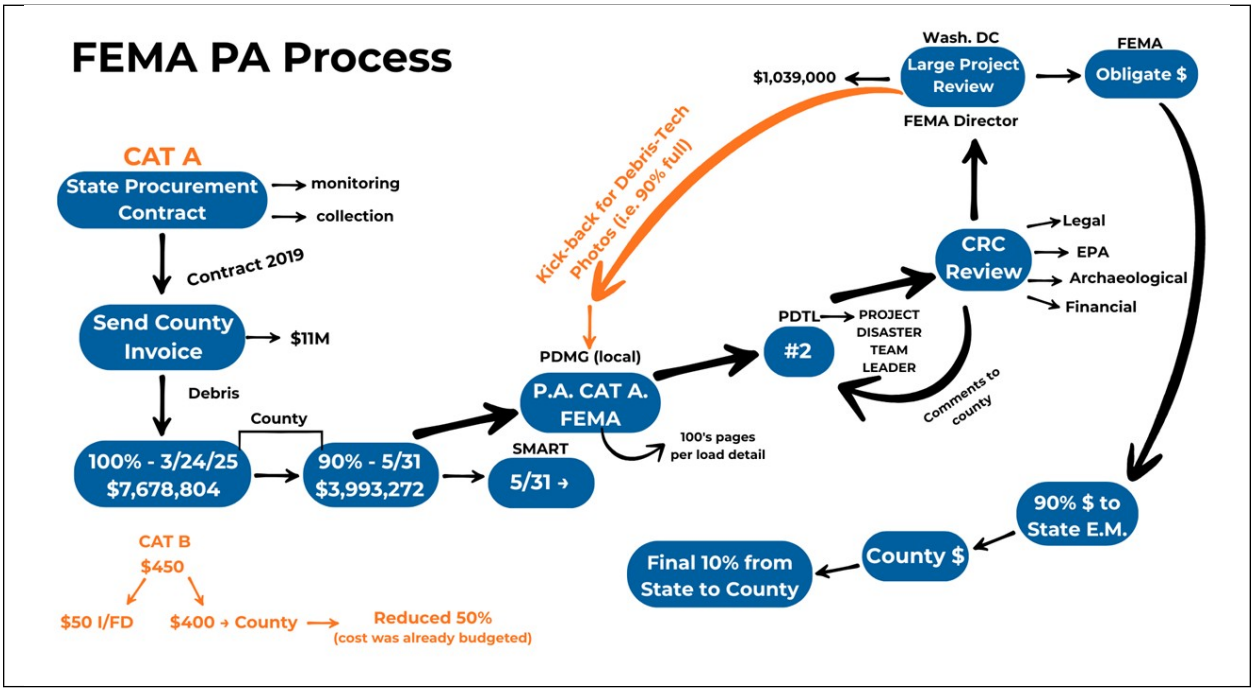
CM - FEMA PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROCESS UPDATE

Brian Epley, County Manager, provided an update on the FEMA public assistance process as follows:



Mr. Epley advised that FEMA disallowed 50 percent of the Emergency Operations Category B expenses, determining that the employee time claimed was a budgeted expense. He noted that this determination was inconsistent with the County's understanding of FEMA's Public Assistance

policy guidance. He further stated that the rules shifted throughout the process, with the application manual revised two (2) to three (3) times and at least 12 to 15 changes in the County's local FEMA project manager.



Mr. Epley provided an overview of the FEMA Public Assistance process and an update on the County's reimbursement status. He explained that Burke County used pre-approved state emergency contracts for debris collection and monitoring, which allowed work to begin immediately after the storm. The County's costs were divided into two (2) phases: the first six (6) months totaled $7,678,804, fully reimbursable by FEMA due to a temporary 100% reimbursement policy; the subsequent $3,993,272 was 90% federally reimbursable, with the remaining 10% covered by the State.

The process begins with the County working with the local Project Disaster Management Group (PDMG) to compile extensive documentation for each project. Applications then move to a FEMA Project Disaster Team Leader for initial review, followed by a four-part review at the FEMA Cost Review Committee (CRC), including legal, financial, and technical compliance. For large projects—over $1,039,000, such as Burke County's $11 million application—FEMA performs a Large Project Review at the federal level. Once approved, FEMA provides 90% of funds to the State for disbursement to the County, with the State covering the final 10%.

Mr. Epley noted that Burke County reached the Large Project Review stage but was returned for additional review due to FEMA questions regarding debris volume measurements, affecting roughly 43% of invoices. He emphasized that the process is highly detailed, involves multiple layers of review, and has taken approximately 14 months, but the County continues working with FEMA and the monitoring contractor to resolve outstanding issues and move toward final obligation and reimbursement.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments.

Commissioner Stroud commented on broader challenges with delayed state and federal payments, noting that complex government processes can create financial strain for contractors and others awaiting compensation. Commissioner Burns asked whether Congressman Moore's office had been engaged regarding these issues. Mr. Epley confirmed that contact had been made and that progress followed. Commissioner Barrier inquired about the potential impact on investment earnings from approximately $11 million currently outstanding, questioning whether the County could see a significant loss in investment return. Mr. Epley responded that while a material loss in the hundreds of thousands of dollars was unlikely, the unplanned expenditure reduced cash on hand and therefore limited investment capacity. Combined with declining interest rates, he noted that some reduction in investment return should be expected.

There being no further discussion, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

EM - PRESENTATION OF LIFESAVER AWARDS

James Robinson, Emergency Services Director, requested that the Board recognize three (3) young citizens for their lifesaving efforts and take a commemorative photo at their regular meeting.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

HEALTH - PRESENTATION OF THE 2025 COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Chairman Brittain announced that Miranda Smith, Public Health Educator/PIO, will present the Community Health Assessment at the regular meeting.

Additional information from the agenda packet:

> A Community Health Assessment (CHA) is a way for the community to come together to look at the biggest health challenges people face in their county. It gathers input from many voices—including those who are often overlooked—to make sure everyone is represented. The CHA helps identify health problems, uncover gaps or inequalities, and guide decisions about where to focus resources. In North Carolina, every health department is required to complete a CHA every three (3) to four (4) years. The results lead to a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which sets goals and tracks progress, so the community can work together toward better health for all. The CHA cycle occurs every three (3) years, with the last CHA occurring in 2022.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

CD - ZONING MAP AMENDMENT, ZMA 2025-06 & PUBLIC HEARING - 6:00 P.M.
Patrick Dickinson, Planner, presented a very brief overview of the following rezoning request:

Rezoning Request: ZMA 2025-06
Applicant: Country Squire Leasing LLC
PIN: 2772-35-7468
Address: 2893 US 70, Connelly Springs, NC 28612
Request: Rezone a 4.78-acre parcel from Residential Two (R-2) to General Business (G-B)

REQUEST:
The Community Development Department received a rezoning application from Country Squire Leasing Co., LLC, requesting to rezone their parcel totaling approximately 4.78 acres from the current zoning of Residential Two (R-2) to General Business (G-B). The applicant stated that they would like to rezone the property to general business, as it was a motor vehicle service station and currently hosts facilities that are retail and business in nature. The parcel for consideration was once combined with the adjoining parcel that is currently zoned as General Business.

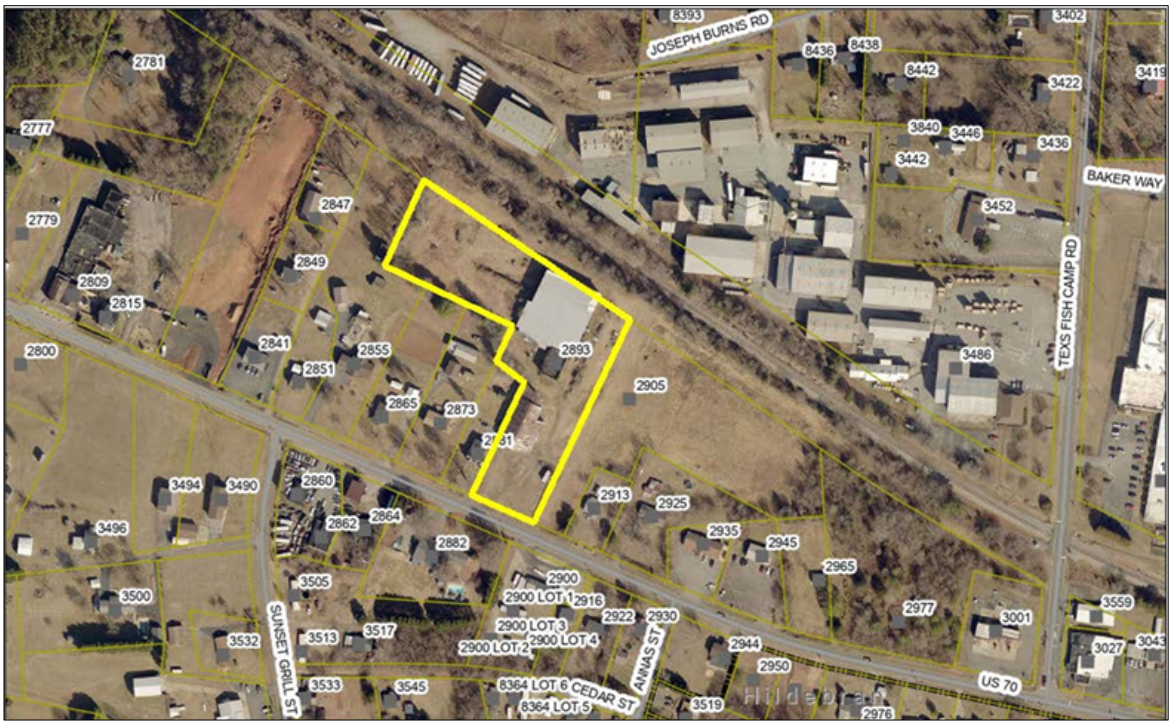
SITE ANALYSIS AND SURROUNDING AREA:
The subject parcel contains unoccupied structures previously used for business and retail purposes. It is located within the Icard Township and falls under the Icard Fire District. Access to the parcel is provided by a private driveway connecting to U.S. Highway 70, a state-maintained roadway.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:

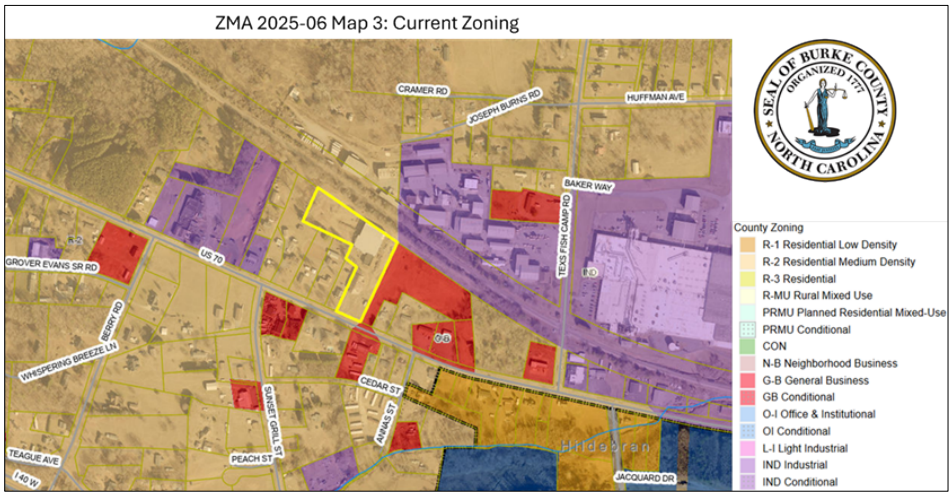
Direction	Current Zoning	Existing Land Use
North	R-2	Lumber Yard Parking & Storage
South	R-2/G-B	Single Family Residential/ Retail
East	G-B	Vacant
West	R-2	Single Family Residential

This parcel is in a historically "mixed-use" area on US 70 in Connelly Springs. The surrounding uses vary from industrial use at the Cramer Lumber Mill, retail uses such as automotive sales and service, and single-family residences.

