MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, March 16, 2026, at 6:00 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 Brian Barrier Randy Burns Mike Stroud
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:	Phil Smith, Vice Chairman (Health-related)
STAFF:	Brian Epley, County Manager Destin Hall, County Attorney Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board
STAFF ABSENT:	Margaret Pierce, Finance Director/Deputy County Manager (Vacation)

CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Brittain called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION
David Bridges, First Apostolic Church Morganton, delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Boy Scouts of America, Troop 197, Glen Alpine, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.



APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended:

1. **Move Consent Item No. 5, *Social Services Advisory Board Removal and Appointment* to Items for Decision No. 8, due to the receipt of an application after agenda distribution.**
2. **Add Decision Item No. 9, *Consideration of a Resolution Approving Tentative Bid Award to Brushy Mountain Builders - $548,750* for the Sewer Meter Project.**
3. **Remove Presentation Item No. 3, *Recognition of Jainny Estrada, NCSSM's Assistant Director of Student Services*, due to illness.**

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

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: To approve the minutes of the December 15, 2025 (regular), January 5, 2026 (pre-agenda), January 20, 2026 (regular), and February 2, 2026 (pre-agenda) meetings as written.

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

PRESENTATIONS

BOC - RECOGNITION OF THE DRAUGHN HIGH SCHOOL CHEER TEAM

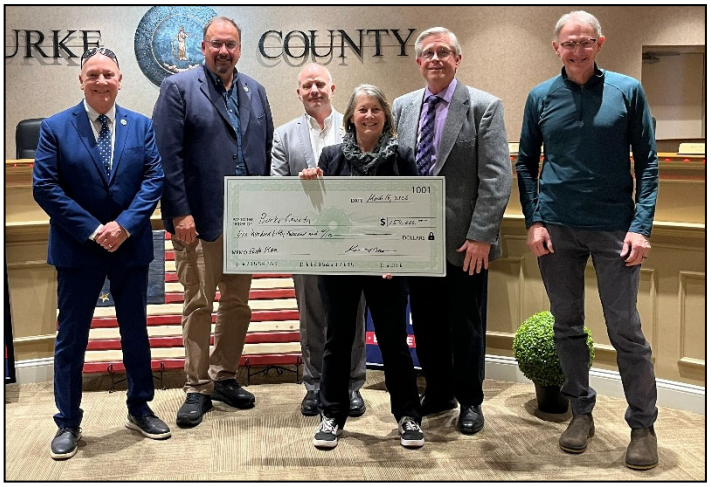
The Board recognized Head Coach Macy Dula and the Draughn High School Cheerleading team for winning the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) Small Varsity DII Game Day Division State Championship at their regular meeting. Coach Dula commended her team and their parents for all their hard work.





RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

CD - FRIENDS OF FONTA FLORA PRESENTATION OF GRANT MATCH FUNDS



Sarah Chabaane, Planner – Trails Specialist, provided an update on the Canal Bridge Sidewalk Project, a proposed 480-foot pedestrian walkway to be constructed on the existing Canal Bridge along NC 126. She explained that the project will connect the planned trailhead at the Canal Bridge Boat Ramp and serve as a critical link in both the Fonta Flora State Trail and the Overmountain Victory State Trail, connecting parcels within Lake James State Park.

Ms. Chabaane reviewed the project's history, noting that design work began in 2021 and received NCDOT approval in 2023. She further reported that Burke County was awarded a Locally Administered Project Program (LAPP) grant in July 2024 for the project. The total project cost is approximately $1.24 million, including a required local match. Ms. Chabaane noted that Friends of the Fonta Flora State Trail and Friends of the Overmountain Victory State Trail committed to providing the required matching funds, while Burke County has already funded the engineering study and other administrative costs. She explained that NCDOT will serve as the lead agency for project construction and oversight.

Ms. Chabaane then introduced representatives of Friends of the Fonta Flora State Trail, who presented a contribution toward the project's required local match. Chairman Brittain expressed appreciation for the partnership and collaborative efforts that have advanced the project.

RESULT:	**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

CD - RECOGNITION OF JAINNY ESTRADA, NCSSM'S ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES
Note: This item was removed from the agenda during the approval of the agenda.

RESULT:	**REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA.**

BOC - PROCLAMATION DECLARING APRIL 18TH AS LINEMEN APPRECIATION DAY
Chairman Brittain presented a proclamation recognizing April 18, 2026, as Lineman Appreciation Day in Burke County. He acknowledged representatives from local electric providers, including the Town of Drexel, the City of Morganton, Rutherford Electric Membership Corporation, and other utility partners serving Burke County.

Chairman Brittain recognized the vital role linemen play in ensuring the safe and reliable delivery of electricity to homes, businesses, and critical public services. He noted that linemen often work in hazardous conditions and are frequently called upon during severe weather events, natural disasters, and other emergencies to restore power and maintain essential infrastructure. Chairman Brittain expressed the Board's appreciation for the dedication, sacrifices, and public service of linemen and their families.



Motion: To approve Proclamation No. 2026-02.

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

Proclamation No. 2026-02 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

PROCLAMATION
LINEMEN APPRECIATION DAY
APRIL 18, 2026

WHEREAS, linemen play a vital role in ensuring the safe and reliable delivery of electricity to homes, businesses, and essential services across Burke County, throughout the State of North Carolina, and the entire nation; and

WHEREAS, their service is essential to the daily lives of our citizens, supporting economic development, education, healthcare, and countless other facets of modern life; and

WHEREAS linemen must work under dangerous conditions, oftentimes far from their homes and families, to construct and maintain the energy infrastructure across the United States; and

WHEREAS, linemen work with thousands of volts of electricity high atop power lines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to keep electricity flowing; tirelessly facing all weather conditions and great personal risk to maintain and restore power, ensuring the well-being and safety of our communities; and often serving as first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety heroes; and

WHEREAS, linemen put their lives on the line every day with little recognition from the community regarding the danger of their work.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Burke County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaim the day of April 18, 2026 as “Linemen Appreciation Day” in Burke County and thanks all linemen, whether employed by a local ElectriCity such as the Town of Drexel and the City of Morganton or by a local energy cooperative like Rutherford Electric Membership Corporation or by a large private provider like Duke Energy, for all they do for our citizens that makes us able to enjoy health, safety, comfort and quality of life every day.

Approved this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

BR - RECOGNITION OF 2026 NC1 COMMUNITY IN RECOVERY ADULT & YOUTH AWARD WINNERS

Tracy Hall, Burke Recovery, presented two (2) statewide recovery awards from the 17th Annual One Community in Recovery Conference, recognizing individuals for their leadership, advocacy, and service in advancing mental health awareness and substance use recovery efforts.

Ms. Hall announced that Brandi Greer, Deputy Director of the Burke County Opioid Response Department, was selected as the 2026 Western North Carolina Recovery Champion. Ms. Hall highlighted Ms. Greer's professional leadership in administering opioid settlement-funded initiatives, as well as her personal recovery journey and longstanding commitment to supporting individuals affected by substance use disorders through peer support, counseling, prevention programming, and nonprofit leadership.



Depicted from left to right: Commissioner Stroud, Brandi Greer, Commissioner Burns, Emily Hall, Commissioner Barrier, and Chairman Brittain.

Ms. Hall also announced that Emily Hall was selected to receive the 2026 Youth and Young Adult Voice Award. Ms. Hall recognized Emily's leadership in prevention education, youth mentorship, Teen Court, and community service initiatives. She further noted Emily's advocacy efforts related to substance misuse prevention, mental health awareness, and support for vulnerable populations within the community.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

BOC - RECOGNITION OF DANNY SCALISE, LOCAL HEALTH DIRECTOR, FOR HIS SERVICE TO BURKE COUNTY

The Board recognized Danny Scalise, who has served as the local health director since July 12, 2021. Dr. Scalise has accepted a new position, and April 3, 2026, will be his last day of employment with Burke County.



Depicted from left to right: Commissioner Burns, Chairman Brittain, Dr. Danny Scalise, Commissioner Stroud, and Commissioner Barrier.

Dr. Scalise expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve Burke County, describing his tenure as an honor. He thanked the Health Department staff for their dedication and professionalism, specifically acknowledging the support he received from his team. Dr. Scalise commended the staff's work ethic, intelligence, character, and commitment to public service, expressing confidence that they would continue providing excellent service to the citizens of Burke County.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

BOC - RECOGNITION OF KAY DRAUGHN, CLERK TO THE BOARD, ON HER RETIREMENT

The Board recognized Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, as she will be retiring at the end of March after serving in this role for the past 14 years. Including accumulated leave, she has over 30 years of local government service.



Depicted from left to right: Commissioner Stroud, Commissioner Burns, Kay Draughn, Chairman Brittain, David Draughn, and Commissioner Barrier.

