

**MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the County Board Room, Burke Services Building, 110 N. Green Street in Morganton, N.C. 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 as usual. Those present were:

COMMISSIONERS:

Scott Mulwee, Chairman
Jeffrey C. Brittain, Vice Chairman
Randy Burns
Johnnie W. Carswell
Phil Smith

STAFF:

Brian Epley, County Manager
Margaret Pierce, Finance Director/Deputy County Manager
J.R. Simpson, II, County Attorney
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION

Commissioner Burns delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

J.R. Simpson, County Attorney, delivered the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**BOC - ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2024**

Information from the agenda packet: Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 153A-39, it is the duty of the Board of Commissioners to elect a chairman for the ensuing year.

Chairman Mulwee opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Carswell nominated Jeffrey C. Brittain for the position of Chairman. Commissioner Burns **MOVED** to close the floor for nominations, but no vote was taken. With there being no other nominations, Chairman Mulwee closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To elect Jeffrey C. Brittain as the Chairman of the Burke County Board of Commissioners for 2024 by acclamation.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner

AYES: Scott Mulwee, Jeffrey C. Brittain, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

Chairman Brittain chaired the meeting from this point forward.

BOC - ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR 2024

Information from the agenda packet: Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 153A-39, it is the duty of the Board of Commissioners to elect a Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Carswell nominated Scott Mulwee for the position of Vice Chairman. Commissioner Burns **MOVED** to close the floor for nominations, but no vote was taken. With there being no other nominations, Chairman Britain closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To elect Scott Mulwee as the Vice Chairman of the Burke County Board of Commissioners for 2024.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

Vice Chairman Mulwee expressed what an honor it had been to serve as the former Chairman and that he was looking forward to working with Chairman Brittain, who brings previous experience as a Board Chairman.

BOC - APPOINTMENT OF COUNTY ATTORNEY FOR 2024

Information from the agenda packet: Currently, James R. Simpson, II serves as the Board's attorney. This position is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and serves at the Board's pleasure.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Smith nominated J. R. Simpson for the position of County Attorney. Commissioner Carswell **MOVED** to close the floor on nominations, but no vote was taken. With there being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint James R. Simpson, II, as the County Attorney for the Burke County Board of Commissioners for 2024.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Phil Smith, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

County Attorney Simpson expressed gratitude to the Board for their ongoing trust and affirmed his commitment to maintaining the same level of excellence in his role.

BOC - APPOINTMENT OF TAX ATTORNEY FOR 2024

Information from the agenda packet: The Kania Law Firm (Asheville) currently serves as the County Tax Attorney. This position is appointed by the Board and serves at the pleasure of the Board. The Board may change this appointment as deemed necessary.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations. Vice Chairman Mulwee nominated the Kania Law Firm for the position of County Tax Attorney. Commissioner Carswell **MOVED** to close the floor on nominations, but no vote was taken. With there being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Kania Law Firm as the County Tax Attorney for the Burke County Board of Commissioners for 2024. The only compensation for the County Tax Attorney will be those authorized by General Statutes in relation to a foreclosure action. The County Tax Attorney will provide the Board with a quarterly report of accounts turned over to him/her and the disposition of said cases at the end of each quarter.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

BOC - APPOINTMENT OF THE CLERK TO THE BOARD FOR 2024

Information from the agenda packet: Currently, Kay Honeycutt Draughn serves as the Clerk to the Board. This position is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and serves at the Board's pleasure.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Burns nominated Kay Honeycutt Draughn for the position of Clerk to the Board. Commissioner Carswell **MOVED** to close the floor on nominations, but no vote was taken. With there being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor and called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Kay Honeycutt Draughn as the Clerk to the Board for the Burke County Board of Commissioners for 2024.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Randy Burns, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

Clerk Draughn expressed that it is an honor and privilege to serve in her capacity as Clerk to the Board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: To approve the meeting minutes of May 2, 2023 (pre-agenda), May 16, 2023 (regular), June 6, 2023 (pre-agenda), and June 20, 2023 (regular) as written.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

PRESENTATIONS

AS - PET OF THE MONTH

Kaitlin Settlemyre, Animal Services Director, presented a dog, Twix, and a cat, Ozzy, in need of their "forever" home. Additionally, she provided updates on departmental matters and shared information about upcoming events. Highlights of her presentation were as follows:

 Pets of the Month December 2023	 • Twix • 3 years old • Female
 Ozzy 2 Years Old Male Neutered	Large Animal Intake on 12/20/2023 • We will be taking in close to 90 animals this Wednesday. • 18 of the most critical animals were brought in last Thursday. • Emergency sheltering equipment is in place with a secondary location on standby if needed. • We are working to clear out our current animals through adoptions and fostering. • We are working with area rescues and out of state rescue organizations to expedite these animals through our system once they are received.
	

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Commissioner Carswell announced that his dog, Jasper, had been found and thanked the community for their outreach and support. Chairman Brittain issued a friendly reminder to adopt or foster a pet in addition to encouraging citizens to spay and neuter their pets.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.**BDI - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Alan Wood, President and CEO, Burke Development Inc., provided an economic development update. Burke County has advanced to tier 2 on the state system. This shift is attributed to notable improvements in income and population growth data. Burke County has successfully moved up 15 places in the rankings of counties in terms of income and population, positioning itself closer to the middle of the pack. Highlights of the BDI projects were as follows:

Project Fern (Chaddick Furniture)	• Approved for a Building Reuse Grant in the amount of \$200,000. • Local company expanding • At least 25 new jobs were created at or above the average county wage. • Morganton applicant • Burke County provided half of the local match which was 5% or \$5k each.
2023	• Two (2) projects announced new CAPEX totaling \$26.3 million and 125 new jobs paying at or above the county average wage. • Since 2020 there has been \$212.9 million CAPEX and 847 new jobs among 13 projects.
UNIX Packaging Burke Business Park	• Crews should be onsite within the next several weeks to finish pouring pads and continue the building construction with anticipated completion being Q1 of 2025. • Currently there are 206 employees working at UNIX. • Top 10 private employers • Top 10 tax base in the County • OneNC and Building Reuse grants closed out or completed
Opt-In (Opportunity Youth Internship)	• Employer outreach continues for the next cohort of summer interns. • A construction trade cohort will be added to support this specific need. • 22 graduated last year. • The goal is to have 40 graduates for the new year. • 70-hour trade school curriculum. • BDI is partnering up with several organizations to try and provide 10 people with scholarships geared towards construction trade programs.
Great Meadows Megasite	• A \$50,000 Golden LEAF Foundation grant was received for the project (geotechnical work for the 570-acre pad) and BDI is waiting to hear back from the North Carolina Railroad grant for additional due diligence. • There is great interest in the site and the projects are ones that the County would be proud to have.
Drexel Business Park	• Anticipate putting the grading work out for bid in February or March with work occurring in Q2 2024. • Minimal rock that will have to be blasted. • Endangered species: Tricolored bats show up on environmental reports routinely. However, bats generally like culverts and dark

	places but neither of these exist on this site.
Speculative Building	- Crystal Morphis with Creative Designs presented a report to the BDI Board of Directors regarding the need for a spec building. The conclusion is there is a need and Burke County would benefit from a 75,000 - 100,000 square-foot building. The final report is due in January 2024. - BDI has had 17 project inquiries looking for a building that they have not been able to respond to in the last 120 days.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Vice Chairman Mulwee noted the Great Meadows Megasite has generated public interest and he suggested holding public forums in Q1 of 2024 to address citizens' questions about the site plans, water quality, site development, buffering, and traffic count. Mr. Wood emphasized that there will be intentionality for each step of the process. BDI has already met with Foothills Conservancy of NC and Lake James Environmental Association. Phase I Environmental results show the site is already environmentally clean. He noted the presence of wetlands on the site and a corresponding study. NCDOT has already been consulted for traffic counts so that the design can proceed with that data considered. Mr. Wood noted that portions of the site will remain untouched as it is not developable. With 410 acres already zoned industrial, a 66-acre track zoned industrial, and 110 acres zoned for general business, Mr. Wood stated it is reasonable to consider the property for industrial use given its road and rail access. Notably, 94 acres are not proposed for rezoning due to its location and wetlands. In response to Vice Chairman Mulwee's query, Mr. Wood affirmed the Board's authority in determining the industry for the site. Additionally, the Board has full authority to consider any sort of incentive that could be offered. County Manager Epley emphasized that economic development is an extension of local government which makes the County an indirect partner. He assured the Board that he is determined to hear and consider all concerns on this matter. Citing all the various environmental studies and buffers, Mr. Epley was confident most questions could be answered in a satisfactory way, and small community meetings are being facilitated to have an open dialogue with the public. Mr. Wood also commented on Duke Energy's excess water capacity and received praise from Chairman Brittain on the internship program. Chairman Brittain then opened the floor a motion.

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

FS - FOREST SERVICE UPDATES

Nicholas Larson, District Ranger, Forest Service, Pisgah National Forest, provided updates on the Linville Gorge Trails, Pisgah Restoration Initiative, Wilson Creek, and the Fall 2023 fire season. Linville Gorge has an additional 2.7 miles that has been added to the trail system which allows hikers to do a loop as well as created access to a rock-climbing area. Mr. Larson stated two (2) additional miles are scheduled to begin development in the Fall. This will keep hikers from disrupting habitats that contain rare plant life and allows for additional targeted climbing access. Mr. Larson thanked his partner, Wild South, for helping with the trail system and the County for their support with emergency management and emergency responses. The Pisgah Restoration Initiative Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (PRI) is a national

collaborative forest landscape restoration project that identifies opportunities for the Federal Government to work with the states and NGO Partners across a large landscape. This creates more meaningful and effective conservation benefits able to be delivered at scale. This has reduced wildfire risks and restored fire-adapted forestry.

PRI is a 10-year program with the following goals to be accomplished per year:

- targeted burning on 10,000 acres
- 500 acres of vegetation management
- 1,500 acres of thinning to improve forest health and vigor of fire-adapted forest
- 12,000 acres of non-native invasive treatments
- three (3) stream crossings improvements

Some of the key players in making these goals a reality include NC Forest Service, NC Wildlife Resource Commission, Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, NC State Parks, Wild South, Foothills Conservancy of NC, Carolina Land & Lakes, and Northwestern North Carolina Mountain Bike Alliance.

The Forest Service has entered into an agreement with Carolina Land and Lakes RC&D to do a corridor study along Wilson Creek to improve the infrastructure in the area. Mr. Larson is also working closely with Ed Phillips, CEO, TDA, to find funding to be able to re-pave the Brown Mountain Overlook. With the 2023 fire season nearly over, Burke County has not had many fires that required US Forest Services to respond.

Chairman Brittain thanked Mr. Larson for the information and opened the floor for questions or comments. Mr. Larson received an appreciatory comment from Commissioner Burns. There being nothing further, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

FINANCE - PRESENTATION OF FY 22 - 23 AUDIT

Margaret Pierce, Finance Director / Deputy County Manager, introduced the County's auditors, Phil Church and Rick Hammer of Lowdermilk Church & Co. LLP. Mr. Church stated the audit went well and commended Ms. Pierce for her efforts in writing the report, which he noted is a rare talent. He turned the floor over to Mr. Hammer who presented highlights of the audit for FY 22 - 23. The County received a clean unmodified opinion from the audit firm.

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BURKE COUNTY Financial Highlights Years Ended June 30, 2023 and 2022		
<u>General Fund</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Cash and investments	\$ 37,859,675	\$ 41,227,685
Total assets	43,894,630	47,002,927
Unassigned fund balance	31,588,409	30,305,835
Total revenue	96,999,026	92,342,609
Total expenditures	96,056,741	90,848,922
Other financing sources (uses)	(1,652,060)	2,895,336
Increase (decrease) in fund balance	(709,775)	4,389,023
Ad valorem taxes collected current year levy	53,996,056	51,996,325
Percent of taxes collected current year levy	98.80	98.73
Investment income	1,135,408	63,102
<u>Proprietary Funds</u>		
Cash and investments	\$ 5,882,992	\$ 2,429,612
Total assets	25,586,806	22,807,790
Net position	17,335,134	14,831,592
Operating revenue	7,923,257	7,376,402
Operating expenses	9,072,759	7,988,692
Nonoperating revenues (expenses)	80,044	259,682
Transfers in (out)	3,573,000	922,455
Change in net position	2,503,542	569,837
Accounts receivable	643,948	625,924
Investment income	119,260	2,619
<u>Other Governmental Funds</u>		
Cash and investments	\$ 62,312,345	\$ 51,321,335
Total assets	66,505,906	55,542,995
Fund balance	60,868,796	37,872,285
Total revenue	36,450,788	26,280,392
Total expenditures	11,591,076	11,006,426
Other financing sources (uses)	(1,889,711)	(3,645,453)
Increase (decrease) in fund balance	22,970,001	11,628,513
Fund Balances Available		
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Unassigned Fund Balance	\$31,588,409	\$30,305,835
Expenditures and transfers out	117,874,811	94,858,789
Unassigned Fund Balance Percentage	26.80%	31.95%
State average for Counties with a population grouping of 50,000 to 99,999	45.74%	42.72%

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

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE**INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for informal public comments and asked speakers to limit their comments to three (3) minutes.

Luke Harrill, 2124 US 70 West, stated the megasite property backs up against his grandparent's farm. While acknowledging that growth is not inherently negative, he questioned the county's decision to develop another business or industrial site when the business park on Kathy Road remains unfilled. Additionally, he raised concerns about the impact on waterways and the potential effects on well water in the area.

Cindy Proctor, 3096 Bridgewater Road, expressed dissatisfaction with the way the rezoning meeting for the megasite was handled. Citizens who had gathered to speak ended up not being able to voice their concerns when that item ended up being tabled for a later meeting at the request of BDI. Ms. Proctor expressed concern about the project proceeding under the radar of the public eye and about water quality issues that can arise from such an undertaking. She felt that communication with the public about this project had been lacking.

Chairman Brittain issued a friendly reminder that this is informal public comments and that the Board does not respond to any commentary made during this portion of the meeting. There will be meetings held in the future to discuss this project and answer questions from citizens.

Betty Ballew expressed concerns that she and her neighbors could lose their way of life. As the owner of a farm, she expressed a strong desire to preserve the rural lifestyle and avoid being affected by the characteristics of big city living. She urged the Commissioners to not only consider the positive implications of a megasite but also the negative impacts that could happen to the landowners in the area. Ms. Ballew emphasized the importance of maintaining Burke as "Nature's Playground."

Joanna Kentch, 1838 Yellow Fork Trail, stated an industrial site could negatively affect groundwater and questioned why they would put a megasite in the area to ruin it. She feels that this project has been kept hidden from the public. She cautioned that one spill could impact the drinking water and asserted that the development is all about money.

Danny Kentch, 1838 Yellow Fork Trail, stated his family researched the entire country 13 years ago before moving from California to the area. He said it was the environment and outdoor activity opportunities that made them decide to move here. He told the Commissioners that jobs can be created without destroying the environment. Mr. Kentch noted that so many companies have vacant positions and are looking for workers already. He hoped the Board had not already come to a decision and that they were just exploring the idea but fears they have decided on this path without soliciting input from the citizens first.

Ryan Hartnett spoke about the megasite. He asserted the issue is not the megasite itself, but rather the optics. He emphasized the need for community forums and input on the matter. Mr. Hartnett expressed a desire to work collaboratively and suggested the establishment of a committee of citizens to be involved in the decision-making process. Noting concerns about the

project occurring behind the scenes, he proposed a solution that involves greater transparency and citizen engagement. While personally against the megasite, Mr. Hartnett stated that he would defer to the will of the community if 51% were in favor of it. However, he highlighted the challenge of knowing the will of the community when the community has not been consulted on their preferences.

There was no one else to address the Board; therefore, Chairman Brittain closed this portion of the meeting. County Manager Epley clarified that the grading Mr. Wood mentioned earlier in the meeting is for the Drexel project, not the Great Meadows project.

CONSENT AGENDA

At the request of the Board, Brian Epley, County Manager, reviewed the following 12 items on the consent agenda, which were approved by a single motion.

BOC - 2024 COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

There are approximately 20 (+/-) boards or commissions that Commission members are appointed to serve on.

Authority, Board or Commission	2024 Appointee
Burke Development Inc.	
Burke Co. BOC Chairman* (Designee)	Brittain
Burke Co. Manager*	Epley
Board of Health	Carswell
Burke County Cooperative Water Board	Carswell
EMS Peer Review Committee	Burns
Foothills Regional Airport Authority	Burns
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council	Smith
JCPC Oversight "Governance" Committee	Smith
Library Board of Trustees	Carswell
Local Emergency Planning Committee	Carswell
Partners Health Management	Brittain
Recreation Commission	Mulwee
Smart Start (Burke Partnership for Children)	Smith
Social Services Board	Brittain
Tourism Development Authority	Mulwee
Transportation Advisory Committee	Smith
Transportation Coordinating Committee	Glines
WPCOG - Policy Board: Alternate	Carswell
WPCOG - Policy Board: Delegate	Burns

*Based on BDI bylaws.

Motion: To approve the slate of Commission appointments as presented for 2024.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE BOC 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

In accordance with NCGS 153A-40, the following resolution sets the Board's meeting schedule for 2024.

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2023-24.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Resolution No. 2023-24 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION
ESTABLISHING THE REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024

WHEREAS, the Burke County Board of Commissioners' pre-agenda meetings are held on the first (1st) Tuesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. in the County Board Room (Commissioners' Meeting Room), Burke County Services Building in Morganton, N.C., except in the months of July, August and December; and

WHEREAS, to allow the county's professional staff and elected officials to take family vacations and / or attend continuing education classes, pre-agenda meetings are not held in the months of July and August; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute 153A-39 requires that the Board hold an organizational meeting on the first (1st) Monday in December for each even-numbered year. As such, an organizational meeting will be held on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. in the County Board Room (Commissioners' Meeting Room); and

WHEREAS, a reception for newly elected officials will be held on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 2:30 p.m. in the County Board Room (Commissioners' Meeting Room) and the December pre-agenda meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. or immediately following the conclusion of the reception; and

WHEREAS, the regular meetings of the Board of Commissioners are held on the third (3rd) Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the County Board Room (Commissioners' Meeting Room), Burke County Services Building; and

WHEREAS, a budget / planning retreat will be held at 10:00 a.m. on March 7 and 8, 2024 at the Lake James State Park Visitors Center, 7321 NC Hwy 126, Nebo, N.C.; and

WHEREAS, the Board may attend the following conferences / gatherings and desires to give the public ample notice:

- NCACC Annual Conference in Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, August 8 - 10, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Burke County Board of Commissioners, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 153A-40(a), does hereby:

- (1) Establish the Board's regular pre-agenda meetings at 3:00 p.m. in the County Board Room (Commissioners' Meeting Room) on the following dates:

January 2, 2024	July – N.A.
February 6, 2024	August – N.A.
March 5, 2024	September 3, 2024
April 2, 2024	October 1, 2024
May 7, 2024	November 5, 2024
June 4, 2024	December 2, 2024*

*Monday

- (2) Establish the Board's regular meetings at 6:00 p.m. in the County Board Room (Commissioners' Meeting Room) on the following dates:

January 16, 2024	July 16, 2024
February 20, 2024	August 20, 2024
March 19, 2024	September 17, 2024
April 16, 2024	October 15, 2024
May 21, 2024	November 19, 2024
June 18, 2024	December 17, 2024

- (3) Establishes the following workshop meetings:

March 7, 2024	10:00 a.m.	Lake James State Park Visitors Center
March 8, 2024	10:00 a.m.	7321 NC Hwy 126, Nebo

- (4) Establishes an organizational meeting on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 2:00 p.m., in the County Board Room (Commissioners' Meeting Room), Burke Services Building, 110 N. Green Street, Morganton; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any recessed, special or emergency meeting will be held as needed with proper notice as required by North Carolina General Statute 153A- 40.

Adopted this 19th day of December 2023.

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

Attest:
/s/ Kay Honeycutt Draughn

Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board

BOC - ADOPTION OF RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR 2024

It is the Board's practice to review, amend as needed and adopt its Rules of Procedures (ROP) on an annual basis. The DRAFT 2024 ROP is largely based on the 4th Edition, 2017, Suggested Rules of Procedure for the Board of County Commissioners, which was published by the SOG (School of Government) and authored by Trey Allen. The following changes (striketrough and red font) were proposed for housekeeping purposes and to expedite the appointment process of the clerk, county attorney and tax attorney when no change in professional staff is needed:

Rule 8 (Page 4 & 5):

(b) Scheduling Organizational Meeting

- (1) *Even-numbered years.* The board shall hold an organizational meeting at its regular meeting place at 2:00 p.m. on the first Monday in December of each even-numbered year. The organizational meeting shall be convened and concluded before the ~~regular~~ December ~~pre-agenda~~ meeting is convened.

(c) Order of Business

(1) *Even-numbered years*

- (A) As the first order of business at the organizational meeting, all persons elected or reelected to the board at the most recent county election must take and subscribe the oath of office set out in Article VI, Section 7, of the North Carolina Constitution, unless they did so earlier in the day. They must then take the General Oath prescribed by G.S. 11-11. Each member's constitutional oath must be filed with the clerk to the board. Although a newly elected or reelected member who has not yet been sworn and who is not present for the organizational meeting may be sworn in later, the member must take, subscribe, and file the constitutional oath and take the G.S. 11-11 oath before he or she begins performing any of the duties of the member's office.
- (B) As the second order of business, the board shall elect a chair and vice chair from among its members using the procedure specified in Rule 39.
- (C) As the third order of business, the board shall approve the bonds of the sheriff and the register of deeds and induct any other newly elected county officials into office.
- (D) As the fourth order of business, the board will appoint the clerk to the board, and the county attorney, ~~and the county tax attorney as needed.~~

Motion: To adopt the 2024 Rules of Procedure for the Burke County Board of Commissioners as presented.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - ADULT CARE / NURSING HOME CAC UPDATE & APPOINTMENTS

The Regional Ombudsman, Christina Franklin, presented an update on the State's and the Burke County Community Advisory Committee's activities, requested an additional seat for a new facility, The Berkeley, and requested reappointments and removals to this vital board.

The CAC resumed visitation in 2022, after a two (2) year restriction due to Covid-19. There are currently five (5) active members, one (1) member on leave due to family illness and one (1) member that Ms. Franklin stated she is going to reconnect with. There is a new required training by the State that must be completed before citizens can apply to serve on the Committee. There are two (2) applicants who are set to go through the training program and will be requesting an appointment once the training is completed in January 2024. The training has three (3) phases; the first is an independent study, the second portion is done through the state, and the third phase is led by Ms. Franklin herself. The training takes several months for interested applicants to undergo before they are ready to visit.

The terms for Roger Hart, Jon Cook and Dolores Huffman have expired. Mr. Hart and Ms. Huffman have agreed to serve another term and their reappointments are recommended, pending receipt of Mr. Hart's application. However, Mr. Cook is not seeking reappointment.

Currently, there are six (6) vacancies on this Board despite recent solicitations in print and on social media.

Motion: To add Seat No. 14 to the Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee roster for The Berkeley Center located on East Parker Road. To remove Jon Cook (Seat No. 6) from the Adult Care & Nursing Home CAC and thank him for his service to the community. To reappoint Roger Hart (Seat No. 2) and Dolores Huffman (Seat No. 7) to the Adult Care & Nursing Home CAC to complete the remainder of 3-year terms ending May 31, 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - REMOVAL FROM AND APPOINTMENT TO THE COUNCIL ON AGING

Ms. Eleanor Summers passed away on October 27, 2023. Her removal from Seat No. 2 on the Council on Aging was requested. Ms. Summers served on the CoA since 2016 and was a valuable member of the Council.

2	Eleanor Summers	A	2/16/2016
		R	12/18/2018
		R	11/16/2021
		R	11/30/2024

Ms. Sherry Gast has applied to serve on the Council on Aging. Her appointment to fill Seat No. 2 was requested.

Motion: To remove Eleanor Summers' name from the Council of Aging roster. To appoint Sherry Gast to the Council on Aging, Seat No. 2, to complete an unexpired

term ending November 30, 2024.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE EMS PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE

Concerning the EMS Peer Review Committee, the terms of appointment ended on November 15th for the following members:

Dr. Anthony Frank (Seat No. 1, Physician)

Nicole Hudson (Seat No. 3, EMS Personnel)

Comm. Randy Burns (Seat No. 6, Gov't Official)

Note: This appointment will be addressed in another agenda item for Board appointments.

Brand Lingerfelt (Seat No. 7, First Responder - East)

Casandra Reid (Seat No. 9, 911 Communications)

Brand Lingerfelt is not seeking reappointment and Ms. Reid is no longer employed with Burke County; Therefore, their removals were requested. Applications were received from the following:

Seat No. 1: Dr. Anthony Frank

Seat No. 3: Nicole Hudson

Seat No. 9: Terry Lail

The terms of appointment are for two (2) years for this 9-member board.

Motion: To remove Brand Lingerfelt and Casandra Reid's names from the EMS Peer Review Committee roster and thank them for their service. To reappoint Dr. Anthony Frank to the EMS Peer Review Committee, Seat. No. 1, Physician, for the remainder of a 2-year term ending November 15, 2025. To reappoint Nicole Hudson to the EMS Peer Review Committee, Seat. No. 3, EMS personnel, for the remainder of a 2-year term ending November 15, 2025. To appoint Terry Lail to the EMS Peer Review Committee, Seat. No. 9, 911 Communications, for the remainder of a 2-year term ending November 15, 2025.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Seats No. 6 (Dentist), No. 7 (Registered Nurse) and No. 10 (at-large) on the Board of Health have terms that expire on December 31st. All three (3) members have submitted applications for reappointment. The terms are for three (3) years. An application for Seat No. 9, at-large, was received from Camey Ervin.

6	Dentist	Dr. Nicholas Thomas	A R TE	12/19/2017 1/19/2021 12/31/2023
7	Registered Nurse	Barry Nelson	A-UT R TE	11/16/2021 12/31/2023
9	At-Large	Vacant	TE	12/31/2024
10	At-Large	Dr. Laura Gratton	A-UT R TE	3/15/2022 12/31/2023

Motion: To reappoint Dr. Nicholas Thomas (Seat No. 6, Dentist), Barry Nelson (Seat No. 7, Registered Nurse) and Dr. Laura Gratton (Seat No. 10, at-large) to the Burke Co. Board of Health for 3-year terms ending December 31, 2026. To appoint Camey Ervin to Seat No. 9 (at-large) on the Board of Health to complete an unexpired term ending December 31, 2024.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CM - APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 5

Approval of the following budget amendment (No. 5), which recognizes grant funding for three (3) grants for emergency management and EMS, was requested.

Budgetary Effect: Total of \$206,435 of grant funding and applicable expenditures.

Motion: To approve Budget Amendment No. 5 as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell and Phil Smith

Budget Amendment No. 5 reads as follows:

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 5			
REVENUES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE
100-46501-01-433100	Jag Grant	\$10,746	
100-46503-01-433200	NC Dept of Public Safety Grant	\$178,000	
100-46503-01-433100	NC Dept of Public Safety Grant	\$17,689	
EXPENSES			
ACCOUNT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE	DECREASE

100-46501-10-533100	Jag Grant	\$10,746	
100-46503-10-533200	Trailer Grant	\$178,000	
100-46503-10-533100	EOC Computer Grant	\$17,689	
To implement necessary budget changes that recognize three grants for public safety. These funds have no matching requirements or local funds. The JAG grant is for bulletproof vests and tactical gear. The other two (2) grants are NC Dept of Public Safety Emergency Management Capacity Building Competitive Grants awarded to purchase a portable shower trailer, animal housing for crisis events, and EOC computer upgrades.			
A copy of these amendments shall be furnished to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer of the County to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.			

Approved this 19th day of December 2023.

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

Attest:

/s/: Kay Honeycutt Draughn
 Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
 Clerk to the Board

FINANCE - SIGNATURE CARD UPDATE

The signature card for the Inmate Trust County bank account needs to be updated in accordance with NCGS 159-25 (b) due to staff changes with the Sheriff's Office.

Matthew Johnson, Accounting Manager with the Finance Department, will need to be designated as an authorized signatory for the Inmate Trust Account as well as a Deputy Finance Officer with the sole duty of signing checks on this account, effective December 20, 2023.

The Sheriff has requested Randy Carswell, Detention Lieutenant, be added as an authorized signer on the Inmate Trust account to facilitate check processing. Further, Miranda Beaver needs to be removed as an authorized signatory due to leaving County employment.

NCGS 159-25 (b):

(b) Except as otherwise provided by law, all checks or drafts on an official depository shall be signed by the finance officer or a properly designated deputy finance officer and countersigned by another official of the local government or public authority designated for this purpose by the governing board. If the board makes no other designation, the chairman of the board or chief executive officer of the local government or public authority shall countersign these checks and drafts. The governing board of a unit or authority may waive the requirements of this subsection if the board determines that the internal control procedures of the unit or authority will be satisfactory in the absence of dual signatures.

Motion: To remove Miranda Beaver and add Randy Carswell to the Inmate Trust account signature card as authorized signers. Further, to add Matthew Johnson as an authorized signer on the Inmate Trust Account as well as a Deputy Finance Officer with the sole duty of signing checks on this account. All changes to the Inmate Trust account signature card will be effective December 20, 2023, in accordance with NCGS 159-25 (b).

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

PHM - PARTNERS HEALTH MANAGEMENT FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPT. 30, 2023

At the pre-agenda meeting, the Board received a financial update from Paul Holden, Partners Health Management, for the period ending Sept. 30, 2023. Highlights of the presentation were as follows:

Supporting Burke County

Paul R. Holden, Ph.D. (Regional Director)
pholden@partnersbhm.org

Members Served

Medicaid Members

➤ Partners providers served 3792 unduplicated Burke County Medicaid members (12 rolling months ending September 30, 2023)

➤ Medicaid penetration rate is 30%

Non-Medicaid funded Recipients

➤ 903 unduplicated individuals were served (12 rolling months ending September 30, 2023)

Members Served

1st Quarter (12 months ending 9-30-23)

• Numbers of Persons Served by Disability

		Medicaid	Non-Medicaid
Intellectual Developmental Disabilities	Child (Age 3-21)	267	1
	Adult (Over 21)	550	6
Mental Health	Child (Age 3-21)	978	15
	Adult (Over 21)	1,539	552
Substance Use	Child (Age 3-21)	10	2
	Adult (Over 21)	448	327

Members Served

1st Quarter (12 months ending 9-30-23)

<u>Cost of Persons Served by Disability</u>		Medicaid	Non-Medicaid
Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (TOTAL: \$28,323,078)	Child (Age 3-21)	\$2,376,006	\$53,898
	Adult (Over 21)	\$25,687,755	\$205,419
Mental Health (TOTAL: \$16,456,439)	Child (Age 3-21)	\$9,515,401	\$9,402
	Adult (Over 21)	\$5,563,825	\$1,367,811
Substance Use (TOTAL: \$2,360,882)	Child (Age 3-21)	\$16,029	\$206
	Adult (Over 21)	\$1,497,298	\$847,349

Burke County Funds

Expenditures to Date

<u>Burke Detention Center</u>	
Correctional Behavioral Health (TOTAL Expended: \$10,900)	Budget: \$48,760
Catawba Valley Healthcare	
Substance Use Services in Detention Center (TOTAL Expended: \$16,732)	Budget: \$58,300
MORES Program Family Partner (TOTAL Expended: \$10,837)	Budget: \$20,000
Psychiatric Support (TOTAL Expended: \$13,420)	Budget: \$72,140

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

TAX DEPT. - RELEASE REFUND REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2023

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

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

The Board of Commissioners was presented with the following list of releases and refunds for consideration. The Net Release is a result of the Report Amount minus the Rebilled Amount.

Tax System Refunds and Releases			
Report Amount	Rebilled Amount	Net Release	Refund Amount
\$25,679.88	\$2,080.80	\$23,599.19	\$0.00

Bill #	Taxpayer Name	Bill Date	Operator ID (Name)	Release Date	Orig Bill Amount(\$)	Release Amount(\$)	Bill Amount after Release(\$)
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Adjustment					
0000039938-2023-2023-0000-01-REG	MITCHELL, ERNIE	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/22/2023	270.73	270.73	0.00
0000053679-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	SHARPE, FRANKLIN BICKETT	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/1/2023	468.03	351.81	116.22
0024075495-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	FORLONG LLC	11/7/2023	AMANDA CONLEY	11/7/2023	2,298.43	1,346.96	951.47
0024075496-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	FORLONG LLC	11/7/2023	AMANDA CONLEY	11/7/2023	2,285.80	1,346.95	938.85
0024075537-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	BREWER, SARAH	11/13/2023	JOHN BRIDGERS	11/13/2023	12.20	12.20	0.00
Subtotal					5,335.19	3,328.65	2,006.54
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Adjustment Release					
0000086884-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	HAYNES, RHONDA B	7/3/2023	LOUISE JOHNSON	11/22/2023	10.59	10.59	0.00
0000086884-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	HAYNES, RHONDA B	7/3/2023	LOUISE JOHNSON	11/22/2023	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subtotal					10.59	10.59	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Amended Listing					
0024067463-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	SUCCESSFUL STRIDES INC	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2023	184.80	178.97	5.83
Subtotal					184.80	178.97	5.83
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Assessed In Error					
0000082229-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	STATE EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/20/2023	104.29	104.29	0.00
Subtotal					104.29	104.29	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Business Closed					
0024009553-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	CARLTON, LEWIS S	7/1/2022	LOUISE JOHNSON	11/22/2023	104.43	104.43	0.00
0024009553-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	CARLTON, LEWIS S	7/3/2023	LOUISE JOHNSON	11/22/2023	84.15	84.15	0.00
Subtotal					188.58	188.58	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Deceased					
0000039938-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	MITCHELL, ERNIE	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/22/2023	130.73	130.73	0.00
Subtotal					130.73	130.73	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Duplicate Billing					
0024073425-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	BLACKBURN, VANCE G	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/21/2023	56.70	28.59	28.11
Subtotal					56.70	28.59	28.11
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Exempt Property					
0000059279-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	SOUTH MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH	7/3/2023	AMANDA CONLEY	11/2/2023	490.44	490.44	0.00
Subtotal					490.44	490.44	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Listed In Error					
0000081023-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	MILESKE, RICHARD	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/28/2023	5.60	5.60	0.00
Subtotal					5.60	5.60	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Mapping Correction					
0000033353-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	FORLONG LLC	7/3/2023	AMANDA CONLEY	11/7/2023	16,534.38	16,534.38	0.00
Subtotal					16,534.38	16,534.38	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Not in Burke County					
0024033422-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	THOMPSON, JOSEPH A	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/9/2023	39.65	39.65	0.00
0024063077-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	AVCO SECURITY SYSTEMS INC	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/2/2023	739.20	739.20	0.00
0024072637-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	MILE HIGH VENTURES	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/2/2023	1,724.80	1,724.80	0.00
Subtotal					2,503.65	2,503.65	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Over Assessment					
0000085680-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	BALDRIDGE, JAMES	7/3/2023	KAYLA BURGESS	11/9/2023	47.04	6.72	40.32
Subtotal					47.04	6.72	40.32
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY		RELEASE REASON: Release LFUF					
0000059279-2023-2023-0000-01-REG	SOUTH MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH	7/3/2023	AMANDA CONLEY	11/2/2023	88.00	88.00	0.00
Subtotal					88.00	88.00	0.00
Grand Total					25,679.99	23,599.19	2,080.80

VTS Refunds Over \$100	
	Refund Amount
VTS Adjustments	\$670.75

Payee Name	Primary Owner	Address 1	Address 3	Bill #	Refund Description	Refund Reason	Create Date	Tax Jurisdiction	Levy Type	Change	Interest Change	Total Change
AVERY, CHRISTINE ELIZABETH	AVERY, CHRISTINE ELIZABETH	3858 HARRY BRITTIAN DR	MORGANTON, NC 28655	0070222961	Refund Generated due to adjustment on Bill #0070222961-2022-2022-0000	Situs error	11/08/2023	01	Tax	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
								57	Tax	(\$141.39)	(\$14.49)	(\$155.88)
								21	Tax	\$27.29	\$2.80	\$30.09
								Refund			\$125.79	
SOUTH MOUNTAIN CHILDREN & FAMILY	SOUTH MOUNTAIN CHILDREN & FAMILY SVC	PO BOX 3387	MORGANTON, NC 28680	0071999663	[AS0168] - Refund Generated due to adjustment on abstract # : 0071999663-2022-2022-0000 RMV	Exempt Property	11/27/2023	01	Tax	(\$185.98)	(\$9.30)	(\$195.28)
								41	Tax	(\$32.11)	(\$1.60)	(\$33.71)
								Refund			\$228.99	
VANG, XOUA	VANG, XOUA	5007 BERKLEY ST	MORGANTON, NC 28655	0074729092	Refund Generated due to adjustment on Bill #0074729092-2023-2023-0000-00	Military	11/28/2023	01	Tax	(\$266.08)	\$0.00	(\$266.08)
								22	Tax	(\$49.89)	\$0.00	(\$49.89)
								Refund			\$315.97	
Refund Total												\$670.75

*Note: The net loss amount is a result of the report amount minus the rebilled amount.

Motion: To approve the Tax Releases and Refunds for November 2023 as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

TAX DEPT. - TAX COLLECTION REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2023

The Board of Commissioners was presented with the Tax Collection Report for the period between July 1, 2023, and November 30, 2023. This reflects the status of collections by the Burke County Tax Collection's Staff. This information is a supplement to the Annual Settlement Report.

Category	Annual Budget	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	\$52,699,577.00	\$38,499,223.16	73.05%	\$14,200,353.84
Motor Vehicle Tax	\$6,200,000.00	\$2,382,848.61	38.43%	\$3,817,151.39
Current Year Taxes	\$58,899,577.00	\$40,882,071.77	69.41%	\$18,071,505.23
Delinquent Taxes	\$700,000.00	\$419,735.93	59.96%	\$280,264.07
Penalty & Interest	\$329,000.00	\$142,177.29	41.21%	\$186,822.71

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	\$56,830,829.79	\$8,499,223.16	71.52%	\$15,331,606.63

Motion: To accept the Tax Collection Report for November 2023 as presented.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

ITEMS FOR DECISION**CLERK - APPOINTMENT OR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE BURKE CO. BOARD OF E & R**

Kay Draughn Clerk to the Board, reported the terms of appointment on the Board of Equalization & Review for Kevin Farris (Seat No. 3) and Mary Louise Hatley (Seat No. 5) end December 31, 2023, and there are three applications on file. Pursuant to NCGS 105-322, the Board of Equalization & Review:

- examines tax lists to ensure property is listed and appraised correctly;
- hears property owner appeals about appraised values; and
- makes necessary adjustments to property valuation in accordance with standards established by law.

3	Kevin Farris P.O. Box 909 Valdese NC 28690	A	2/17/2015
		A	12/15/2015
		R	12/19/2017
		R	1/19/2021
		TE	12/31/2023
5	Mary Louise Hatley P.O. Box 901 Valdese NC 28690	A	2/17/2015
		A	12/15/2015
		R	12/19/2017
		R	1/19/2021
		TE	12/31/2023

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 3. Vice Chairman Mulwee nominated Kevin Farris. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations and called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Kevin Farris to Seat No. 3 on the Burke County Board of Equalization & Review for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2026.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 5. Commissioner Carswell nominated Mary Hatley. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations and called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Mary Hatley to Seat No. 5 on the Burke County Board of Equalization & Review for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS OR REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE LIBRARY BOTS

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the terms of appointment for Tiffany Cooper (Seat No. 5, Valdese City resident) and Susan Berley (Seat No. 9, At-large) on the Library Board of Trustees end December 31, 2023. There are two (2) applications on file for Seat No. 5 and there are two (2) applications on file for Seat No. 9.

5	Valdese - City	Tiffany Cooper	A-UT	3/16/2021
		Valdese NC 28690	R TE	12/31/2023
9	At-Large	Susan Berley	A-UT	4/20/2021
			R TE	12/31/2023

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 5. Commissioner Carswell nominated Tiffany Cooper. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations and called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Tiffany Cooper to the Library Board of Trustees, Seat No. 5, for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 9. Vice Chairman Mulwee nominated Sandy Hoilman. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations and called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Sandy Hoilman to the Library Board of Trustees, Seat No. 9, for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS OR REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE TDA

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, relayed that on the Tourism Development Authority, the terms of Rebecca Randolph (Seat No. 1, COT Hotel/Motel), Rob Winkler (Seat No. 2, Morganton), Morrissa Angi (Seat No. 3, Valdese), Dana Whisnant (Seat No. 5, Travel / Tourism At-large) and Mike Watts (Seat No. 7, Travel / Tourism At-large) end December 31, 2023. The term is for two

(2) years.

The following applications are on file: Morrissa Angi, Rob Winkler, Dana Whisnant, Mike Watts, Mandy Nix and Deborah Perry.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 1. Vice Chairman Mulwee nominated Deborah Perry. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations and called for a motion.

Motions: To appoint Deborah Perry to TDA Seat No. 1 (COT Hotel / Motel), for a 2-year term ending December 31, 2025.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Motion: To reappoint Rob Winkler to TDA Seat No. 2 (Morganton), to reappoint Morrissa Angi to TDA Seat No. 3 (Valdese), to reappoint Dana Whisnant to TDA Seat No. 5 (Travel / Tourism At-large) and to reappoint Mike Watts to TDA Seat No. 7 (Travel / Tourism At-large) for 2-year terms ending December 31, 2025.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Motion: To reappoint Commissioner Scott Mulwee as Chair of the TDA for 2024.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS / REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE VETERANS SERVICE BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the Veterans Service Board consists of five (5) at-large seats for veterans with an honorable service record. Appointments are needed to replace Larry Britt, Seat No. 1, and Forrest Earley, Seat No. 2, who did not seek reappointment. The reappointments of David Tubergen (Seat No. 3) and Edwin Ware (Seat No. 4) are requested to complete unexpired terms ending September 30, 2025. An appointment is also needed for Seat No. 5. Kenneth Canipe occupied this seat until his passing in July. The unexpired term for this seat ends September 30, 2026. There were several applications on file.

Motion: To remove the names of Larry Britt, Forrest Earley and Kenneth Canipe from the official roster of the Veterans Service Board and thank them for their service to the country and Burke County.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 1. Vice Chairman Mulwee nominated Gary Jennings. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations and called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Gary Jennings to Seat No. 1 on the Veterans Service Board to complete a term ending September 30, 2026.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 2. Commissioner Carswell nominated James Gribble and Commissioner Smith nominated Brian Barrier. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were received.

Motion: To appoint James Gribble to Seat No. 2 on the Veterans Service Board to complete a term ending September 30, 2026.

RESULT:	APPROVED [4 TO 1]
MOVER:	Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, and Johnnie W. Carswell
NAYS:	Phil Smith

Motion: To appoint Brian Barrier to Seat No. 2 on the Veterans Service Board to complete a term ending September 30, 2026.

RESULT:	FAILED [1 TO 4]
MOVER:	Phil Smith, Commissioner
AYES:	Phil Smith
NAYS:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, and Johnnie W. Carswell

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 5. Commissioner Smith nominated Brian Barrier and Commissioner Smith nominated Curtis Hildebran. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain closed the floor for nominations. The vote was taken in the order in which the nominations were received.

Motion: To appoint Brian Barrier to Seat No. 5 on the Veterans Service Board to complete a term ending September 30, 2026.

RESULT:	FAILED [2 TO 3]
MOVER:	Phil Smith, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain and Phil Smith
NAYS:	Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, and Johnnie W. Carswell

Motion: To appoint Curtis Hildebran to Seat No. 5 on the Veterans Service Board to complete a term ending September 30, 2026.

RESULT:	APPROVED [3 TO 2]
MOVER:	Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner
AYES:	Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, and Johnnie W. Carswell
NAYS:	Jeffrey C. Brittain and Phil Smith

Chairman Brittain called for a motion for Seats No. 3 and 4.

Motion: To reappoint David Tubergen to Seat No. 3 and Edwin Ware to Seat No. 4 on the Veterans Service Board to complete the remainder of terms ending September 30, 2025.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Johnnie Carswell, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for reports and comments from Board members and professional staff. Margaret Pierce, Finance Director / Deputy County Manager, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and happy holidays. Commissioner Smith thanked everyone for a good first year serving the County. He then wished everyone Merry Christmas as well as a safe and happy new year. Commissioner Burns reported that he was elected Vice Chairman on the WPCOG Executive Committee as well as serving as Chairman on the Public Education Steering Committee for the NC Association of County Commissioners. He then wished everyone a Merry Christmas. Vice Chairman Brittain echoed the holiday well wishes. Commissioner Carswell extended congratulations to the Chairman and Vice Chairman for their election to their respective roles. He then thanked Burke County EMS for doing a fantastic job when he was feeling unwell. Commissioner Carswell mentioned his upcoming trip to Washington D.C. and a meeting with state legislatures in February. Chairman Brittain relayed information on the upcoming meetings, community events and holiday office closures. He then issued friendly reminders to not litter, to pick up trash, to cover your loads when transporting trash to the landfill or a convenience site, to spay and neuter your pets and to adopt or foster a pet from Animal Services.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLERK- BOARDS AND COMMITTEES VACANCY REPORT

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, announced the following vacancies on county boards or committees as follows:

- Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee
- City of Morganton - Board of Adjustment (ETJ)
- City of Morganton - Planning Board (ETJ)
- Council on Aging
- Burke County Board of Health
- Hickory Regional Planning Commission
- Drexel Planning Board - ETJ Alternate

CLOSED SESSION – NOT NEEDED, NOT HELD

ADJOURN

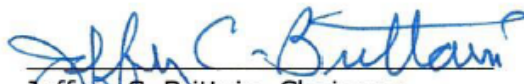
Motion: To adjourn at 7:32 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Scott Mulwee, Randy Burns, Johnnie W. Carswell, and Phil Smith

Approved this 19th day of March 2024.


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

Attest:


Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board