SATELLITE & EXISTING SURROUNDING LAND USE



ZONING CONTEXT



SITE PHOTOS



Current Zoning (R-2):
The Residential Two (R-2) zone in Burke County is explicitly residential in nature but less restrictive on housing type than R-1. Permitted uses include allowing stick-built and modular single-family homes, double-wide (class A) manufactured homes, and duplexes. Certain uses, such as golf courses, parks, and country clubs, require a special use permit.

Proposed Zoning - General Business (G-B):
The General Business District has been established to provide suitable locations for commercial activities that serve the public. Allows most retail, entertainment, and service uses. More intensive uses in this district requires a special use permit (e.g., kennels, exterminators, special event grounds, retail spaces greater than 100,000 square feet, and scrap yards). *See BCZO Table of Uses pg. 3-20 to 3-24.* Industrial and agricultural uses are limited. Distillery, breweries, commercial greenhouses, automobile parts recycling, and mini warehouses are a few examples of industrial and agricultural uses permitted under G-B zoning.

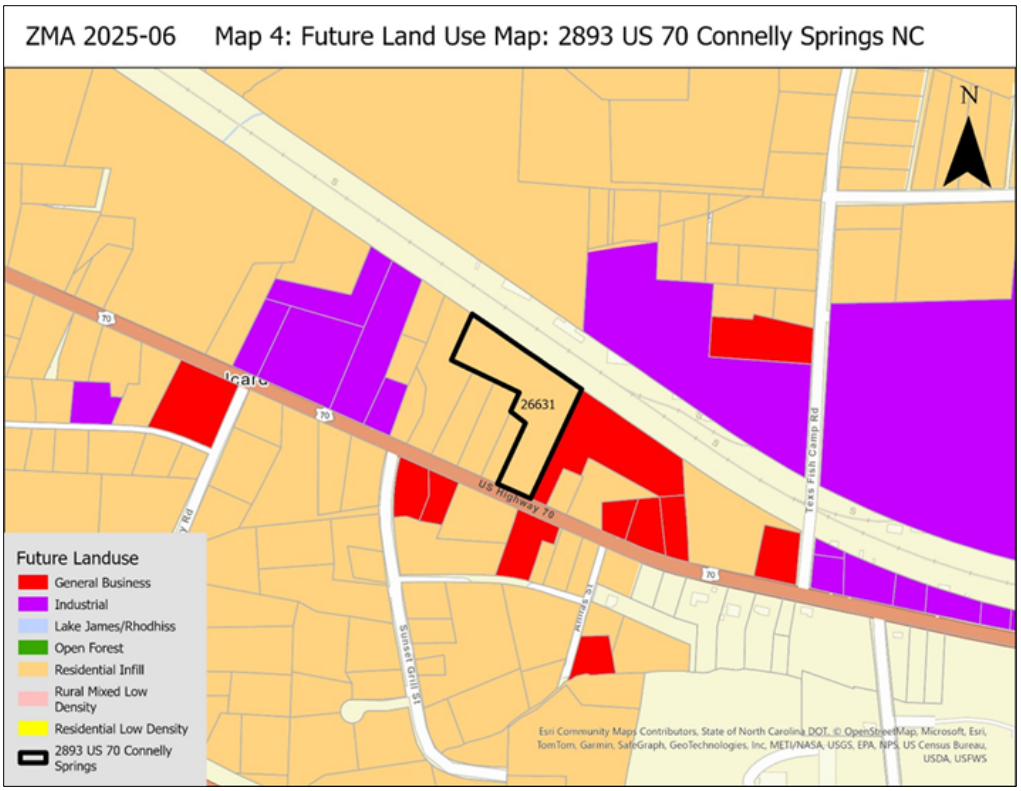
COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:
The 2022-2030 Blueprint Burke Strategic Land Use Plan designates this parcel as *Residential Infill* on the future land use map. The residential infill category supports the following:

- Medium to high-density development focuses on suburban or rural neighborhood settings with sufficient access to major roads.
- Access to infrastructure such as public water and sewer.

The requested zoning of General Business is not consistent with the future land use map and would require a change to General Business on the future land use map.

General Business supports the following:

Major road access under NCDOT maintenance, infrastructure including water and sewer, and improved driveways for access. Encourages uses such as single-family, multifamily, and manufactured residential development, along with commercial, retail, warehouses, and smaller manufacturing uses.



STAFF FINDINGS:
Community development staff find the rezoning request reasonable and in public interest based on the following:

The surrounding mix of land uses and zoning (including adjacent G-B and IND zoning) supports the parcel's rezoning. The parcel is located along Hwy 70, which provides access to state-maintained roads and utilities, which are consistent along highway corridors. While the rezoning is not consistent with the Blueprint Burke Strategic Land Use Plan and Land Use Map, it is consistent with its goals to promote economic development along highway corridors with access to utilities and state-maintained roads.

PLANNING BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS:
The Planning Board reviewed this item at their September 25, 2025, meeting. No one spoke during the public comment period, and the Board voted 6-0 to support the request.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CONSENT AGENDA

WPCC - FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JUNE 30TH AND SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

Sandy Hoilman, Vice President for Administrative Services / Chief Financial Officer, presented the financial information for the year ending June 30th and for the period ending September 30th as follows:

WESTERN PIEDMONT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FY 2025-2026 SUMMARY AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

	STATE			COUNTY			INSTITUTIONAL		
Summary of Revenues	BUDGET	ACTUAL	REMAINING	BUDGET	ACTUAL	REMAINING	BUDGET	ACTUAL	REMAINING
State Appropriations	17,506,477	3,996,530							
Add. Allocations (detail below)	1,320								
County Appropriations				3,129,864	782,466				
Rent & Interest Income					9,188				
Institutional Funds							10,960,844	2,740,211	
Total Budgeted Revenues	**17,507,797**	**3,996,530**	**13,511,267**	**3,129,864**	**791,654**	**2,338,210**	**10,960,844**	**2,740,211**	**8,220,633**
Summary of Expenditures									
Institutional Support	2,905,776	943,178	32%	328,234	192,000	58%	44,150	11,032	25%
Curriculum Instruction	8,218,633	1,623,383	20%				800,000	198,914	25%
Non Curriculum Instruction	2,149,234	486,235	23%				150,000	36,154	24%
Academic Support	1,439,018	363,976	25%					-	0%
Student Support	1,783,520	429,592	24%				2,000,000	471,276	24%
Plant Operations & Maint.				2,801,630	674,658	24%	-	-	0%
Proprietary / Other							1,600,000	391,068	24%
Student Aid							6,366,694	1,482,010	23%
Capital Outlay (excluding Capital Improvements)	1,011,616	107,488	11%				-	-	-
Total Budgeted Expenditures	**17,507,797**	**3,953,852**	**13,553,945**	**3,129,864**	**866,658**	**2,263,206**	**10,960,844**	**2,590,454**	**8,370,390**
		22.6%	**77.4%**		**27.7%**	**72.3%**		**23.6%**	**76.4%**

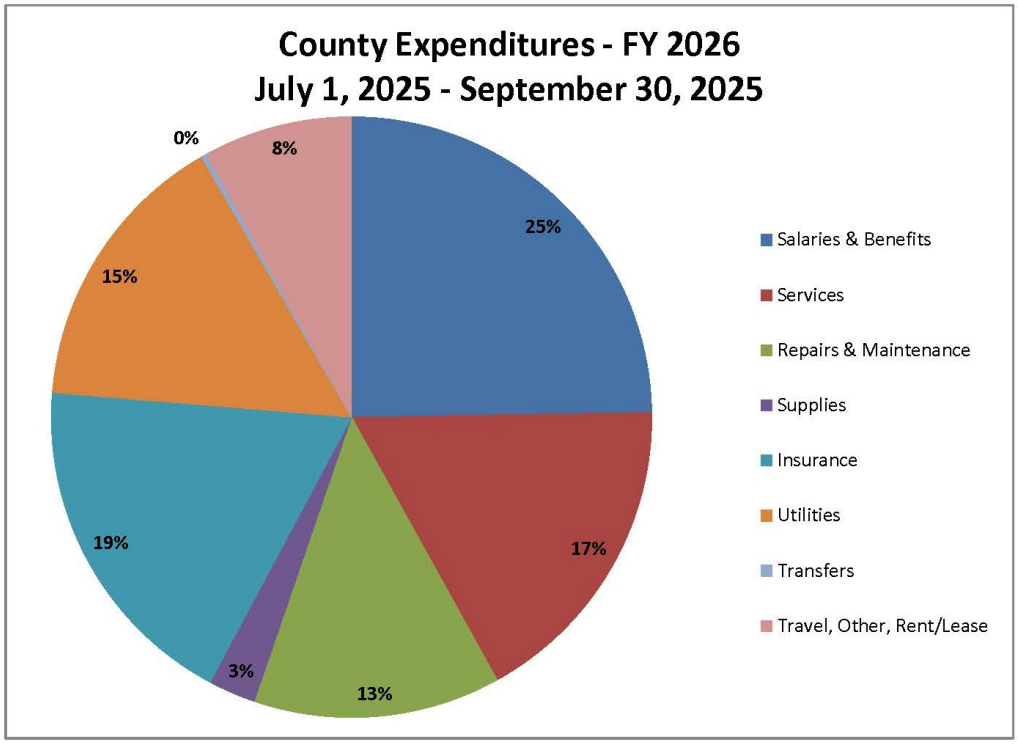
ADDITIONAL FUNDING DESIGNATED FOR APPROVED PROJECTS		
Customized Training Projects	1,320	
ApprenticeshipNC		
Perkins Carryforward		
Hurricane Relief		
Enrollment Growth		
Longevity		
High Cost Programs		
Faculty Retention & Nursing		
Total Other	**1,320**	

For Year Ending June 30, 2026			
Total College Budget	$	31,598,505	
Total Expenditures	$	7,410,964	**23.5%**

Fund Balance: County Funds	
Fund Balance, Beginning July 1, 2025	688,735
Current Operating Cash	(75,004)
Current Fund Balance	**613,731**
	20%

Western Piedmont Community College
County Expenditures by Category
FY 2026 - Actual Expenditures - July 1, 2025 thru September 30, 2025

Salaries & Benefits	214,440	24.7%
Services	149,071	17.2%
Repairs & Maintenance	115,416	13.3%
Supplies	22,119	2.6%
Insurance	160,255	18.5%
Utilities	133,241	15.4%
Transfers	2,579	0.3%
Travel, Other, Rent/Lease	69,537	8.0%
	866,658	**100%**



For fiscal year 2025, July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, Ms. Hoilman reported that the College spent 92% of its total state budget and 99% of its formula allocation, with all of the remaining funds carried forward. County funds were spent at 99.5% of the budget.