Clerk Draughn thanked the Board for the recognition and expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to serve Burke County. She stated that it had been an honor to support the work of the Board and thanked the Commissioners for the trust they had placed in her throughout her tenure. Clerk Draughn also expressed gratitude for the relationships and friendships formed over the years and noted that she would always be proud to have been a part of Burke County's story.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE

INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for informal public comments at 6:30 p.m. and asked speakers to limit their comments to three (3) minutes.

Steve Starnes, a resident of Connelly Springs, addressed the Board regarding a proposed cryptocurrency mining operation in Burke County. Mr. Starnes expressed concerns related to the potential energy demands of such facilities, possible impacts on utility infrastructure and electricity costs, noise generated by industrial cooling systems, water consumption, and the limited number of long-term jobs typically associated with cryptocurrency mining operations. He also emphasized the importance of transparency, accountability, and public engagement in evaluating any such proposal. Mr. Starnes urged the Board to prioritize quality of life, environmental stewardship, and responsible economic development when considering future projects of this nature.

Cristy Gupton addressed the Board regarding the importance of maintaining musculoskeletal health. She emphasized the benefits of resistance training and strength-building exercises to preserve mobility, balance, and the ability to prevent falls later in life. Ms. Gupton noted that while activities such as walking provide cardiovascular and mental health benefits, they should be supplemented with strength training exercises. She also discussed the impact of prolonged sitting on muscle health and posture and referenced educational resources related to musculoskeletal movement and wellness.

There was no one else to address the Board; therefore, Chairman Brittain closed this portion of the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

At the request of the Board, Brian Epley, County Manager, reviewed the following 11 items on the consent agenda, which were approved by a single motion.

BOC - PROCLAMATION FOR SOCIAL WORKER APPRECIATION MONTH 2026

The Board was requested to approve the following proclamation declaring March as Social Worker Appreciation Month, which recognizes the dedication, expertise, and impact of social workers in Burke County and beyond.

The 2026 theme, "Social Workers: Uplift. Defend. Transform," highlights how social workers not only care deeply about people but also take meaningful action to support individuals, families, and communities. Social workers are at the forefront of addressing critical societal challenges, including mental health and substance use disorders, income inequality, and homelessness. Their work spans hospitals, schools, government agencies, social service organizations, and more, making them essential to the well-being of our society.

Social work is one of the fastest-growing professions in the U.S., with demand projected to increase 6% by 2034, reinforcing the vital role social workers play in shaping stronger, healthier communities. This proclamation serves to honor their contributions, acknowledge their commitment, and emphasize the importance of self-care for those in helping professions.

Motion: To approve Proclamation No. 2026-03.

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

Proclamation No. 2026-03 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

SOCIAL WORK MONTH 2026 PROCLAMATION
SOCIAL WORKERS: UPLIFT. DEFEND. TRANSFORM.

WHEREAS, individuals have entered the social work profession for generations because they are committed to helping improve the well-being of people, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers positively impact the lives of millions of Americans each day in hospitals, schools, child welfare agencies, community centers, assisted living facilities, and within federal, state, and local governments; and

WHEREAS, the 2026 Social Work Month theme, “Social Workers: Uplift. Defend. Transform.,” recognizes the dedication and expertise Social Workers bring to strengthening individuals and families, promoting resilience, and supporting positive change; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers adhere to a professional Code of Ethics that emphasizes service, integrity, respect, and the inherent dignity and worth of every person; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers help all people, regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex or disability; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers assist individuals and families navigating life’s challenges, including mental health concerns, substance use recovery, family transitions, aging, disability, and times of crisis; and

WHEREAS, Social Workers help protect children, support families under stress, connect individuals with essential services, and work collaboratively with community partners to improve outcomes; and

WHEREAS, research demonstrates that the presence of Social Workers in schools, healthcare settings, and community agencies improves educational achievement, health outcomes, and overall quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the social work profession continues to grow, with more than 800,000 Social Workers serving communities across the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Burke County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim the month of March 2026 as National Social Work Month in Burke County and commend Social Workers for their ongoing service and commitment to uplifting, defending, and transforming the lives of those they serve.

Approved this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

CHAMBER - PROCLAMATION DECLARING APRIL 2026 AS BURKE IMPACT GROUP (B.I.G.) CHALLENGE MONTH

In previous years, the Burke County Chamber of Commerce held an annual litter sweep event; however, for 2026, the BCCOC has expanded the litter sweep concept into a broader, month-long initiative entitled the B.I.G. Challenge (Burke Impact Group Challenge). The initiative will run throughout the month of April and is designed to encourage diverse forms of community service beyond litter pickup.

While environmental cleanup remains a core component, the B.I.G. Challenge invites businesses, civic groups, churches, nonprofits, and other organizations to participate in service activities such as:

- Community litter removal and beautification efforts
- Hosting baby showers for organizations supporting new mothers
- Sewing blankets for hospice patients
- Assisting with the construction of Habitat homes
- Building accessibility ramps for residents in need
- Other volunteer-driven community improvement projects

The expanded format allows broader participation by groups that may not be able to engage in litter collection but wish to contribute meaningfully to the community.

Motion: To approve Proclamation No. 2026-01.

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

Proclamation No. 2026-01 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION DECLARING THE MONTH OF APRIL 2026 AS
BURKE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S
BURKE IMPACT GROUP (B.I.G.) CHALLENGE MONTH

WHEREAS, the Burke Impact Group (B.I.G.) Challenge, led by the Burke County Chamber of Commerce, builds upon the success of the community's annual Litter Sweep efforts conducted over the past four years; and

WHEREAS, this expanded month-long initiative provides increased opportunities for residents, businesses, civic groups, and organizations throughout Burke County to participate in meaningful community improvement activities; and

WHEREAS, the B.I.G. Challenge is intentionally designed to be inclusive of individuals of all ages and physical abilities by offering a variety of ways to serve beyond traditional litter pickup; and

WHEREAS, these activities may include beautification projects, volunteer service, environmental stewardship, and other acts that strengthen community pride and engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Burke County Chamber of Commerce continues to demonstrate leadership in fostering partnerships that promote a cleaner, more connected, and more vibrant community; and

WHEREAS, the Burke Impact Group Challenge encourages citizens to take collective ownership in preserving the natural beauty and quality of life in Burke County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Burke County Board of Commissioners hereby designates the month of April 2026 as the

"BURKE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S
BURKE IMPACT GROUP (B.I.G.) CHALLENGE MONTH"

in Burke County and encourages all residents, businesses, schools, faith-based organizations, and community groups to participate in activities that make a positive impact throughout our county.

Approved this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

CLERK - REMOVAL OF ALAN GLINES AS PLAT REVIEW OFFICER FOR BURKE COUNTY
Due to his retirement, the adoption of the following resolution removing Alan Glines as a plat review officer for Burke County was requested. This removal should not have any impact on service delivery in the Community Development Department.

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2026-05.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Resolution No. 2026-05 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION REMOVING PLAT REVIEW OFFICERS

WHEREAS, Section 47-30.2 of the North Carolina General Statutes requires that the Board of Commissioners of each county designate one or more persons experienced in mapping or in land records management, as Review Officers, to review each map and plat required to be submitted for review before the map or plat is presented to the Register of Deeds for recording; and

WHEREAS, Alan Glines has retired from Burke County and is no longer able to serve in the capacity of Plat Review Officer;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Burke County Board of Commissioners hereby removes Alan Glines as a Plat Review Officer for the County of Burke.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be recorded in the Burke County Register of Deeds Office and indexed in the name of the Review Officer.

Adopted this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

CLERK - ADULT CARE & NURSING HOME COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REMOVAL
Kathleen Andrews has resigned due to increased family commitments. This was a request to remove her name from the official roster and thank her for her service to the community.

Motion: To remove Kathleen Andrews from the Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee official roster and thank her for her service to the community.

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

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE RECREATION COMMISSION
The following seats on the Recreation Commission have terms that are set to expire on March 31, 2026:

4	Valdese / R. College	Jonathan Carter 211 Windsor St Connelly Springs, NC 28612	A-UT R TE	4/19/2022 5/16/2023 3/31/2026
6	Hildebran / Icard	Ricky Barnes 3001 Hodges St Connelly Springs, NC 28612	A-UT R TE	4/19/2022 5/16/2023 3/31/2026
8	Ray Childers	Curtis Hildebran	A-UT R TE	3/15/2022 5/16/2023 3/31/2026
11	Salem	Sarah Ellis	A-UT TE	8/18/2025 3/31/2026
13	Mtn. View	LaPorsche Cuthbertson	A-UT R TE	3/15/2022 5/16/2023 3/31/2026

Ricky Barnes and Sarah Ellis have both expressed interest in serving another term and maintained perfect attendance at all meetings held in 2025. There have been no meetings in 2026 to date. Jordan Phillips is stepping down from service. Pursuant to the Burke County Code of Ordinance, Chapter 50, Article I, Sec. 50-29 (b), Seat No. 4, representing Valdese / Rutherford College, is no longer eligible for representation on the commission. The ordinance provides that each youth athletic playing district must participate in three (3) or more county youth sporting leagues to qualify for representation. Valdese / Rutherford College currently participates in only two (2) county leagues and therefore no longer meets the eligibility requirements. As such, the seat must be removed by action of the Board of Commissioners.

