BRUNSWICK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OFFICIAL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
August 3, 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 Frank Williams Commissioner Pat Sykes
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 Stephen Rector, 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

Chairman Forte gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ADJUSTMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Forte asked for any adjustments to the agenda. Commissioner Thompson requested that, under Administrative Report Item V.4, an Open Burn Discussion be added. Commissioner Sykes seconded the motion to add the requested item to the agenda.

Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sykes and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Art Dornfeld, as the Mayor of Shallotte, thanked all those involved in the response to the July 10th Quarry Fire.

Tonia Young commented on her concerns with development around Sanders Forest and the damages that are being created because of the use of that road with heavy equipment along with concerns with the Christian Recovery Center Inc. (CRCI) location at the end of her road and the issues present with clientele.

Keith McGee commended county staff for a meeting in June in the Calabash area and wished to express his support in a study forth coming to the Board regarding a contract for a county-wide master plan study for Utilities.

V. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Thompson 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 July 6, 2026, Regular Meeting**
   The Board approved the Meeting Minutes for the July 6, 2026, Regular Meeting.

2. **County Attorney – Paws Place Deed of Dedication**
   The Board approved the Deed of Dedication for water infrastructure for Paws Place.

3. **County Attorney – Resolution Authorizing Law Enforcement Proceeds of Brunswick ABC Store in Northwest to be Directed to the City of Northwest**
   The Board approved the resolution authorizing law enforcement proceeds of the Brunswick ABC Store in Northwest to be directed to the City of Northwest. The Resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING LAW ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDS OF BRUNSWICK ABC STORE IN NORTHWEST TO BE DIRECTED TO THE CITY OF NORTHWEST

WHEREAS, the Brunswick County Board of Alcoholic Beverage Control was organized under the provisions of N.C. General Statute 18B-600 and established following a countywide election held on November 7, 1989; and

WHEREAS, the Brunswick County Board of Alcoholic Beverage Control is a component unit of Brunswick County; and

WHEREAS, N.C. General Statute 18B-805 requires the ABC Board to make certain monthly and quarterly distributions, including quarterly payments of the remaining gross receipts as well as payments to local law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, historically, the ABC Board has operated a store near the Columbus County line on Hwy 74/76 and within the County's unincorporated area; and

WHEREAS, the ABC Board has moved the ABC store to the intersection of Hwy 87 and Hwy 74/76 within the corporate limits of the City of Northwest; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northwest has requested the monies required to be provided to law enforcement for this store to be paid to the City of Northwest for the operation of its police department; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Brunswick County Alcoholic Beverage Control Board to remit the law enforcement proceeds of the store within the City of Northwest to the City of Northwest.

This, the 3rd day of August 2026.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

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

4. **County Attorney – Timber Farms Phases 1A and 2A Deed of Dedication**
The Board approved the Deed of Dedication for water and sewer infrastructure for Timber Farms Phases 1A and 2A.

5. **Emergency Management – IPAWS COG Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)**
The Board approved a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Brunswick County and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Program Management Office for the secure interoperability between Brunswick County Interoperable System(s) and the IPAWS-Open Platform for Emergency Networks (IPAWS-OPEN).

6. **EMS – Bald Head Island Ambulance Franchise Agreement FY 27**
The Board approved the Ambulance Franchise Agreement with the Village of Bald Head Island.

7. **EMS – Southport Fire Department Ambulance Franchise Agreement**
The Board approved the annual ambulance franchise agreement with Southport Fire Department.

8. **EMS – Stryker Medical Agreement FY26-27**
The Board approved Emergency Medical Services contract with Stryker Medical Equipment.

9. **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:

-Support for Counties' Implementation and Ongoing Support of Changes in Eligibility Redeterminations Requirements and Community Engagement Requirements
Session Law 2026-1/House Bill 696 provides a one time, off-cycle quarterly distribution of $110,245 in funding ($440,978.77 in total) to support the implementation of Public Law 119-21/H.R.1. These funds were provided by the state to county Social Services departments to support the counties with the increased administrative costs. No additional appropriation is needed, as County funding was approved for the increase in costs in the FY 2027 budget. This item is included for awareness only.

-Funding for Counties' Implementation and Ongoing Support of Medicaid Expansion Requirements
For 2026-2027 State fiscal year, the base county administration subcomponent is being increased over the prior year's quarterly amount. Counties will draw down this funding when workers code Daysheets to program codes MAE and MIX. Counties began drawing this funding down with the June 1571 submitted in July. Brunswick County's allocation is 1.15% of total Caseload or approximately $357,505.21 for July 2026 to June 2027. These funds were provided by the state to county Social Services departments to assist with the continued support of Medicaid expansion eligibility changes. No additional appropriation is needed, as County funding was approved for the increase in costs in the FY 2027 budget. This item is included for awareness only.

-NC Community Care Network Rollover Budget Amendment
Appropriating of fund balance of $8,263 of funding from North Carolina Community Care Network received on June 10, 2026, to innovate our services for Medicaid clients. Due to the timing could not be utilized in FY26 and will be expended in FY27.

10. **NC Forestry Agreement**

The Board approved entering into an agreement with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for the protection, development, and improvement of forest land in Brunswick County, and delegated signing authority to the County Manager.

11. Health Services – CRCI Services Agreement Fiscal Year 2026-2027
The Board approved the Services Agreement with CRCI for Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

12. Information Technology – Video Imaging (VI) Servers
The Board approved the processing of a budget amendment rolling funds from the prior year's approved budget to the current budget for the procurement of (2) Lenovo Servers for Video Imaging. These (2) servers will replace (3) end-of-life, end-of-support servers.

13. Operation Services – BMAP Cooperative Services Agreement
The Board approved a Cooperative Service Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services Wildlife Services.

14. Operation Services – Oakes Grading, Inc – Tri-Beach Fuel Site Aboveground Storage Tank Replacement Agreement
The Board approved an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Northwest, Brunswick County, and the Brunswick County Sheriff for off-duty law enforcement services.

15. Sheriff's Office – Agreement with Coastal Horizons ARROW Program (NCOS)
The Board approved an agreement with Coastal Horizons to continue providing services as part of the ARROW Program in the Brunswick County Detention Center. This program utilizes North Carolina Opioid Settlement funds.

16. Sheriff's Office – Firing Range Building Project Rollover Request
The Board approved a rollover request of $72,695 in approved budgeted funds in FY26 earmarked for a building project at the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office Firing Range that's been delayed due to permitting and other preps.

17. Sheriff's Office – GHSP LEL Grant Resolution and AOC
The Board approved a Resolution and Agreement of Conditions as the next stage in the application process for the Governor's Highway Safety Program grant for the Region 3 Law Enforcement Liaison position. This is the fifth year of this grant, and federal funds cover 100% of the total award, valued at $30,000. The Resolution reads as follows:

NORTH CAROLINA GOVERNORS HIGHWAY SAFTEY PROGRAM
LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office has completed an application contract for traffic safety funding, and that Brunswick County Board of Commissioners has thoroughly considered the problem identified and has reviewed the project as described in the contract:

THEREFORE, NOW BE IT RESOLVED by the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners in open meeting assembled in the city of Bolivia, North Carolina this 3rd day of August 2026 as follows:

1. That the project referenced above is in the best interest of the Governing Body and the general public; and

2. That Sheriff Brian Chism is authorized to file, on behalf of the Governing Body, an application contract in the form of prescribed by the Governor's Highway Safety Program for federal funding in the amount of $30,000 to be made to the Governing Body to assisting defraying the cost of the project describe in the contract application; and
3. That the Governing Body has formally appropriated the cash contribution of $0 as required by the project contract; and
4. That the Project Director designation in the application contract shall furnish or make arrangement for other appropriate persons to furnish such information, data, documents and reports as required by the contract, if approved, or as may be required by the Governors Highway Safety Program; and
5. That certified copies of this resolution be included as part of the contract referenced above; and
6. That is resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Done and ordered in open meeting by:
Mike Forte, Chairman

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

18. Sheriff's Office – GHSP Traffic Grant Resolution and AOC

The Board approved a Resolution and Agreement of Conditions as the next stage in the application process for the Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) grant. This is the first year of the grant for an additional two positions in the traffic unit, and federal funds cover 85% of salary, equipment, and travel expenses this year. The Resolution reads as follows:

NORTH CAROLINA GOVERNORS HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM
LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office has completed an application contract for traffic safety funding, and that Brunswick County Board of Commissioners has thoroughly considered the problem identified and has reviewed the project as described in the contract:

THEREFORE, NOW BE IT RESOLVED by the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners in open meeting assembled in the city of Bolivia, North Carolina this 3rd day of August 2026 as follows:

1. That the project referenced above is in the best interest of the Governing Body and the general public; and
2. That Sheriff Brian Chism is authorized to file, on behalf of the Governing Body, an application contract in the form of prescribed by the Governor's Highway Safety Program for federal funding in the amount of $289,316 to be made to the Governing Body to assisting defraying the cost of the project describe in the contract application; and
3. That the Governing Body has formally appropriated the cash contribution of $51,056 as required by the project contract; and
4. That the Project Director designation in the application contract shall furnish or make arrangement for other appropriate persons to furnish such information, data, documents and reports as required by the contract, if approved, or as may be required by the Governors Highway Safety Program; and

5. That certified copies of this resolution be included as part of the contract referenced above; and
6. That is resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Done and ordered in open meeting by:
Mike Forte, Chairman

Attest:
Daralyn Spiveyn NCCCC,MCM
Clerk to the Board

19. Sheriff's Office – Interlocal Agreement BCSO with the Town of Carolina Shores
The Board approved an Interlocal Agreement between the Town of Carolina Shores, Brunswick County, and the Brunswick County Sheriff for off-duty law enforcement services.

20. Sheriff's office – PSGP Grant Application Approval
The Board ratified the County Manager's approval of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office application for the Department of Homeland Security Port Security Grant Program. Grant funds will be used to purchase night vision devices and maritime flotation equipment to enhance the capabilities of the Sheriff's Office Special Operations Team during maritime and critical incident response operations. The PSGP requires a 25% match, and the Sheriff plans to utilize drug seizure funds and/or donations to meet said match.

21. Sheriff's Office – Southport Christian School SRO Agreement
The Board approved a Sheriff's Office School Resource Officer's Reimbursement Agreement with Southport Christian School.

22. Tax - August 2026 Tax Releases
The Board approved the August 2025 releases.

23. Utilities - Contract with Xylem Water Solutions USA, Inc.
The Board approved a contract with Xylem Water Solutions USA, Inc. in the amount of $451,472.00 for the purchase of replacement pumps for lift stations.

24. Utilities - Heritage Water Systems Contract for Replacement Grinder Pumps and Kits
The Board approved a contract with Heritage Water Systems for the purchase of replacement grinder pumps and components manufactured by Crane Pump Systems (Barnes Grinder Pumps).

25. Utilities - McKim and Creed – Amendment #2 NE Brunswick WWTP Phase III Expansion
The Board authorized the Chairman and Clerk to approve Amendment #2 with McKim & Creed Engineering, extending the contract time to project completion and decreasing the contract value to $4,126,115 for the NEWWTP Phase III Expansion.

26. Utilities - OpenWindow – Longwood Rd. Sewer Project – Septic Tank Abandonment (DEQ-ARPA Grant SRP-W-ARP-0297 CN4) – Construction Agreement
The Board approved appropriations; approved the attached Resolution of Tentative Award; authorized staff to issue a Notice of Award; authorized the County Manager to sign Project Bid Information; authorized the Chairperson and Clerk to the Board to execute a contract with OpenWindow Home Inspection, LLC in the amount of $300,000.00 for the septic tank abandonment services for the Longwood Road Sewer Project (SRP-W-ARP-0297-CN4), 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. The Resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION OF TENTATIVE AWARD

WHEREAS, Brunswick County, North Carolina has received bids, pursuant to a duly advertised notice therefor, for septic tank abandonment services associated with the Longwood Road Sewer Project (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, the Project is eligible for State Reserve Program grant funding from the American Rescue Plan Act through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality - Division of Water Infrastructure, as approved under the State Water Infrastructure Authority, and has been assigned DWI Project No. SRP-W-ARP-0297-CN4; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County Public Utilities received, reviewed, and tabulated bids for the aforementioned septic tank abandonment services; and

WHEREAS, OpenWindow Home Inspection, LLC was the lowest bidder for the Project in the bid amount of $300,000.00; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County Public Utilities recommends TENTATIVE AWARD to the lowest bidder, OpenWindow Home Inspection, LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that TENTATIVE AWARD is made to the lowest bidder, OpenWindow Home Inspection, LLC in the amount of $300,000.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such TENTATIVE AWARD is contingent upon approval of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality.

Adopted this the 3rd day of August 2026 at Brunswick County, North Carolina.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

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

27. Utilities - Rufus Young – Longwood Rd. Sewer Project – Plumbing Connections (DEQ-ARPA Grant SRP-W-ARP-0297 CN3) – Construction Agreement

The Board approved appropriations; approved the attached Resolution of Tentative Award; authorized staff to issue a Notice of Award; authorized the County Manager to sign Project Bid Information; authorized the Chairperson and Clerk to the Board to execute a contract with Rufus Young Construction, Inc. in the amount of $372,000.00 for the plumbing connections for the Longwood Road Sewer Project (SRP-W-ARP-0297-CN3), 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. The Resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION OF TENTATIVE AWARD

WHEREAS, Brunswick County, North Carolina has received bids, pursuant to a duly advertised notice therefor, for plumbing connection services associated with the Longwood Road Sewer Project (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, the Project is eligible for State Reserve Program grant funding from the American Rescue Plan Act through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality - Division of Water Infrastructure, as approved under the State Water Infrastructure Authority, and has been assigned DWI Project No. SRP-W-ARP-0297-CN3; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County Public Utilities received, reviewed, and tabulated bids for the plumbing connection services; and

WHEREAS, Rufus Young Construction Inc., was the lowest bidder for the Project in the bid amount of $372,000.00; and

WHEREAS, Brunswick County Public Utilities recommends TENTATIVE AWARD to the lowest bidder, Rufus Young Construction Inc.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that TENTATIVE AWARD is made to the lowest bidder, Rufus Young Construction Inc., in the amount of $372,000.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such TENTATIVE AWARD is contingent upon approval of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality.

Adopted this the 3rd day of August, 2026 at Brunswick County, North Carolina.

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

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

VI. PUBLIC HEARING

1. **Emergency Management - Public Hearing for Fire Fee Funding Based on the Adoption of the 2026-2027 Budget from the NC General Assembly**
Malcolm Smith, Fire Administrator, advised the Board regarding the changes in the Fire Fee Funding as a result of the FY 27 budget adopted by the NC General Assembly which will require the Board of Commissioners to amend the adopted Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Ordinance to incorporate the updated fire fee schedules. North Carolina law requires the Board to hold a public hearing before considering this budget amendment. Upon closing the Public Hearing, the Board will consider adoption of the budget amendment to implement the updated fire fees for the affected fire districts.

Commissioner Thompson made the motion to open the public hearing at 3:22 p.m. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5-0).

Art Dornfeld, Mayor of Shallotte, spoke to his support of the increase of the fire fees as proposed and adopted by the NC General Assembly.

Commissioner Williams made the motion to close the public hearing at 3:23 p.m. Vice – Chairman Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5-0).

Vice - Chairman Cooke made the motion to approve the fire fee funding as approved by the General Assembly. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. 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

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

1. **Utilities - Crane Pumps & Systems PFT Corp. Grinder Package Contract Approval**
Mr. Nichols requested the Board approve a contract with Crane Pumps & Systems PFT Corp. for the annual purchase of Barnes Grinder Pump packages. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the contract with Commissioner Sykes seconding. The motion passed unanimously (5 to 0).

2. **Utilities - Greer Lime Company Contract Approval**
Mr. Nichols requested the Board approve a contract with Greer Lime Company in the amount of $2,936,006.09 for the purchase of lime needed for water treatment. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the contract with Greer Lime Company. Vice – Chairman Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

3. Utilities – **Preferred Sources Inc. (Myers Grinder Pumps) Grinder Package Contract Approval**
Mr. Nichols requested the Board approve a contract with Preferred Sources Inc. for the annual purchase of Myers Grinder Pump packages and tank extensions. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the contract. Vice – Chairman Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

4. **Governing Body – Open Burning Discussion (Resulting from the Amended Agenda)**
Commissioner Thomspon requests the Board authorize the County Attorney to return at the September 8th meeting with options for preparing an ordinance to address open burns countywide, to open the landfill for all residents free of use for vegetative debris disposal, with burning exemptions such as agriculture, ceremonial, cooking, warmth, training, environmental (controlled burns for underbrush type of burns) all of which would need to be permitted through a system. Commissioner Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5-0).
Mr. Stone reminded the Board there will be a cost to the County for disposal and will gather information to have ready for the same meeting.

VIII. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. **Clerk to the Board – Fire Funding Committee Appointment**
Commissioner Thompson: Suggested this selection be tabled, allowing for possible resizing or restructuring of the committee makeup. All avenues should be explored, and input needs to come from all aspects with an option to involve the public in an online response option.

   Commissioner Sykes: Staff, fire fee committee and Chiefs have met extensively over the last year, with no result. The size of the current committee as proposed is of concern. County staff who have the data, history and operational knowledge along with two (2) commissioners should be making the decisions as they are elected to do so. There are two (2) fire studies that have been done historically and would like to see those for reference. Maximum number of members should be no more than five (5) to be effective.

Commissioner Williams: Open to the reduction of the committee but must have an adequate number of participants. Interest in the outcome needs to be key within the established committee.

Commissioner Cooke: The existing applicants are diverse, well rounded, and educated and the size of the current proposed committee is of no objection. Citizens are a challenge as they are not engaged nor do they understand the fire community. There has not been adequate opportunity to fully vet the applicants.

Chairman Forte: Three to five (3-5) people are the prime numbers for a true committee. In favor of Commissioner Sykes suggestion. Engage citizens as a write in opportunity.

Mr. Batton: Reminded the Board of Mr. Stone's original recommendation for the makeup of the committee:

a) One representative from Fire Chief's Association
b) One Commissioner
c) One Mayor
d) Appointment from the County Managers office
e) Appropriate county staff participating as needed (finance, tax, legal etc.)

Commissioner Williams made the motion to table this and asked for options to be brought back. Current structure, staff's proposed structure, Commissioner Sykes proposal to proceed without a committee, staff suggestions and then form a committee based on these variables. Vice - Chairman Cooke seconded the motion to table and passed unanimously (5-0).

2. **Clerk to the Board – Voting Delegate and Alternate for the NCACC Annual Conference**
Commissioner Thomspon made the motion to appoint Vice -Chairman Cooke as the voting delegate and Commissioner Williams as the alternate to the NCACC Annual Conference. Commissioner Sykes seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5-0).

IX. OTHER BUSINESS/INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Williams would like staff to review the public comment policy for each Board meeting to lessen the confusion of speaking for a group for eight (8) minutes or speaking individually for three (3) minutes.

X. CLOSED SESSION

1. Mr. Baton requested the Board enter closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1)(3) and (5), to approve the Minutes from the July 6, 2026, Closed Session, to consult with its attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege, and to discuss the acquisition of property.

   Vice – Chairman Cooke made the motion to enter Closed Session pursuant to the above cited statutes at 3:44 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

   Chairman Forte called the Regular Session to order at 5:20 p.m.

   Mr. Batton advised there is nothing to report from Closed Session.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Sykes made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 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