After presenting the financial data, Ms. Hoilman provided several key updates. Approximately 70–75% of curriculum programs have shifted from 16-week semesters to eight (8) week sessions, which data indicates improved student focus and retention while minimizing loss of progress when students must withdraw; however, high-contact programs such as nursing, cosmetology, and welding will remain on 16-week formats. Fall enrollment is up 4% overall, with increases in both curriculum and continuing education, and staff expressed strong satisfaction with this growth. The Emergency Services Training Center, which is approximately 68% complete, remains on schedule for completion in April.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

BCPS - FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH AND FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

Keith Lawson, Finance Officer, Burke County Public Schools, presented financial reports for the year ended June 30, 2025, and for the period ending September 30, 2025.

BCPS

Estimated Revenues

2025/2026

	Annual		Sep YTD			% of Budget
	Previous	Current Fcst	Previous	Current	% Change	Received
State	99,867,340	98,868,667	21,633,729	21,189,239	-2.1%	21.4%
Federal	13,959,820	13,325,000	2,199,722	2,097,429	-4.7%	15.7%
Local	19,279,613	19,481,204	5,054,646	5,123,644	1.4%	26.3%
Charter Schools	970,387	1,018,796	7,854	1,356	-82.7%	0.1%
Fines & Forfeitures	289,181	260,396	43,852	64,436	46.9%	24.7%
Receivables	47,416	42,674	45,876	32,236	-29.7%	75.5%
Special Revenues	12,850,279	12,593,273	2,137,926	2,177,093	1.8%	17.3%
Total	$ 147,264,036	$ 145,590,010	$ 31,123,605	$ 30,685,433	**-1.4%**	**21.1%**

BCPS

Local Financials by Purpose & Function Level

2025/2026

			Anaudited	'25/'26					
Expenses	'22/'23	'23/'24	'24/'25	Budget	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Regular Instructional Services	5,521,972	8,342,293	8,301,648	8,435,386	838,874				838,874
Instructional Support	10,283,484	10,865,457	11,665,620	11,641,999	3,728,769				3,728,769
Other Governmental Units	692,840	895,393	1,095,489	1,230,028	62,282				62,282
Revenues Over/(Under)	100,077	176,296	(476,160)	(504,343)	591,747				591,747
Grand Total	$16,598,373	$20,279,439	$20,586,597	$20,803,070	$ 5,221,672	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 5,221,672
% of Annual Budget									25.1%
Revenue									
Burke County	15,593,566	19,157,406	19,279,613	19,481,204	5,123,644				5,123,644
Charter Schools	709,442	842,594	970,387	1,018,796	1,356				1,356
Fines & Forfeitures	241,513	242,444	289,181	260,396	64,436				64,436
Schools' Receivables	53,852	36,995	47,416	42,674	32,236				32,236
Grand Total	$16,598,373	$20,279,439	$20,586,597	20,803,070	5,221,672	-	-	-	5,221,672

Mr. Lawson explained that challenges with state funding for teacher positions were related to declining enrollment. He noted that the district has 26 school buildings, including 14 elementary schools, and that losing just one (1) student per grade across those schools results in approximately $122,000 in lost state revenue. However, because the state funding formula allocates teacher positions based on total enrollment across an entire grade level rather than by individual schools, the district does not lose a corresponding teacher position. Enrollment losses are spread across multiple schools and grade levels, making it difficult to reduce staffing proportionally and respond effectively to declining revenues, particularly with respect to teaching positions.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Commissioner Burns asked about the causes of declining enrollment. Mr. Lawson reported a loss of 563 students over the past four (4) years, with 531 attributed to charter schools and vouchers, noting a recent spike in voucher participation. In response to a question from Commissioner Burns, he also explained that funding for students from the Jonas Ridge area is paid at Avery County's per-pupil allotment rather than the local rate. There being no further discussion, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE ADULT CARE & NURSING HOME COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the terms of the following members of the Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee ended May 31st:

- Seat No. 1: Karen Robinson
- Seat No. 3: Diane Patterson
- Seat No. 4: Victoria Whitworth
- Seat No. 13: Susan Merrill

All four (4) members have expressed interest in serving an additional 3-year term.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS / REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE COUNCIL ON AGING

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, explained that the terms of the following members end on November 30, 2025, and they are willing to serve another 3-year term:

- Paige Pitts
- Jerry Propst (pending receipt of application)

In accordance with her wishes, the removal of Linda McGallard is requested. She will be moving out of state at the end of November. An application from Pearl Jones was received to fill this vacant seat.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENT TO THE EAST BURKE SENIOR CENTER

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, stated that Karin O'Donnell's term on the East Burke Senior Center Advisory Council ended in May. She has reapplied to serve a second 3-year term.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CLERK - REMOVAL FROM THE LEPC SEAT NO. 11, MEDIA

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, requested the removal of Marty Queen from Seat No. 11, Media, on the Local Emergency Planning Committee due to an employment change.

11	Media	Marty Queen	A-UT	4/16/2024
			TE	1/31/2027

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

CM - APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 4 - $18,500

Brian Epley, County Manager, requested approval of Budget Amendment No. 4, which recognizes additional donation revenues received above the originally budgeted amounts. These funds include:

- $16,000 in contributions from Burke County United Way, the Community Foundation of Burke County, and UNC Health Blue Ridge to support the Hurricane Helene 1-Year Anniversary Event;
- $1,000 from Walmart to support the Annual Essay Contest Event; and
- $1,500 from Walmart to provide holiday meals for senior citizens.

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 4			
REVENUES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
100-00000-06-436500	CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATIONS	$16,000	
100-54500-06-436500	CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATIONS	$1,500	
100-00000-06-436500	CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATIONS	$1,000	
EXPENSES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
100-40000-05-561500	PROGRAM SUPPLIES	$16,000	
100-54500-20-562600	FOOD	$1,500	
100-61000-35-580000	DISTRICT ACTIVITIES – SUPPLIES	$1,000	
To recognize funds received by Burke County for the expenses of those funds used toward the Hurricane Helene event, and donations from Walmart for sponsoring the annual Essay contest event and holiday meals for seniors.			

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

CM - APPROVAL OF OCCUPANCY TAX RELEASE
Note: This item was removed from the agenda during the approval of the agenda.

RESULT: REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA.

TAX - TAX COLLECTION REPORT - OCTOBER 2025
John Bridgers, Tax Administrator, presented the Tax Collection Report for the period ending October 31, 2025, as follows:

Category	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	$37,477,843.82	68.09%	$17,561,170.18
Motor Vehicle Tax	$2,123,353.61	38.91%	$3,333,503.39
Current Year Taxes	$39,601,197.43	65.46%	$20,894,673.57
Delinquent Taxes	$384,300.38	54.90%	$315,699.62
Penalty & Interest	$114,213.85	34.72%	$214,786.15

Note: Mr. Bridgers identified a correction in the property tax collection figures. Year-to-date collections total $37,477,843.14, representing 68.08% of the total, leaving a remaining balance of $17,561,170.86 yet to be collected.

The Tax Levy is the total property tax value, not including motor vehicles, times the tax rate. This amount changes monthly with the addition of discoveries, other changes, or corrections, and when Public Utility Values are added, typically during September.

Category	Tax Levy	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	$56,741,128.49	$37,477,843.82	66.05%	$19,263,284.67

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

TAX - TAX REFUND & RELEASE REPORT - OCTOBER 2025
John Bridgers, Tax Administrator, presented the Refund & Release Report for the period ending October 31, 2025, as follows:

VTS Refunds Over $100	
	Refund Amount
VTS Adjustments	$209.33

Payee Name	Address 3	Bill #	Refund Description	Refund Reason	Create Date	Tax Jurisdiction	Levy Type	Change	Interest Change	Total Change
BIGGERSTAFF, JOLENE GREENE	LINVILLE FALLS, NC 28647	0087581035	Refund Generated due to adjustment on Bill #0087581035-2025-2025-0000-00	Change of County	10/21/2025	01	TAX	($45.79)	$0.00	($45.79)
						57	TAX	($41.25)	$0.00	($41.25)
						57	VEHICLE FEE	($20.00)	$0.00	($20.00)
									Refund	$107.04
MCCALL, MAXINE COOPER	DREXEL, NC 28619	0087422823	Refund Generated due to adjustment on Bill #0087422823-2025-2025-0000	Situs error	10/28/2025	01	TAX	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
						55	TAX	$192.01	$0.00	$192.01
						57	TAX	($274.30)	$0.00	($274.30)
						57	VEHICLE FEE	($20.00)	$0.00	($20.00)
									Refund	$102.29
									Refund Total	$209.33

Tax System Refunds and Releases			
Report Amount	Rebilled Amount	Net Release	Refund Amount
$15,144.63	$3,552.04	$11,592.59	$2,324.62