Motion: To remove Seat No. 4, Valdese / Rutherford College, from the Recreation Commission due to ineligibility under Chapter 50, Article I, Section 50-29(b) of the Burke County Code of Ordinances. To remove Jonathan Carter, Curtis Hildebran, Jordan Phillips, and LaPorsche Cuthbertson from the Recreation Commission's official roster and thank them for their service to the community. To reappoint Ricky Barnes to the Parks & Recreation Commission, Seat No. 6, Hildebran / Icard, for a 3-year term ending March 31,

2029. To appoint Landon Cook to the Parks & Recreation Commission, Seat No. 7, W.A. Yong, to complete the remainder of a term ending March 31, 2027. To appoint Katlyn "Katie" Greer to the Parks & Recreation Commission, Seat No. 8, Ray Childers, for a 3-year term ending March 31, 2029. To reappoint Sarah Ellis to the Parks & Recreation Commission, Seat No. 11, Salem, for a 3-year term ending March 31, 2029. To appoint Valerie Barnhardt to the Parks & Recreation Commission, Seat No. 13, Mountain View, for a 3-year term ending March 31, 2029.

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

CLERK - APPOINTMENT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Library Board of Trustees is a 9-member advisory Board which meets quarterly and provides guidance on the County's three (3) libraries. Seat No. 8, Hildebran, was previously held by Jennie Cook, who recently reached the maximum number of allowable terms. Martitia "Marti" Smith has applied to fill the vacancy. The three (3) year term will expire on December 31, 2028.

8	Hildebran - City	Jennie Cook	A	6/19/2018
		P.O. Box 382	R	1/21/2020
		Hildebran NC 28637	R	1/17/2023
			TE	12/31/2025

Motion: To appoint Martitia "Marti" Smith to the Library Board of Trustees, Seat No. 8, Hildebran, to complete the remainder of a 3-year term ending December 31, 2028.

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

CM - APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 15 - $2,580,000

Approval of Budget Amendment No. 15, which recognizes a grant awarded by the NC Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) to the Burke County Public Schools for the replacement of HVAC at Freedom High School, was requested. These funds are awarded under the Helene Recovery Grant program. Capital funds from NC DPI are disbursed under the CORE banking program and require the County to act as the disbursement agent. Funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis to the school system. No County funds are involved, but this does require a budget amendment for both the County and the school system.

Motion: To adopt Budget Amendment No. 15 as presented.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Budget Amendment No. 15 reads as follows:

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 15
FY 25-26

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 15			
REVENUES AND EXPENSES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
REVENUES			
150-00000-01-433000-	Helene Recovery Grant	$2,580,000	
EXPENSES			
150-00000-30-550502-	FHS HVAC Project	$2,580,000	
Purpose: recognizing grant funds awarded by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) to Burke County Public Schools for HVAC replacement at Freedom High School under the Helene Recovery Grant Program. The County will serve as the disbursement agent for these State capital funds through the CORE banking program, with reimbursements issued to the school system.			
A copy of these amendments shall be furnished to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer of the County to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.			

Adopted this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

CM - APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 16 - $14,277
Approval of Budget Amendment No. 16, which recognizes additional allocations from NC DHHS to the Department of Social Services, was requested.

Motion: To adopt Budget Amendment No. 16 as presented.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Budget Amendment No. 16 reads as follows:

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 16
FY 25-26

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 16			
REVENUES AND EXPENSES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
REVENUES			
100-52000-01-433440-	DSS Administrative Funds	$14,277	
EXPENSES			
100-52070-20-554001-	Foster Care Board Payments	$14,277	
Purpose: To recognize $14,277 in funds allocated by NC DHHS for Emergency Placement services to support foster care placement stability for children with behavioral health needs. No County funds are required.			
A copy of these amendments shall be furnished to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer of the County to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.			

Adopted this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

CM - APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 17 - $26,760
Approval of Budget Amendment No. 17, which recognizes additional allocations from NC DHHS to the Department of Social Services, was requested.

Motion: To adopt Budget Amendment No. 17 as presented.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Budget Amendment No. 17 reads as follows:

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 17
FY 25-26

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 17			
REVENUES AND EXPENSES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
REVENUES			
100-52000-01-433440-	DSS Administrative Funds	$26,760	
EXPENSES			

100-52070-20-554010-	Family Reunification	$26,760	
Purpose: To recognize $26,760 in funds allocated by NC DHHS for Family Reunification services to support safe and stable families. No County funds are required.			
A copy of these amendments shall be furnished to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer of the County to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.			

Adopted this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

CM - APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 18 - $5,600
Approval of Budget Amendment No. 18, which recognizes additional allocations from NC DHHS to the Department of Social Services, was requested.

Motion: To adopt Budget Amendment No. 18 as presented.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Budget Amendment No. 18 reads as follows:

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 18
FY 25-26

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 18			
REVENUES AND EXPENSES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
REVENUES			
100-54500-01-433100-	US DHHS	$5,600	
EXPENSES			
100-54500-20-586000-	SHIIP GRANT	$5,600	
Purpose: To recognize $5,600 in funds allocated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide shredding services for senior citizens to help prevent Medicaid and other identity fraud. Services will be offered at the East Burke and Morganton Senior Centers. No County funds are required.			

A copy of these amendments shall be furnished to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer of the County to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.

Adopted this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

CM - APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 19 - $36,550
Approval of Budget Amendment No. 19, which recognizes additional funds donated from the Library Foundation to support countywide library activities, was requested.

Motion: To adopt Budget Amendment No. 19 as presented.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Budget Amendment No. 19 reads as follows:

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 19
FY 25-26

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 19			
REVENUES AND EXPENSES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
REVENUES			
100-55500-06-436500-	Library Donations	$36,550	
EXPENSES			
100-55500-25-569025-	Children Programming-Valdese	$4,015	
100-55500-25-569050-	Children Programming-Hildebran	$2,341	
100-55500-25-569075-	Children Programming-Morganton	$4,665	
100-55500-25-569125-	Young Adult Programming	$6,306	
100-55500-25-569150-	Adult Programming	$5,548	
100-55500-25-569200-	Library Support	$13,675	
Purpose: To recognize a $36,550 donation from the Library Foundation to support additional activities throughout the County. No County funds are required.			
A copy of these amendments shall be furnished to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer of the County to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.			

Adopted this 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

ITEMS FOR DECISION

CLERK - REMOVAL & APPOINTMENT - VETERANS SERVICE BOARD
Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, requested the removal of Mr. Curtis Hildebran. Several applications have been received for consideration. Members of the Veterans Services Board must have an honorable record of service. The eligible applicants were as follows:

- Geronimo Blancaflor applied in November 2025 and listed VSB as his first choice.
- Jim Frady applied in July of 2025 and listed VSB as his first choice.
- Amber Puett applied in November 2025 and listed VSB as her third choice.
- Dillon Smith applied in September 2025 and listed VSB as his first choice.

Motion: To remove Curtis Hildebran from the official Veterans Service Board roster and thank him for his service to the community.

