

BRUNSWICK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OFFICIAL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
May 4, 2026
3:00 P.M.

The Brunswick County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on the above date at 3:00 p.m., Commissioners’ Chambers, David R. Sandifer Administration Building, County Government Center, Bolivia, North Carolina.

- PRESENT:

Commissioner Mike Forte, Chairman
Commissioner J. Martin Cooke, Vice-Chairman
Commissioner Randy Thompson
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
Currie Elkins, 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 3:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

III. ADJUSTMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Forte asked for adjustments to the agenda.

Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice - Chairman Cooke and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chief Keith McGee spoke to his concerns regarding the current fire fee funding model and asking for support in the resolution for increasing the cap in fire fees that is on the agenda for approval later.

Chief Charles Drew spoke to his concerns regarding the challenges for the fire service within the County. He is seeking support for the fire fee resolution increasing the cap that has not been increased since 2017. He also recommended an eight-person committee to work toward a successful funding mechanism.

Judy Andracak spoke to her concerns of evacuation route along the overdeveloped Four Mile Rd., Georgetown Rd. and State Highway 179.

Mia Dwertman with the Lower Cape Fear LifeCare spoke of the services the Lower Cape Fear LifeCare offers.

V. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Vice – Chairman Cooke moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

1. **Clerk to the Board – Meeting Minutes April 20, 2026, Regular Meeting**
The Board approved the Meeting Minutes for the April 20, 2026, Regular Meeting.
2. **Clerk to the Board – Proclamation – Naming May 2026 as Bike Month**
The Board approved the proclamation naming May 2026 as Bike Month. The Proclamation reads as follows:

PROCLAMATION NAMING MAY 2026 AS BIKE MONTH

WHEREAS, the month of May is observed as National Bike Month as promoted by the League of American Bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County is committed to the promotion of safe and convenient bicycling for both transportation and recreation; and

WHEREAS, 13 roadway accidents including bicyclists occurred in 2024 in Brunswick County which underscores the importance of ensuring driver awareness, bicyclist safety education, and safe facilities for bicycling to prevent crashes; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County is a member of the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and has promoted bicycle safety, awareness, and education through the regional Be A Looker campaign which encourages children and adults to operate their bicycles in a safe manner and educates drivers on how to share the road with bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County through the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Go Coast program, is committed to alleviating traffic congestion by supporting choices in transportation infrastructure and ensuring a clean and healthy environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, Brunswick County proclaims May as Bike Month and will continue to promote safe bicycling opportunities for citizens of Brunswick County.

This the 4th day of May, 2026.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

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

3. **County Attorney – 211 Luxury Storage and Village Point Landing Phase 1 Deed of Dedication**
The Board approved the 211 Luxury Storage and Village Point Landing Phase 1 Deed of Dedication.
4. **County Attorney – McLamb Farms Phase 1A Deed of Dedication**
The Board approved the McLamb Farms Phase 1A Deed of Dedication

5. **County Attorney – Ocean Isle Beach Phase A1-2 Deed of Dedication**
The Board approved the Ocean Isle Beach Phase A1-2 Deed of Dedication.
6. **County Attorney – River Tide Farms Ph 4 Deed of Dedication**
The Board approved the River Tide Farms Ph. 4 Deed of Dedication.
7. **County Attorney – Saunders Village Ph 1 Deed of Dedication**
The Board approved the Saunders Village Ph. 1 Deed of Dedication.
8. **Emergency Management – Approve New Sunset Harbor Zion Hill Fire District**
The Board approved the new Sunset Harbor Zion Hill Fire District.
9. **Emergency Management – Purchase Mobile Air Trailer**
The Board approved the purchase of a mobile air trailer.
10. **EMS – Lease of Space at Sunset Harbor and Zion Hill Volunteer Fire Department**
The Board approved the lease of space at the Sunset Harbor Zion Hill Volunteer Fire Department.
11. **EMS – Lease of Space at Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department**
The Board approved the lease of space at Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department.
12. **EMS – OEMS MIH/CP Funding Opportunity**
The Board approved EMS to apply for grant funding through the North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) and Community Paramedicine (CP) funding opportunity.
13. **Finance – Brunswick County Schools Agency Agreement**
The Board approved and authorized the Chairman to execute an updated Agency Agreement between the Brunswick County Board of Education and Brunswick County.
14. **Finance - Fiscal Items**
The Board approved Budget Amendments, Capital Project Ordinances and Fiscal Items of a routine nature on the consent agenda to include the following:

-**Register of Deeds Excise Tax Budget Amendment**
Appropriate \$1,700,000 of additional Register of Deeds Excise Tax revenue and associated anticipated expenditures.
15. **Tax – May 2026 Releases**
The Board approved the May 2026 releases.
16. **Utilities – GSE – Longwood Rd. Sewer Project Electrical Connections (DEQ – ARPA Grant SRP-W-ARP-0297 CN2) Construction Agreement**
The Board approved the appropriations; the attached Resolution of Tentative Award; authorizing staff to issue a Notice of Award; authorizing the County Manager to sign Project Bid Information; authorizing the Chairperson and Clerk to the Board to execute a contract with GSE Electrical Services, Inc. in the amount of \$266,350.00 for the electrical connections for the Longwood Road Sewer Project contingent upon County Attorney review and approval of the contract, performance and payment bonds, NC E-Verify documentation, affidavits of compliance, and insurance certificates; contingent upon receiving Authorization to Award from NCDEQ – Division of Water Infrastructure.
17. **Utilities – Ratify Emergency Biosolids Stabilization and Removal Contract – EMA Resources, Inc. for West Brunswick Regional WWTP**

The Board ratified the emergency contract with EMA Resources, Inc. in the amount of \$162,200.

VI. PRESENTATION

1. Code Administration – Building Safety Month Proclamation

Commissioner Thompson read and made the motion to approve the proclamation recognizing May as Building Safety Month. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0). The Proclamation reads as follows:

PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING MAY AS BUILDING SAFETY MONTH IN BRUNSWICK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, Brunswick County is committed to recognizing that our growth and strength depends on the safety and essential role our homes, buildings and infrastructure play, both in everyday life and when disasters strike, and;

WHEREAS, our confidence in the resilience of these buildings that make up our community is achieved through the devotion of vigilant guardians—building safety and fire prevention officials, architects, engineers, builders, tradespeople, design professionals, laborers, plumbers and others in the construction industry—who work year-round to ensure the safe construction of buildings, and;

WHEREAS, these guardians are dedicated members of the North Carolina Building Inspectors Association and certified by the Office of State Fire Marshal, who are experts in the built environment to create and implement the highest quality codes and standards to protect us in the buildings where we live, learn, work and play, and;

WHEREAS, these modern building codes and standards include safeguards to protect the public from hazards such as hurricanes, snowstorms, tornadoes, wildland fires, floods and earthquakes, and;

WHEREAS, Building Safety Month is recognized by the International Code Council to remind the public about the critical role of our communities' largely unknown protectors of public safety—our code officials—who assure us of safe, sustainable and affordable buildings that are essential to our prosperity, and;

WHEREAS, each year, in observance of Building Safety Month, people all over the world are asked to consider the commitment to improve building safety, resilience and economic investment at home and in the community, and to acknowledge the essential service provided to all of us by local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal building safety and fire prevention departments, in protecting lives and property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, by the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim May 2026 as Building Safety Month and call up all citizens and businesses to acknowledge and thank the building officials, fire officials and permit technicians for the selfless work they perform every day in keeping Brunswick County a safe place to live and grow.

This the 4th day of May, 2026.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Attest:
Daralyn Spivey, NCCCC, CMC

Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

2. Utilities – Proclamation – Drinking Water Week 2026

Chairman Forte read and made the motion to approve the proclamation recognizing Drinking Water Week 2026. Commissioner Sykes seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0). The Proclamation reads as follows:

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING DRINKING WATER WEEK

WHEREAS, the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners wishes to provide and promote the importance of safe drinking water in Brunswick County; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County Public Utilities (BCPU) serves not only the unincorporated areas of the County; but also, within the municipalities of Boiling Spring Lakes, Bolivia, Calabash, Carolina Shores, Caswell Beach, parts of Leland, Navassa, Northwest, parts of Oak Island, St. James, Sandy Creek, Southport, Shallotte, Sunset Beach, and Varnamtown; and

