

**MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PRE-AGENDA MEETING**

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

COMMISSIONERS:

Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Phil Smith, Vice Chairman
Brian Barrier
Randy Burns
Mike Stroud

STAFF:

Brian Epley, County Manager
Margaret Pierce, Finance Director/Deputy County Manager
Destin Hall, County Attorney
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended: addition of Action Item No. 1, A Resolution to Amend the BOC 2024 Meeting Schedule.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

PRESENTATIONS**SHERIFF - RECOGNITION OF RETIREMENT FOR MACHO - K9 OFFICER**

Sheriff Banks Hinceman requested that Macho, a dedicated K9 officer, be granted permission to retire. Macho has faithfully served the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of Burke County for over eight (8) years, demonstrating unwavering loyalty, bravery, and skill throughout his career. His contributions to public safety and his steadfast partnership with his handler have left a lasting impact on the community. Sheriff Hinceman also requested that Macho be surplus and transferred to his handler as requested in Consent Item No. 1.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CM - GFOA'S CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING

Brian Epley, County Manager, reported that the County has been awarded, for the 3rd consecutive year, a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA), for its comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. This prestigious Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, representing a significant accomplishment by both the government and its management. Mr. Epley commended Finance staff for their hard work. The Board was asked to recognize and congratulate the Finance Department for this outstanding achievement at the regular meeting.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

SHERIFF - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SALE OF COUNTY-ISSUED K9 MACHO

Chairman Brittain noted that this was discussed during Presentation No. 1 and opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the following meeting.

Information from the agenda packet:

In accordance with N.C.G.S. § 17F-21 (a) (1), the Sheriff is requesting that a recently retired K9 named Macho, be declared surplus property and awarded to his long-time handler, Lt. Tim Branch, for the fee of \$1.00. Macho retired on November 8, 2024.

Budgetary Effect: None.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

BOC - ADOPTION OF RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR 2025

Chairman Brittain stated that the Rules of Procedures had been available for review and then opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the following meeting.

Information from the agenda packet:

It is the Board's practice to review, amend as needed and adopt its Rules of

Procedures (ROP) on an annual basis. The DRAFT 2025 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.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE BOC 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, requested the adoption of a resolution, in accordance with N.C.G.S. § 153A-40, to establish the Board's meeting schedule for 2025. After Ms. Draughn read the proposed schedule, a brief discussion ensued. It was agreed that holding regular meetings on the 3rd Monday of each month, rather than the 3rd Tuesday, would be preferable. The Board also discussed the need to account for federal holidays. Chairman Brittain directed the Clerk to make the necessary adjustments to the schedule to accommodate these considerations.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

BOC - 2025 COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Brittain stated that there are numerous boards or committees that Commission members are appointed to serve on. Consideration of work schedules and prior commitments should be taken into consideration when making the appointments. Chairman Brittain noted one change for the Child Protection Child Fatality Prevention Team, which would be served by Commissioner Barrier instead of Commissioner Stroud. Then he opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the following meeting.

The draft 2025 Commission appointments read as follows:

Authority, Board or Commission	2024 Appointee	2025 Appointee
Burke Development Inc.		
Burke Co. BOC Chairman* (Designee)	Brittain	Brittain
Burke Co. Manager*	Brian Epley	Brian Epley
Burke County Cooperative Water Board	Carswell	Burns
Child Protection Child Fatality Prevention Team	Brittain	Barrier
EMS Peer Review Committee	Burns	Burns
Foothills Regional Airport Authority	Burns	Burns
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council	Smith	Smith
JCPC Oversight "Governance" Committee	Smith	Smith
Library Board of Trustees	Carswell	Barrier
Local Emergency Planning Committee	Carswell	Stroud
Partners Health Management	Brittain	Brittain
Public Health Advisory Board	Carswell	Smith
Recreation Commission	Mulwee	Stroud
Smart Start (Burke Partnership for Children)	Smith	Barrier
Social Services Advisory Board	Brittain	Barrier

Tourism Development Authority	Mulwee	Smith
Transportation Advisory Committee	Smith	Stroud
Transportation Coordinating Committee	CM's Designee	Planning Dir.
VEDIC Term – Until Further Notice	Mulwee	Stroud
VEDIC Term – Until Further Notice	Burns	Burns
WPCOG - Policy Board: Alternate	Carswell	Brittain
WPCOG - Policy Board: Delegate	Burns	Burns

*Based on BDI bylaws.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY ACTION

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the County appoints three (3) members to the Blue Ridge Community Action Board of Directors. Blue Ridge Community Action, Inc. (BRCA) is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1965 to address problems related to poverty in Burke, Caldwell, and Rutherford counties. BRCA strives to obtain and maintain agency self-sufficiency and assist employees and low-income residents in obtaining and maintaining self-sufficiency. Their mission is realized by providing services, advocacy, and support for persons to become economically self-sufficient, improve the quality of their lives, and better provide opportunities for their families.

The terms of appointment for Michael Cloy (Seat No. 1), Barbara Myers (Seat No. 2) and James Smith (Seat No. 3) end December 15, 2024. All three (3) seats are "public at-large" seats and have 2-year terms. All the current members desire reappointment, except for Mr. Cloy. Therefore, his removal from the official roster was requested. The appointment of Ricki Shaun was requested for Seat No. 3.

Blue Ridge Community Action					
Three (3) Members					
2-Year Terms					
Seat No.	Position	Name-Address	Term		
1	At-Large Public	Michael Cloy	A-UT	2/16/2021	
		127B Ridgeside Terrace		12/20/2022	
		Morganton NC 28655	TE	12/15/2024	
2	At-Large Public	Barbara Myers	A-UT	5/18/2021	
		102 New Orleans Blvd.	R	12/20/2022	
		Morganton NC 28655	TE	12/15/2024	
3	At-Large Public	James Smith	A-UT	2/19/2019	
		402 W. Union Street	R	12/15/2020	
		Morganton NC 28655	R	12/20/2022	
			TE	12/15/2024	

A=Appointment							
R=Reappointment							
A-UT=Appointed to Complete Unexpired Term							
TE=Term Expires							

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - RESOLUTION AMENDING PLAT REVIEW OFFICERS

Kay Draughn reported that Morganton has requested the appointment of Benjamin Ealy as a Plat Review Officer for the City of Morganton; Valdese has requested the removal of Larry Johnson and the appointment of Ashley Young, WPCOG Planner, as a Plat Review Officer for the Town of Valdese; and, Rhodhiss has requested the appointment of Ashley Young as a Plat Review Officer for the Burke County portion of the Town of Rhodhiss. Draft Resolution No. 2024-28, reflects the aforementioned requests from Morganton, Valdese and Rhodhiss.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - APPOINTMENT TO JCPC - SEAT NO. 15

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board. Stated that the purpose of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, required by General Statute § 143B-846, is to assess the needs of at-risk youth in Burke County giving particular attention to the offenders on a continuing basis. They also assist the County in planning delinquency prevention programs and recommending community-based alternatives to becoming involved in the justice system. Finally, they evaluate programs receiving community-based alternative funds or recommend new programs for Juvenile Crime Prevention Council funds to meet the continued need. The 24-member council serves 2-year terms.

District Court Judge Sherri Elliott has requested the appointment of Judge Scott Conrad to the JCPC, Seat No. 15, to serve the remainder of a 2-year term ending June 30, 2026. Until her retirement, Seat No. 15 was occupied by Brandi Tolbert. Removal from the roster is requested.

15	Chief Dist. Court Judge	Brandi Tolbert	A	6/21/2022
	or Designee		R	
			TE	6/30/2024

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE BURKE CO. BOARD OF EQUALIZATION & REVIEW

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 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.

The Burke Co. Board of Equalization & Review is a 5-member board. The terms of appointment for James Gordon (Seat No. 2) and Doris Smith (Seat No. 4) end December 31, 2024. Both current members desire reappointment.

2	James Gordon*	A	2/17/2015
		A	12/15/2015
		R	12/18/2018
		R	12/21/2021
		TE	12/31/2024
4	Doris Smith	A	2/17/2015
		A	12/15/2015
		R	12/18/2018
		R	12/21/2021
		TE	12/31/2024

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - REALIGNMENT OF TERMS FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, stated that, currently, the terms for the members of the Social Services Advisory Board end in June, July, September and December. For efficiency and continued continuity, realignment of the term expirations to end in September is requested as follows:

	Term Ends	Suggested New Term
Seat No. 1 (Nancy Wood)	June 30, 2026	Change to September 30, 2026
Originally appointed by the BOC.		

Seat No. 2 (County Comm.) N.A. (Appointed annually in December.)

	Term Ends	Suggested New Term
Seat No. 3 (John Day)	July 1, 2027	Change to September 30, 2027
Originally appointed by the State on July 1, 2024.		

	Term Ends	Suggested New Term
Seat No. 4 (Mo Schwind)	September 21, 2026	Change to September 30, 2026

Originally appointed by the DSS Board with a term of September 19, 2023 – September 21, 2026.

	Term Ends	Suggested New Term
Seat No. 5 (Keith Bowman)	July 1, 2027	Change to September 30, 2027

*Originally appointed by the State on July 1, 2024.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.
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CLERK - APPOINTMENT TO MORGANTON PLANNING BOARD ETJ

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that Burke County appoints two (2) members to the Morganton Planning Board for the ETJ (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction). An application was received from Mr. Louis Vinay who resides in the Morganton ETJ area. His appointment to complete the remainder of a 3-year term ending June 3, 2027, was requested.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.
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CLERK - EMS PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, stated that the EMS Peer Review Committee is a 9-member board with 2-year terms, required by 10A NC Administrative Code 13P .0408. This Committee is responsible for analyzing patient care data and outcome measures to evaluate the ongoing quality of patient care, system performance, and medical direction within the EMS system.

The appointments of Kaylee Pittman to Seat No. 2, replacing Leonora Mahoney, Zack Williams, to Seat No. 3, replacing Nicole Hudson, Robert Bishop to Seat No. 5, replacing Mike Willis, and Joey Burleson to fill vacant Seat No. 7, First Responder East, were requested.

Further, the reappointment of April Traxler to Seat No. 4, Medical Facility – Frye and Allen Hudson to Seat No. 8, First Responder – south were requested.

Seat No. 6, Government Official, will be addressed through a separate agenda item.

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2	Nurse	Leonora Mahoney	A	11/16/2021
			R	12/20/2022
			TE	11/15/2024
3	EMS Personnel	Nicole Hudson	A	11/16/2021
			R	12/19/2023
			TE	11/15/2025
4	Medical Facility Frye	April Traxler - Frye Hospital	A	11/16/2021
			R	12/20/2022
			TE	11/15/2024
5	Emergency Mgmt	Mike Willis	A	11/16/2021
			R	12/20/2022
			TE	11/15/2024
6	Gov't Official (Commissioner)		A	12/2/2024
			TE	12/1/2025
7	First Responder East		A	11/16/2021
			TE	11/15/2023
8	First Responder South	Allen Hudson	A	11/15/2021
			R	12/20/2022
			TE	11/15/2024

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION TEAM RE-STRUCTURING

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the NC Child Fatality Prevention System is a statewide multi-disciplinary system that was developed in the 1990s consisting of the North Carolina Child Fatality Prevention Team, North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force and local teams (CFPTs and CCPTs).

N.C.G.S. § 7B Article 14 defines the membership composition of CCPTs and CFPTs, statutorily required to represent disciplines among the community, as well as the responsibilities and duties of the local CFPT to review resident county child fatalities, assess potential gaps in systems and policies that may have contributed to the deaths, and make recommendations to policymakers to improve local and statewide systems to better protect children and prevent future deaths.

Passed in 2023, changes to the law via the 2023 Appropriations Act [Section 9H.15 of Session Law 2023-124] now require all Boards of County Commissioners to determine if the local team proceeds as a single or multi-county team. Burke County would like to continue as a single-county team and requested the Commissioners' confirmation of this operational model.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

HR - POLICY MODERNIZATION PRESENTATION

Mark Miller, Human Resources Director, presented draft revisions to the Burke County Personnel Policy concerning policy modernization relating to Article 1 - Personnel Administration System.

Additional information from the agenda packet:



Policy Modernization

Process underway of reviewing our current Policies....

- Modernization of HR Policies and Procedures
 - Best practices
 - More empowerment and culture-defining, less control focused
 - Reduce Risk – updated compliance with federal, state and local employment laws
 - Clarity - clear mission, vision and expectations to support the citizens of Burke County
- Substantial Equivalency – Policies that reflect OSHR guidance and position us to receive certification:
 - Classification of jobs
 - Compensation Plan
 - Recruitment/Selection
- Policy Modernization objectives align with the organization's Focus on Employer of Choice initiatives
- Article 4 – Recruitment and Selection was updated and has been approved by the Board – April 2024





Review Process

Process Workflow Steps for Policy Revision

Update-

- What policies should be included/excluded? Research best practices
- Consistent formatting so all policies are structured uniformly
- Identify which policies have been problematic historically and make changes/updates/deletions accordingly

Review-

- Review policy drafts with employee listening groups, HR Sub-Committee, Department Heads, legal review, and County Manager.

Approve-

- Review of final drafts with Commissioners to obtain Board Approval of individual policy drafts
- Once all drafts are approved, will seek resolution to approve all drafted policies in entirety

Implement- Implement policies, update procedures and rollout to the organization





Up For Review

Article 1 – Personnel Administration System is up for review at this time

- Proposed Changes:
 - Submitted in new updated policy format
 - Cited statutes for clarity
 - Updated text for clarity and conciseness

Next Steps

Looking Forward:

- Remainder of Policies will be submitted over the next couple of months
 - Classification Plan
 - Wage and Salary Administration
 - General Employment Policies
 - Disciplinary Action
 - Leave of Absences
 - Safety
 - Workplace Harassment
 - Etc.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

TAX DEPT. - RELEASE REFUND REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024

John Bridgers, Tax Administrator, presented the following list of releases and refunds for November 2024 as follows:

VTS Refunds Over \$100	
	Refund Amount
VTS Adjustments	\$338.00

Payee Name	Refund Type	Bill #	Status	Refund Description	Create Date	Tax Jurisdiction	Levy Type	Change	Interest Change	Total Change
PERKINS, LINDA MERRITT	Adjustment >= \$100	0079813037	PENDING	Refund Generated due to adjustment on Bill #0079813037-2024-2024-0000-00	11/1/2024	01	TAX	(\$168.00)	\$0.00	(\$168.00)
						57	TAX	(\$150.00)	\$0.00	(\$150.00)
						57	VEHICLE FEE	(\$20.00)	\$0.00	(\$20.00)
									Refund	\$338.00
									Refund Total	\$338.00

Tax System Refunds and Releases			
Report Amount	Rebilled Amount	Net Release	Refund Amount
\$105,850.16	\$94,394.98	\$11,455.34	\$9,493.57

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

Trans #	Refund Recipient Name	Refund Address	Refund Description	Opid	Refund Change Date	Refund Amount (\$)
19255529	PIEDMONT CORRUGATED SPECIALTY	340 MORGAN ST SE VALDESE, NC 28690	Overpayment on Payment of CHECK on Bill # 0000078548-2024-2024-0000-00 of \$1,395.26	DPCLBX	11/21/2024	1,395.26
19255695	WAL-MART REAL ESTATE	ATTN: PROPERTY TAX DEPT PO BOX 8050 MS 0555 BENTONVILLE, AR 72716	Refund on Bill # 0000060643-2023-2023-0000-00	DPCADJ	11/25/2024	8,098.31
Total						9,493.57

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 Release							
0000010695-2024-2024-0000-02-PRV	BROWN, JAMES H	4/18/2024	EMILY PETERSEN	11/4/2024	927.65	927.65	0.00
0000018281-2024-2024-0000-01-PRV	CORPENING, JANICE W	5/28/2024	EMILY PETERSEN	11/12/2024	687.38	687.38	0.00
0000018281-2024-2024-0000-02-PRV	CORPENING, JANICE W	5/28/2024	EMILY PETERSEN	11/14/2024	731.38	731.38	0.00
Subtotal					2,346.41	2,346.41	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Deceased							
0000076145-2015-2015-0000-00-REG	SMITH, GLEN F	7/1/2015	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	16.71	16.71	0.00
0000076145-2017-2017-0000-00-REG	SMITH, GLEN F	7/1/2017	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	17.08	17.08	0.00
0000076145-2018-2018-0000-00-REG	SMITH, GLEN F	7/1/2018	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	17.08	17.08	0.00
0000076145-2019-2019-0000-00-REG	SMITH, GLEN F	7/1/2019	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	17.08	17.08	0.00
0000076145-2020-2020-0000-00-REG	SMITH, GLEN F	7/1/2020	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	17.08	17.08	0.00
0000076145-2021-2021-0000-00-REG	SMITH, GLEN F	7/1/2021	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	17.08	17.08	0.00
0000076145-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	SMITH, GLEN F	7/1/2022	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	17.08	17.08	0.00
0000076145-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	AMHERST AUTOMOTIVE	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	13.76	13.76	0.00
0000076145-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	AMHERST AUTOMOTIVE	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	11/13/2024	14.52	14.52	0.00
Subtotal					147.47	147.47	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Duplicate Billing							
0000003187-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CHILDRES, MEGHAN A	7/15/2024	EMILY PETERSEN	11/12/2024	2,227.73	9.24	2,218.49
0000003187-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CHILDRES, MEGHAN A	7/15/2024	EMILY PETERSEN	11/12/2024	2,218.49	9.24	2,209.25
0000025936-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	REEVES, MICHAEL RAY	7/15/2024	EMILY PETERSEN	11/14/2024	513.02	6.16	506.86
0024020206-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	SHELL, J H	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	11/12/2024	18.62	5.60	13.02
0024068616-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	SHELL, JOHN H SR	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	11/12/2024	5.60	5.60	0.00
0024079022-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	HAYES, SYBRINA RHEA	8/19/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	11/1/2024	212.05	212.05	0.00
Subtotal					5,195.51	247.89	4,947.62
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Over Assessment							
0000010886-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	SCHUZLE, KENNETH LEE	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	11/15/2024	361.70	15.40	346.30
0000018169-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CORPENING, JAMES	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	11/14/2024	67.48	10.78	56.70
Subtotal					429.18	26.18	403.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Penalty Correction							
0000041840-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CRUMP, RONNIE LYNN	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	11/15/2024	277.15	0.84	276.31
0000041840-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CRUMP, RONNIE LYNN	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	11/15/2024	276.31	0.56	275.75
0000041840-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CRUMP, RONNIE LYNN	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	11/15/2024	275.75	0.75	275.00
Subtotal					829.21	2.15	827.06
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Not in Burke County							
0000074591-2018-2018-0000-00-REG	CLAY, DONALD	7/1/2018	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2024	4.59	4.59	0.00
0000074591-2019-2019-0000-00-REG	CLAY, DONALD	7/1/2019	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2024	4.59	4.59	0.00
0000074591-2020-2020-0000-00-REG	CLAY, DONALD	7/1/2020	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2024	4.59	4.59	0.00
0000074591-2021-2021-0000-00-REG	CLAY, DONALD	7/1/2021	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2024	4.59	4.59	0.00
0000074591-2022-2022-0000-00-REG	CLAY, DONALD	7/1/2022	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2024	4.59	4.59	0.00
0000074591-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	CLAY, DONALD	7/3/2023	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2024	6.16	6.16	0.00
0000074591-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	CLAY, DONALD	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	11/6/2024	5.85	5.85	0.00
Subtotal					34.96	34.96	0.00
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Release LFUF							
0000047091-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	AUTON, PENNY SETZER	7/15/2024	LINDA WILBUR	11/8/2024	93.60	88.00	5.60
Subtotal					93.60	88.00	5.60
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Sold/Traded							
0000018120-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	FRANKLIN, DANNY K	7/15/2024	KAYLA BURGESS	11/18/2024	778.65	8.09	770.56
Subtotal					778.65	8.09	770.56
TAX DISTRICT: BURKE COUNTY RELEASE REASON: Value Change							
0000060643-2023-2023-0000-00-REG	WAL-MART REAL ESTATE	7/3/2023	AMANDA CONLEY	11/25/2024	94,980.11	8,180.11	86,800.00
0024033829-2024-2024-0000-00-REG	BERKOWITZ, HILLARY J	7/15/2024	AMANDA CONLEY	11/12/2024	1,015.06	374.08	640.98
Subtotal					95,995.17	8,554.19	87,440.98
Grand Total					105,850.16	11,455.34	94,394.82

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. At the request of the Chairman, Mr. Bridgers explained how releases and refunds originate and how the software processes them. Commissioner Barrier highlighted that many Burke County citizens are unaware that turning in a license plate and presenting the receipt to the Tax Office could make them eligible for a prorated tax refund. He inquired about what happens to unclaimed refunds. Mr. Bridgers

explained that unclaimed funds go into the general fund since the Tax Office cannot verify if a plate has been turned in without a receipt. When asked if data could be compiled on how often this occurs, Mr. Bridgers stated it was not possible to generate such a report because the necessary data was unavailable. He added that the DMV should inform individuals to provide the receipt to the Tax Office when surrendering a plate.

Brian Epley, County Manager, noted that the State of North Carolina took over motor vehicle billing and collection in 2017. The state now collects vehicle tax revenue for counties and disperses the revenue to the counties, leaving Burke County without a detailed ledger linking tags to vehicles or taxpayers.

Commissioner Barrier advocated for enhanced communication to ensure taxpayers are informed about their eligibility for prorated refunds when turning in plates, which Mr. Epley stated is doable. Mr. Bridgers further clarified that no refund applies if the plate is turned in, but the vehicle remains in the taxpayer's possession, as the vehicle is still taxable.

With no further discussion, this item was moved, without objection, to the next meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

TAX DEPT. - TAX COLLECTION REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024

John Bridgers, Tax Administrator, presented the Tax Collection Report for the period ending November 30, 2024, as follows:

Category	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	\$38,464,292.08	70.20%	\$16,328,886.92
Motor Vehicle Tax	\$2,263,249.54	44.59%	\$2,812,994.46
Current Year Taxes	\$40,727,541.62	68.03%	\$19,141,881.38
Delinquent Taxes	\$328,001.64	46.86%	\$371,998.36
Penalty & Interest	\$129,802.41	39.45%	\$199,197.59

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	\$57,080,587.94	\$38,464,292.08	67.39%	\$18,616,295.86

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the following members' terms on the 11-member Public Health Advisory Board end December 31st:

Seat No. 1	Jessi Stout (Pharmacist) is interested in serving another 3-year term.
Seat No. 3	This seat is for a veterinarian and is vacant.
Seat No. 5	Isaac Crouch (Optometrist or Private Citizen) is interested in serving another 3-year term. Additional applications on file: William Reid (Applied in 2023 to serve on the Board of Health), Jacob Brown, Dillon Smith and Crystal Gupton.
Seat No. 7	This seat is for a registered nurse and is vacant. An application was received from Joset Taylor and her appointment is requested.
Seat No. 9	Camey Ervin (At-Large) is interested in serving another 3-year term. Additional applications on file: William Reid (Applied in 2023 to serve on the Board of Health), Jacob Brown, Dillon Smith and Crystal Gupton.

Seat No.	Position	Name-Address		Term
1	Pharmacist	Jessi Stout	A-UT R TE	12/20/2022 12/31/2024
5	Optometrist Or Private Citizen	Isaac Crouch	A-UT R TE	3/17/2020 3/15/2022 12/31/2024
7	Registered Nurse	Vacant	A-UT R TE	 12/31/2026
9	At-Large	Camey Ervin	A-UT TE	12/19/2023 12/31/2024

After a few clarifying statements, Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, this item was moved without objection to the following meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS OR REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE LIBRARY BOTS

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that the Library Board of Trustees is a 9-member advisory board that meets quarterly and provides guidance on the County's three (3) libraries. The terms of appointment for Browning Rochefort (Seat No. 1, Morganton – City) and Mark Patrick (Seat No. 4, At-large) on the Library Board of Trustees end December 31, 2024. Both members desire reappointment. There are two (2) applications on file for Seat No. 4, one (1) from Loch Hoffman (east) and one (1) from Janice Gravely (west). Currently, five (5) of the nine (9) members are from the eastern portion of Burke County. The term is for three (3) years.

1	Morganton - City	Browning Rochefort	A-UT R TE	1/21/2020 12/21/2021 12/31/2024
4	At-Large	Mark Patrick 102 Mimosa Hills Drive Morganton NC 28655	A R R TE	12/21/2021 12/31/2024

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS OR REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE TDA

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, stated that on the Tourism Development Authority, the terms of appointment end December 31, 2024, for Samantha Reid (Seat No. 4, Collector of Occupancy Taxes Hotel / Motel), Dianne Reihl (Seat No. 6, Travel / Tourism At-large) and Mitch Kerce (Seat No. 8, Collector of Occupancy Taxes Hotel / Motel). All three (3) members desire reappointment and the terms are for two (2) years.

4	COT Hotel/Motel	Samantha Reid 404 Avery Avenue Morganton NC 28655	A-UT	1/21/2020
			R	12/15/2020
			R	12/20/2022
			TE	12/31/2024
6	Travel/Tourism At-Large	Dianne Reihl 1588 Watkins Court Morganton NC 28655	A-UT	1/21/2020
			R	12/15/2020
			R	12/20/2022
			TE	12/31/2024
8	COT Hotel/Motel	Mitch Kerce 115 Bush Drive Morganton NC	A-UT	1/21/2020
			R	12/15/2020
				12/20/2022
			TE	12/31/2024

In addition to the members' applications, the following application is on file: Mandy Nix. Ms. Nix is a collector of occupancy tax.

Further, in accordance with the TDA's authorizing legislation, the Board must designate one (1) member of the Authority as chair. Vice Chairman Smith, in a prior agenda item concerning commissioner board appointments for 2025, is slated to serve on the Tourism Development Authority.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

REPORTS

PHM - UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPT. 30, 2024

Dr. Paul Holden, Regional Director of Partners Health Management (PHM), provided a brief overview of his company. He explained that the State of North Carolina has four (4) managed care organizations (MCOs) responsible for behavioral health and substance use services, with PHM being one (1) that serves 15 counties.

Dr. Holden outlined the four Medicaid options available:

1. Standard Plan: Recipients choose a plan, and one (1) of four (4) participating insurance

companies reimburses the provider.

2. Medicaid Direct: Recipients do not select a plan but instead choose a provider that accepts Medicaid. PHM typically contracts with these providers, receiving and processing invoices directly.
3. Tailored Plan: This option is designed for individuals with significant challenges, including intellectual or developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, mental health issues, or substance use disorders.
4. Care Management: Although PHM does not deliver direct services, it employs Care Managers who assist individuals in coordinating their various needs, including physical health, pharmacy, and behavioral health services.

Dr. Holden then provided an update on mental health services and expenditures for the period ending September 30, 2024. The highlights of which were as follows:

 PARTNERS Improving Lives. Strengthening Communities. Supporting Burke County Paul R. Holden, Ph.D. (Regional Director) pholden@partnersbhm.org	Members Served <u>Medicaid Members</u> - Partners providers served 4207 unduplicated Burke County Medicaid members (12 rolling months ending September 30, 2024) - Medicaid penetration rate is 48% <u>Non-Medicaid funded Recipients</u> 631 unduplicated individuals were served (12 rolling months ending September 30, 2024)  11/14/2024																																																		
Members Served (12 months ending 9-30-24) <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>Medicaid</th> <th>Non-Medicaid</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Intellectual Developmental Disabilities</td> <td>Child (Age 3-21)</td> <td>116</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adult (Over 21)</td> <td>463</td> <td>44</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Mental Health</td> <td>Child (Age 3-21)</td> <td>1,050</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adult (Over 21)</td> <td>1,781</td> <td>362</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Substance Use</td> <td>Child (Age 3-21)</td> <td>30</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adult (Over 21)</td> <td>767</td> <td>204</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>  11/14/2024 3			Medicaid	Non-Medicaid	Intellectual Developmental Disabilities	Child (Age 3-21)	116	1	Adult (Over 21)	463	44	Mental Health	Child (Age 3-21)	1,050	20	Adult (Over 21)	1,781	362	Substance Use	Child (Age 3-21)	30	0	Adult (Over 21)	767	204	Members Served (12 months ending 9-30-24) <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2"></th> <th>Medicaid</th> <th>Non-Medicaid</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (TOTAL: \$28,417,989)</td> <td>Child (Age 3-21)</td> <td>\$784,872</td> <td>\$23,848</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adult (Over 21)</td> <td>\$27,416,736</td> <td>\$192,533</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Mental Health (TOTAL: \$20,597,097)</td> <td>Child (Age 3-21)</td> <td>\$11,658,948</td> <td>\$5,742</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adult (Over 21)</td> <td>\$7,931,719</td> <td>\$1,000,688</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Substance Use (TOTAL: \$3,794,203)</td> <td>Child (Age 3-21)</td> <td>\$54,176</td> <td>\$0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adult (Over 21)</td> <td>\$3,239,490</td> <td>\$500,537</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>  11/14/2024 4			Medicaid	Non-Medicaid	Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (TOTAL: \$28,417,989)	Child (Age 3-21)	\$784,872	\$23,848	Adult (Over 21)	\$27,416,736	\$192,533	Mental Health (TOTAL: \$20,597,097)	Child (Age 3-21)	\$11,658,948	\$5,742	Adult (Over 21)	\$7,931,719	\$1,000,688	Substance Use (TOTAL: \$3,794,203)	Child (Age 3-21)	\$54,176	\$0	Adult (Over 21)	\$3,239,490	\$500,537
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Burke County Funds	Burke County Funds
Expenditures 7-1-24 to 10-31-24	Services 7-1-24 to 9-30-24
- Burke Detention Center - Correctional Behavioral Health (TOTAL Expended: \$16,253) Budget: \$48,760 - Catawba Valley Healthcare - Substance Use Services in Detention Center (TOTAL Expended: \$27,216) Budget: \$58,300 - MORES Program Family Partner (TOTAL Expended: \$13,557) Budget: \$20,000 - Psychiatric Support (TOTAL Expended: \$22,900) Budget: \$72,140	- Burke Detention Center - Correctional Behavioral Health (Online Services) Total Number of Inmates Served: 81 Number of Sessions: 119 Inmates Under Suicide Watch: 38 - Catawba Valley Healthcare - Substance Use Services in Detention Center Total Number of Inmates Served: 100 Number of Encounters: 268 - MORES Program Family Partner Total Number Served: 16 - Psychiatric Support Total Number of Clients: 271 Number of Encounters: 376
 11/14/24 6	 11/14/24 6
Questions?	