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

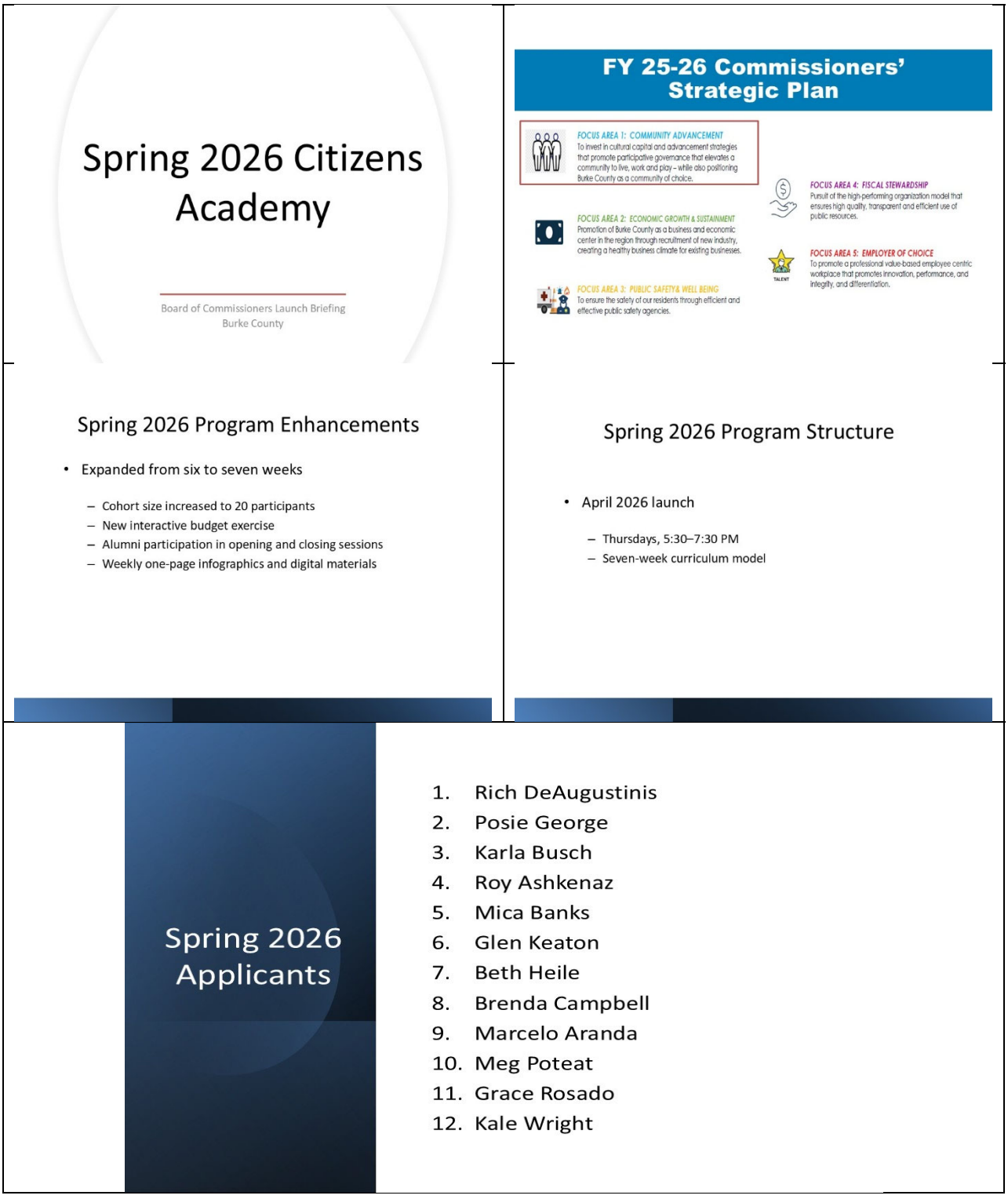
Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Barrier nominated Dillon Smith. There being no further nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Dillon Smith to Seat No. 5, at-large, on the Veterans Service Board to complete the remainder of a 3-year term ending September 30, 2026.

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

CM - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE 2026 SPRING CITIZENS ACADEMY (PLACEHOLDER)
Brian Epley, County Manager, provided an update on the Spring 2026 Citizens Academy program and requested Board approval of the Spring 2026 Citizens Academy class. Highlights of his presentation were as follows:

This space is intentionally left blank.



Note: Ms. Banks works in Burke County, but lives in Catawba County and would need an exception to residency.

Motion: To approve the selection of Rich DeAugustinis, Posie George, Karla Busch, Roy Ashkenaz, Mica Banks, Glen Keaton, Beth Heile, Brenda Campbell, Marcelo Aranda, Grace

Rosado, Kale Wright, and Meg Poteet as the Spring 2026 class for Burke County Citizens Academy. Further, to grant a residency waiver.

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

FINANCE - APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING REPAIR AND RENOVATION FUNDS

Brian Epley, County Manager, reported that a portion of lottery proceeds are deposited into a special fund administered by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction called the Public-School Building Repair and Renovation fund. This fund is used by counties to address their school capital needs. Monies deposited into the fund accumulate and earn interest until drawn down by the county. In order to draw down funds, the Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education must approve and submit an application for an eligible project. The Burke County Public Schools requested $325,000 from these funds to replace Patton High School's HVAC control system units that are at end-of-life. This project meets the guidelines for the use of these funds.

Motion: To approve the Public-School Building Repair and Renovation Fund application in the amount of $325,000 and authorize the Chairman to execute the application on behalf of the board.

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

TAX - TAX COLLECTION REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2026

Dawn Hutchins, Revenue Collections Supervisor / Deputy Tax Collector, presented the Tax Collection Report for the period ending February 28, 2026, as follows:

	Budget	Actuals To Date	Remaining
Current Year Taxes	$ 60,495,871	$ 56,591,442	$ 3,904,429
Discounts	$ (350,000)	$ (346,445)	
Deliquent Taxes	$ 700,000	$ 605,063	$ 94,937
Interest and Fees	$ 329,000	$ 299,943	$ 29,057
	$ 61,174,871	$ 57,150,003	

Total Net Levy for 2025 Tax Year			% Collected	Remaining
Property Tax	$ 55,972,360	$ 52,494,551	94%	$ 3,477,809
Motor Vehicles	$ 5,456,857	$ 4,092,764	75%	$ 1,364,093
Fire Tax-Property tax	$ 6,507,986	$ 6,023,879	93%	$ 484,107

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

Motion: To accept the Tax Collection Report as presented.

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

TAX - TAX RELEASE & REFUND REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2026

Dawn Hutchins, Revenue Collections Supervisor / Deputy Tax Collector, presented the Release and Refund Report for the period ending February 28, 2026, as follows:

Tax System Refunds and Releases			
Report Amount	Rebilled Amount	Net Release	Refund Amount
$10,262.27	$2,647.23	$7,615.04	$0.00

VTS Refunds Over $100	
	Refund Amount
VTS Adjustments	$0.00

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**						
0000013905-2026-2023-0000-01-REG	FINDING HOPE PROPERTIES, LLC	2/16/2026	LINDA WILBUR	2/16/2026	238.22	17.66	220.56
0024033339-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	BENTLEY, LORRI HOWELL	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	2/16/2026	17.58	17.58	0.00
Subtotal					**255.80**	**35.24**	**220.56**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Business Closed**						
0024033317-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PLUMBING	7/1/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	2/16/2026	62.34	62.34	0.00
Subtotal					**62.34**	**62.34**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Deceased**						
0000009111-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HOWELL, SAMMY RAY	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/11/2026	189.43	189.43	0.00
0000013905-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	TOWNSEND, DOROTHY B	7/3/2023	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/11/2026	231.41	231.41	0.00
0000013905-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	TOWNSEND, DOROTHY B	7/15/2024	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/11/2026	231.41	231.41	0.00
0000013905-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	TOWNSEND, DOROTHY B	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/11/2026	229.74	229.74	0.00
0000087579-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MCNEILLY, BRETT ROY	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/18/2026	104.57	104.57	0.00
Subtotal					**1,197.00**	**1,197.00**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Discovery Billing**						
0000003610-2026-2023-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, CYNTHIA P	2/24/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	241.59	241.59	0.00
0000003610-2026-2024-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, CYNTHIA P	2/20/2026	LINDA WILBUR	2/20/2026	358.07	72.48	285.59
0000003610-2026-2024-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, CYNTHIA P	2/20/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	285.59	44.00	241.59
0000003610-2026-2024-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, CYNTHIA P	2/20/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	241.59	241.59	0.00
0000008766-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	PEDRO-MATEO, TEOFILO	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	308.20	44.00	264.20
0000008766-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	PEDRO-MATEO, TEOFILO	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	264.20	264.20	0.00
0000009759-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	PIZZINO, GABRIEL BISHOP	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/23/2026	287.53	40.59	246.94
0000010563-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	HAYNES, KELSEY JALENE	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/23/2026	237.66	237.66	0.00
0000013929-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	HOWIE, RANDALL JOHN	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	344.26	344.26	0.00
0000013929-2026-2025-0000-01-REG	HOWIE, RANDALL JOHN	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	300.26	300.26	0.00
0000015193-2026-2024-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, WILLIAM L	2/20/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/20/2026	369.62	75.14	294.48
0000015193-2026-2024-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, WILLIAM L	2/20/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	294.48	42.11	252.37
0000046617-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	DEYTON, JASON B III	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/23/2026	293.75	44.00	249.75
0000046617-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	DEYTON, JASON B III	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	249.75	0.00	249.75
0000046617-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	DEYTON, JASON B III	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/24/2026	249.75	249.75	0.00
0000047519-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	GWYN, MELISSA REED	2/23/2026	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/23/2026	274.75	92.00	182.75
Subtotal					**4,601.05**	**2,333.63**	**2,267.42**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Duplicate Billing**						
0024086294-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	TATE, KEITH EDWIN	8/29/2025	LINDA WILBUR	2/6/2026	70.97	70.97	0.00
0024087951-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MCLAUGHLIN, KRISTY STYLES	8/29/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/6/2026	13.71	13.71	0.00
0024088049-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MULL, JOSEPH LIVINGSTON	8/29/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	2/9/2026	27.06	27.06	0.00
0024088396-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	BROWNE, CHRISTOPHER AARON	8/29/2025	LINDA WILBUR	2/27/2026	250.44	250.44	0.00

