MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, September 15, 2025, 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
Phil Smith, Vice Chairman
Brian Barrier
Randy Burns
Mike Stroud

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

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION
Pastor Tamika Garrison, Carolina Caring, delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
4-H / Cooperative Extension led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.



Front row (left to right): Emma Oakley, Aviana Page-Phillips, and Red Baudean. Second Row (left to right): Peggy Carpenter, Sadie Sauberan, Lola Desrosiers, Ellie Hudson, Jessica Carswell, Joey Morrison, Emily Hall, Madison Pryor, Hazel Cole, and Hannah Cole. Back row (left to right): Nicki Carpenter, Ruby Desrosiers, Randy Burns, Mike Stroud, Jeff Brittain, Addy Fulbright, and Brian Barrier.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

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

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

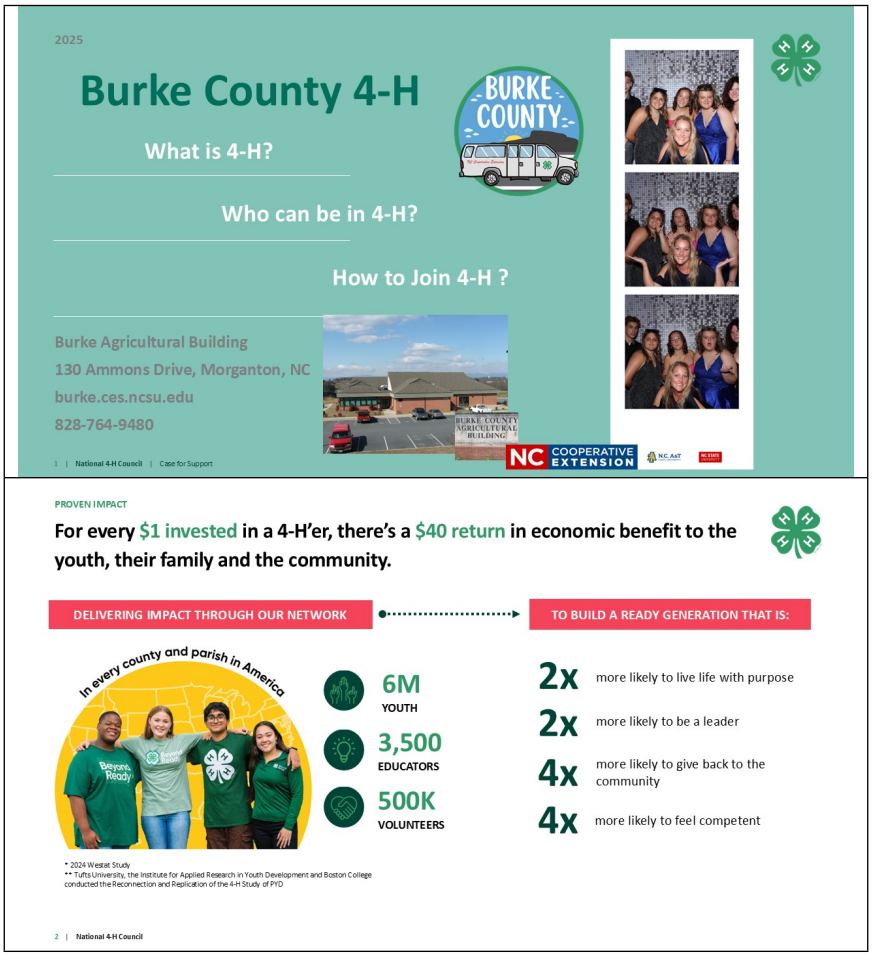
Motion: To approve the May 19, 2025 (special), May 19, 2025 (regular), and June 2, 2025 (pre-agenda) meeting minutes as written.

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

PRESENTATIONS

CE - 4-H PROGRAM OVERVIEW & RECOGNITION OF 4-H STATE / NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

4-H Agent Nicki Carpenter presented an overview of the 4-H program in Burke County and recognized this year's winners in a variety of disciplines. Highlights of her presentation were as follows:

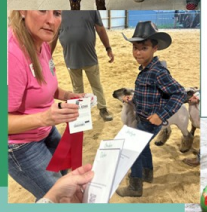


4-H OPPORTUNITIES

- 4-H Entertains/Talent & Fashion
- Presentations & Public Speaking
- Project Record Books
- Application, Interview, Resume and Essay (AIRE)
- 4-H Camps & Leadership Conferences
- Dairy, Horse, Livestock & Poultry Events
- 4-H Electric Program
- Community Service & Citizenship
- Forestry & Wildlife
- Local, Mountain and State Fair
- College Scholarships
- Adult Volunteer Leaders
- Health Rocks & Healthy Living
- Gardening, Safety, Cooking, Aerospace & MORE!











3 | National 4-H Council | Case for Support

NC State Horsebowl Contest

The 2025 NC State 4-H Horsebowl Contest, a showcase of equine knowledge and quick thinking, was held on **March 8th, 2025**, at NC State University. Held in conjunction with the State Hippology Contests, the event drew 142 youth participants across 27 teams, competing in Junior, Senior, and Mixed divisions.

Coach: Crosby Norris
Lola Desrosiers
Sadie Sauberan
Julian Hernandez
Ellie Hudson
Ruby Desrosiers





West District Horsebowl: Winners!

NC State 4-H Horsebowl: 5th!

4 | National 4-H Council | Case for Support

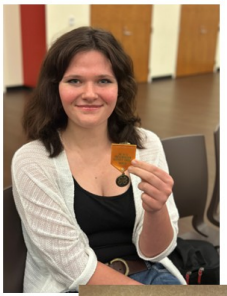
CONGRATS!!

Addy Fulbright

- AIRE (Application, Interview, Resume, Essay)

WINNER, Awarded National Trip!

- 4-H Presentation Category: Communication Arts; West District GOLD winner!



Jacob Hanlon

Awarded three 4-H College Scholarships! (current NCSU student)



5 | National 4-H Council | Case for Support

NC State 4-H Horse Show

31 classes had a Burke County 4-H'er placement! Way to go!!

- Jessica Carswell
- Ruby Desrosiers
- Sadie Sauberan
- Ruby Desrosiers
- Ellie Hudson







Jr. Photography 1st Place State Winner
Ellie Hudson, Burke County

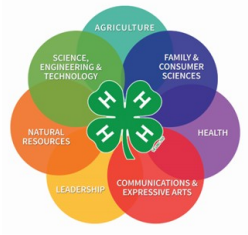
4-H Project Record Book Winners!

4-H Project Record Books capture the 4-H'ers chosen project area from Jan. to Dec. of each year. Books are submitted on a county level and then can progress to District/State levels.

- Aviana Page-Clark
- Ellie Hudson
- Emma Oakley
- Kaylee Hoyle
- Emily Hall
- Joey Morrison
- Hazel Cole
- Hannah Cole
- Ruby Desrosiers
- Madison Pryor
- Addy Fulbright

4-H PLEDGE

I pledge my **HEAD** to clearer thinking,
my **HEART** to greater loyalty,
my **HANDS** to larger service,
and my **HEALTH** to better living,
for my club, my community,
my country, and my world.



North Carolina 4-H Hall of Fame
Lisa Hanlon







"Making the Best Better"

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



Awardees were honored with certificates and County lapel pins, while the 4-H NC Hall of Fame inductee was further recognized with the presentation of a walking stick.



4-H Horsebowl Team (left to right): Lola Desrosiers, Ruby Desrosiers, Ellie Hudson, Red Baudean, and Sadie Sauberan.



Lisa Hanlon, NC 4-H Hall of Fame honoree, and Chairman Brittan



Addy Fulbright
State AIRE Winner
West District Gold Winner

Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

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

CE - PROCLAMATION DECLARING NATIONAL 4-H WEEK

Nicki Carpenter, 4-H Agent, requested approval of a proclamation declaring October 5 - 11, 2025, as National 4-H Week in Burke County. This year's theme is "Beyond Ready."

Chairman Brittain read excerpts from the proclamation, then called for a motion.

Motion: To approve Proclamation No. 2025-15.