Trans #	Refund Recipient Name	Refund Address	Refund Description	Opid	Refund Change Date	Refund Amount ($)
19311477	GERALD DAVIS SMITH	PO BOX 440 RUTHERFORD COLLEGE,NC 28671	Refund on Bill # 0024090208-2025-2025-0000-00	DHUTCHINS1	10/24/2025 8:47:47 AM	106.27
19311595	PATRICK LUKE HARRIGAN	100 BEIERSDORF DR CONNELLY SPRINGS,NC 28612	Refund on Bill # 0024091214-2025-2025-0000-00	DHUTCHINS1	10/27/2025 9:41:10 AM	194.00
19312275	RYAN S SETTLEMYRE	308 MAIN AVE E HILDEBRAN,NC 28637	Overpayment on Payment of CHECK on Bill # 0000024465-2025-2025-0000-00 of $1,781.55	DPCLBX	10/31/2025 6:05:06 PM	1,781.55
Total						**2,324.62**

Bill #	Taxpayer Name	Bill Date	Operator ID (Name)	Release Date	Orig Bill Amount($)	Release Amount($)	Bill Amount after Release($)
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Adjustment**						
0000044575-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HICKS, RONALD R	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	10/3/2025	92.00	92.00	0.00
0000044575-2025-2025-0000-01-REG	HICKS, RONALD R	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	10/3/2025	242.48	150.48	92.00
0024057756-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MARTIN, BRIAN NEEL	10/6/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	10/6/2025	4.88	4.88	0.00
Subtotal					**339.36**	**247.36**	**92.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Amended Listing**						
0000048144-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	BOBBY HONEYCUTT CONTRACTING, LLC	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/21/2025	1,091.99	1,091.99	0.00
0000071456-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CARDONA-RAMIREZ, CATHY	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/22/2025	16.73	16.73	0.00
0024076741-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MED FIRST IMMEDIATE CARE AND FAMILY PRACTICE	7/1/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	10/23/2025	194.82	194.82	0.00
Subtotal					**1,303.54**	**1,303.54**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Business Closed**						
0024058982-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	MORSE AGENCIES LLC	7/1/2022	LINDA WILBUR	10/10/2025	38.23	38.23	0.00
0024058982-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	MORSE AGENCIES LLC	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	10/10/2025	30.80	30.80	0.00
0024058982-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	MORSE AGENCIES LLC	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	10/10/2025	30.80	30.80	0.00
0024058982-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MORSE AGENCIES LLC	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/10/2025	33.58	33.58	0.00
0024070936-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	HOLLOW MOON LLC	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	10/9/2025	25.96	25.96	0.00
0024070936-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HOLLOW MOON LLC	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/9/2025	23.50	23.50	0.00
Subtotal					**182.87**	**182.87**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Discovery Billing**						
0024076701-2025-2025-0000-02-REG	DAVIDSON HOLLAND WHITESELL & CO PLLC	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	10/7/2025	396.35	396.35	0.00
Subtotal					**396.35**	**396.35**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Exempt Property**						
0000034865-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA	7/15/2024	AMANDA CONLEY	10/27/2025	45.08	45.08	0.00
Subtotal					**45.08**	**45.08**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Not in Burke County**						
0000085493-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CARTER, JAMIE	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	10/13/2025	94.16	94.16	0.00
0024069685-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	GRIGG, PENNI LIBERA	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	10/23/2025	185.88	185.88	0.00
0024072639-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	REDNECK FLYERS	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	10/28/2025	134.31	134.31	0.00
Subtotal					**414.35**	**414.35**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Over Assessment**						
0024084741-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MORTON, MICHAEL E	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	10/30/2025	1,831.50	1,404.15	427.35
Subtotal					**1,831.50**	**1,404.15**	**427.35**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Process Correction**						
0024085343-2025-2023-0000-00-REG	RENCARE SOLUTIONS LLC	9/23/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/2/2025	1,519.24	1,519.24	0.00
0024085343-2025-2023-0000-01-REG	RENCARE SOLUTIONS LLC	9/23/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/2/2025	1,580.29	1,580.29	0.00

0024085343-2025-2024-0000-00-REG	RENCARE SOLUTIONS LLC	9/23/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/2/2025	1,488.73	1,488.73	0.00
0024085343-2025-2024-0000-01-REG	RENCARE SOLUTIONS LLC	9/23/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/2/2025	1,545.10	1,545.10	0.00
Subtotal					**6,133.36**	**6,133.36**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Release LFUF**						
0000048144-2025-2025-0000-01-REG	PRICE, JEFFERY DONALD	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/21/2025	1,201.94	92.00	1,109.94
0000071456-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CARDONA-RAMIREZ, CATHY	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	10/3/2025	94.16	88.00	6.16
0000071456-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CARDONA-RAMIREZ, CATHY	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/3/2025	108.73	92.00	16.73
Subtotal					**1,404.83**	**272.00**	**1,312.83**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Situs Correction**						
0024045856-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HERMAN, TAHARA L	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	10/22/2025	21.67	21.67	0.00
Subtotal					**21.67**	**21.67**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Sold/Traded**						
0000035579-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	NORMAN, GERALD W	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	10/13/2025	813.98	6.11	807.87
0024007926-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	GARRISON, EDWARD W III	7/1/2022	KAYLA BURGESS	10/16/2025	15.60	15.60	0.00
0024007926-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	GARRISON, EDWARD W III	7/3/2023	KAYLA BURGESS	10/16/2025	11.33	11.33	0.00
0024007926-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	GARRISON, EDWARD W III	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	10/16/2025	10.77	10.77	0.00
0024007926-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	GARRISON, EDWARD W III	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	10/16/2025	10.67	10.67	0.00
Subtotal					**862.35**	**54.48**	**807.87**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Value Change**						
0000025535-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	PRICE, BETTY RUTH W	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	10/1/2025	271.33	271.33	0.00
0000025535-2025-2025-0000-01-REG	PRICE, BETTY RUTH W	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	10/1/2025	487.51	487.51	0.00
0000025535-2025-2025-0000-02-REG	PRICE, BETTY RUTH W	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	10/1/2025	271.33	271.33	0.00
0000048144-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	BOBBY HONEYCUTT CONTRACTING, LLC	7/1/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	10/21/2025	1,179.20	87.21	1,091.99
Subtotal					**2,209.37**	**1,117.38**	**1,091.99**
Total					**15,144.63**	**11,592.59**	**3,552.04**

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

TDA - PRESENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL UPDATE FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH AND FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

Chairman Brittain announced that Ed Phillips with the TDA (Tourism Development Authority) will present the TDA's financial reports at the regular meeting.

BURKE COUNTY TDA
September 30, 2025

Assets		
	1014 First Citizens Bank	$ 266,853.51
	1015 NC Capital MGMT Account	$ 638,335.40
	1210 Accounts Receivable	$ -
	Total Checking	$ 905,188.91
Liabilities		
	2000 Accounts Payable	$ 9,919.90
	2050 City of Morganton - Payable	$ 44,288.09
	2053 Grant Funds Paid in Advance	$ 11,851.27
	2075 Town of Valdese - Payable	$ 88,341.13
	2100 Payroll Liabilities	$ 127.51
	Total Liabilities	$ 154,527.90
Equity		
	3900 Retained Earnings	$ 886,723.34
	Net Income	$ (136,062.33)
	Total Equity	$ 750,661.01
Total Liabilities & Equity		$ 905,188.91

BURKE COUNTY TDA
BUDGET TO ACTUAL JULY 1, 2025-SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

Income	Budget	Actual	Available Balance
4010 · Burke Co. Govt. - Occup. Tax	$ 1,200,000	96,680.90	$ 1,103,319.10
4110 · Interest Income	$ -	6,774.05	$ (6,774.05)
4120 · Miscellenous	$ 25,000	8,704.12	$ 16,295.88
4530 · America 250 Grant	$ -	-	$ -
5000 · Trolley Revenue	$ 10,000	6,271.92	$ 3,728.08
Total Income	$ 1,235,000	118,430.99	$ 1,116,569.01
Expense			
5010 · Accounting/Audit	$ 10,000	-	$ 10,000.00
5020 · Marketing/Advertising	$ 271,000	77,552.30	$ 193,447.70
5023 · America 250	$ -	7,555.53	$ (7,555.53)
5102 · Membership Dues	$ 2,500	1,650.00	$ 850.00
5109 · Building Maintenance	$ 4,800	1,130.00	$ 3,670.00
5113 · City of Morganton/Tourism	$ 270,000	21,753.20	$ 248,246.80
5115 · Town of Valdese/Tourism	$ 150,000	12,085.11	$ 137,914.89
5117 - Bank Charges	$ -	20.84	$ (20.84)
5150 · Insurance	$ 35,000	11,047.57	$ 23,952.43
5180 · Office Supplies	$ 7,000	439.05	$ 6,560.95
5200 · Payroll Expenses	$ 411,000	104,140.78	$ 306,859.22
5250 · Postage	$ 1,000	122.41	$ 877.59
5265 - Retail Items	$ -	-	$ -
5280 · Office Rent	$ 30,000	7,500.00	$ 22,500.00
5285 · Utilities	$ 5,200	390.34	$ 4,809.66
5290 · Telephone	$ 7,000	1,686.98	$ 5,313.02
5300 · Travel/Training	$ 20,500	5,135.27	$ 15,364.73
5301 · Trolley Expenses	$ 10,000	2,271.92	$ 7,728.08
5400 · Misc. Expense	$ -	12.02	$ (12.02)
Total Expense	$ 1,235,000	254,493.32	$ 980,506.68
Net Income	$ -	-136,062.33	136,062.33

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENT TO THE FOOTHILLS REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

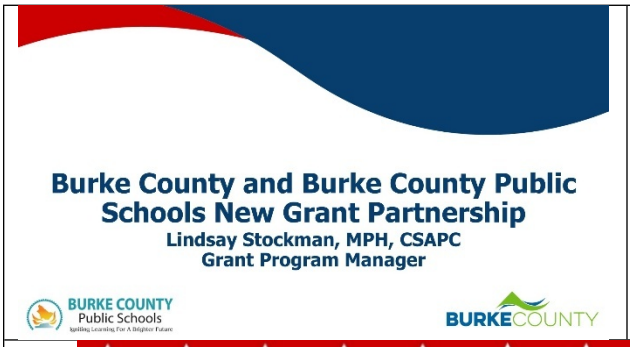
Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, relayed that the County appoints two (2) members to the Foothills Regional Airport Authority for 2-year terms. Seat No. 1 is occupied by Commissioner Burns. Seat No. 2, an at-large seat, is occupied by Thomas Fraley. His term ended, and he is willing to serve another term. There are three (3) applications on file for this position.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

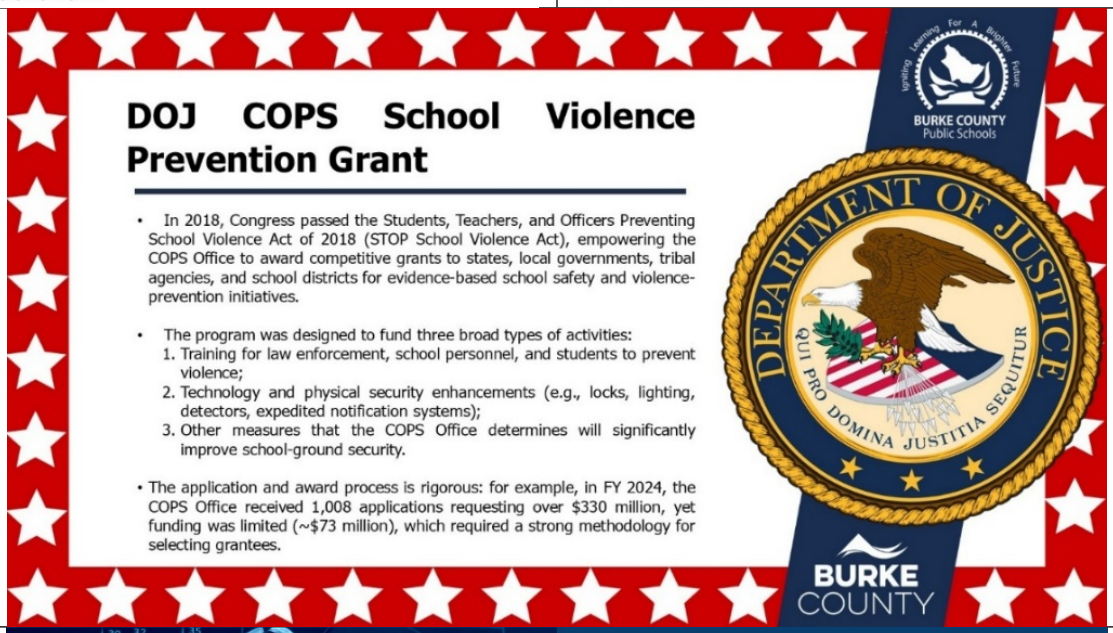
RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

FINANCE — CONSIDERATION OF COPS GRANT & BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 5 - $624,991

Lindsay Stockman, Senior Fiscal Analyst, presented an overview of a new partnership with Burke County Public Schools related to a federally funded COPS violence prevention grant authorized under the Stop School Violence Act as follows:











Ms. Stockman explained that the County plans to use its portion of the funds to install lighting at Reep Park, specifically illuminating a currently unlit baseball field to improve safety and expand recreational opportunities.

Additional information from the agenda packet:

> Approval of Budget Amendment No. 5 recognizes Federal grant funding from the Department of Justice. The purpose of the COPS school violence prevention grant is to provide school safety equipment and technology to ensure safe academic settings. The total grant amount is $624,991 and requires a 25% match of $156,248 that will be split between BCPS and the County, $116,248 and $40,000, respectively. Examples of equipment include keyless entry and metal detectors.

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 5			
REVENUES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
REVENUES			
150-15001-01-433000-	US DOJ SCHOOL GRANT	$468,743	
150-15001-11-439410	TRANSFER FROM CAPITAL RESERVE	$40,000	
EXPENSES			
150-15001-30-586000	US DOJ SCHOOL GRANT	$464,991	
150-15001-30-575000	EQUIPMENT	$160,000	
150-00000-30-599999	BUDGET SET ASIDE		$116,248
410-00000-55-595150	TRANSFER TO SCH ART 42 FD 150	$40,000	
410-00000-05-599999	PROJECT RESERVE SET ASIDES		$40,000
Purpose: To recognize grant funding awarded through the U.S. Department of Justice's COPS Office School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP), which will be used to strengthen school safety and security through evidence-based initiatives and technology enhancements.			

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments.

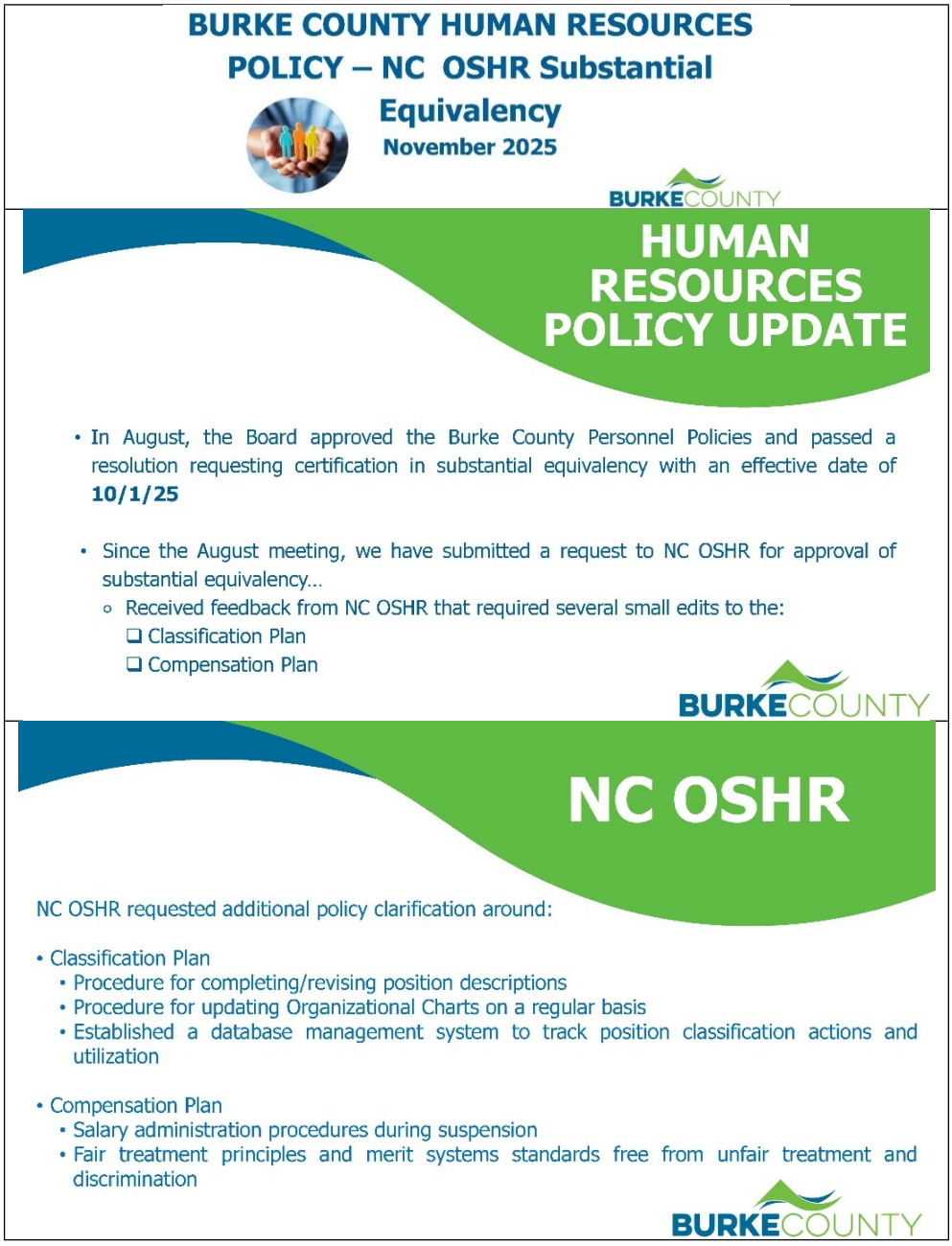
In response to Commissioner Burns, Brian Epley clarified that the county's $40,000 match for the grant will be entirely cash, with the remaining $116,248 funded by the school system from its capital reserve. He noted that Ms. Stockman is supported by Burke County Public School staff, and that they are exploring a variety of security improvements, including keyless locks, badge access, and expanded camera coverage, though full cost estimates are not yet finalized. Commissioner Stroud emphasized the importance of ensuring all schools are safe and encouraged proactive community support beyond grant funding. Ms. Stockman noted that the county continues to pursue additional grants, with the COPS grant available again in three (3) years, and Mr. Epley added that a simultaneous COPS grant is being pursued to provide additional school resource officers. Commissioner Burns highlighted that the sheriff's office has assigned a community officer to George Hildebran, improving response times.

There being no further discussion, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

HR - APPROVAL OF POLICY REVISIONS TO SEEK SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCY

Mark Miller, Human Resources Director, presented proposed text revisions to the Classification Plan (Policy No. 7) and the Compensation Plan Policy (Policy No. 8). These revisions are required by the North Carolina Office of State Human Resources (OSHR) following its review of the policies. Approval of the updates is requested to support Burke County's ongoing efforts to achieve substantial equivalency from OSHR, as authorized by Resolution No. 2025-20, adopted by the Board of Commissioners on August 18, 2025.





Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments and sought input from the County Attorney on his thoughts on the proposed policy changes. Destin Hall, County Attorney, stated he would need to confirm with his office whether the revisions are complete, but believes they are, and will inform the County Manager once verified. Chairman Brittain gauged the sentiment of the Board, who were in consensus to move this item to consent once the legal review was confirmed to be completed. There being no further discussion, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

AS - DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE

Kaitlin Settlemyre, Animal Services Director, stated that a departmental update from the Animal Services Department will be presented at the regular meeting.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CM / OPIOID - ORS UPDATE

Dr. Katie Samuels, Opioid Settlement Coordinator, provided an update on the Opioid Remediation Strategy as follows:

OPIOID RESPONSE TEAM

BOC UPDATE

November 2025

DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

01 FY24-25 IMPACT REPORT OVERVIEW

02 COUNTY-LED STRATEGY UPDATES

03 PROVIDER-LED STRATEGY UPDATES

04 LOOKING AHEAD

FY24-25 OSF ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

YEAR IN REVIEW

- Established an independent Opioid Settlement Department
- Distributed 1,000+ naloxone kits across the county
- Launched county-wide education and engagement campaigns
- Coordinated Peers Partnering for Excellence (PPE) to elevate peer leadership
- Developed a videography project documenting lived experience
- Sustained and expanded Recovery Court as an alternative to incarceration



STRATEGIES FUNDED IN FY24–25

Strategy 1: Collaborative Strategic Planning

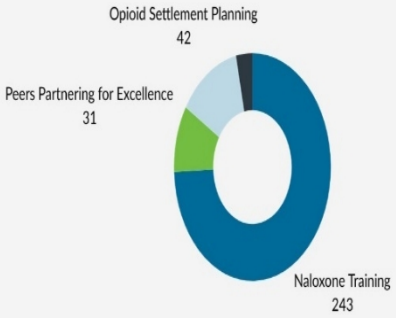
- Opioid Settlement Coordinator
- Program Coordinator
- Peers Partnering for Excellence (PPE)
- Qualitative Data Project (Videography)
- Public Health & Safety Team
- Strategic Plan (Not included in Annual Report)

Strategy 3: Recovery Support Services

- Recovery Court

COLLABORATION IN ACTION

In FY24-25, the Opioid Response Team engaged 315 unique individuals in strategic planning, naloxone training, and recovery court.



34%

of individuals reported living experience in mental health, substance use, or taking care of a loved one.

BURKE COUNTY RECOVERY COURT

Recovery Support Services

15 participants served; 1,592 staff contacts documented	100% referral and linkage to treatment, harm reduction, and healthcare	86% treatment adherence after 6 months
73% housing retention; 53% employment	87% connected to other services; 60% engaged in harm reduction supports	100% received naloxone kits; 2 community overdose reversals reported

CURRENT STRATEGY UPDATES

COUNTY-LED STRATEGY UPDATE

UPDATES ON THE THREE COUNTY-LED STRATEGIES APPROVED IN FY25–26 AND THEIR CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION STATUS.

NALOXONE DISTRIBUTION

Purchasing has begun with a new vendor: $22/box.

COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR

A contingent offer has been made. Start date TBD.

PORT TEAM

Offers have been extended to fill two AM Peer Co-Responder positions. The PM shift position is being reposted. Implementation planning and partnership development are ongoing.

PROVIDER-LED STRATEGY UPDATE

SPARC: FCT-R program.

Fully staffed: Supervisor, Trainer, 2 Practitioners, and Peer Support Specialist

3 of 5 staff completed full FCTR training; skills labs began Oct. 21

Ongoing training in Substance Use and Recovery

5 new referrals received this month; 1 active case

Notable increase in referrals and engagement

PROVIDER-LED STRATEGY UPDATE

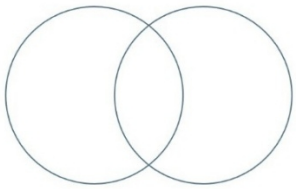
A CARING ALTERNATING: SACOT/SAIOP

- Submitted documentation for site licensure; awaiting approval
- Hired CADC (start Nov. 3) and extended offer to Team Lead (LCAS)
- Two staff completed Matrix Model training; internal training planned for late Nov.
- Program Manager appointed to oversee new SUD Department
- Marketing and outreach materials in development
- Drawn down startup funds to support implementation and staffing

PROVIDER-LED STRATEGY UPDATE

High Country Community Health: Low-Barrier MAT

- In process of hiring Clinical Pharmacist and Nurse Practitioner
- Receiving referrals from the Community Paramedic Program
- Actively engaged in PORT implementation planning
- Drawn down startup funds to support launch activities



LOOKING AHEAD

- Next Opioid Advisory Committee Meeting: Nov. 18, 2025
  - Will review and recommend the next round of provider proposals
- Pending Proposals:
  - Burke Recovery, Christ Centered Recovery Program, Catawba Valley Health
- Review resolutions that may need amendments or extensions

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Commissioner Barrier extended gratitude to Dr. Samuels for all the work that she does. There being no further discussion, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

HEALTH - QUARTERLY OPERATIONAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

Chairman Brittain announced that Danny Scalise, Local Health Director, will present a quarterly operational report at the regular meeting.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO NEXT MEETING ON NOVEMBER 17, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Chairman Brittain asked Board members to submit their reports to the Clerk for inclusion in the regular agenda packet. He issued a reminder for some upcoming office closures, community events, and meetings. He also invited youth groups to sign up to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at Commissioners' meetings and reminded citizens about the ability to report litter in need of cleaning via the County's website. Additionally, he encouraged participation in Operation Green Light.

ACTION ITEMS

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENT TO THE JURY COMMISSION

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, explained that the Burke County Board of Commissioners appoints one (1) citizen to the Jury Commission. Jennifer Francis occupies this seat. Her term expired at the end of September, and she reapplied to serve another 2-year term. The Clerk of Superior Court, Crystal Carpenter, requested that this appointment be made at the pre-agenda meeting due to statutory deadlines for completing the jury roster process. For streamlining, the Clerk has also requested that the term for Seat No. 1 end on October 30th to closely match the terms for Seats No. 2 and 3, which are appointed by judicial officials.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, he called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Jennifer Francis to the Jury Commission, Seat No. 1, to complete the remainder of a 2-year term ending October 31, 2027, as requested by the Clerk of Superior Court.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Randy Burns, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeff Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

CM / GS - APPROVAL OF ENGINEERING SERVICES CONTRACT FOR THE LANDFILL

Brian Epley, County Manager, presented an overview of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process for engineering services for the landfill as follows:

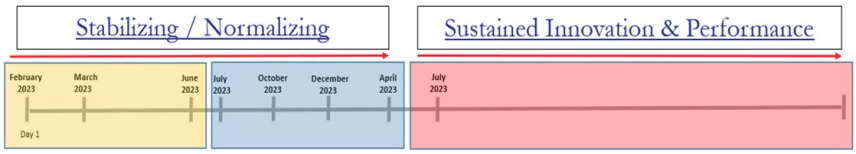
BURKECOUNTY

IMPROVING LIVES IN BURKE COUNTY
SERVICE | SUPPORT | ENHANCEMENT

Empathy	Teamwork	Accountability	Performance	Growth
We treat all people with fairness, respect, and kindness; we encourage diverse perspectives.	We prioritize shared goals and believe we can achieve more when we work together.	We can communicate openly and honestly with employees and stakeholders. We have integrity to do what is right.	We are focused on innovation, efficiency, and measured outcomes. We strive for a high-quality customer experience.	We support and invest in the advancement of our team and prioritize professional development.

Solid Waste Environmental Engineering Services

ReAct / ReBuild / ReThink
FY 2025 - 2026



Re-Act
- Complete CULTURE **Re-Set**
- Targeted Pay Adjustments
- Personnel Policy Modifications
- Employee Communication
- Revaluation Management

Re-Build
- Purpose / Values / Culture
- Evaluate Economics
- Commissioner Strategic Plan
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Pay / Classification Study
- Community Partnerships
- Long Term Fiscal Planning

Re-Think
- Service Delivery Model
- Long Term Priorities
- Traditional Beliefs
- Leverage Technology

SOLID WASTE - ENTERPRISE FUND

Legal Basis:

The definition and use of an **enterprise fund** in North Carolina are established under the **North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) Chapter 159, the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.**



KEY CHARACTERISTICS:

- Operates like a business
- Charges users directly for services
- Separate from the general fund (which covers things like police, fire, and general government)
- Helps ensure that the **true cost of services** is transparent and **paid by users**, not taxpayers in general

Solid Waste Management – Material Type

MSW – Municipal Solid Waste

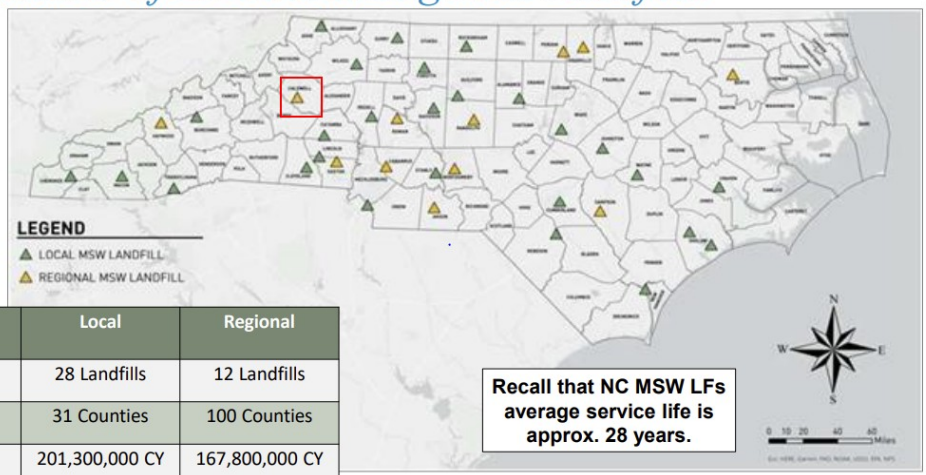
- MSW refers to **everyday waste generated by households and businesses** — essentially, "trash" or "garbage."
- **Examples of MSW:**
  - Food waste
  - Packaging (plastics, paper, cardboard)
  - Used clothing
  - Broken furniture
  - Household garbage bags
  - Office and commercial trash
  - Non-hazardous waste from schools, hospitals, etc.

C&D – Construction and Demolition Debris

- C&D waste comes from construction, remodeling, repair, or demolition of buildings and infrastructure.
- **Examples of C&D Materials:**
  - Wood (untreated or painted)
  - Concrete, brick, and masonry
  - Roofing shingles
  - Drywall
  - Glass
  - Metal scraps
  - Insulation
  - Flooring and tiles

Statistics of Local and Regional Landfills

Average Age of a NC MSW is 25.6 years.

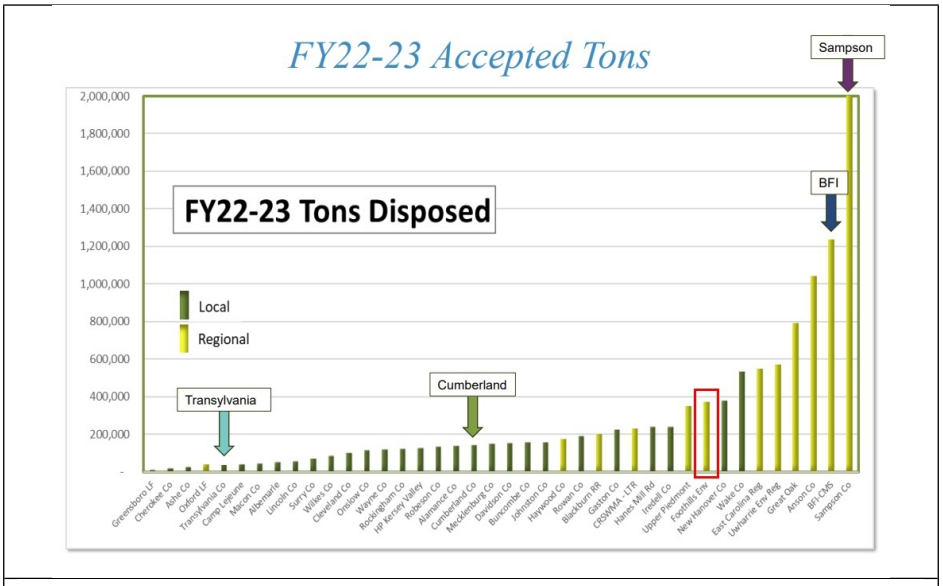


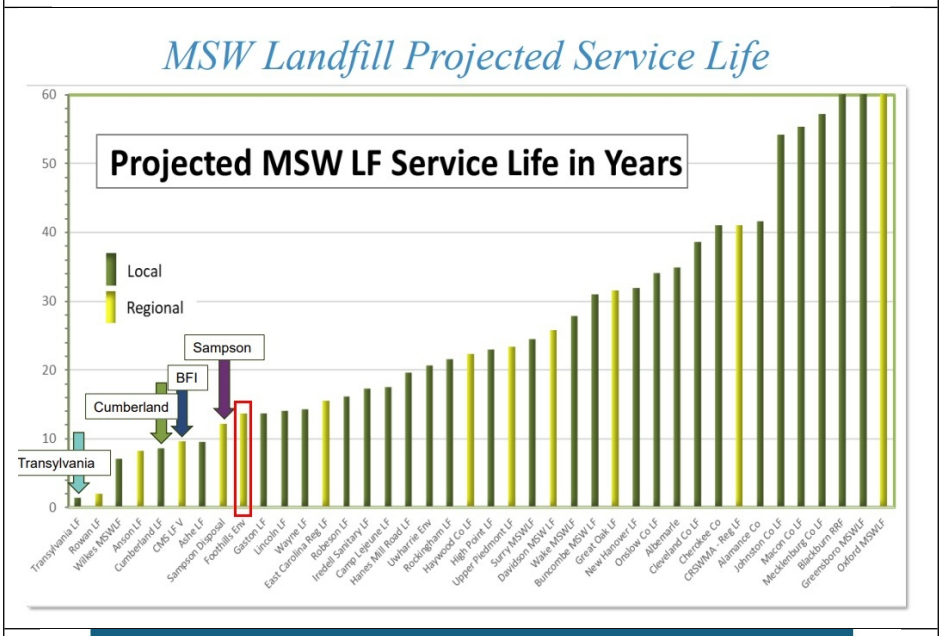
	Local	Regional
Quantity	28 Landfills	12 Landfills
Service Area (NC only)	31 Counties	100 Counties
Remaining Capacity	201,300,000 CY	167,800,000 CY
FY22-23 Waste Acceptance	4,022,000 TN	7,558,000 TN

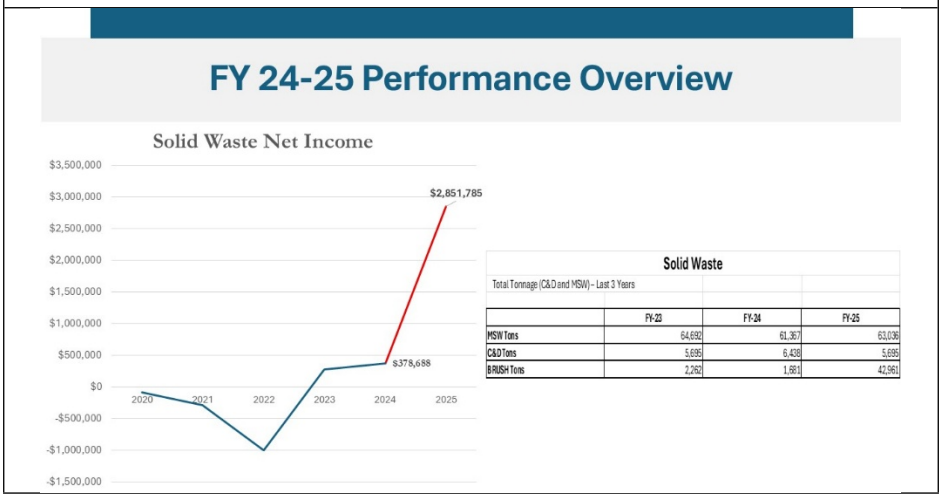
Recall that NC MSW LFs average service life is approx. 28 years.

**Closure timelines assume FY22-23 reported acceptance (i.e., straight-line).*
***Remaining capacity does not include Lenoir, White Street. or Camp Lejeune.*

DEQ NORTH CAROLINA Department of Environmental Quality


FY22-23 Accepted Tons
Sampson
BFI
FY22-23 Tons Disposed
Local
Regional
Transylvania
Cumberland
2,000,000
1,800,000
1,600,000
1,400,000
1,200,000
1,000,000
800,000
600,000
400,000
200,000
-


MSW Landfill Projected Service Life
Projected MSW LF Service Life in Years
Local
Regional
Sampson
BFI
Cumberland
Transylvania
60
50
40
30
20
10
0


FY 24-25 Performance Overview
Solid Waste Net Income
$3,500,000
$3,000,000
$2,500,000
$2,000,000
$1,500,000
$1,000,000
$500,000
$0
-$500,000
-$1,000,000
-$1,500,000
$2,851,785
$378,688
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
Solid Waste
Total Tonnage (C&D and MSW) - Last 3 Years
FY-23 FY-24 FY-25
MSW Tons 64,692 61,367 63,036
C&D Tons 5,695 6,438 5,695
BRUSH Tons 2,262 1,681 42,961

Scope of Services.....

Planning & Program Support
- Solid Waste Management Plan updates and long-range master planning (capacity, diversion, collection, siting).
- Capital improvement planning (CIP), phasing, and permitting roadmaps.
- Waste stream characterization and forecasting; operational benchmarking.
- Disaster debris management plans (FEMA-compliant) and emergency response playbooks.
- Public engagement, siting support, and environmental justice screening.
- RFP/RFQ development, procurement support, and contract negotiations (operations, hauling, recycling, disposal).

Permitting & Regulatory Compliance
- Groundwater and surface water monitoring networks; sampling & analysis plans.
- Detection/assessment/Corrective Action monitoring (40 CFR Part 258 analogs), data management, and statistical analysis.
- Landfill gas monitoring (wells, probes, structures), air compliance testing, and surface emissions surveys.
- Stormwater inspections, sampling, and DMR/SWPPP reporting.
- Settlement/slope monitoring, stability analyses, and geotechnical investigations.

Scope of Services.....

Engineering & Design
- Landfill master plans, cell layout, grading, and sequencing.
- Liner systems (geosynthetics/clay), leachate collection/force mains, pump stations, equalization and treatment.
- Final cover/capping (turf/geomembrane/evapotranspiration covers) and closure/post-closure design.
- Landfill gas (LFG) collection & control systems, flare or energy-recovery design, blower/flare station upgrades.
- Stormwater systems: ponds, channels, culverts, BMPs, erosion & sediment control plans.
- Roads/pavements, scales/scalehouses, maintenance buildings, citizen convenience sites layout.
- Transfer station and MRF/organics facility design (tip floors, loadout, traffic modeling, fire protection).
- Odor, litter, vector, and noise controls; screening/berming and aesthetics.

Construction Services
- Bid documents, cost estimates, and contractor prequal/selection support.
- Construction administration, resident engineering, and schedule/cost control.
- Construction Quality Assurance (CQA): liner/cap geomembrane, geosynthetics testing, soils QC.
- As-built surveys, certification reports, record drawings, and regulatory closeout packages.

Interviewed 4 Finalist firms on Wednesday – October 8, 2025

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

SOLID WASTE OPERATIONAL CONSULTING SERVICES

RFQ-2025-0912

August 22, 2025

Selection Panel
1. Margaret Pierce
2. Brian Nieft
3. Hugh Sandoe
4. Brian Epley
5. Johnathan Seagraves
6. Mark Delehant

LaBella Powered by partnership.

SMITH+GARDNER ENGINEERS

HNA ENGINEERING PLLC

Garrett & Moore, Inc.

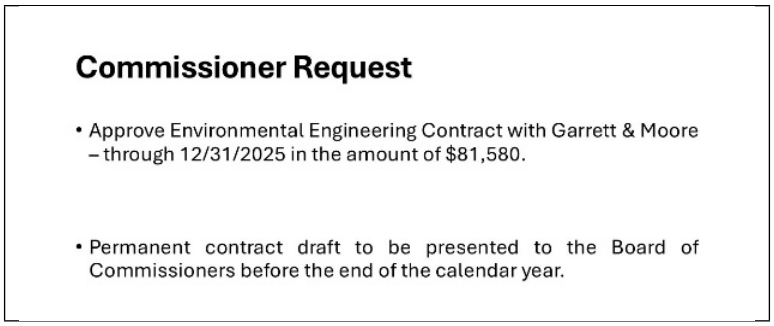
First Order of Business....

Engineering Fee	
$	22,955.00
$	29,435.00
$	11,545.00
$	17,645.00
$	81,580.00

Table 1

Task Order 2026-1 Fees

Task	Task Description	Fee
Task 1 Johns River C&D Expansion Landfill		
1.1	Fall 2025 Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting	$ 13,240
1.2	2025 Q4 Methane Monitoring and Reporting	$ 2,695
1.3	2025 Q4 Stormwater Monitoring and Reporting	$ 7,020
Task 1 Johns River C&D Expansion Subtotal		**$ 22,955**
Task 2 Johns River C&D-Over-MSW Landfill		
2.1	Fall 2025 Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting	$ 26,740
2.2	2025 Q4 Methane Monitoring and Reporting	$ 2,695
Task 2 Johns River C&D-Over-MSW Subtotal		**$ 29,435**
Task 3 East Burke Landfill		
3.1	Fall 2025 Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting	$ 9,840
3.2	2025 Q4 Methane Monitoring and Reporting	$ 1,705
Task 3 East Burke Landfill Subtotal		**$ 11,545**
Task 4 Kirksey Drive Landfill		
4.1	Fall 2025 Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting	$ 15,940
4.2	2025 Q4 Methane Monitoring and Reporting	$ 1,705
Task 4 Kirksey Drive Landfill Subtotal		**$ 17,645**



County Manager Epley reported that the County had worked with the same engineering firm for 30 years and that this was an appropriate time to seek new perspectives and fresh ideas. Eight (8) firms submitted proposals, four were interviewed, and Garrett & Moore Engineering was selected by the 6-member panel. Although the full contract was not ready for submission to the Board, he requested approval of the regulatory testing and compliance items set forth in a "temporary" contract in the amount of $81,580. He said the full "annual" contract will be presented to the Board at the December meeting.