0024088404-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	SAY TZOC, JUAN JOSE	8/29/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	2/16/2026	26.13	26.13	0.00
0024088464-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	SAYLES, RICHARD PHILLIP	8/29/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	2/16/2026	248.55	248.55	0.00
0024089306-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, JERRY LEE	8/29/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	2/16/2026	40.88	40.88	0.00
0024091315-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CARSWELL, JEFFREY SCOTT	8/29/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	2/6/2026	123.54	123.54	0.00
0024092376-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MCLAUGHLIN, KRISTY STYLES	8/29/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/6/2026	13.88	13.88	0.00
0024092396-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	LOWMAN, BARREY GRIFFIN	8/29/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/16/2026	36.05	36.05	0.00
0024093392-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	POLLARD, CONNIE LYNN	8/29/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	2/17/2026	95.18	95.18	0.00
0024093464-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	GRAY, MARY BETH	8/29/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	2/27/2026	48.82	48.82	0.00
0024099669-2026-2025-0000-00-REG	MCGINNIS, ALVIN LUTHER	2/16/2026	KAYLA BURGESS	2/27/2026	51.17	51.17	0.00
Subtotal					**1,046.38**	**1,046.38**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Listed In Error**						
0024076342-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	YANCEY, RICHARD ALLAN	7/15/2024	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/6/2026	6.16	6.16	0.00
0024076342-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	YANCEY, RICHARD ALLAN	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/6/2026	6.11	6.11	0.00
Subtotal					**12.27**	**12.27**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Mapping Correction**						
0000018146-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	TRUITT, TIMOTHY W JR	8/19/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	2/23/2026	393.05	393.05	0.00
Subtotal					**393.05**	**393.05**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Not in Burke County**						
0024052827-2021-2021-0000-00-REG	PRUITT, MICHAEL E	7/1/2021	KAYLA BURGESS	2/17/2026	4.59	4.59	0.00
0024052827-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	PRUITT, MICHAEL E	7/1/2022	KAYLA BURGESS	2/17/2026	4.59	4.59	0.00
0024052827-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	PRUITT, MICHAEL E	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	2/17/2026	6.16	6.16	0.00
0024052827-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	PRUITT, MICHAEL E	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	2/17/2026	5.80	5.80	0.00
0024083024-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HENSON, DARUS C	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	2/24/2026	6.11	6.11	0.00
Subtotal					**27.25**	**27.25**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Process Correction**						
0000013905-2023-2023-0000-01-REG	TOWNSEND, DOROTHY B	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	2/11/2026	407.97	407.97	0.00
0000013905-2024-2024-0000-01-REG	TOWNSEND, DOROTHY B	7/15/2024	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/11/2026	407.97	407.97	0.00
0000013905-2025-2025-0000-01-REG	TOWNSEND, DOROTHY B	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/11/2026	404.72	404.72	0.00
0024083926-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MILLER, JACK JETHRO JR	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	2/25/2026	1,108.99	1,108.99	0.00
Subtotal					**2,329.65**	**2,329.65**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY	**RELEASE REASON: Sold/Traded**						
0024044872-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	JOHNSON, BENJAMIN GRAY	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	2/25/2026	8.29	8.29	0.00
0024069051-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	WALKER, HOWARD GENE	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	2/6/2026	116.34	3.70	112.64
0024069051-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	WALKER, HOWARD GENE	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	2/6/2026	112.64	112.64	0.00
0024069051-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	WALKER, HOWARD GENE	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	2/6/2026	26.92	3.51	23.41
0024069051-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	WALKER, HOWARD GENE	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	2/6/2026	23.41	23.41	0.00
0024069051-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	WALKER, HOWARD GENE	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	2/6/2026	26.68	3.48	23.20
0024069051-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	WALKER, HOWARD GENE	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	2/6/2026	23.20	23.20	0.00
Subtotal					**337.48**	**178.23**	**159.25**
Total					**10,262.27**	**7,615.04**	**2,647.23**

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

Motion: To accept the Tax Release and Refund Report as presented.

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

TAX - ORDER TO ADVERTISE 2025 DELINQUENT REAL PROPERTY TAXES

Dawn Hutchins, Revenue Collections Supervisor / Deputy Tax Collector, requested approval to advertise the 2025 delinquent taxes.

Additional information from the agenda packet:

> Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 105-369, the Tax Collector shall report to the governing board the total amount of unpaid taxes for the current fiscal year that are liens on real property.
>
> Under this statute, the Board orders the Tax Collector to advertise these tax liens on all unpaid real property. Also, a notice must be sent to the owner of record. This notice shall be sent at least 30 days before the advertisement is to be published, to the last known address. These notices state that the owner's name will be advertised if taxes are not paid in full by Tuesday, March 31, 2026. The Tax Office mailed these notices in February 2026 (see sample).

This Delinquent Tax Notice, which is required to be sent before advertising in the newspaper, also serves as the Debt Setoff (DSO) Notice for Burke County. The Debt Setoff Notice is featured on the front page and is further explained on the reverse side of the document. This notice gives taxpayers 30 days to pay their delinquent taxes and avoid Burke County intercepting their North Carolina Income Tax refund.

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

Motion: To approve the 2025 Order to Advertise Tax Liens.

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

The order to advertise reads as follows:

ORDER OF THE BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH NCGS § 105-369

State of North Carolina
County of Burke

To: John Bridgers, Tax Administrator of Burke County

You are hereby authorized, empowered and commanded to advertise tax liens on real property for failure to pay 2025 property taxes. You shall advertise said liens by publishing each lien in the local newspaper having general circulation in Burke County. Advertisement of the liens shall be made on Saturday, April 4, 2026.

This order shall be full and sufficient authority to direct, require, and enable you to advertise said tax liens in accordance with North Carolina General Statute § 105-369.

Witness my hand and official seal, this the 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Board of Commissioners

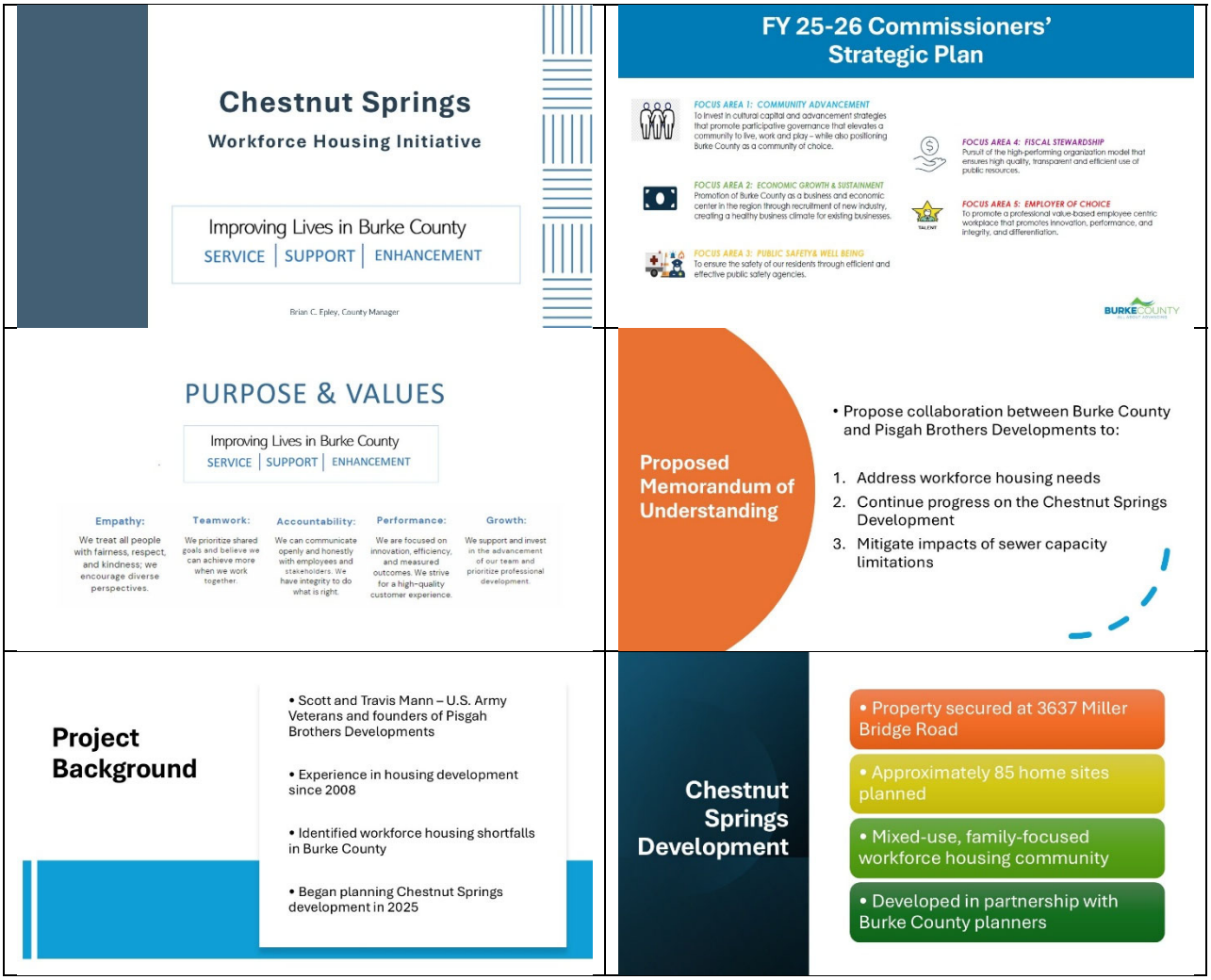
Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

