MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PRE-AGENDA MEETING

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a pre-agenda meeting on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, Burke County Services Building, 110 N. Green Street, Entrance E, in Morganton, North Carolina. The meeting was streamed live on the County's YouTube channel, BurkeCountyNC, and it was broadcast on the local cable systems. The agenda, in its entirety, was posted to the County's website, www.burkenc.org, several days prior to the meeting. Pursuant to Resolution No. 2024-17, adopted and effective on August 20, 2024, the Burke County Board of Commissioners conferred upon itself all the power, duties, and responsibilities of the Board of Health and the Social Services Board. Those present were:

COMMISSIONERS:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman Phil Smith, Vice Chairman Brian Barrier Randy Burns Mike Stroud
STAFF:	Brian Epley, County Manager Alan Glines, Planning Director/Deputy County Manager Margaret Pierce, Finance Director/Deputy County Manager Dylan Laws, Wilson, Lackey, Rohr & Hall P.C. Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

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

PRESENTATIONS

NCEIPD - NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH (OCT.) 2025 (PLACE HOLDER)
Shelly Cash, Business Relations Representative, Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities (EIPD), requested approval of a proclamation recognizing October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month; this year's theme is "Celebrating Value and Talent."

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. There being none, the item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CE - 4-H PROGRAM OVERVIEW & RECOGNITION OF 4-H STATE / NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER(S)

4-H Agent, Nicki Carpenter, provided an overview of the County's 4-H program and recognized recent state-level achievements.

She explained that 4-H is an international, learn-by-doing youth development program for ages 5–18, focusing on "head, heart, hands, and health." Burke County delivers 4-H through multiple formats, including school enrichment, after-school programs, community clubs, special-interest ("SPIN") clubs, and community outreach.

Ms. Carpenter highlighted the wide range of local 4-H opportunities, including project books, public speaking, horse and livestock programs, shooting sports, teen council, volunteer leadership, healthy living, beekeeping, sewing, career and college readiness, electric programs, and scholarship support.

She then announced the 2024–2025 state-level award recipients as follows:

NC 4-H Horse Bowl – 5th in State (Burke Mixed Team)

- Ruby Desrosiers
- Ellie Hudson
- Sadie Sauberan
- Lola Desrosiers
- Julian Hernandez

Coach: Crosby Norris

AIRE Program & Presentation Awards

- Addy Fulbright
  - State AIRE Winner – Awarded National Trip
  - West District Gold Winner – Communication Arts Presentation

4-H Collegiate Scholarships

- Jacob Hanlon
  - Awarded three collegiate scholarships

NC State 4-H Horse Show:

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

State Project Record Book Winners (2024 Project Year)

- Ellie Hudson
- Aviana Page-Clark

- Emma Oakley
- Kaylee Hoyle
- Emily Hall
- Joey Morrison
- Hazel Cole
- Hannah Cole
- Ruby Desrosiers
- Madison Pryor
- Addy Fulbright

NC 4-H Hall of Fame:
- Lisa Hanlon (volunteer leader)

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Ms. Carpenter responded to a clarifying question from Commissioner Stroud. Vice Chairman Smith inquired about the number of 4-H members in Burke County, and Ms. Carpenter reported that approximately 200 youth are active, registered members, with an indirect reach of nearly 2,000 through after-school programs. There being no further discussion, the item was moved to the next meeting without objection.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

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 opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

DSS - FOSTER CARE PRESENTATION (PLACE HOLDER)

Brian Epley, County Manager, expressed his appreciation to the Board for their continued focus on supporting children experiencing foster care. He noted that a monthly foster care–related presentation is typically given its own slot during the Board meeting; however, he requested that this month's update be included within the DSS report later in the agenda, where Social Worker Garrett Smith would play a brief video and provide a short overview of a day in the life of a foster care social worker.

RESULT:	**WITHOUT OBJECTION, THIS ITEM REMAINED ON THE PRE-AGENDA AGENDA, AS AN ACTION ITEM WITH THE DSS OPERATIONAL REPORT.**

CM - END OF THE YEAR REPORT (PLACE HOLDER)

Brian Epley, County Manager, relayed that staff are working on finalizing the Year-End Report for FY 24-25, which will be presented at the regular meeting.

This item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

AAB - APPROVAL OF UPDATED RULES OF PROCEDURE
Debbie Hawkins, Chair, Animal Advisory Board, stated the Board conducted an annual review and updated their Rules of Procedure, accordingly, as required by the County Code.

Note: The Animal Advisory Board's Rules of Procedure are hereby incorporated into the meeting minutes by reference.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CLERK - APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL ON AGING
Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that Maxine Childers has been unable to attend recent Council on Aging meetings and requested that her name be removed from the roster with appreciation for her service. An application has been received from Heather Ward, and her appointment to Seat No. 4 was requested to complete the remainder of the current three-year term ending November 30, 2026.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

TAX DEPT. - TAX COLLECTION REPORT - AUGUST 2025
In the absence of the Tax Administrator, Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the Tax Collection Report for the period ending August 31, 2025, was provided to the Board as a handout.

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

TAX DEPT. - RELEASE REFUND REPORT - AUGUST 2025

The Board of Commissioners received a handout with the following list of releases and refunds for the period ending August 31, 2025.

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

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO BURKE CO. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Kay Draugh, 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 is willing to serve another 3-year term ending September 30, 2028. Also, an application is on file for Damion Patton.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO BC PLANNING BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, explained that the terms of appointment for Shawn Freeman (Seat 2 - East) and Andrew Lowdermilk (Seat 5, at-large) on the Burke County Planning Board end September 30, 2025. Both members are 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 questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS TO THE REVALUATION TASK FORCE (PLACE HOLDER)

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, highlighted 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:

- Kevin Farris - Seat No. 3 (Insurance professional)
- Evan Crawley - Seat No. 4 (Agricultural community)
- Jerry Norvell - Seat No. 6 (At-Large)
- Johnnie Carswell - Seat No. 7 (Citizen over age 55)

Applications continue to be accepted to fill the newly established Task Force. At this time, three seats remain without a qualified applicant.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS / REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE VETERANS SERVICE BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, noted 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. Both members have expressed a willingness to continue serving. Additionally, there are applications on file from Jim Frady and Dillon Smith.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

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

Alan Glines, Planning Director / Deputy County Manager, in conjunction with the Register of Deeds and Community Development, proposed 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 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.

The draft authorizing resolution included in the agenda packet reads as follows:

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.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

RESULT:	**MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

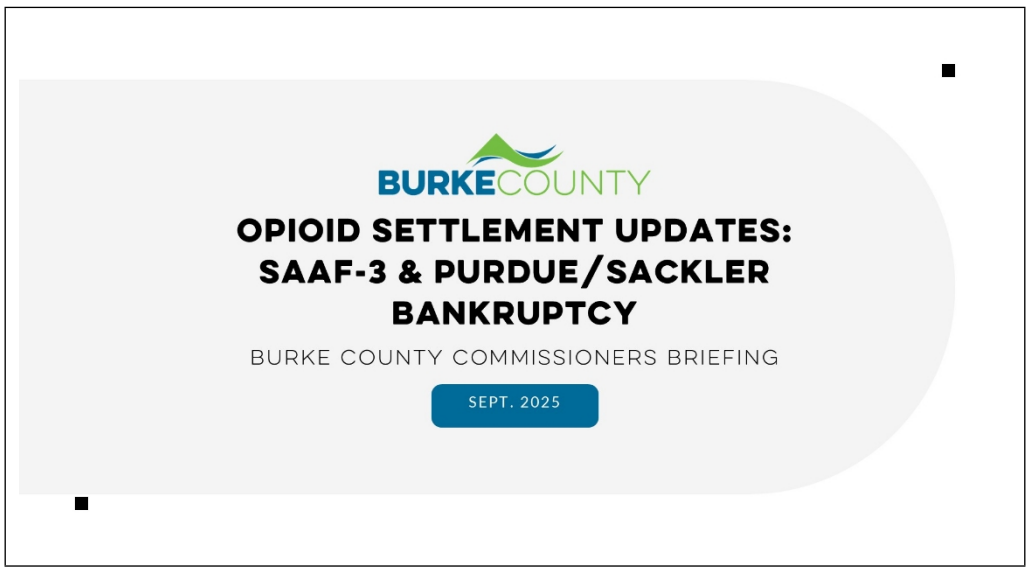
Chairman Brittain asked Board members to submit their reports to the Clerk for inclusion in the regular agenda packet. He issued a reminder for some upcoming meetings. He also invited youth groups to sign up to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at Commissioners' meetings.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS – NONE

ACTION ITEMS

CM - OPIOID LITIGATION UPDATE & RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF OPIOID SETTLEMENTS WITH SECONDARY OPIOID MANUFACTURERS

Dr. Katie Samuels, Opioid Settlement Coordinator, presented an opioid settlement update as follows:



DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

01 SETTLEMENT FRAMEWORK

02 SAAF-3 OVERVIEW

03 PURDUE/SACKLER SETTLEMENT

04 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION

06 RECOMMENDATIONS

SETTLEMENT FRAMEWORK & BACKGROUND

01 — 2021 MOA
Framework for NC distribution, accountability, remediation

Sign-on: November 2021

02 — 2023 SAAF
Added Walmart, CVS, Walgreens, Teva, Allergan

Sign-on: Feb. 2023

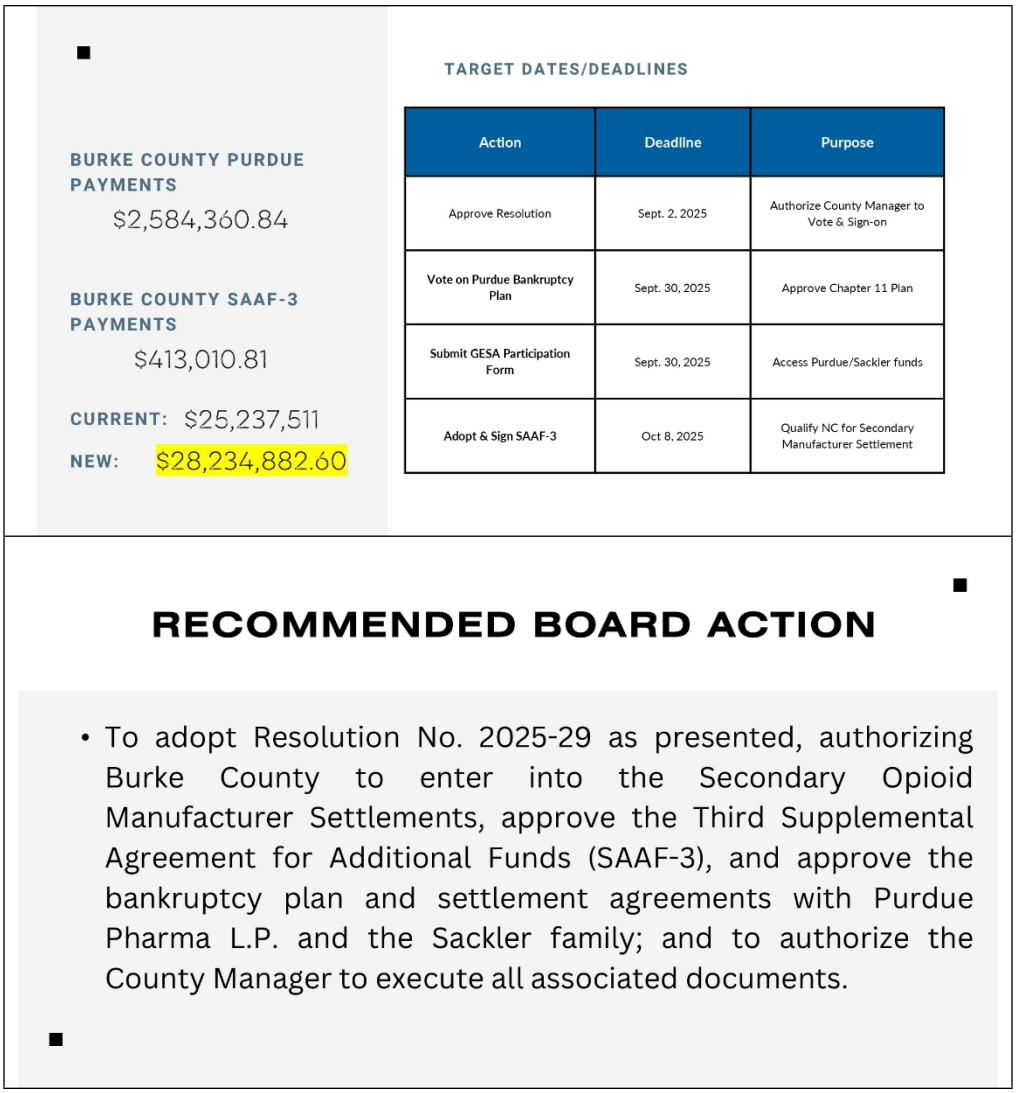
03 — 2024 SAAF-2
Added Kroger settlement

Sign-on: July 2024

Next Sign-on: SAAF-3

SAAF-3 (SECONDARY OPIOID MANUFACTURER SETTLEMENTS)

- Extends NC's existing MOA/SAAF framework to new settlements with Alvogen, Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Indivior, Sun, Viatris, and Zydus.
- Distribution per payment:
  - 15% State
  - 84.62% Local Governments
  - 0.38% Local Counsel Fee Fund (reverts to locals if unused)
- Funds must be deposited into the local special revenue fund and used only for MOA-approved remediation strategies.
- Takes effect once enough NC subdivisions sign to qualify as a State-Subdivision Agreement.
- **Local action required:** adopt resolution and sign SAAF-3 + settlement documents.



BURKE COUNTY PURDUE PAYMENTS

$2,584,360.84

BURKE COUNTY SAAF-3 PAYMENTS

$413,010.81

CURRENT: $25,237,511

NEW: $28,234,882.60

TARGET DATES/DEADLINES

Action	Deadline	Purpose
Approve Resolution	Sept. 2, 2025	Authorize County Manager to Vote & Sign-on
Vote on Purdue Bankruptcy Plan	Sept. 30, 2025	Approve Chapter 11 Plan
Submit GESA Participation Form	Sept. 30, 2025	Access Purdue/Sackler funds
Adopt & Sign SAAF-3	Oct 8, 2025	Qualify NC for Secondary Manufacturer Settlement

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

- To adopt Resolution No. 2025-29 as presented, authorizing Burke County to enter into the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Settlements, approve the Third Supplemental Agreement for Additional Funds (SAAF-3), and approve the bankruptcy plan and settlement agreements with Purdue Pharma L.P. and the Sackler family; and to authorize the County Manager to execute all associated documents.

Pursuant to the Board of Commissioners adopted Rules of Procedure, Rule 10. Pre-Agenda Meetings, "…at the discretion of the chair, any decision item set forth in the agenda packet may be acted upon during the pre-agenda meeting if the matter is considered to be time sensitive or waiting until the regular meeting may be detrimental to the county.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

Budgetary Effect: N.A.

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2025-29 as presented, authorizing Burke County to enter into the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Settlements, approve the Third Supplemental Agreement for Additional Funds (SAAF-3), and approve the bankruptcy plan and settlement agreements with Purdue Pharma L.P. and the Sackler family; and to authorize the County Manager to execute all associated documents, subject to review and/or revision by the County Attorney.

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

Resolution No. 2025-29 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION BY THE BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF OPIOID SETTLEMENTS WITH SECONDARY OPIOID MANUFACTURERS, PURDUE PHARMA LP, AND THE SACKLER FAMILY, AND APPROVING THE THIRD SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS BETWEEN THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON PROCEEDS RELATING TO THE SETTLEMENT OF OPIOID LITIGATION

WHEREAS, more than 41,500 North Carolinians lost their lives to a drug overdose from 2000-2023.

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has estimated the total economic burden of prescription opioid misuse alone in the United States to be $78.5 billion a year, including the costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement;

WHEREAS, in 2024, it is projected that 53 individuals in Burke County died from an overdose, representing one of the highest rates in North Carolina and reflecting a 12% decrease from the prior year, highlighting the continued importance of sustained investments in prevention, treatment, and recovery;

WHEREAS, certain counties and municipalities in North Carolina joined with thousands of local governments across the country to file lawsuits against opioid companies, manufacturers, pharmaceutical distributors, and chain drug stores to hold those companies accountable for their misconduct;

WHEREAS, settlements (collectively "the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Settlements") have been reached in litigation against Alvogen, Inc., Amneal Pharmaceuticals LLC, Apotex Corp., Hikma Pharmaceuticals USA Inc. f/k/a West-Ward Pharmaceuticals Corp., Indivior Inc., Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Inc., Viatris Inc., and Zydus Pharmaceuticals (USA) Inc., as well as their subsidiaries, affiliates, officers, and directors (collectively "the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Defendants") named in the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Settlements;

WHEREAS, representatives of local North Carolina governments, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, and the North Carolina Department of Justice have negotiated and prepared a Third Supplemental Agreement for Additional Funds ("SAAF-3") to provide for the equitable distribution of the proceeds of the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Settlements;

WHEREAS, settlements have been reached, under Purdue Pharma L.P.'s bankruptcy plan, whereby Purdue Pharma L.P. ("Purdue") and members of the Sackler family will pay

approximately $7.4 billion to settle opioid claims across the nation, which settlements would be subject in North Carolina to the equitable distribution of the proceeds as set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA") which has already been approved by this Board;

WHEREAS, by joining the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Settlements, approving the SAAF-3, and approving the bankruptcy plan and settlements relating to Purdue and the Sackler family, the state and local governments maximize North Carolina's share of opioid settlement funds to ensure the needed resources reach communities as quickly, effectively, and directly as possible;

WHEREAS, it is advantageous to all North Carolinians for local governments, including Burke County and its residents, to sign onto the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Settlements, SAAF-3, and approving the bankruptcy plan and settlements relating to Purdue and the Sackler family, in order to demonstrate solidarity in response to the opioid overdose crisis, and to maximize the share of opioid settlement funds received both in the State and Burke County to help abate the harm; and

WHEREAS, both the MOA and SAAF-3 directs substantial resources over multiple years to local governments on the front lines of the opioid overdose epidemic while ensuring that these resources are used in an effective way to address the crisis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Burke County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the County Manager to execute, on behalf of Burke County, the necessary documents to enter into opioid settlement agreements, as set forth herein, with the Secondary Opioid Manufacturer Defendants, to execute the SAAF-3, and to approve the bankruptcy plan and settlement agreements relating to Purdue and the Sackler family, and to provide such documents to Rubris, the Implementation Administrator, subject to a pre-audit certificate thereon by the County Chief Financial Officer, if applicable, and approval as to form and legality by the Burke County Attorney.

Adopted this 2nd day of September 2025.

/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

CM - CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL CITIZENS ACADEMY APPLICANTS

Brian Epley, County Manager, highlighted that at the August 18, 2025, meeting, the Board of Commissioners unanimously approved all 18 applicants for the inaugural Burke County Citizens Academy. Since that time, two (2) additional applications have been received from Joseph Winkler and Meg Poteet.

Pursuant to the Board of Commissioners adopted Rules of Procedure, Rule 10. Pre-Agenda Meetings, "…at the discretion of the chair, any decision item set forth in the agenda packet may

be acted upon during the pre-agenda meeting if the matter is considered to be time sensitive or waiting until the regular meeting may be detrimental to the county." With the first session slated to start September 11th, staff respectfully requested consideration of adding these applicants to the inaugural Burke County Citizens Academy during the pre-agenda meeting.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the next meeting.

Motion: To approve the addition of Joseph Winkler and Meg Poteet to the Fall 2025 Citizens Academy class.

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

DSS - MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORT

Korey Fisher-Wellman, DSS Director, presented the monthly operational report as follows:



OPERATIONS



BURKECOUNTY

Economic Services MOU Data

METRICS PER MOU					
	FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES				
		MOU MEASURE	98%	95%	
ACTIVE RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES	APP TIMELINESS RATE- REGULAR	APP TIMELINESS RATE-EXPEDITE	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE	
10,715	5,566	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	
WORK FIRST FAMILY ASSISTANCE AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES					
ACTIVE RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES	MOU MEASURE	95%	95%	
			APPLICATION TIMELINESS	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE	
91	60		Achieved	Achieved	
MEDICAID		MOU MEASURE	90	90	95
TOTAL MEDICAID RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES		REPORT CARD MAD	REPORT CARD OTHER	Straight Through Processing
28,873	23,067		Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE					
	MOU PERFORMANCE MEASURE			85%	85%
SA ACTIVE CASES				SAA TIMELINESS APPLICATIONS	SAD TIMELINESS APPLICATIONS
251				Achieved	75%
ENERGY PROGRAMS					
	MOU PERFORMANCE MEASURE			95%	95%
	CIP APPLICATIONS PROCESSED	LIEAP APPLICATIONS PROCESSED		% PROCESSED TIMELY -NO SOURCE 1 DAY	% PROCESSED TIMELY -WITH SOURCE 2 DAY
	205	0		Achieved	Achieved
CHILD CARE SUBSIDY					
		PERFORMANCE MEASURE	95%		
	ACTIVE CASES		APPLICATION TIMELINESS		
	429		Achieved		