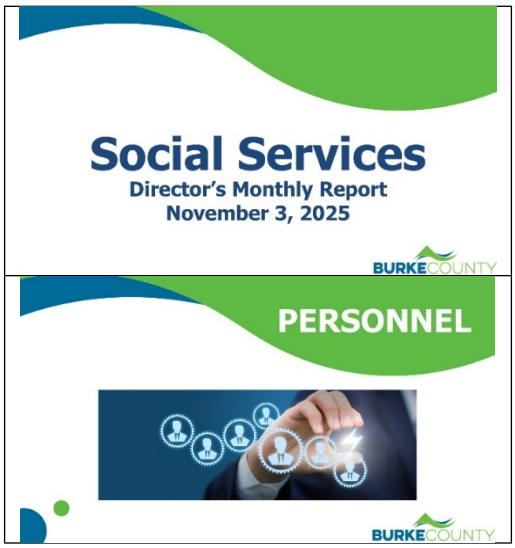
Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, he called for a motion.

Motion: To approve a temporary contract between Burke County and Garrett & Moore Engineering in the amount of $81,580 and authorize the County Manager to execute the agreement, subject to review and/or revision by the County Attorney.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Randy Burns, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeff Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

DSS - DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

Korey Fisher-Wellman, DSS Director, and Chazlyn Thomas, Social Work Program Administrator, presented the monthly DSS report as follows:



REPORT

September 2025

Current Openings:

Position Title	Position #:	Status
IMC III Leadworker	52045	
IMC III Leadworker	51901	
IMC III	52002	
IMC II	51382	
PA IV	52047	
IMC II	51820	
IMC II	51898	
PA IV	51418	
After Hours Support Specialist	52062	Conditional Offer
Part Time PA IV	52081	Conditional Offer
Social Worker IAT	51866	Conditional Offer
Social Worker IAT	51437	Final Offer
Social Worker IAT	51438	
Social Worker III	51468	Final Offer
Social Worker IAT	51776	
Social Worker III	51829	
Social Worker IAT	51441	
Social Worker Supervisor III	51424	Conditional Offer
Staff Development Specialist	51667	

Separations:
Total = **10**
- Voluntary Resignation = 7
- Retirement = 1
- Dismissal = 2

Number of Hirings:
Total = **4**
- Attorney I = 1
- Social Worker IA&T= 3

OPERATIONS

Economic Services MOU Data

METRICS PER MOU

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES

ACTIVE RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES	MOU MEASURE	95%	95%
		APP TIMELINESS RATE- REGULAR	APP TIMELINESS RATE-EXPEDITE	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE
10,784	5,605	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved

WORK FIRST FAMILY ASSISTANCE AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

ACTIVE RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES	MOU MEASURE	95%	95%
			APPLICATION TIMELINESS	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE
84	56		Achieved	Achieved

MEDICAID

TOTAL MEDICAID RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES	MOU MEASURE	90	90
			REPORT CARD MAD	REPORT CARD OTHER
28,740	23,203		Achieved	Achieved

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

SAA ACTIVE CASES	MOU PERFORMANCE MEASURE	85%
		SAA TIMELINESS APPLICATIONS
248		83%

ENERGY PROGRAMS

	MOU PERFORMANCE MEASURE	
CIP APPLICATIONS PROCESSED	LIEAP APPLICATIONS PROCESSED	
253	0	

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

ACTIVE CASES	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	95%
		APPLICATION TIMELINESS
427		Achieved

Economic Services Update

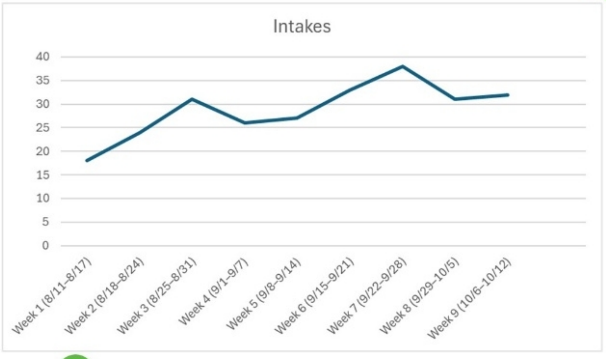
AGED OR DISABLED ADULT ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS Does not include MXP or FP cases	ADULT ACTIVE CASES *Does not include MXP or FP cases	FAMILY AND CHILDREN ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS	FAMILY AND CHILDREN ACTIVE CASES	TOTAL MEDICAID APPLICATIONS TAKEN	TOTAL MEDICAID REVIEWS	TOTAL MEDICAID REVIEWS WITHOUT WAIVERS	CAP REFERRALS	LTC REFERRALS	TOTAL MEDICAID RECIPIENTS	TOTAL NEMT TRIPS	REPORT CARD MAD	REPORT CARD OTHER	RECERT COMPLETION TIMELINESS RATE	Straight Through Processing	Total
MOU MEASURE											90	90	95		
5384	7609	21,937	13958	382	412	1890	3	17	27,323	626	96%	92%	[redacted]	100%	93%
5387	7563	22,277	14091	446	90	1128	4	14	27,666	642	96%	92%		100%	93%
5405	7584	22,655	14304	688	363	1746	9	10	28,062	573	97%	97%		100%	97%
5415	7567	22936	14554	582	1485	2246	10	11	28,351	582	100%	97%		100%	96%
5412	7612	23126	14845	565	2090	2900	5	9	28,538	651	96%	96%		100%	96%
5391	7,608	23436	14,952	352	2223	2580	1	7	28,561	683	93%	95%		100%	95%
5356	7,618	23247	15,012	411	855	2969	11	13	28603	735	100%	95%		100%	95%
5389	7,752	23481	15,037	380	1571	*	4	12	28,870	683	96%	95%		100%	95%
5351	7,658	23365	15,147	382	*	*	3	9	28,716	713	93%	97%		100%	97%
5338	7,683	23515	15,235	346	1540	n/a	0	17	28,851	698	96%	94%		100%	95%
5327	7,734	23,544	15,333	382	1435	n/a	2	18	28,873	*	93%	95%		100%	95%
5283	7,753	23448	15,418	325	1386	n/a	1	12	28,731	823	100%	96%		100%	96%
5289	7,744	23471	15,459	378	1586	n/a	2	16	28,740	756	100%	94%		100%	94%

Economic Services Update

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES

	ACTIVE RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES	APPLICATIONS TAKEN	APP TIMELINESS RATE-REGULAR	APP TIMELINESS RATE-EXPEDITE	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE	RECERTS COMPLETED	FNS EBT BENEFITS
MOU MEASURE				95%	95%	95%		
SEP	11,199	5814	525	99.51%	98.26%	98.28%	406	*
OCT	11,503	5975	731/6302	98.54%	94.23%	72.63%	285	3230130
NOV	11,981	6206	394	100.00%	97.81	67%	739	2962954
DEC	12,193	6312	346	97.62%	98.15%	100%	356	2016823
JAN	12,108	6275	585	99.31%	99.77%	100%	525	1,973,378
FEB	11,951	6236	449	97.18%	100%	98.75%	561	1,963,605
MAR	11,907	6183	499	97.21%	100%	98.48%	526	1,965,566
APR	11,396	5959	591	97.24%	100.00%	97.77%	720	1,871,687
MAY	11,002	5732	576	98.11%	99.15%	99.13%	692	1,808,941
JUN	10,804	5,597	598	97.69%	92.73%	98.19%	553	1783246
JUL	10,715	5,556	594	96.83%	96.84%	98.74%	548	1760696
AUG	10,783	5602	558	99.52%	99.31%	98.86%	528	1778789
SEP	10,794	5605	580	99.13%	97.98%	99.41%	509	1752253

CPS REPORTS



- Since PathNC has started, reports are trending upward
- The first showed 99 reports and the second 30 days showed 161 reports, a 62% increase

CPS CASELOADS



- High point was February 2025 with 306 open cases
- Steady decrease from March forward ending at 234 in September



ADULT SERVICES UPDATE

Guardianship
- Total Wards: 66
- Contracted Wards: 17

SAIH (Special Assistance In-Home)
- Active Cases: 51
- State Average Caseload: 25-30

CAP (Community Alternatives Program)
- Current Enrollment: 133
- Capacity: 188+

Sept APS Data

Category	Number	Notes
Total APS Reports Received	35	
APS Reports Screened In	16	Reports meeting criteria for an investigation
Substantiated Cases	4	
Confirmed Cases	4	Includes substantiations and other confirmations
Cases Opened for Services	8	Ongoing support and case management
Outreach Cases Assigned	10	Proactive engagement with at-risk adults
Service Referrals	12	Referrals for supportive community services
Guardianship Referrals	2	Referrals for potential legal guardianship

FOSTER CARE UPDATE



Every child deserves a family

Foster Care Snapshot – Burke County
- Total children experiencing foster care: **194**
- New entries into care this period: **17**
- Exits from care this period: **6**

BURKECOUNTY

ADULT SERVICES' CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



BURKECOUNTY

Foster Care Christmas Program



BURKECOUNTY

BURKECOUNTY

THANK YOU

Questions?

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Commissioner Burns asked about the number of children placed in out-of-county care. Ms. Thomas said the exact number was not immediately available, and Mr. Fisher-Wellman explained that many out-of-county placements result from kinship, specialized treatment needs, or adoption placements that cannot be met locally. These placements often require significant travel by social workers, including out-of-state visits, which is time intensive. County Manager Epley highlighted ongoing process improvements and position reclassifications to reduce travel demands without increasing the budget.

Commissioner Burns asked about travel costs, and Mr. Fisher-Wellman stated that travel is initially a county expense with some state and federal reimbursement. Discussion followed regarding limitations in local placement options, including reduced federal reimbursement for congregate care and concerns about Medicaid rate cuts affecting Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs), which could leave high-needs children with fewer appropriate placement options. Chairman Brittain asked about interstate visitation, and Mr. Fisher-Wellman and Ms. Thomas explained that while partner agencies assist under the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), Burke County staff must still complete required quarterly visits.

Mr. Fisher-Wellman also briefed the Board on the emerging SNAP situation. Due to an ongoing federal funding lapse and new related litigation, the federal administration indicated it intends to release one (1) month of SNAP contingency funding at approximately 50% of normal benefit levels, anticipated to apply to November only. If this contingency funding is used in November, then no additional contingency funding would remain should the shutdown continue into December, which could result in recipients receiving no SNAP benefits in a subsequent month. The timing of benefit issuance remains uncertain, as the state was still awaiting guidance, though North Carolina's EBT system is operational and benefits could be issued quickly once authorized. SNAP benefits are issued on a staggered schedule statewide, and the state would need to determine how to address missed benefit days. County administrative costs and reimbursements are not expected to be impacted.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Phil Smith, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeff Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

ADJOURN

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Phil Smith, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeff Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

Approved this 16th day of February 2026.

_____
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

_____
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board