CM - CHESTNUT SPRINGS DEVELOPMENT MOU

Brian Epley, County Manager, presented a Memorandum of Understanding between Burke County and Pisgah Brothers Developments regarding the Chestnut Springs housing development

located at 3637 Miller Bridge Road for consideration. Highlights of his presentation were as follows:

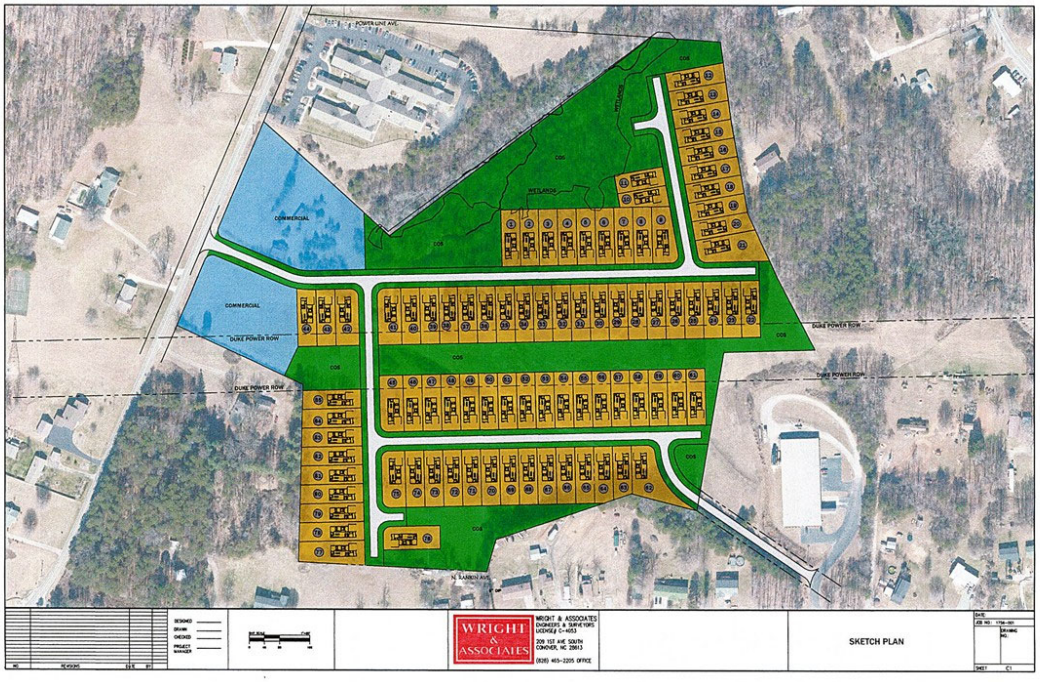


This space is intentionally left blank.



3637 Miller Bridge Rd

- 31.61 Acres
- Icard Township
- **Zoning Jurisdiction:** Burke County
- **Zoning:** R-MU
  - Likely Conditional Zoning









Project Infrastructure Challenges

- February 17, 2026: Notification of sewer capacity constraints
- Potential multi-year delay
- Developers revised project phasing to maintain forward progress
- Goal: Support housing needs while accommodating infrastructure limits

Proposed Development Phasing

Phase I (2026): 12 homes using septic → **Phase II (2027):** 24 homes using septic

Phase III (2028): 24 homes using septic → **Phase IV (2029):** Remaining 25 homes coordinated with future sewer capacity

Initial Timeline

- March 16, 2026 – Present MOU to County Commissioners
- March 26, 2026 – Planning Board Meeting
- May 18, 2026 – Master Plan approval and permits
- June 1, 2026 – Horizontal construction begins
- July 1, 2026 – First homes delivered

Conclusion & Partnership Vision

- Long-term partnership between Pisgah Brothers and Burke County
- Collaborative solution to workforce housing shortage
- Commitment to working with local leaders and residents
- Supporting the continued growth of Burke County

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

Motion: To approve an agreement between Burke County and Scott and Travis Mann (Pisgah Brothers Developments) as presented by the County Manager and as it relates to sanitary sewer capacity for the proposed Chestnut Springs Development Project on Miller Bridge Road, subject to review and/or revision by the County Attorney.

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

CLERK- SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD REMOVAL & APPOINTMENT
Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that Officer Keith Bowman has resigned from the Social Services Advisory Board. This was a request to remove his name from the official roster and thank him for his service to the community. This at-large seat has a term that expires September 30, 2027.

Applications on file:
2026: Ron Blancaflor
2025: Christian Cothren

5	At-Large	Keith Bowman	7/1/2024
			9/30/2027

Motion: To remove Keith Bowman's name from the Social Services Advisory Board's official roster and thank him for his service to the community.

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Burns nominated Geronimo "Ron" Blancaflor. There being no further nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Geronimo "Ron" Blancaflor to the Social Services Advisory Board, Seat No. 5, at-large, to complete a term ending September 30, 2027.

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

CM – RESOLUTION APPROVING TENTATIVE AWARD OF CONTRACT TO BRUSHY MOUNTAIN BUILDERS, INC. FOR LONG-TERM SEWER FLOW METERING PROJECT ($548,750)
Brian Epley, County Manager, presented a request related to the installation of sewer flow meters funded through a North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) grant. He explained that the project is intended to improve measurement of wastewater flows, including inflow and infiltration, by installing flow meters at strategic locations within the County's sewer system. Mr. Epley reported that three (3) bids were received, with Brushy Mountain Builders, Inc. submitting the lowest responsive and responsible bid in the amount of $548,750. He noted that the project is fully grant-funded with no local match required and that NCDEQ requires a tentative award resolution prior to completing its grant compliance review.

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

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2026-08 as presented.

RESULT:	**ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Resolution No. 2026-08 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF A TENTATIVE AWARD

WHEREAS, the County of Burke has received bids, pursuant to a duly advertised notice, for construction of the Long-Term Metering Project; and

WHEREAS, Willis Engineers, consulting engineers, have reviewed the bids; and

WHEREAS, Brushy Mountain was the lowest responsive responsible bidder for the Long-Term Metering Project, in the total bid amount of $548,750.00; and

WHEREAS, the consulting Engineers recommend a TENTATIVE AWARD to the lowest responsive responsible bidder,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS THAT A TENTATIVE AWARD is made to the lowest responsive responsible bidder, Brushy Mountain Builders, Inc., in the Total Bid Amount of $548,750.

NAME OF CONTRACTOR	AMOUNT
1. Brushy Mountain Builders, Inc.	$548.750
2. Cover Utility, Inc.	$596,900
3. James E. Harris Construction Co., Inc.	$1,045,460

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT SUCH TENTATIVE AWARD is contingent upon the approval of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. The County Manager is authorized to execute a contract for the project pending said approval.

Adopted this the 16th day of March 2026.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

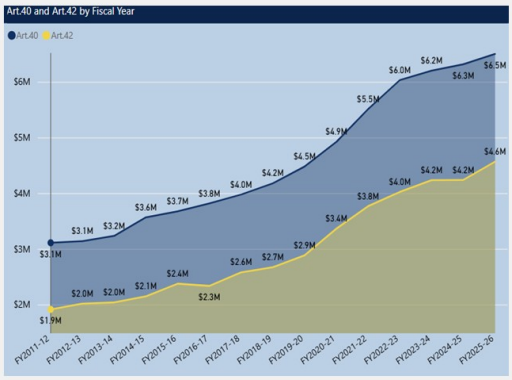
REPORTS AND COMMENTS

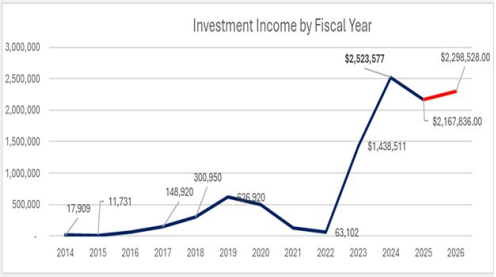
CM - PRESENTATION OF THE FY 25-26 MID-YEAR REPORT (PLACE HOLDER)

Brian Epley, County Manager, presented the mid-year financial report for FY 25-26. Highlights of his presentation were as follows:



Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Strategic Plan





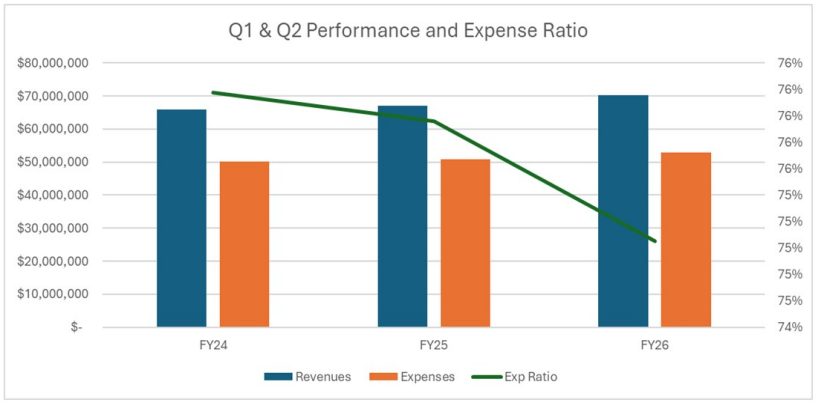
Budget Development Calendar

- February/March……Work-Session & Report Analysis
  - Operating Departments (Tier I, II, III)
  - Fire Departments
  - Non-Profits & Outside Funding Agencies
  - Public Schools & Community College
  - LME/MCO
  - Risk Management Partners
- March……Work-Session & Report Analysis
- March……...Mid Fiscal Year Fiscal Report / Audit Report
- April……..Commissioner Revenue Memo
- April……..Updated 5-Year CIP Plan Draft
- May…….……...Budget Message / Capital Improvement Plan
- September……...End of Fiscal Year Report
- December……..Strategic Plan Update

Prioritizing Communication

How is 2025-2026 Going?

- Strong & improving local macro-economic indicators……..
- Stable budget to actual organizational performance……..
- Improved operational efficiencies & executed re-engineering strategies……..
- Dramatically increasing regulatory cost pressures…….
  - Risk Management
  - Medicaid Hold Harmless
  - H.R. 1
  - Medical Inflation & Wellness
  - State Treasury Costs

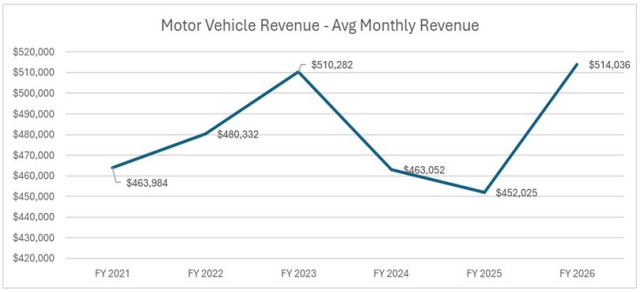


- Revenues increased from $65.9M to $70.3M (+6.7% over the period).
- Expenses increased from $50.2M to $52.8M (+5.2%).

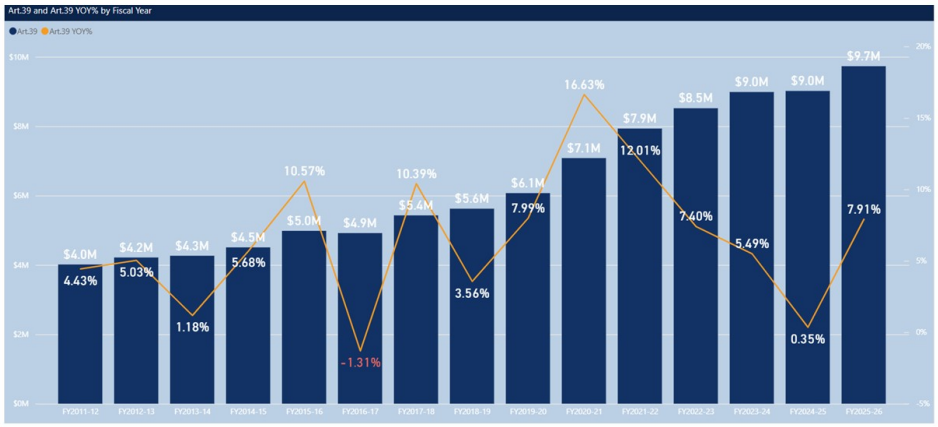
Property Tax Revenue

Ad Valorem Tax

Burke County has collected $49,928,918 million in Ad Valorem Taxes in the General Fund year to date December 31, 2025, compared to $48,062,406 million collected year to date December 31, 2025. An increase of approximately $1.86 million or 3.9%.



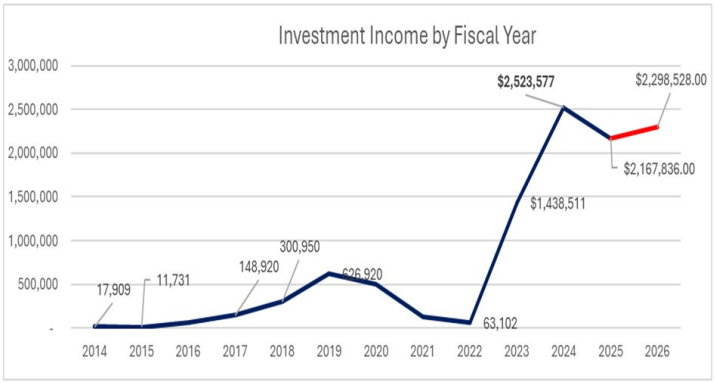
Sales Tax Revenue



Sales Tax Revenue



Investment Income



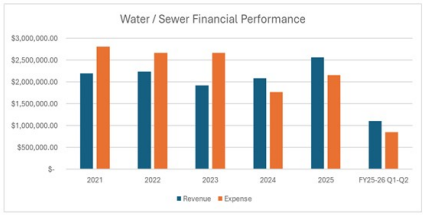
Development Activity

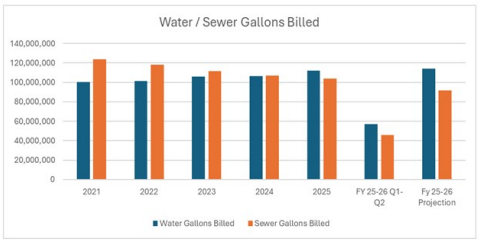
Permits	2025	2024	% change
Single Family	401	251	60%
Building permits- all types	2,813	2,283	23%
Duplex units	15	8	87%
Manufactured Homes	156	105	48%
Plat Review	134	69	94%
Zoning Permits	1,397	1268	10%



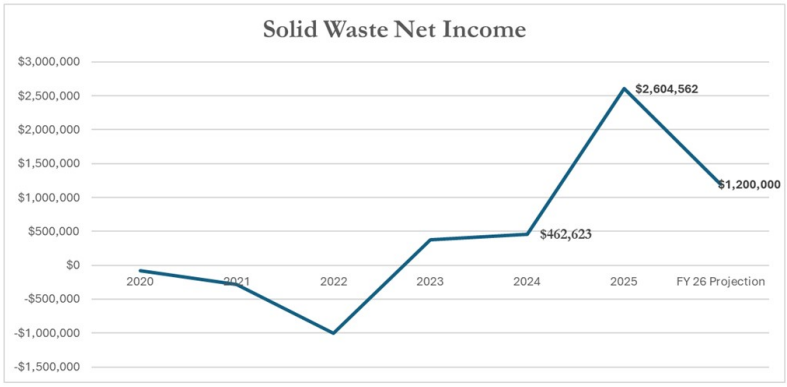


Enterprise Fund Performance



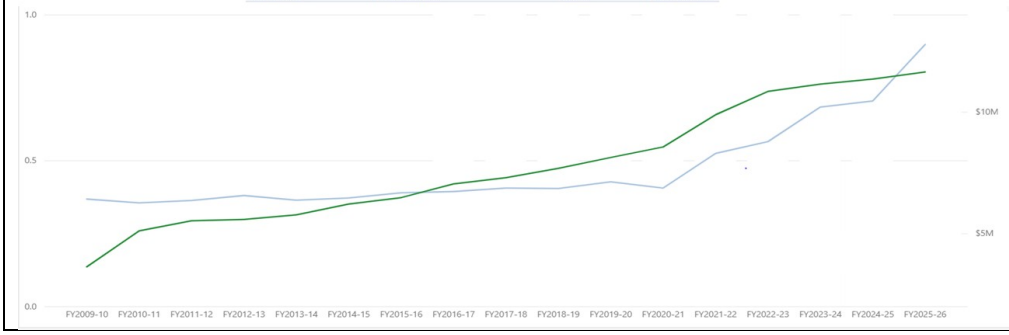


Enterprise Fund Performance



Medicaid Hold Harmless Revenue

FY2019-20	$8,120,898.15	5.84%	$7,118,446.35
FY2020-21	$8,553,323.62	5.32%	$6,863,973.45
FY2021-22	$9,877,725.68	15.48%	$8,286,025.63
FY2022-23	$10,839,176.84	9.73%	$8,772,396.69
FY2023-24	$11,139,852.92	2.77%	$10,195,623.51
FY2024-25	$11,342,774.89	1.82%	$10,443,159.03
FY2025-26	$11,638,001.05	2.60%	$12,762,607.88