Economic Services Update

MEDICAID

MOU MEASURE								90	90	95						
	AGED OR DISABLED ADULT ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS Does not include MXP or FP cases	ADULT ACTIVE CASES *Does not include MXP or FP cases	FAMILY AND CHILDREN ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS	FAMILY AND CHILDREN ACTIVE CASES	TOTAL MEDICAID APPLICATIONS TAKEN	TOTAL MEDICAID REVIEWS	TOTAL MEDICAID REVIEWS WITHOUT WAIVERS	CAP REFERRALS	LTC REFERRALS	TOTAL MEDICAID RECIPIENTS	TOTAL NEMT TRIPS	REPORT CARD MAD	REPORT CARD OTHER	RECERT COMPLETION TIMELINESS RATE	Straight Through Processing	Total
JUL	5440	7466	21,831	13,849	425	439	1977	3	19	27,271	773	100%	98%	[redacted]	100%	98%
AUG	5403	7505	21885	13,942	415	489	1540	4	11	27,288	773	93%	94%		100%	94%
SEP	5384	7609	21,937	13958	382	412	1890	3	17	27,323	626	96%	92%		100%	93%
OCT	5387	7563	22,277	14091	446	90	1128	4	14	27,666	642	96%	92%		100%	93%
NOV	5405	7584	22,655	14304	688	363	1746	9	10	28,062	573	97%	97%		100%	97%
DEC	5415	7567	22936	14554	582	1485	2246	10	11	28,351	582	100%	97%		100%	96%
JAN	5412	7612	23126	14845	565	2090	2900	5	9	28,538	651	96%	96%		100%	96%
FEB	5391	7,608	23436	14,952	352	2223	2580	1	7	28,561	683	93%	95%		100%	95%
MAR	5356	7,618	23247	15,012	411	855	2969	11	13	28603	735	100%	95%		100%	95%
APR	5389	7,752	23481	15,037	380	1571	*	4	12	28,870	683	96%	95%		100%	95%
MAY	5351	7,658	23365	15,147	382	*	*	3	9	28,716	713	93%	97%		100%	97%
JUN	5338	7,683	23515	15,235	346	1540	n/a	0	17	28,851	698	96%	94%	[redacted]	100%	95%
JUL	5327	7,734	23,544	15,333	382	1435	n/a	2	18	28,873	*	93%	95%		100%	95%

Economic Services Update

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES

	ACTIVE RECIPIENTS	ACTIVE CASES	APPLICATIONS TAKEN	APP TIMELINESS RATE-REGULAR	APP TIMELINESS RATE-EXPEDITE	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE	RECERTS COMPLETED	FNS EBT BENEFITS
MOU MEASURE				95%	95%	95%		
JUL	11,138	5,799	556	96.38%	93.75%	98.73%	555	1772168
AUG	11,155	5792	579	99.53%	95.20%	99.26%	539	1791212
SEP	11,199	5814	525	99.51%	98.26%	98.28%	406	*
OCT	11,503	5975	731/6302	98.54%	94.23%	72.63%	285	3230130
NOV	11,981	6206	394	100.00%	97.81	67%	739	2962954
DEC	12,193	6312	346	97.62%	98.15%	100%	356	2016823
JAN	12,108	6275	585	99.31%	99.77%	100%	525	1,973,378
FEB	11,951	6236	449	97.18%	100%	98.75%	561	1,963,605
MAR	11,907	6183	499	97.21%	100%	98.48%	526	1,965,566
APR	11,396	5959	591	97.24%	100.00%	97.77%	720	1,871,687
MAY	11,002	5732	576	98.11%	99.15%	99.13%	692	1,808,941
JUN	10,804	5,597	598	97.69%	92.73%	98.19%	553	1783246
JUL	10,715	5,556	594	96.83%	96.84%	98.74%	548	1760696

ADULT SERVICES UPDATE



Guardianship
- Total Wards: 63
- Contracted Wards: 17

SAIH (Special Assistance In-Home)
- Active Cases: 53
- State Average Caseload: 25-30
- Only **ONE** SAIH Social Worker covers **ALL** cases

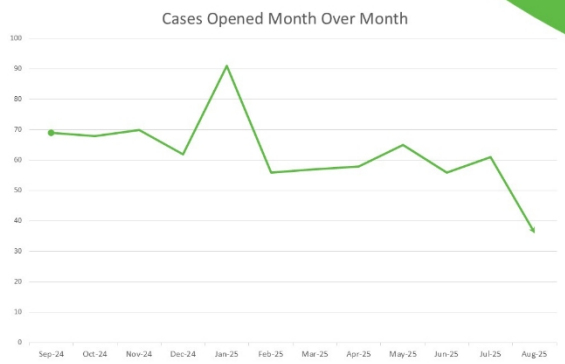
CAP (Community Alternatives Program)
- Current Enrollment: 140
- Capacity: 188+

BURKECOUNTY

July APS Data

Category	Number	Notes
Total APS Reports Received	38	
APS Reports Screened In	18	Reports meeting criteria for an investigation
Substantiated Cases	2	
Confirmed Cases	2	Includes substantiations and other confirmations
Cases Opened for Services	4	Ongoing support and case management
Outreach Cases Assigned	12	Proactive engagement with at-risk adults
Service Referrals	15	Referrals for supportive community services
Guardianship Referrals	3	Referrals for potential legal guardianship

CPS REPORTS



- Highest intake month was January 2025 with 91 reports.
- Average reports per completed month is 64.8.

BURKECOUNTY

CPS CASELOADS



- High point was February 2025 with 306 open cases.
- Steady decrease from March forward, ending at 221 as of 8/25/25.

BURKECOUNTY

FOSTER CARE UPDATE



Foster Care Snapshot – Burke County

- Total children in foster care: 186
- New entries into care this period: 6
- Exits from care this period: 4

BURKECOUNTY

REMOVED

History and Purpose

Released in 2013, written and directed by Nathanael Matanick.

Inspired by the real-life experiences of foster children in the U.S. child welfare system.

Has since become a training and awareness tool for social workers, foster parents, and child welfare agencies.

Humanize the Foster Care Experience - Shows removal from a child's point of view, capturing the trauma, confusion, and resilience involved.

Build Empathy - Helps viewers understand the emotions children face during removal and placement.

Raise Awareness - Increases public understanding of foster care and adoption.

Support Training & Education - Used in social work education, foster parent training, and community awareness events.



BURKECOUNTY

The 10-minute video "REMOVED" by Nathanael Matanick was shown in the chambers and can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lOeQUwdAjE0.

Next, Garrett Smith, Social Worker, provided an overview of the realities of foster care and adoption social work. He emphasized that the work is emotionally demanding, unpredictable, and often requires responding to crises, but is ultimately rewarding.

He explained daily responsibilities, including preparing court reports, submitting monthly day sheets, ensuring children receive needed services, managing disruptions in placements, and coordinating case plans with parents, guardians ad litem, Medicaid partners, and foster or kinship providers. He outlined the levels of foster care and the process of finding appropriate placements.

Mr. Smith described the reunification track, including case plan development, supervised / unsupervised visits, trial home placements, and Rylan's Law home visits. He explained the adoption track, where children who become legally free (via termination or relinquishment of parental rights) are matched with pre-adoptive families through child-focused recruiters and NC Kids.

He spoke about the emotional reality for children who often have no family support, noting that workers frequently serve as the child's primary support during difficult transitions. Mr. Smith shared a recent example involving a child whose pre-adoptive placement in another state failed shortly before adoption, requiring emergency removal, overnight supervision at DSS, hospitalization for panic symptoms, and locating a new placement. He highlighted the resilience of children and the importance of stability.

Despite challenges, Mr. Smith emphasized the meaningful outcomes of the work and shared a successful adoption case completed shortly before a youth's 18th birthday. He concluded by briefly outlining adoption paperwork and procedures, including adoption assistance eligibility and the adoption committee meeting process.

Chairman Brittain expressed appreciation for the presentation and for Mr. Smith's hard work. He then opened the floor for questions or comments.

Commissioner Burns asked whether there is a common thread behind situations requiring child removal. Mr. Smith responded that causes vary, but domestic violence, physical abuse, and substance abuse—particularly drug use—are among the most frequent factors he has observed. He noted that because he currently works with children who are already legally free, reunification workers may have more up-to-date insights into initial removal trends.

Commissioner Burns also asked whether certain times of year see more reports. Mr. Fisher-Wellman explained that reports decrease during summer when schools are out, as schools are the primary reporters. When school resumes, reports typically increase. He added that extended holidays, including Christmas break, also tend to bring higher reporting levels. Commissioner Burns expressed that the challenges facing children appear far larger than what DSS staff can address alone and commended Mr. Smith for the emotional and difficult nature of his work.

Vice Chairman Smith stated that a presentation like Mr. Smith's would be valuable for Burke

County Public Schools. Drawing from his 30 years in the school system, he noted that such information would have helped educators better understand the backgrounds and challenges of students. He encouraged collaboration between DSS, Dr. Swan, and the County Manager to explore creating a program for teachers, administrators, and principals.

In response, DSS Director Mr. Fisher-Wellman agreed that reaching more educators could be beneficial. He noted that DSS already meets regularly with school counselors and administrators but acknowledged that information does not always reach classroom teachers. He stated that expanding efforts to engage teachers is a good idea and a potential opportunity.

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

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

RESULT:	**APPROVED (4-1)**
MOVER:	Brian Barrier, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Mike Stroud
ABSENT:	Randy Burns (Momentarily stepped away from the dais and was not present for the vote.)

GENERAL SERVICES - COURTHOUSE ROOF PROJECT BID AWARD

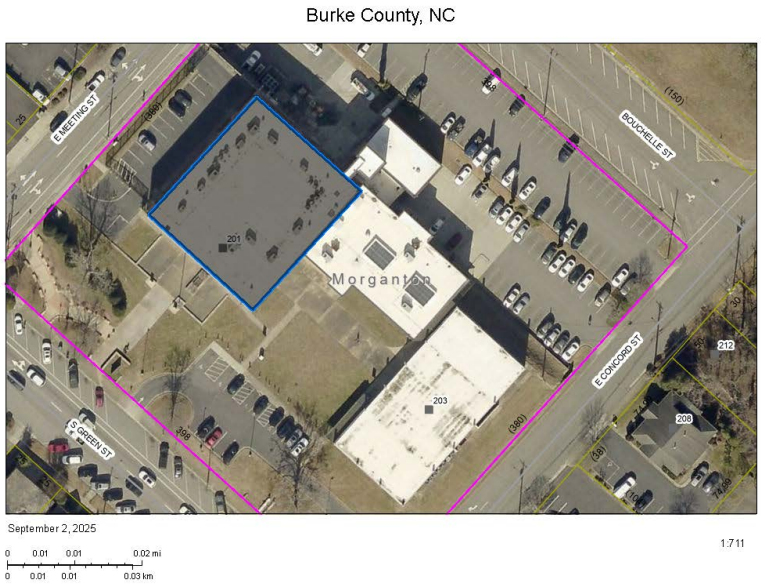
Mark Delehant, General Services Director, explained that the Courthouse has had several repairs over the years to address various leaks; however, it has escalated to the point where a roof replacement was needed. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was posted on the county website on August 04, 2025, soliciting sealed bids from qualified vendors for the partial replacement of the roofing on the Burke County Courthouse. Closing date for bids was August 18, 2025, and the County received nine (9) bids from vendors. Johnson Roofing Concepts, Inc., has been selected as the most responsive responsible bidder. There are several options to reduce the cost of the project, but the cost of the project will not exceed the bid amount of $89,871. Funds are available for the project through the M&R Building and Grounds budget.

BID #:	Date Closed:
2025-0818	8/18/2025

PROJECT:
Burke County Courthouse Partial Roof Replacement

Vendor:	Bid:	
Johnson Roofing Concepts, Inc	$	89,871.00
ProCraft Roofing	$	96,240.00
Piedmont Commercial Roofing	$	103,230.00
Radco Roofing	$	108,883.00
Cannon Roofing	$	123,880.00
AAR of North Carolina	$	137,500.00
Benton Roofing	$	155,548.00
Conover Construction & Roofing	$	171,985.00
Pinam	$	274,946.00

Recommendation
After reviewing bids, Johnson Roofing Concepts, Inc is recommended as the lowest responsible, responsive bidder for the project.



Pursuant to the Board of Commissioners adopted Rules of Procedure, Rule 10. Pre-Agenda Meetings, "…at the discretion of the chair, any decision item set forth in the agenda packet may be acted upon during the pre-agenda meeting if the matter is considered to be time sensitive or waiting until the regular meeting may be detrimental to the county."

Budgetary Effect: None.

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

Motion: To award the bid to Johnson Roofing Concepts, Inc., not to exceed the amount of $89,871, for the partial replacement of the roofing at the Burke County Courthouse and authorize the County Manager to execute the contract on behalf of the Board, subject to review and/or revision by the County Attorney.

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

CLOSED SESSION

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

ADJOURN

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

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

Approved this 15th day of December 2025.

_____

_____, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:

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