WHEREAS, for nearly four decades BCPU has faithfully provided water to other utilities (wholesale customers) including Ocean Isle Beach, Holden Beach, Oak Island, and Bald Head Island; and

WHEREAS, the County recognizes water as a vital natural resource essential to public health; and

WHEREAS, BCPU operates a high-quality drinking water system, recognized with the NC American Water Works Association Water Large Distribution System of the Year Award, most recently in 2024; and

WHEREAS, the County’s water system supports fire protection, economic growth, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the County continues investing in water reliability and treatment improvements, including expansion of the Northwest Water Treatment Plant and advanced treatment technologies; and

WHEREAS, the County encourages residents, businesses, and stakeholders to protect water sources, conserve water, and support clean water initiatives.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Chairman and the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners that the first full week of May is proclaimed as Drinking Water Week.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be recorded in the permanent minutes of this Board.

Adopted this 4th day of May, 2026.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

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

3. Annual Trillium Presentation

Cecelia Peers with Trillium Health Resources gave her annual report to the Board.
No action was taken.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

1. **Administration – Ratify Resolution to General Assembly Requesting Fire Fee Cap Increase**

Vice - Chairman Cooke made the motion to approve the ratification of the resolution requesting fire fee cap Increase. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. The vote for approval passed (4 to 1) in favor of ratifying the resolution. The poll is as follows:

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

The Resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION REQUESTING LOCAL LEGISLATION TO AMEND BRUNSWICK COUNTY’S FIRE PROTECTION FEES

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has previously granted to Brunswick County, by local act, the authority to assess fire protection fees, as reflected in S.L. 1999-323, as amended by S.L. 2001-74, S.L. 2007-335, and S.L. 2017-60; and

WHEREAS, the fee schedules in those acts have become further outdated and are insufficient to keep up with inflation as well as the growing population and needs of Brunswick County; and

WHEREAS, an additional amendment to the existing legislation will enhance the ability of Brunswick County to meet the fire protection needs of its citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners requests that its legislative delegation modify the schedule of fire fees by increasing the maximum allowed fees by up to fifty percent through a staggered increase of twenty-five percent this upcoming fiscal year (FY27) and the remainder in the next year (FY28).

This the 4th day of May, 2026.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

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

2. **Engineering – Request for Two (2) Full-Time Engineering Inspector Positions**

Commissioner Thompson made the motion to approve the two (2) additional full-time employees for Engineering inspectors due to increased workload in the department. Vice – Chairman Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5-0).

3. **Utilities – T.A. Loving Company Southport Evaluation and Rehabilitation of Wastewater Systems (DEQ-ARPA Grant and Loan) – Construction Agreement**

Commissioner Sykes made the motion to approve appropriations; authorize staff to issue a Notice of Award; authorize the Chairperson and Clerk to the Board to execute a Resolution of Tentative Award for T.A. Loving Company; and authorize

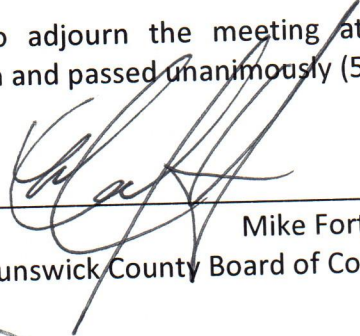
the Chairperson and Clerk to the Board to execute a contract with T.A. Loving Company in the amount of \$5,555,295 for the construction of the Southport Evaluation and Rehabilitation of Wastewater System (SRP-W-ARP-0299 and CS-370714-04), contingent upon County Attorney review and approval of the contract, performance and payment bonds, NC E-Verify documentation, affidavits of compliance, and insurance certificates; contingent upon receiving Authorization to Award from NCDEQ – Division of Water Infrastructure. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS/INFORMAL DISCUSSION

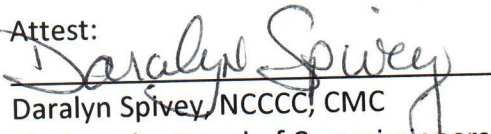
Vice – Chairman Cooke reminded staff and the gallery of the ReadyBrunswick event happening tomorrow (May 5, 2026) at the walking trail near Building C from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and the week of May 3-9, 2026, is public service recognition week for local government employees.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Sykes made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:59 p.m. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).


Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Attest:


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