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

Proclamation No. 2025-15 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

PROCLAMATION DECLARING
OCTOBER 5 - 11, 2025 AS NATIONAL 4-H WEEK

WHEREAS, this year's National 4-H Week theme, "Beyond Ready," reminds us that 4-H is building a ready generation in a world of change and equips young people with skills for the future while meeting them where they are today; and

WHEREAS, 4-H is America's largest youth development organization, supporting six million youth across the country; and

WHEREAS, 4-H programs are delivered by the Cooperative Extension System - a community of more than 100 public land-grant colleges and universities across the Nation - that provides experiences for young people to learn by doing; and

WHEREAS, 4-H is in every city and county in the United States and helps six million youth become engaged, successful, and independent; and

WHEREAS, 4-H connects young people and adults to their communities, preparing them for work and life through experiential and inquiry-based learning while providing emerging research for positive youth development; and

WHEREAS, expanding from its strong agricultural roots, 4-H helps young people explore the world around them and grow into productive adults; and

WHEREAS, supporting future leaders in science, agriculture, and community leadership is an important imperative for the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture 4-H program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Burke County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim October 5 - 11, 2025, as NATIONAL 4-H WEEK throughout Burke County, and encourage all our citizens to recognize 4-H for the significant impact it has made and continues to make by empowering youth with the skills they need to lead for a lifetime.

Approved this 15th day of September 2025.

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

NCEIPD - NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH (OCT.) 2025

Shelly Cash, Business Relations Representative, NC EIPD (Division of Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities), stated that October is recognized as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Approval of the attached proclamation, which formally designates October for this observance, with this year's theme: "Celebrating Value and Talent," was requested.



Nyra Simmons, Rehabilitation Counselor, NC EIPD, explained that she helps clients reach their employment goals.

Janet Hannah, Business Relations Representative, EIPD, provided supporting data for the proclamation request. According to the 2023 Census, Burke County has a population of 87,570, with 11,910 residents living with disabilities, including both visible and hidden disabilities. The Western Regional Workforce Development location in Morganton serves Burke County. Over the past year, 215 individuals applied for EIPD services. Of those, staff received 48 referrals, successfully placed all 48 individuals into employment, and closed 23 cases. Additionally, the program supported 13 internships across the county, three (3) of which resulted in permanent employment. Ms. Hannah noted that EIPD remains an underutilized resource in Burke County and encouraged referrals of individuals with disabilities who are interested in obtaining and maintaining employment. She reiterated the request to approve the proclamation recognizing National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October.

Chairman Brittain read excerpts from the proclamation, then called for a motion.

Motion: To approve Proclamation No. 2025-14.

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

Proclamation No. 2025-14 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

PROCLAMATION
NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH
OCTOBER 2025

WHEREAS, in October 2025, we celebrate the 80th Anniversary of *National Disability Employment Awareness Month* (NDEAM), an annual recognition of the vital contributions of people with disabilities in the American workforce; and

WHEREAS, this observance began in 1945 as a weeklong national recognition of the abilities and accomplishments of people with physical disabilities, and in 1988, Congress expanded the observance to a monthlong commemoration now known as NDEAM; and

WHEREAS, NDEAM has since evolved to highlight the importance of creating and sustaining inclusive workplaces that provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities—including those with mental health conditions and other non-obvious disabilities—to thrive and succeed; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) was established within the U.S. Department of Labor and entrusted with administering NDEAM, including the selection and promotion of its annual theme; and

WHEREAS, as America looks forward to commemorating its 250th anniversary in 2026, this year's NDEAM theme and graphics align with that milestone, honoring the enduring value of belonging, opportunity, and equity in our nation's workforce; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 theme, *"Celebrating Value and Talent,"* recognizes the skill, dedication, and innovation that workers with disabilities bring to their jobs, strengthening our communities and economy while reminding us that America's true strength lies in the talents of all its people;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Burke County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim October 2025 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month in Burke County, North Carolina, and urges all citizens, businesses, and community organizations to join in recognizing the important contributions of workers with disabilities, promoting inclusive practices, and advancing equal opportunity in the workplace.

Approved this 15th day of September 2025.

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

CM - END OF THE YEAR REPORT

Brian Epley, County Manager, presented the Year-End Report for FY 24-25. The full report is hereby incorporated into the meeting minutes by reference, and the highlights of his presentation were 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.

High Performance & Communication

- January.....Mid Fiscal Year Fiscal Report / Audit Report
- February/March.....Work-Session & Report Analysis
- April.....Commissioner Revenue Memo
- May.....Budget Message / Capital Improvement Plan
- September.....End of Fiscal Year Report
- December.....Strategic Plan Update

Prioritizing Communication

FY 24-25 Performance Overview

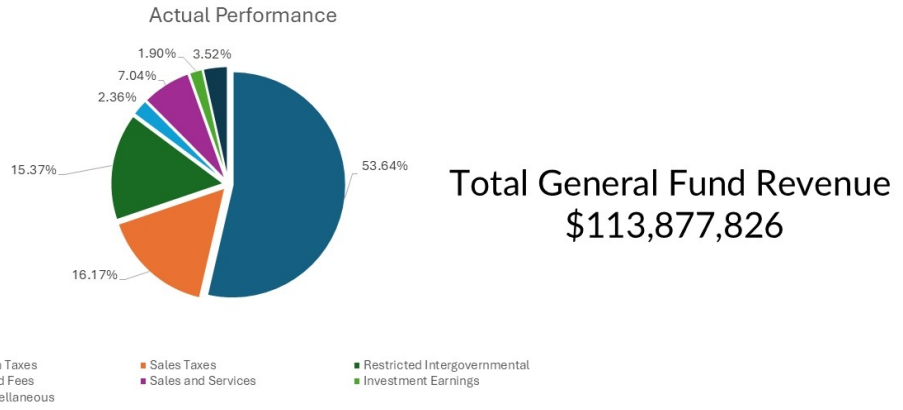
Full Implementation of Comprehensive Pay & Classification Study	Full Year of In-Sourced EMS Billing	Full Year of In-Sourced MSW Transport	Maintained < 10% Talent Retention
Reduced Employee Wellness Costs	Reduced Environmental Health Turn-around Time from 12 weeks to 30 Days	Capital Program Implementation for Animal Services, EMS, & Courthouse	Completed Public Safety Strategic Plan •Improved Law Enforcement Staffing Ratios •Reduced EMS & E-911 Response Times •Increased Commercial Fire Inspection Rates
Eliminated Backlog of 300 DSS Child Welfare Cases	Advanced Water/Sewer AIA Study to Phase II	Implemented a Centralized Model for the Opioid Settlement Project	Disaster Recovery Efforts

FY 24-25 Commissioner Strategic Plan

FOCUS AREA 4: FISCAL STEWARDSHIP
Pursuit of the high-performing organization model that ensures high quality, transparent and efficient use of public resources.

1. Current Year Financial Performance
2. Fund Balance & Key Ratios
3. Debt Portfolio

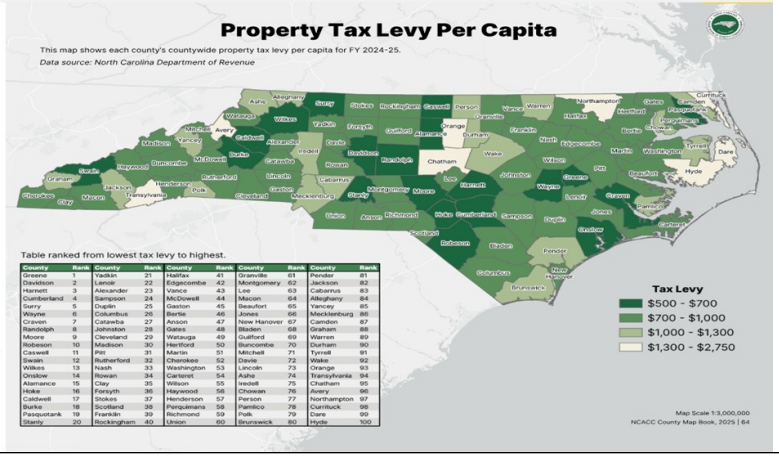
FY 24-25 General Fund



Total General Fund Revenue
$113,877,826

FY 24-25 Performance Overview

Burke	**$672**	**18th**
Avery	$1,009	74th
Alexander	$738	23rd
Caldwell	$671	17th
Catawba	$750	27th
Rutherford	$769	32nd
Watauga	$845	49th

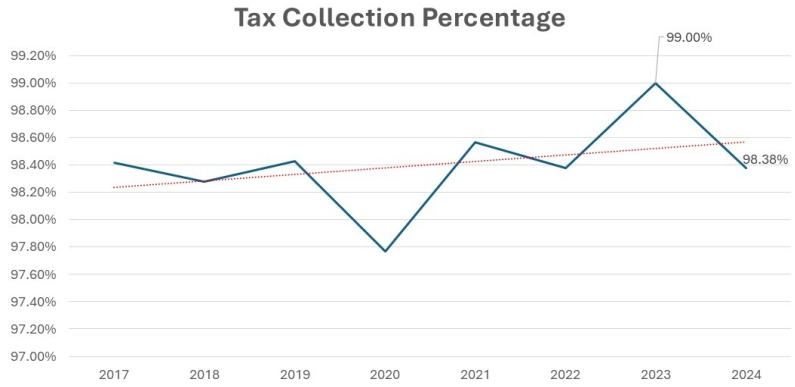


FY 24-25 Performance Overview

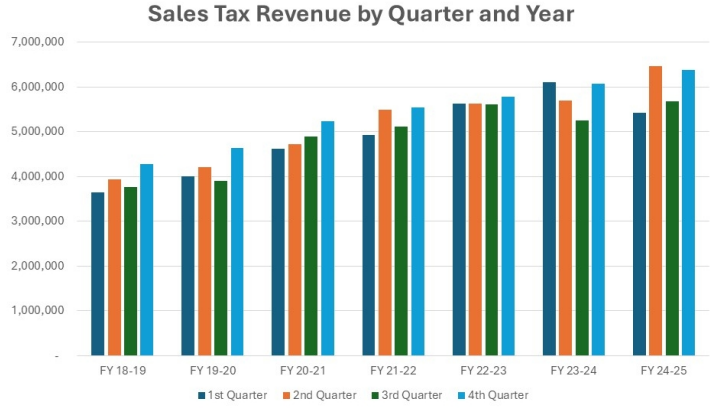
2024-2025 TOP 10 TAX PAYERS		
OWNER_NAME	TAX_LEVY	TAXABLE_VALUE
DUKE ENERGY CAROLINAS LLC	$1,213,072.15	$216,604,313
CONTINENTAL AUTOMOTIVE SYSTEMS	$705,682.15	$126,014,669
BLUE RIDGE HEALTHCARE HOSPITALS II	$311,282.00	$55,161,785
LEVITON MANUFACTURING CO INC	$291,628.25	$52,076,473
RUTHERFORD EMC	$266,123.51	$47,522,055
GERRESHEIMER GLASS INC	$262,904.30	$45,773,416
SGL CARBON LLC	$236,787.42	$42,283,467
CCHU MORGANTON LLC	$227,047.75	$36,772,814
UNIX PACKGING	$214,870.01	$38,332,791
ARG MHMORNC001 LLC	$204,692.38	$36,552,211
Total	$3,934,089.92	$697,093,994

Total Value.....$ 697,093,994 (6.1%)
Total Revenue.....$ 3,9340,089 (3.61 Cents)

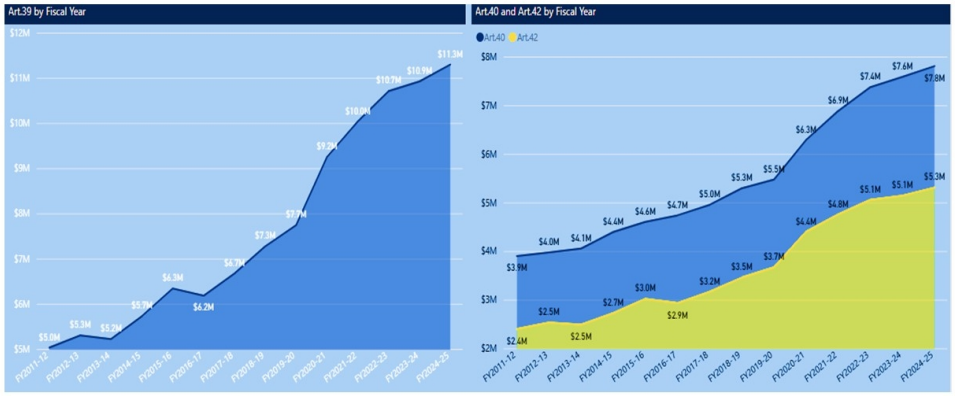
FY 24-25 Performance Overview



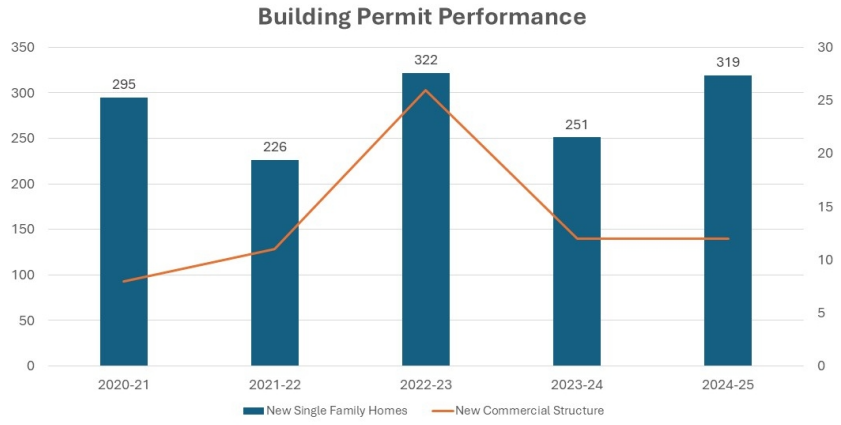
FY 24-25 Performance Overview



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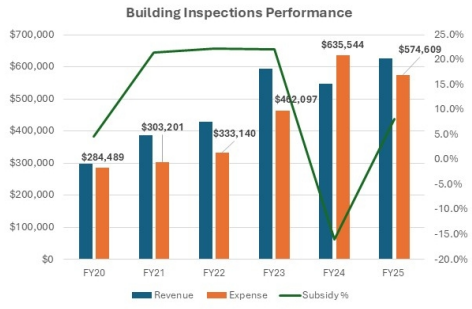


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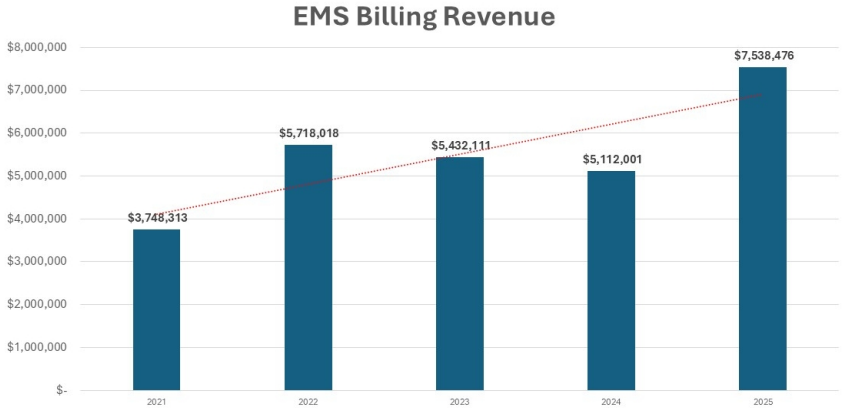


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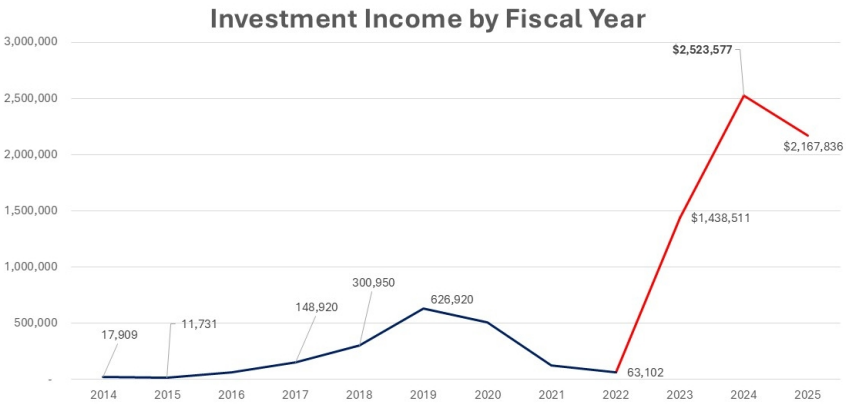




FY 24-25 Performance Overview



FY 24-25 Performance Overview



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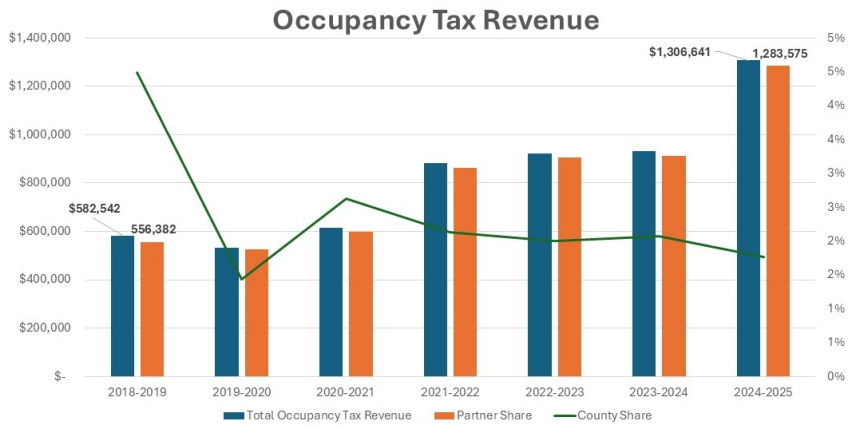
Current & Active Management

- 24 Active Grants
- $6.2M

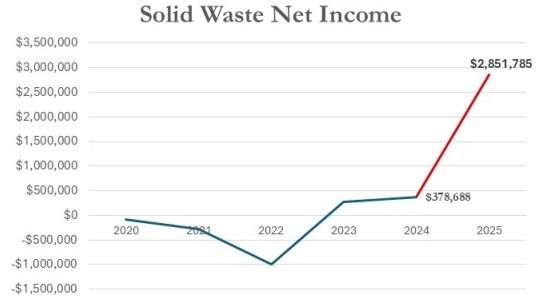
5-Year Capital Improvement Plan

- EMS Headquarters
- Animal Services
- Public Health & Social Services
- Courthouse Decompression
- Rolling Stock / Fleet
- FHEC Roof & Courthouse Roof

FY 24-25 Performance Overview



FY 24-25 Performance Overview

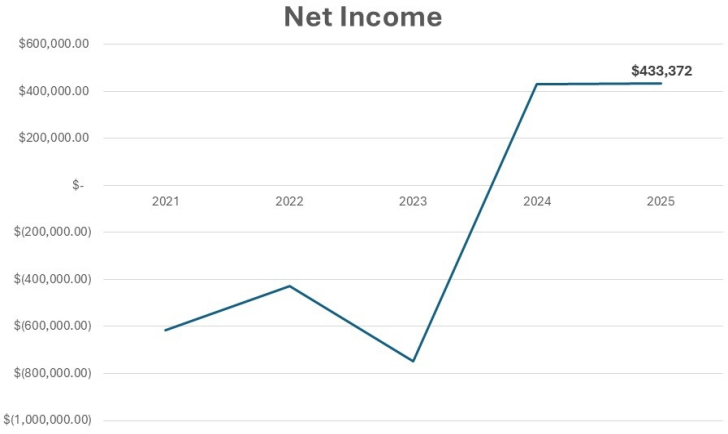


Solid Waste

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	5,698	6,438	5,695
BRUSH Tons	2,262	1,681	42,961

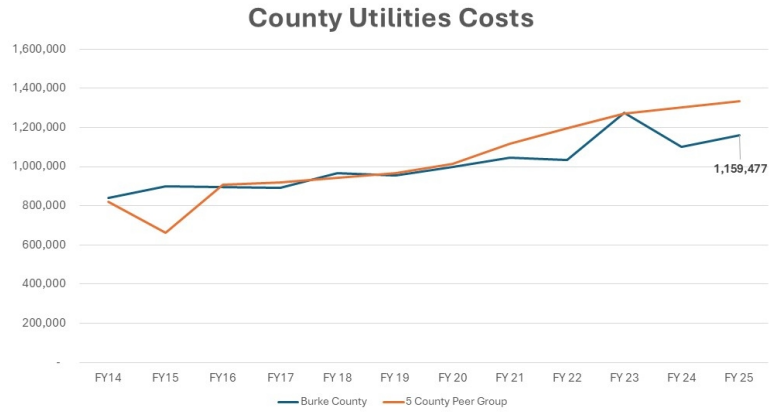
FY 24-25 Performance Overview



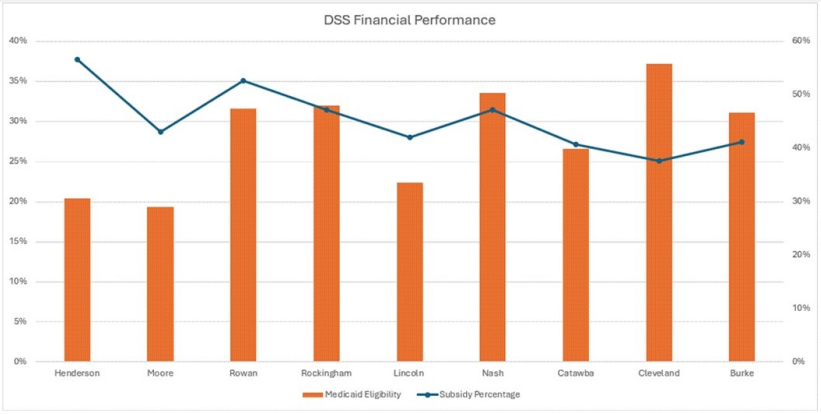
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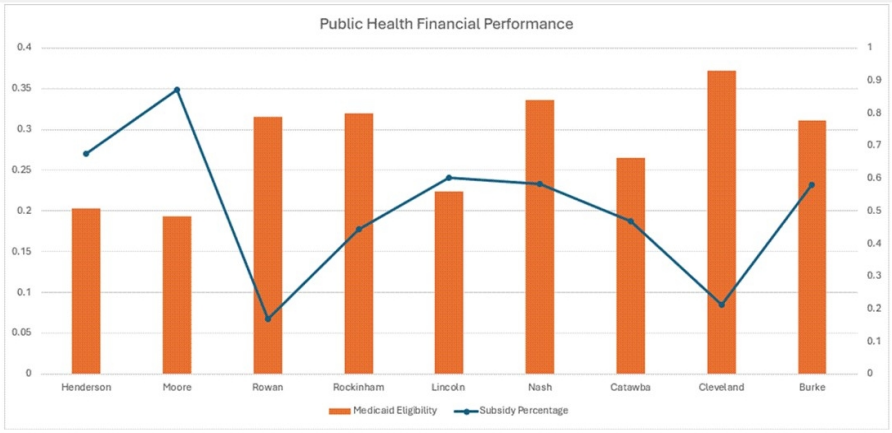
FY 24-25 Performance Overview



FY 24-25 Performance Overview



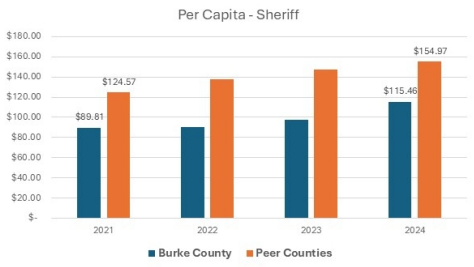
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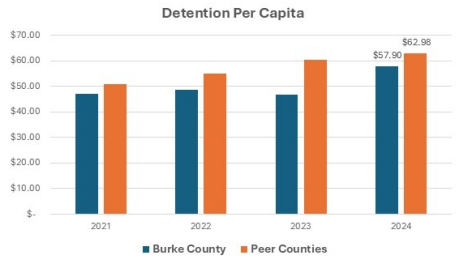