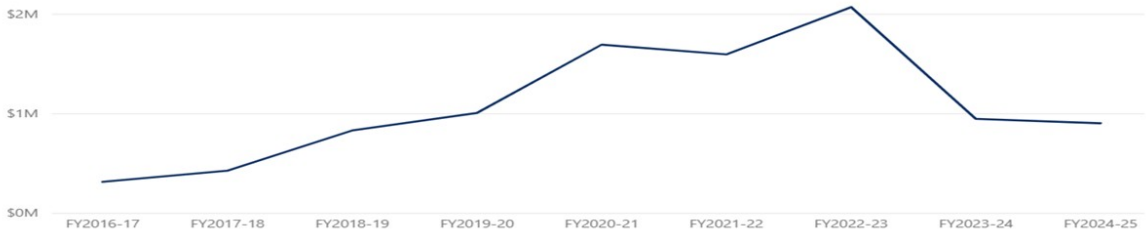


FY 2023-24 Projected Medicaid Hold Harmless (Click a column to sort by)

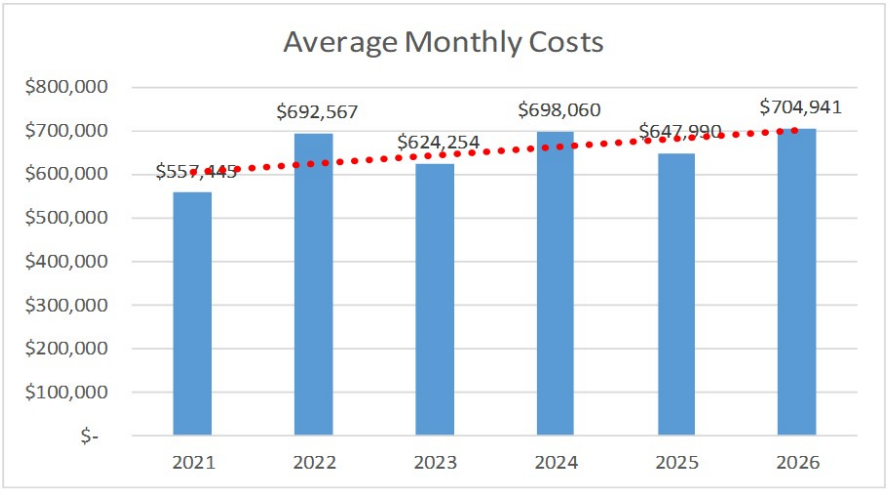
State only distributes 90% in March of projected full fiscal year amount - This table reflects their full FY proejction

FY	County	Repealed Sales Tax Amount (+ City Hold Harmless)	Repealed Sales Tax Amount (+ City Hold Harmless) YoY%	State Medicaid Expenses	State Medicaid Expenses YoY%	Total Hold Harmless Payment (only >0)	Total HH YoY $	Total HH YoY %
FY2011-12	BURKE	$5,516,401.03	8.07%	$6,352,232.34	1.57%			
FY2012-13	BURKE	$5,572,754.59	1.02%	$6,556,028.94	3.21%			
FY2013-14	BURKE	$5,758,709.94	3.34%	$6,365,055.83	-2.91%			
FY2014-15	BURKE	$6,207,975.93	7.80%	$6,453,954.85	1.40%			
FY2015-16	BURKE	$6,470,177.07	4.22%	$6,670,503.35	3.36%			
FY2016-17	BURKE	$7,031,587.16	8.68%	$6,720,593.76	0.75%	$310,993	$310,993	
FY2017-18	BURKE	$7,287,191.55	3.64%	$6,864,511.31	2.14%	$422,680	$111,687	35.91%
FY2018-19	BURKE	$7,672,831.71	5.29%	$6,845,771.19	-0.27%	$827,061	$404,380	95.67%
FY2019-20	BURKE	$8,120,898.15	5.84%	$7,118,446.35	3.98%	$1,002,452	$175,391	21.21%
FY2020-21	BURKE	$8,553,323.62	5.32%	$6,863,973.45	-3.57%	$1,689,350	$686,898	68.52%
FY2021-22	BURKE	$9,877,725.68	15.48%	$8,286,025.63	20.72%	$1,591,700	($97,650)	-5.78%
FY2022-23	BURKE	$10,839,176.84	9.73%	$8,772,396.69	5.87%	$2,066,780	$475,080	29.85%
FY2023-24	BURKE	$11,139,852.92	2.77%	$10,195,623.51	16.22%	$944,229	($1,122,551)	-54.31%
FY2024-25	BURKE	$11,342,774.89	1.82%	$10,443,159.03	2.43%	$899,616	($44,614)	-4.72%
FY2025-26	BURKE	$11,638,001.05	2.60%	$12,762,607.88	22.21%		($899,616)	-100.00%
Total		**$131,757,193.48**	**9.69%**	**$129,934,246...**	**10.89%**	**$9,754,862**	**$0**	**0.00%**

Year over year trending



Employee Wellness Fund

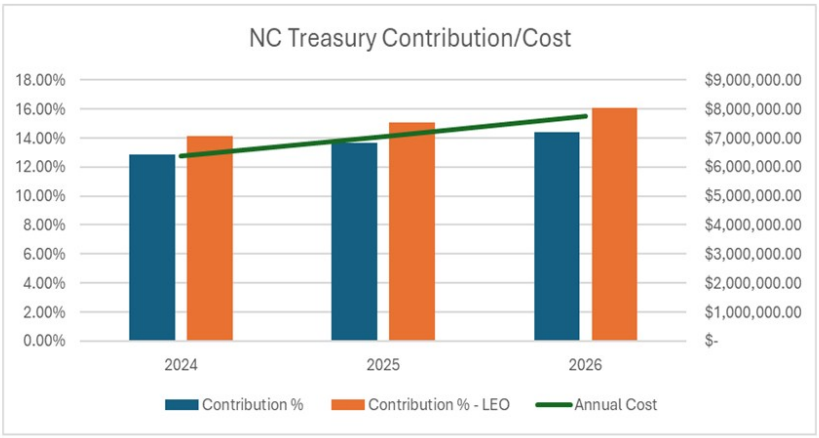


This space is intentionally left blank.

Risk Management Costs



Regulatory Cost



Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments.

Commissioner Barrier inquired about the status of Hurricane Helene-related FEMA reimbursements. Mr. Epley reported that FEMA reimbursement funding had been approved and was awaiting deposit. He also noted that the home acquisition program had been approved, with 13 participating families remaining in the program, and that the project was awaiting final processing at the State Emergency Management level.

Commissioner Stroud commended County staff for their efforts in navigating funding challenges and maintaining financial stability despite the loss of several revenue sources. He expressed support for exploring future opportunities to generate revenue and strengthen the County's financial position.

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

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

BOC – REPORTS & COMMENTS

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for reports and comments from Board members and professional staff, then issued several reminders for upcoming BOC meetings and community events. Commissioner Stroud reminded citizens about the upcoming America 250 commemoration and expressed appreciation for the opportunities afforded by the nation's history and heritage.

Commissioner Burns thanked Clerk Kay Draughn for her professionalism, honesty, and willingness to provide guidance and procedural advice throughout her service to the Board. County Manager Epley commended Clerk Draughn for her professionalism, institutional knowledge, dedication to the organization, and service to the Board, noting that she would be greatly missed. Commissioner Barrier thanked Clerk Draughn for her kindness, professionalism, and positive demeanor throughout her tenure. He also provided an update on the Child Fatality Prevention Team's recent state-mandated review process and emphasized the importance of community awareness regarding youth suicide prevention, noting that additional information about a future awareness event would be shared at a later date. Clerk Draughn thanked the Board and staff for their kind remarks and stated that it had been an honor and a privilege to serve the Board and the citizens of Burke County. Chairman Brittain echoed the Board's appreciation for Clerk Draughn's exemplary service and dedication and expressed gratitude for her contributions to Burke County.

RESULT:	**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, announced the following service opportunities:

- Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee
- Burke County Public Health Advisory Board
- Hickory Regional Planning Commission
- Drexel Planning Board - ETJ Members & Alternate
- Partners Health Management's Human Rights Committee
- Council on Aging
- Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
- Burke Senior Center Advisory Council

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments and then encouraged citizens to participate and get involved.

RESULT:	**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

CLOSED SESSION
Chairman Brittain announced that a closed session is needed and called for a motion.

Motion: To go into closed session to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential, to discuss threatened or pending litigation, to preserve the attorney-client privilege, to discuss economic development matters, to discuss contractual matters (land acquisition) and to discuss personnel matters as authorized by NCGS 143-318.11(a) (1), (3), (4), (5) and (6).

RESULT:	**APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns and Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Phil Smith

Motion: To come out of closed session.

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

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION
Chairman Brittain announced that a proper motion was made to come out of closed session and that no action was taken in closed session.

ADJOURN
Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

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

Approved this 20th day of July 2026.

_____
Randy Burns, Acting Chair
Burke County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

_____
Morgan Buchanan
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners