

**BRUNSWICK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OFFICIAL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
October 20, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

The Brunswick County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on the above date at 6:00 p.m., Commissioners’ Chambers, David R. Sandifer Administration Building, County Government Center, Bolivia, North Carolina.

- PRESENT:

Commissioner Mike Forte, Chairman
Commissioner Randy Thompson
Commissioner J. Martin Cooke, Vice - Chairman
Commissioner Pat Sykes
Commissioner Frank Williams
- STAFF:

Steve Stone, County Manager
Bryan Batton, County Attorney
David Stanley, Deputy County Manager
Niel Brooks, Deputy County Manager
Aaron Smith, Finance Director
Daralyn Spivey, Clerk to the Board
LeAnn Weigand, Executive Assistant/Deputy Clerk
Jim Hartsell, IT
Lt. Barbour, Sheriff’s Office

Board Action, containing all items in this set of minutes, is filed within the Clerk to the Board’s office.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Forte called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Thompson gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ADJUSTMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Thompson requests under Administrative Report:
Brunswick County Fair and Expo be added as item VIII2
Item V8 Operation Services – Convenience Site Fees be moved as item VIII3 for further discussion.
With the above requested amendments to the agenda, Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve. Commissioner Sykes seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Shirley Sullivan spoke to her concerns regarding development, lack of necessary healthcare providers, industrial building, and low wages in Brunswick County.

Judy Andricak spoke to her concerns regarding the burning of unattended debris piles in clear cut areas.

Arthur Stevens spoke to his concerns regarding water availability for all citizens of Brunswick County.

Herman Berry, no response.

Larry & Vickie Smith, no response.

Melissa Bates: Mr. Stevens spoke for her.

Tammy Stanely: Mr. Stevens spoke for her.

Ada Rosebauer: Mr. Stevens spoke for her.

Haley McFarland spoke to her concerns regarding overdevelopment of Brunswick County and the lack of infrastructure leading to a direct public health and safety issue.

V. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Thompson made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

1. **Administration - Budget Calendar FY 2027**
The Board approved the FY 2027 Budget Calendar.
2. **Clerk to the Board - JCPC Roster Approval**
The Board approved the current roster for the JCPC.
3. **County Attorney – Amendment to the Contract, Purchasing, and Property Disposal Policy to Reflect New Increased Thresholds Under Federal Uniform Guidance.**
The Board approved an amendment to the Contract, Purchasing, and Property Disposal Policy to reflect the new increased thresholds under Federal Uniform Guidance and to delegate authority to the County Attorney's office for future amendments to the Contract, Purchasing, and Property Disposal Policy to address statutory changes only.
4. **County Attorney – Fords Reach, Phase 1, Deed of Dedication**
The Board accepted the Deed of Dedication for water and sewer infrastructure for Fords Reach, Phase 1.
5. **County Attorney - Southport Meadows, Phase 1 Deed of Dedication.**
The Board accepted the Deed of Dedication for water and sewer infrastructure in Southport Meadows, Phase 1.
6. **Emergency Management – Everbridge, Inc.- Mass Notification System — Master Services Agreement**
The Board approved the Master Services Agreement with Everbridge, Inc. for the provision of mass notification services.
7. **Finance – Fiscal Items**
The Board approved Budget Amendments, Capital Project Ordinances, and Fiscal Items of a routine nature as indicated below:
 - Insurance Proceeds Water Fund Budget Amendment
Appropriating \$4,982 of insurance proceeds for payment of hail damage to rental vehicle.
 - Financial Reports for September 2025 (unaudited)
Summary Information for General and Enterprise Funds, ARPA, Opioid project statuses, key revenue indicators, and Cash and Investment details are included. All year-to-date fiscal reports are provided at: <https://brunswickcountync.gov/finance/reports>
8. **Operation Services – Convenience Site Fees**
Moved per the amended agenda to Administrative Report VIII2.

9. Tax – October 2025 Tax Releases

The Board approved the tax releases for October 2025.

10. Veterans Services - N.C. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Grant

The Board approved a second-round grant application to be submitted to the NC Department of Military and Veteran Affairs.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

1. Administration – Medicaid and Federal Government Shutdown HHS Impacts

The Board received a presentation from Cathy Lytch regarding the impacts of the Federal Government Shutdown and Medicaid cuts on Health and Humans Services. No action was taken.

2. Administration - Presentation and Resolutions for General Obligation School Bond Referendum

Mr. Cole, Brunswick County Schools Superintendent, provided a presentation from Brunswick County Schools on projects, timing, and the amount of funding needed in association with a General Obligation Bond.

Chairman Forte made the motion to proceed with the issuance of the \$349.6 million in general obligation (GO) bonds proposed for construction, improving and renovating school facilities and to place the bond referendum on the general election ballot in November of 2026. The vote for approval passed (4 to 1). The poll is as follows:

- Commissioner Thompson: Aye
- Commissioner Forte: Aye
- Commissioner Cooke: Aye
- Commissioner Sykes: Nay
- Commissioner Williams: Aye

Clerks Note: The Board of Commissioners did not consider adopting resolutions to issue the Bonds, directing the publication of notice of intention to apply to the Local Government Commission (LGC), or authorizing the Finance Director to apply and submit to the Local Government Commission (LGC) due to the result of Commissioner Forte’s motion. The Commissioners requested the following statement: Commissioner Sykes is in favor of the Bond but would like to see it on the March Primary Ballot in an effort to begin the process sooner, relying on the Board of Education’s recommendation to make the necessary decisions that are needed for the school system.

3. Clerk to the Board – Operation Green Light Proclamation

Commissioner Williams read and made the motion to approve the proclamation recognizing November 4-11, 2025, as Operation Green Light honoring the service and sacrifice of Veterans returning to civilian life. The Proclamation reads as follows:

OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR VETERANS 2025 PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the residents of Brunswick County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served our country and this community in the Armed Forces and appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of those who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County seeks to honor individuals who have made countless sacrifices for freedom by placing themselves in harm’s way for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and by functioning as County Veterans Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and

WHEREAS, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, Brunswick County hereby declares November 4-11, 2025, as a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of those transitioning from active service and encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of business or residence from November 4-11, 2025.

This, the 20th day of October 2025.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Attest:
Daralyn Spivey, NCCCC, CMC
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

4. Health Services – Substance Use, Addiction, and Mental Health Commission Quarterly Presentation

The Board received a presentation from the Substance Use, Addiction, and Mental Health Commission on substance use and addiction treatment. No action was taken.

5. Planning – UDO Modernization Project – Follow Up

Marc Pages and Michael Harvey presented follow-up information as requested regarding the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Modernization Project. The presentation by Micheal Harvey with NFOCUS Planning focused on approval authorities and processes for Text Amendments, Rezoning, Conditional Rezoning, Planned Developments, Subdivisions, and Site Plans to be incorporated into the new UDO. The Commissioners reviewed several options for each approval authority/processes and selected the following, which are generally consistent with Mr. Harvey’s recommendations:

- **Text Amendments** – No change to the current process. The Planning Board reviews and provides a recommendation after a public comment session. The Commissioners then hold a fully advertised public hearing and make the final decision.
- **Conventional Rezoning** – No change to the current process. These are typically non-controversial items. The Planning Board holds a fully advertised public hearing and makes a decision. Anyone with standing may appeal to the Commissioners, who will hold a new (de novo) public hearing before making a final decision.

- **Conditional Rezoning** – No change to the current process. These projects typically include site plans and lists of land uses and conditions. The Planning Board holds a fully advertised public hearing and makes a decision. Anyone with standing may appeal to the Commissioners, who will hold a new (de novo) public hearing before making a final decision.
- **Planned Developments (PDs)** – PDs will now follow a Conditional Rezoning process instead of Site Plan approval process that shifts PD review from a technical (meets ordinance or not) to a legislative process, giving boards more flexibility and expanding review criteria. The Planning Board holds a fully advertised public hearing and makes a decision. Anyone with standing may appeal to the Commissioners, who will hold a new (de novo) public hearing before making a final decision. This gives more opportunity for public input and allows appeals to the Commissioners. Neighborhood Meetings will now be required for Planned Developments (previously only encouraged, although many do hold them).
- **Subdivisions** – Process change. New limit of 100 lots (currently no limits). Projects with more than 100 lots will now be required to go through the PD process. Planning Staff will continue to review and approve subdivisions that meet ordinance requirements (it's not a discretionary review – it's a technical review whether it meets ordinance or not). A new Neighborhood Meeting requirement will be required to allow community discussion and notification. Action on Subdivision proposals is not discretionary – it's technical (meets Ordinance or not).
- **Site Plans** – Minor change to the current process. Currently, Planning Staff approves all projects with less than 75,000 sq. ft. heated space. Very few projects are submitted over 75,000 sq feet (approximately one every few years). Larger projects typically fall under PD review. Action on Site Plan proposals is not discretionary – it's technical (meets Ordinance or not).

Commissioner Sykes made the motion to approve the above recommendations as listed to be incorporated into the new UDO. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5-0).

Clerks Note: The Board will meet again with the consultant to review the final draft of the proposed changes before considering official adoption at a future public meeting.

- 6. **Social Services – Smart Start of Brunswick County**
The Board received a presentation from Krista Campana, Executive Director for Smart Start of Brunswick County, regarding the state of childcare today. No Action was taken.

VII. **PUBLIC HEARING**

- 1. **Utilities – Sewer Use Ordinance (SUO) Proposed Text Amendments – Connection Requirements – October 2025**
Brent Lockamy reviewed the requested amendments to the Sewer Use Ordinance to include the following:

Remove and Replace Article II, Section 3.1 with:

Connection shall be required, as described below, and shall apply to all structures within two hundred (200) feet of the road right-of-way, as defined in the Utility Policy (AP-98001) in Section 3.C, containing a water line or sewer collection line owned and/or operated by the County, and shall be provided for each and every habitable structure subject to North Carolina Building Code meeting the criteria described below, individually and separately (one connection for each single-family residential dwelling), unless applicable exceptions apply as described by this Ordinance.

- a. Structures on properties which are served by a gravity sewer collection system, that exceed 200 linear feet from the road right-of-way, may apply for connection to the gravity sewer collection system and may also elect to install an individual ejector pump, among other options, if permitted by the plumbing code and state law.
- b. Structures on properties between 200 linear feet and 300 linear feet (measured from the proposed location of the grinder pump station) from a low-pressure sewer collection system, may apply for connection to the low-pressure system but are not required to do so.
- c. The POTW Director may approve connections to low pressure collections system that exceed 300 linear feet.

Amend Article II, Section 4.1 to add subsection (i) as follows:

- i. New development and any subdivision of land seeking to connect to an existing low-pressure system will be required to obtain a sewer extension permit that has been permitted as part of the NC Department of Environmental Quality's Alternative Sewer Extension Permitting process and extend the low-pressure mains to the subject structure (s) and parcel(s) with the exception of:
 - 1. One single family structure, duplex structure, or a small commercial structure with less than 210 gpd wastewater flow (or 70 gpd per bedroom for residential structures with more than three bedrooms), and any accessory structures as defined in G.S. 162A-211 on a single lot of record as of November 1, 2025, with frontage on the existing low-pressure system. Parcels subdivided after this date are ineligible for exemption. In this case a single low-pressure service to the existing low-pressure main shall be used for connection. The existing low-pressure system must have been designed and permitted for the wastewater flows from the structure or must have sufficient additional capacity for the new connection.
 - 2. Subdivision activity resulting from Court action. Only those resulting parcels having frontage on the existing low-pressure system may connect. The parcel Owner is responsible for service installation unless otherwise approved by the Utilities Director.
 - 3. Subdivision activity for the purpose of transferring to a family member provided that no more than ten lots are created and meeting the requirements of the Unified Development Ordinance. Only those resulting parcels having frontage on the existing low-pressure system may connect. The parcel Owner is responsible for service installation unless otherwise approved by the Utilities Director.

Chairman Forte opened the Public Hearing at 7:37 p.m. Hearing no comments from the public, the public hearing was closed at 7:37 p.m.

Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the amendments to the Sewer Use Ordinance as stated above. Vice - Chairman Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

1. Utilities – State Utility Contractors – Contract Price Amendment No. 1 – GMP Southeast Area Improvements Water Infrastructure Project

Commissioner Sykes made the motion to authorize the Chairman and the Clerk to the Board to execute Contract Price Amendment No. 1 with State Utility Contractors,

establishing the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) in the amount of \$2,153,500.00 for the Southeast Area Improvements – St. James Water Infrastructure Project, which is aimed at approving water flow and pressure in the area in and around the Town of St. James. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

2. Governing Body – Amended Agenda – The Brunswick County Fair and Expo

This event was an enormous success for the County as a whole and would like to recognize Kyle Bridgers, Brandon Hardy, Randy Hardy, Allison and Bryan Newcomb and Christie Hardy who organized and worked tirelessly to organize this event.

Commissioner Thompson would like to see the County-owned property on Highway 211 used in the future, working with those listed above in partnership, whether on the existing Ash - Little River Road property or the County-owned Highway 211 property, to move the Fair and Expo to a more centralized location of the County. In the coming weeks, the County should honor those who organized the event with a proclamation.

Commissioner Williams would like to see funding from the Tourism Development Authority going forward and a County partnership with the Fair organizers and agreed those listed above deserve all the recognition. The Highway 211 property needs to have a long-term visionary plan, and the County should work with State Legislators for possible State funding.

Commissioner Sykes would like to see the breakdown of the fees associated with the Sheriff's Office, the use of County equipment /personnel, and what the third-party contractor charges for such an event. Mr. Batton reminded the Board that at all times, the Deputies are acting under the authority of the Sheriff and will provide a breakdown of the charges and fees associated.

Vice - Chairman Cooke commented that the property on Highway 211 should be looked at with possible law enforcement and other assets for year-round uses as well as potential future collaboration of the Hardy family. With the existing three (3) year contract both with the property owners and the vendors, we could be ready for the Fair to move should that decision be made.

Chairman Forte thanked the Hardy family and Mr. Bridgers for the work that was done to bring the Fair to fruition. Looking forward to meeting with the organizers to assist in the making of the Fair bigger and better.

3. Operation Services – Convenience Site Fees

The Board received an update regarding the increase in fees requested as part of 2.4% per March 2025 CPI increases in contract terms. Commissioner Thompson made the motion accept the increase in fees. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

IX. CLOSED SESSION

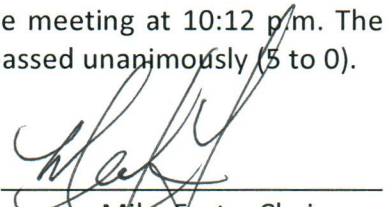
Mr. Batton requested the Board enter Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) and (3), to approve Closed Session Minutes from July 21, 2025, and August 4, 2025, and to consult with its attorney to preserve the attorney-client privilege.

Chairman Forte made the motion to enter Closed Session at 9:57 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sykes and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

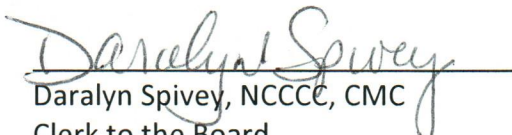
Chairman Forte called the Regular Session to order at 10:12 p.m.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Williams made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thompson and passed unanimously (5 to 0).


Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Attest:


Daralyn Spivey, NCCCC, CMC
Clerk to the Board