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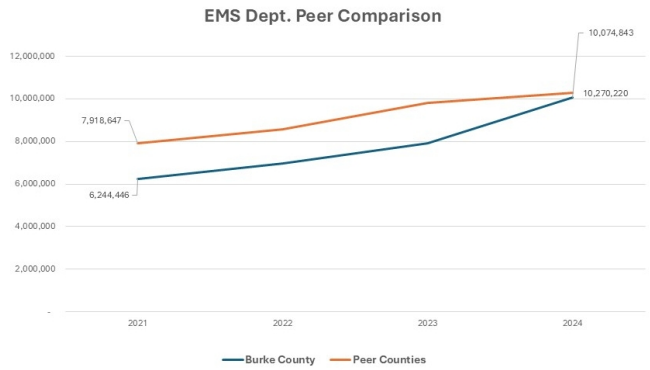
Department	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
Detention Center	$5,749,295	$6,430,034	$6,102,443
Sheriff's Department	$8,334,000	$9,415,974	$11,150,569
Emergency Medical Services / EM	$7,713,065	$8,639,608	$10,689,319
Fire Marshal's Office	$428,075	$563,759	$639,275
E-911/Communications	$2,625,355	$3,065,732	$3,131,803
Total Public Safety	$24,849,790	$28,115,107	$31,713,409

FY 24-25 Performance Overview

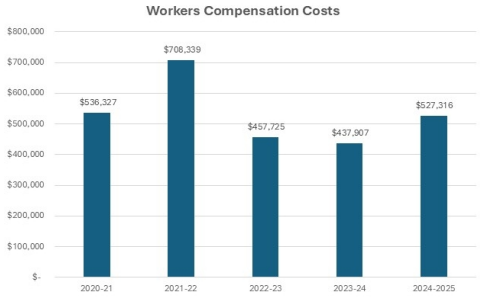




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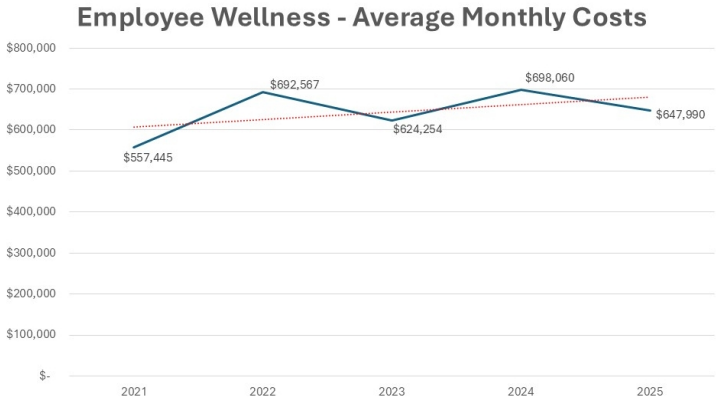


FY 24-25 Performance Overview





FY 24-25 Performance Overview



FY 24-25 Performance Overview

Experience Summary	2023-24	2024-25	Δ from Prior
Net Paid Claims	$6,990,939	$7,350,128	5.1%
Actual Net Cost	$8,274,670	$8,714,579	5.3%
FIE	$6,863,070	$7,517,970	
Net Position to FIE	120.6%	115.9%	-4.7%
Gross Rx Claims to Total Gross Claims	39.5%	37.6%	
Net Claims PEPY	$10,217	$10,733	5.0%
Average Employees	684	685	0.1%

Observations

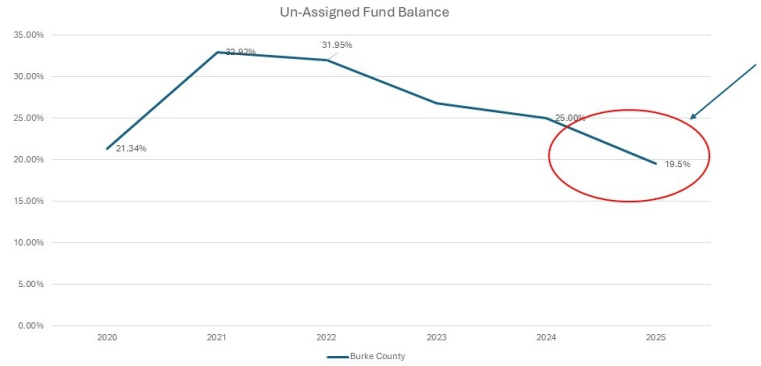
For the current experience period of Jul 1, 2024 to Jun 30, 2025, the group is currently performing unfavorably based on the following:

- Claims net of amounts over the SSL decreased 5.1% over the prior year. This is below the medical trend of 10%.
- Prescription drug claims currently account for 37.6% of total claims. This is higher than average.
- There are several large claimants over $62,500, making up 34.6% of the total claims. Typically, high cost claimants make up 20% to 35% of total claims.

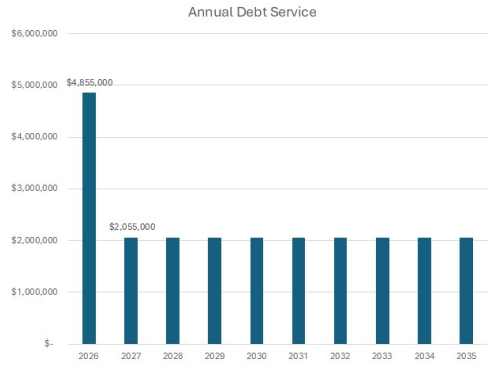
Large Claimants	2023-24	2024-25
Number of Large Claimants (>$62,500)	24	22
Total Paid for Large Claimants (>$62,500)	$2,248,812	$2,631,016
Claimants Over SSL (>$125,000)	7	7
Total Paid Over SSL (>$125,000)	$356,481	$430,059

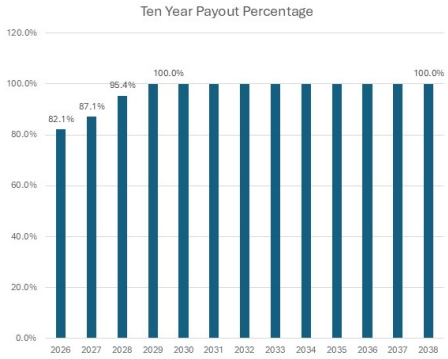
Note: Omits aggregating specific, if applicable.

FY 24-25 Performance Overview



FY 24-25 Performance Overview





FY 24-25 Performance Overview

Total Debt Outstanding	$ 28,455,000		
Debt Item	**Amount**	**Annual Debt Service (P&I)**	**Payoff Date**
County Jail	$ 12,655,000	$ 1,606,750	2037
Total County Debt	$ 12,655,000	$ 1,606,750	
Patton High School	$ 1,420,000.00	$ 1,458,503.00	2026
Draughn High School	$ 1,375,000.00	$ 1,520,672.00	2026
Mountain View Elementary	$ 13,005,000.00	$ 1,646,938.00	2038
Total School Debt	$ 15,800,000.00	$ 4,626,113.00	

County	Total Debt Outstanding	Debt Per Capita
Catawba County	$ 174,361,611	$ 150
McDowell County	$ 22,694,224	$ 509
Caldwell County	$ 38,770,068	$ 481
Iredell County	$ 176,321,129	$ 883
Lincoln County	$ 93,253,161	$ 975
Avery County	$ 9,537,011	$ 543
Burke County	**$ 33,375,000**	**$ 375**

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments and then praised county staff for their hard work. There being nothing further, he called for a motion.

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

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

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE

INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Brittian called for informal public comments and asked speakers to limit their comments to three (3) minutes.

Kimberly Clarke addressed the Board regarding Hockoca, an organization she founded, and ongoing issues related to a lawsuit and tax exemption matters. She stated that a lawsuit involving the organization, which followed issues spanning several years, was dismissed without consultation with her attorney or prior notice to the organization. Ms. Clarke expressed appreciation for the tax exemption that was granted, but noted that not all requested items were addressed. She highlighted concerns regarding the omission of low- to moderate-income housing, specifically a tiny house project, which she stated was identified as part of the organization's exemption request and discussed with County staff. Ms. Clarke also raised concerns about outstanding attorney fees and alleged due process issues, stating that timely action on the tax exemption and appeal requests may have prevented the need for litigation.

Marsha Love, a board member of Hochoka, expressed appreciation to the Board for granting tax-exempt status, stating it was a significant and welcome step forward. She noted that the lengthy process contributed to attorney involvement and accrued legal fees. Ms. Love echoed prior comments regarding requests for a meeting with County staff and the organization's desire to move forward promptly, particularly regarding a tiny house project already on the property. She urged that any remaining legal and administrative issues be resolved by the start of the new year. Ms. Love concluded by sharing a personal experience that underscored her support for Hochoka's mission and expressed hope for a positive working relationship between Hochoka and Burke County moving forward.

Cristy Gupton, a member of the Burke County Public Health Advisory Board, addressed the Board regarding the importance of independent, community pharmacies to the health and well-being of Burke County residents. She emphasized that community pharmacies provide personalized care, medication counseling, delivery services, and coordination with local physicians, often resulting in better clinical and financial outcomes for patients. Ms. Gupton contrasted these services with large retail chain pharmacies and cited concerns about pricing practices influenced by Pharmacy Benefit Managers, referencing a national example to highlight potential patient risks. She noted that independent pharmacies support the local economy, help prevent pharmacy deserts in rural and underserved areas, and serve as critical access points for medications, vaccines, and health screenings. Ms. Gupton also highlighted the role of local pharmacies and healthcare providers during the COVID-19 pandemic and in community response efforts following Hurricane Helene. She encouraged the County to consider initiatives and partnerships that support independent pharmacies and locally focused health benefit plans.

There was no one else to address the Board; therefore, Chairman Brittain closed this portion of the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA
At the request of the Board, Brian Epley, County Manager, reviewed the following four (4) items on the consent agenda, which were approved by a single motion.

AAB - APPROVAL OF UPDATED RULES OF PROCEDURE
The AAB's (Animal Advisory Board) Rules of Procedure was reviewed, pursuant to County Code 2-87, and minor modifications were made for housekeeping purposes, which were unanimously approved. Approval by the County Commissioners was requested.

Motion: To approve the Animal Advisory Board's rules of procedure as presented.

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

CLERK - APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL ON AGING
Maxine Childers has been unable to attend the Council on Aging meetings. Removal of her name from the roster and thanking her for her service was requested. An application was received from Heather Ward, and her appointment to Seat No. 4 was requested to complete the remainder of a 3-year term ending November 30, 2026.

Motion: To remove Maxine Childers' name from the official roster for the Council on Aging and thank her for her service to the community. Further, to appoint Heather Ward to the Council on Aging, Seat No. 4, to complete the remainder of a 3-year term ending November 30, 2026.

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

TAX DEPT. - TAX COLLECTION REPORT - AUGUST 2025
The Board of Commissioners was presented with the Tax Collection Report for the period

between July 1, 2025, and August 31, 2025, at the pre-agenda meeting. This reflects the status of collections by the Burke County Tax Collection's Staff. This information is a supplement to the Annual Settlement Report.

Category	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	$29,710,699.64	53.98%	$25,328,314.36
Motor Vehicle Tax	$1,064,954.52	19.52%	$4,391,902.48
Current Year Taxes	$30,775,654.16	50.87%	$29,720,216.84
Delinquent Taxes	$233,117.54	33.30%	$466,882.46
Penalty & Interest	$62,036.16	18.86%	$266,963.84

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	$53,876,573.53	$29,710,699.64	55.15%	$24,165,873.89

Motion: To accept the Tax Collection Report for August 2025 as presented.

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

TAX DEPT. - RELEASE REFUND REPORT - AUGUST 2025

Releases in value and/or refunds of taxes typically occur when:

- Taxpayers submit information that creates a reduction in value.
- Situs is corrected between counties and/or municipalities.
- Valuation appeals reduce the value of real or personal property.
- The postmark reveals that a payment was submitted timely.

The Board of Commissioners was presented with the following list of releases and refunds for consideration during the pre-agenda meeting. The Net Release results from the Report Amount minus the Rebilled Amount.

Tax System Refunds and Releases			
Report Amount	Rebilled Amount	Net Release	Refund Amount
$56,640.41	$25,913.42	$30,726.99	$7,613.57

VTS Refunds Over $100	
	Refund Amount
VTS Adjustments	$409.58

Payee Name	Primary Owner	Refund Type	Bill #	Transaction #	Refund Reason	Tax Jurisdiction	Levy Type	Change	Interest Change	Total Change
PREISER, CONNIE EPLEY	PREISER, CONNIE EPLEY	Adjustment >= $100	0072363561	231611038	Over Assessment	01	TAX	($110.60)	$0.00	($110.60)
						26	TAX	($23.70)	$0.00	($23.70)
									Refund	**$134.30**
WALKER, SANDRA JENKINS	WALKER, SANDRA JENKINS	Adjustment >= $100	0086612038	465896660	Situs error	01	TAX	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
						57	TAX	($319.10)	$0.00	($319.10)
						57	VEHICLE FEE	($20.00)	$0.00	($20.00)
						27	TAX	$63.82	$0.00	$63.82
									Refund	**$275.28**
									Refund Total	**$409.58**

*Note: The net release amount results from the reported amount minus the rebilled amount.

Bill #	Taxpayer Name	Bill Date	Operator ID (Name)	Release Date	Orig Bill Amount($)	Release Amount($)	Bill Amount after Release($)
0024054718-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MARLIN LEASING INC	7/1/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	8/27/2025	40.26	40.26	0.00
0024076701-2025-2024-0000-00-REG	DAVIDSON HOLLAND WHITESELL & CO PLLC	6/24/2025	LINDA WILBUR	7/31/2025	778.46	321.12	457.34
0024076701-2025-2024-0000-00-REG	DAVIDSON HOLLAND WHITESELL & CO PLLC	6/24/2025	LINDA WILBUR	7/31/2025	274.88	274.88	0.00
0024084582-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MARLIN LEASING	7/1/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	8/27/2025	5.46	5.46	0.00
0024084656-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MARLIN LEASING INC	7/1/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	8/27/2025	33.89	33.89	0.00
0024084661-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MARLIN LEASING INC	7/1/2025	LOUISE JOHNSON	8/27/2025	12.65	12.65	0.00
Subtotal					**1,145.60**	**688.26**	**457.34**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Adjustment Release							
0000060630-2025-2025-0070-00-DLD	SEARCY, DAYLON KEITH	8/6/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	8/6/2025	378.27	378.27	0.00
Subtotal					**378.27**	**378.27**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Duplicate Billing							
0000054328-2020-2020-0000-00-REG	NORMAN, WALTER M	7/1/2020	LINDA WILBUR	8/19/2025	140.11	140.11	0.00
0000054328-2021-2021-0000-00-REG	NORMAN, WALTER M	7/1/2021	LINDA WILBUR	8/19/2025	144.11	144.11	0.00
0000054328-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	NORMAN, WALTER M	7/1/2022	LINDA WILBUR	8/19/2025	156.92	156.92	0.00
0000054328-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	NORMAN, WALTER M	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	8/19/2025	107.28	107.28	0.00
0000054328-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	NORMAN, WALTER M	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	8/19/2025	105.53	105.53	0.00
0024007990-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	PEARSON, BILLY EDWARD	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	8/6/2025	5.80	5.80	0.00
0024076701-2025-2025-0001-00-REG	DAVIDSON HOLLAND WHITESELL & CO PLLC	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	8/22/2025	642.29	642.29	0.00
0024083161-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	GRAJALES, OMAR VILLANEUVA	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/15/2025	10.75	10.75	0.00
Subtotal					**1,312.79**	**1,312.79**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Exempt Property							
0000039008-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	SEARCY, DAYLON KEITH	7/1/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	8/6/2025	465.86	465.86	0.00
0000060630-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	SEARCY, DAYLON KEITH	7/1/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	8/6/2025	595.83	595.83	0.00
0000060630-2025-2025-0000-01-REG	SEARCY, DAYLON KEITH	7/1/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	8/11/2025	217.56	217.56	0.00
Subtotal					**1,279.25**	**1,279.25**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Late Listing							
0000056813-2025-2025-0000-01-REG	MILLER, REBECCA N	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	8/26/2025	390.97	35.54	355.43
0000070868-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	ONEMAIN FINANCIAL GROUP LLC 1824	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/13/2025	317.55	28.87	288.68
0024009643-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MORGANTON HGTS ASSOC LMT PARTNERSHIP	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/7/2025	86.05	7.82	78.23
0024009851-2025-2025-0000-09-REG	RAV PROPERTIES LLC	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	8/26/2025	2,005.04	2,005.04	0.00
Subtotal					**2,799.61**	**2,077.27**	**722.34**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Mapping Correction							
0000010983-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	ROBINSON, ROBERT	7/15/2024	AMANDA CONLEY	8/4/2025	2,316.14	2,316.14	0.00
0000010983-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	ROBINSON, ROBERT	7/1/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	8/4/2025	2,300.25	2,300.25	0.00
Subtotal					**4,616.39**	**4,616.39**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Not in Burke County							
0024063102-2023-2023-0000-01-REG	CHAPMAN, RALPH E	7/3/2023	KAYLA BURGESS	8/1/2025	15.40	6.16	9.24
0024063102-2023-2023-0000-01-REG	CHAPMAN, RALPH E	7/3/2023	KAYLA BURGESS	8/1/2025	9.24	9.24	0.00
0024063102-2025-2024-0000-00-REG	CHAPMAN, RALPH E	7/23/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/1/2025	16.80	16.80	0.00
0024063102-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CHAPMAN, RALPH E	7/23/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/1/2025	15.27	15.27	0.00
0024077581-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	SCANLAN, TIMOTHY C	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/20/2025	208.10	208.10	0.00
0024077664-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MCLAUGHLIN, SHANNON L	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/19/2025	354.09	354.09	0.00
0024083950-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	SAX, EVAN	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/19/2025	5.80	5.80	0.00
0024084430-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HARWOOD, VIVIAN FARRIS	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/7/2025	4.17	4.17	0.00
0024084741-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MORTON, MICHAEL E	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	8/25/2025	2,490.84	659.34	1,831.50
0000056813-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	MILLER, REBECCA N	7/1/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	8/8/2025	803.29	803.29	0.00
0024085108-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	BRISTOL, JEREMY DANIEL	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/7/2025	57.30	15.82	41.48
Subtotal					**3,980.30**	**2,098.08**	**1,882.22**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Over Assessment							
0024060295-2025-2025-0001-00-REG	DALE, ALENE	8/4/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	8/8/2025	249.70	67.65	182.05
0024084734-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CAUSEBE LLC	7/1/2025	JOHN BRIDGERS	8/13/2025	32,051.25	11,294.25	20,757.00
Subtotal					**32,300.95**	**11,361.90**	**20,939.05**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Process Correction							
0024076701-2025-2024-0000-00-REG	DAVIDSON HOLLAND WHITESELL & CO PLLC	6/24/2025	LINDA WILBUR	7/31/2025	457.34	125.47	331.87
0024076701-2025-2024-0000-00-REG	DAVIDSON HOLLAND WHITESELL & CO PLLC	6/24/2025	LINDA WILBUR	7/31/2025	331.87	56.99	274.88
0024083393-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	ALLMAN, JIMMY DARRELL	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	8/26/2025	1,146.62	1,146.62	0.00
Subtotal					**1,935.83**	**1,329.08**	**606.75**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Release LFUF							
0000029474-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	GANTT, TERRY M	7/1/2022	AMANDA CONLEY	7/31/2025	295.09	82.00	213.09
0000029474-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	GANTT, TERRY M	7/3/2023	AMANDA CONLEY	7/31/2025	251.81	88.00	163.81
0000056813-2025-2025-0000-01-REG	MILLER, REBECCA N	7/1/2025	AMANDA CONLEY	8/8/2025	482.97	92.00	390.97

0000089659-2025-2024-0000-00-REG	CLARK, EARL E	7/23/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/26/2025	100.30	88.00	12.30
0000089659-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CLARK, EARL E	7/23/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/26/2025	103.18	92.00	11.18
Subtotal					**1,332.62**	**530.00**	**802.62**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Situs Correction							
0000072744-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	CATAWBA VALLEY PROPERTY	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/18/2025	5.68	5.68	0.00
Subtotal					**5.68**	**5.68**	**0.00**
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Sold/Traded							
0000010926-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	DENTON, MARK ALAN	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/21/2025	868.83	9.15	859.68
0000052810-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HOLDEN, STEPHEN W	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/14/2025	1,514.75	6.10	1,508.65
0000052810-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HOLDEN, STEPHEN W	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/14/2025	1,508.65	22.77	1,485.88
0000052810-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	HOLDEN, STEPHEN W	7/1/2025	LINDA WILBUR	8/14/2025	1,485.88	23.42	1,462.46
0000070713-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	RUTHERFORD, GLORIA JEAN	7/1/2025	LOENDORF JOSEPH	8/26/2025	119.17	119.17	0.00
0024034670-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	GATES, DERRICK J	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/7/2025	9.16	9.16	0.00
0024052110-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	FENDER, JENNIFER BURGESS	7/1/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/26/2025	40.57	40.57	0.00
0024077040-2025-2025-0000-00-REG	PENDLETON, TIMOTHY W	7/16/2025	KAYLA BURGESS	8/13/2025	6.11	6.11	0.00
Subtotal					**5,553.12**	**236.45**	**5,316.67**
Total					**56,640.41**	**25,913.42**	**30,726.99**

Motion: To approve the Tax Releases and Refunds for August 2025 as presented.

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

ITEMS FOR DECISION

CD & ROD - CENTRALIZE THE PLAT REVIEW FUNCTION TO COUNTY STAFF

Alan Glines, Planning Director / Deputy County Manager, explained that the Register of Deeds and Community Development jointly propose consolidating the plat review process. Under this change, Burke County Community Development staff would handle the review of plat elements prior to recording, with Register of Deeds staff serving as backup when needed.

Plat reviews generally involve two (2) major components:

1. Zoning and Watershed Review - Municipal planners review plats for compliance with local codes and ordinances within their jurisdiction.

2. Plat Standards Review - A technical review to ensure compliance with N.C.G.S. § 47-30 (Plats and Subdivisions; Mapping Requirements). This includes verifying surveyor certifications, owner signatures, title block information, deed references, adjoining property owners, notes, and other required elements.

Currently, municipal planners are often involved in both parts of the review. Under the proposed process, municipal planners would continue to review plats for zoning and watershed compliance, but would then forward plats to Burke County Community Development staff for the technical review. This change is expected to improve consistency and ensure compliance with state law.

If approved by the Board of Commissioners, implementation would begin October 1, 2025, with a gradual rollout over three (3) months. Municipal planners may continue signing plats through January 1, 2026, after which Community Development staff will fully assume the review role prior to recording at the Register of Deeds.

This approach is well-established in North Carolina, with approximately 75 of the 100 counties already utilizing county staff for plat review and should create no more than 10 additional hours

of work per month, which can readily be absorbed by existing staff.

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

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2025-30.

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

Resolution No. 2025-30 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION UPDATING PLAT REVIEW OFFICERS

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute § 47-30.2 requires the board of commissioners in each county, by resolution, to appoint Plat Review Officers to examine plats prior to their submission to the Register of Deeds and to certify that such plats meet all statutory requirements for recording; and

WHEREAS, the Register of Deeds Office and the Community Development Office are collaborating to transition the plat review function in-house, with county staff assuming responsibility for review and approval of plats beginning October 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, during this transition period, municipal plat reviewers will complete work already in progress, with full implementation and responsibility for plat review transferring to county staff effective January 1, 2026; and

WHEREAS, effective on October 1, 2025, the Burke County Board of Commissioners will appoint the following individuals as plat review officers for Burke County:

ENTITY	ADD
Register of Deeds Office	Stephanie Norman
Register of Deeds Office	Tira Duckworth
Register of Deeds Office	JoAnna Hester
Register of Deeds Office	Trista Annas

WHEREAS, on December 31, 2025, the following individuals will be removed as plat review officers for Burke County:

ENTITY	REMOVE
Glen Alpine	Crystal Reed, as recorded in Book 2755, Page 273
Morganton	Wendy Smith, as recorded in Book 2664, Page 412
Morganton	Benjamin Ealy, as recorded in Book 2782, Page 455
Morganton	Shelley Stevens, as recorded in Book 2805, Page 856
Drexel	Bill Carroll, as recorded in Book 2755, Page 273
Drexel	Teresa Kinney, as recorded in Book 2579. Page 287

Valdese	Ashley Young, as recorded in Book 2782, Page 455
Rutherford College	Katelyn Smith, as recorded in Book 2725, Page 404
Connelly Springs	Tamara Brooks, as recorded in Book 2579, Page 287
Hildebran	Logan Shook, as recorded in Book 2636, Page 890
Long View	Susan Matheson, as recorded in Book 2805, Page 856
City of Hickory (BC Portion)	Brian Burgess, as recorded in Book 2579, Page 287
City of Hickory (BC Portion)	Brian Frazier, as recorded in Book 2579, Page 287
City of Hickory (BC Portion)	Dennis Cal Overby, as recorded in Book 1911, Page 841
Rhodhiss (BC Portion)	Ashley Young, as recorded in Book 2782, Page 455
Rhodhiss (BC Portion)	Teresaa Kinney, as recorded in Book 2579, Page 287

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Burke County Board of Commissioners approve the adjustments to the plat review officers as outlined above; and

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

Adopted this 15th day of September 2025.

/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

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO BURKE CO. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, stated that Gregory Smith currently occupies Seat No. 4, west, on the Burke Co. Board of Adjustment, and his term ends September 30, 2025. He was willing to serve another 3-year term ending September 30, 2028. Also, an application was on file for Damion Patton.

4	West	Gregory Smith	A-UTR	9/17/2024
		Morganton NC 28655	TE	9/30/2025

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 4, west. Commissioner Burns nominated Gregory Smith. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Gregory Smith to the Burke Co. Board of Adjustment, Seat No. 4, West, to a 3-year term ending September 30, 2028.

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

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO BC PLANNING BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the terms of appointment for Shawn Freeman (Seat No. 2 - East) and Andrew Lowdermilk (Seat No. 5, at-large) on the Burke County Planning Board end September 30, 2025. Both members were willing to serve another term. There are several applications on file for the Board's consideration. The terms are for three (3) years.

2	East	Shawn Freeman	A-UT	2/17/2025
			TE	9/30/2025
5	At-large	Andrew Lowdermilk	A-UT	7/16/2024
			TE	9/30/2025

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 2, east. Commissioner Stroud nominated Shawn Freeman; there being no further nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Shawn Freeman to Seat No. 2, East, on the Burke Co. Planning Board for a 3-year term ending September 30, 2028.

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 5, at-large. Commissioner Burns nominated Andrew Lowdermilk; there being no further nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Andrew Lowdermilk to Seat No. 5, at-large, on the Burke Co. Planning Board for a 3-year term ending September 30, 2028.

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

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS TO THE REVALUATION TASK FORCE

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, noted that at the July 21, 2025, meeting, the Burke County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution establishing the Burke County Revaluation Task Force. The seven (7) member citizen advisory body is charged with promoting transparency, enhancing public understanding, and providing community input throughout the 2027 countywide property revaluation process.

The Board was asked to appoint members to fill the following designated seats:

1. A citizen actively employed or retired from real estate, property appraisal, or tax administration
2. A licensed general contractor familiar with market-based construction costs
3. An active professional in insurance, risk management, or banking, familiar with market trends and asset replacement costs

4. A representative of the agriculture community
5. At-large community member
6. At-large community member
7. A citizen over the age of 55

Applications on file:

- Tim Newton – Applicant for Seat No. 1: Real Estate Professional
- Kevin Farris - Applicant for Seat No. 3: Insurance professional
- Evan Crawley - Applicant for Seat No. 4: Agriculture Community Representative
- Jerry Norvell - Applicant for Seat No. 6: At-Large Member
- Johnnie Carswell - Applicant for Seat No. 7: Citizen Over Age 55

To appoint Tim Newton (Seat No. 1 – Real Estate Professional), Kevin Farris (Seat No. 3 – Insurance Professional), Evan Crawley (Seat No. 4 – Agriculture Community Representative), Jerry Norvell (Seat No. 6 – At-Large), and Johnnie Carswell (Seat No. 7 – Citizen Over Age 55) to the Revaluation Task Force, each for a term ending January 1, 2027.

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

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS / REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE VETERANS SERVICE BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, explained that the Veterans Service Board is comprised of five (5) at-large seats designated for veterans with an honorable service record. The terms for David Tubergen (Seat No. 3) and Edwin Ware (Seat No. 4) will expire on September 30, 2025. The members have expressed a willingness to continue serving. Additionally, there are applications on file for Jim Frady and Dillon Smith.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nomination for Seat No. 3. Vice Chairman Smith nominated David Tubergen. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint David Tubergen to the Veterans Service Board, Seat No. 3, for a 3-year term ending September 30, 2028.

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nomination for Seat No. 4. Commissioner Stroud nominated Edwin Ware. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Edwin Ware, Seat No. 4, for a 3-year term ending September 30, 2028.

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

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

BOC - REPORTS & COMMENTS

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for reports and comments from Board members and professional staff.

Commissioner Burns reported that he was appointed to the North Carolina Education Workforce Innovation Commission and participated in the Commission's first virtual meeting, with an in-person meeting scheduled for October 10th in Alexander County. He also announced his reappointment as an at-large director on the Policy Board of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. Commissioner Burns noted that he joined Mr. James Robinson to present an award to Zachary Wade, who was unable to attend a previous meeting, and requested that the Board remember the family of Charlie Kirk following his passing.

County Manager Brian Epley provided an update on FEMA-funded waterway debris removal projects, noting recent progress following federal funding allocations. He stated that debris removal has begun in the most impacted areas along the Linville River in northern Burke County, with eight (8) projects approved. He highlighted that the program has been managed by the State since June 30th.

Vice Chairman Smith commented on the positive presence of youth and families at the meeting and requested that the County Manager address concerns related to motor vehicle tax billing. Mr. Epley explained the motor vehicle tax "gap billing" process administered by the State through the DMV and Department of Revenue. He reported that approximately 8,000 bills were mailed based on state-provided data, some of which contained errors, including duplicate or incorrect calculations. Approximately 6,500 accounts remain under review. The Tax Office will notify affected taxpayers, and he encouraged residents to review their bills carefully and contact the Tax Office with any discrepancies. Refunds will be issued for overpayments. Vice Chairman Smith emphasized that the billing issue originated at the State level and was not caused by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Barrier expressed appreciation to County Manager Epley for spending time touring county facilities and thanked staff for their professionalism and positive morale, noting strong leadership across departments.

Chairman Brittain shared information on the upcoming one-year Hurricane Helene Documentary, which is a joint project between Burke County and the city of Morganton, then thanked the following sponsors of the event: Burke County United Way, the Community Foundation, UNC Blue Ridge Health, The Hampton (Morganton), and Rutherford Electric. He issued a reminder about the BOC regular meeting and invited youth groups interested in leading the Pledge of Allegiance at Board meetings to sign up on the county website. Further, he encouraged citizens to spay or neuter pets, adopt or foster from Burke County Animal Services, secure their loads when visiting convenience centers or the landfill, avoid littering, and report littered areas through the Community Beautification tab on the county's website.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLERK - BOARDS AND COMMITTEES VACANCY REPORT
Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, announced the following vacancies on county boards or committees as follows:

- Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee
- Burke County Public Health Advisory Board
- Hickory Regional Planning Commission
- Drexel Planning Board - ETJ Alternate
- Partners Health Management's Human Rights Committee
- Revaluation Task Force

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

RESULT:	**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

CLOSED SESSION

RESULT:	**NOT NEEDED, NOT HELD.**

ADJOURN
Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

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

Approved this 20th day of January 2026.

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

Attest:

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