Partners Health Management (PHM) has been actively collaborating with Ashley Jarrett, Assistant Health Director, Health Department, James Robinson, EMS Director, EMS, and Dillon Sain, Student Services Director, Burke County Public Schools, to address behavioral health needs in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. PHM recently launched a co-responders program, which began operations a few weeks ago. As part of this initiative, two (2) PHM representatives accompanied EMS teams to assess the community's needs. There will be an upcoming meeting to determine if there is a need to keep the program running, but Dr. Holden did not think it was likely as he highlighted the resiliency of Burke County residents who have worked to rebuild their lives.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Dr. Holden responded to a question from Commissioner Stroud about the location of PHM as well as the providers. There being no further discussion, this item was moved without objection to the following meeting.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

SS/VS - OPERATIONAL UPDATE FROM SENIOR SERVICES & VETERAN SERVICES

Roxanne Powell, Senior Services Director, stated that she, as well as Molly Eller, Veteran Services Officer, will present operational updates from the Senior Services and Veteran Services departments at the regular meeting.

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

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE NEXT MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.

DSS - MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024

Korey Fisher-Wellman, DSS Director, presented a monthly operational report. It is crucial for elected officials to stay informed about the activities, trends, and accomplishments of the

Department of Social Services (DSS) due to the department's critical role in safeguarding vulnerable populations and promoting community well-being. DSS addresses essential social needs such as child welfare, healthcare access, and support for low-income families, making it integral to public health and safety. Moreover, with DSS receiving approximately 40% of Burke County's total county budget allocations, elected officials must have a clear understanding of how funds are utilized to ensure responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. This knowledge allows officials to make informed decisions, advocate for necessary resources, and maintain transparency with constituents regarding the department's impact on the community. Highlights of Mr. Fisher-Wellman's presentation were as follows:

December 2, 2024

SOCIAL SERVICES

DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT

Presented by Korey Fisher-Wellman



DISCUSSION TOPICS

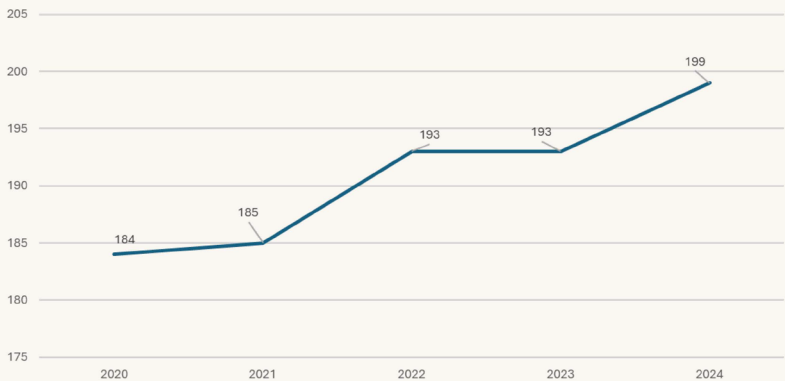


- PERSONNEL
- OPERATIONS
- CAPITAL UPDATE
- EMERGING ISSUES

PERSONNEL



Total FTE's



Year	Total FTE's
2020	184
2021	185
2022	193
2023	193
2024	199

THE BURKECOUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES HAS AN FTE ALLOCATION OF 199 POSITIONS. THIS HAS GROWN SUBSTANTIALLY OVER THE PAST FIVE (5) YEARS – SPECIFICALLY FOLLOWING A STAFFING ANALYSIS IN 2021. WE ADDITIONALLY ADDED SIX (6) FTES IN 2023 FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL OF MEDICAID EXPANSION IN DECEMBER 2023.

Hirings and Separations Report

Current Open Positions

Accounting Tech IV	52043	Conditional
IMC II	51820	Conditional
IMC II	51369	
IMC III	51815	Conditional
IMC I	51364	
IMC I	51358	
IMC II	51365	
IMC II	51785	
IMC II	51653	
IMC III LEADWORKER	52045	
IMC III	51342	
IMC III LEADWORKER	51901	
SOCIAL WORKER IAS&T	51438	
PT PROCESSING ASST IV	51481	Final
SOCIAL WORKER IAS&T	51436	
SOCIAL WORKER IAS&T	51864	
SOCIAL WORKER IAS&T	51866	
SOCIAL WORKER IAS&T	51440	
SOCIAL WORKER III	51867	
SOC WORK SUPV III	51788	Final
PT PROCESSING ASST IV	52051	

Separation and Hirings over the Last 30 Days

Separations:

Total = 7

Voluntary Resignation = 7

Number of Hirings:

Total = 5

Social Worker IA&T = 1

Part Time Social Worker IA&T = 1

After Hours Placement Support Specialist = 1

Social Work Supervisor III = 2

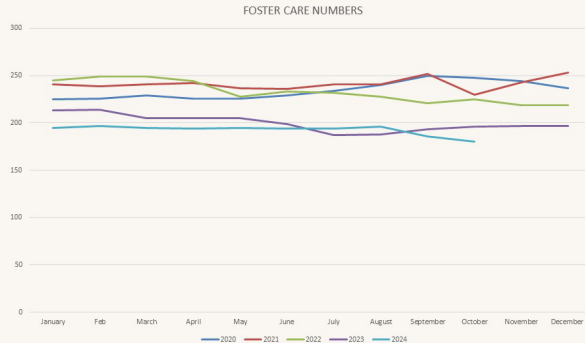
OPERATIONS

Economic Services MOU Data

IN 2017 THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY PASSED 2017-41, SECTION 3.3 THAT REQUIRED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT THROUGH AN AGREED UPON MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE STATE DHHS AND ALL NC COUNTIES. THE MOU HAS 13 SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE METRICS. SEE BELOW FOR CURRENT STATE OF BURKE COUNTY BY METRICS:

METRICS PER MOU			
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES	APP TIMELINESS RATE - REGULAR	APP TIMELINESS RATE - EXPEDITE	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE
	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
WORK FIRST FAMILY ASSISTANCE AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES			
	APPLICATION TIMELINESS	RECERT TIMELINESS RATE	
	Achieved	Achieved	
MEDICAID			
	REPORT CARD MAD	REPORT CARD OTHER	Straight Through Processing
	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE	SAA TIMELINESS APPLICATIONS	SAD TIMELINESS APPLICATIONS	
	Achieved	Achieved	
ENERGY PROGRAMS	% PROCESSED TIMELY - NO SOURCE 1 DAY	% PROCESSED TIMELY - WITH SOURCE 2 DAYS	
	Achieved	Achieved	
CHILD CARE SUBSIDY	APPLICATION TIMELINESS		
	Achieved		

CHILD WELFARE UPDATE



Since October 2020, there has been a 28.3% decrease in the number of children experiencing foster care in Burke County.

• October Foster Care Data

- 4 children entered care
- 9 children exited care
 - 2 through adoption
 - 7 through guardianship

• October CPS Screening Data

- 123 Total Reports
 - 32 Screen outs
 - 81 screen ins
 - 10 screened for other counties

- **Currently there are 184 children experiencing foster care and 295 open CPS Cases**

CAPITAL UPDATE

CAPITAL UPDATE



Recent Building Update–

General Services recently completed the installation of a new shower, along with a washer and dryer within the building. This upgrade greatly enhances convince, particularly when we have a child who is staying overnight. With the new shower facilities on-site, there is no longer a need to relay on off-site showers, ensuring that the child had immediate access to necessary amenities. This improvement provides comfort and ease, helping create a more welcoming and homelike environment for children staying in the building.

LONG TERM BUILDING –

- Evaluation of options is currently underway.
- 3 options have been identified thus far:
 - a. New Construction
 - b. HRC Renovations
 - c. FHEC Adaptive Reuse Project

EMERGING ISSUES

IDENTIFIED MATTERS

01



LIMITED CHILD PLACEMENT OPTIONS

DSS continues to face a shortage of foster homes and care resources, impacting child welfare. Exploring partnerships and recruitment strategies to address the issue.

02



Continued Workforce Shortages

As the workforce continues to shrink, we are actively partnering with local colleges and universities to build a pipeline of skilled professionals. These collaborations are crucial to addressing staffing gaps and ensuring a future workforce capable of meeting our community's needs

**CHRISTMAS WISHES FOR
BURKE COUNTY**

Approximately 200 children are
experiencing foster care in Burke County

This year's goal is 500 donors to
help fill all the tags!

Return gifts with the original name tag you are given
DO NOT wrap gifts, place in a bag for drop off with tag
New Items ONLY

IF YOU CANNOT FULLY
SPONSOR, BUT STILL WISH TO
HELP WE ALSO NEED THE
FOLLOWING DONATIONS

- unwrapped toys for all ages
- gift cards for teens/ children
entering care after the deadlines
- new clothing of all sizes

**\$30 to \$50
PER TAG**

TAGS WILL GO TO DONORS THE
WEEK OF OCT. 28

RETURN GIFTS TO BURKE COUNTY DSS BETWEEN NOV. 11 AND NOV. 27
Contact Deputy Director Chazlyn Thomas if you would like to participate and to
drop off donated items
email: chazlyn.thomas@burkenc.org or phone: 828-764-9625

Christmas Wishes Update

Kids- 205 each with 2 tags

Young Adults- 20 with 2 tags

Sponsors- 148 with some sponsoring 1
tag and some sponsoring up to 15 tags.



Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Commissioner Stroud raised concerns about foster children staying overnight at the DSS office. Mr. Fisher-Wellman explained that this is a temporary measure used when children are without a placement or in between homes. This situation typically arises with children who have higher behavioral needs, making it more challenging to find suitable placements. Commissioner Stroud asked for more details about the behavioral needs. Mr. Fisher-Wellman described them as severe and noted a broader issue—a nationwide shortage of behavioral health placement facilities, compounded by a lack of general foster placements. He mentioned that approximately 23 children statewide sleep in DSS offices each night. When Commissioner Stroud asked whether these children were

capable of working, Mr. Fisher-Wellman responded that while they could work, living in a DSS office was not ideal. He noted the challenge of securing a job without a placement is that the child might be moved to another county. Commissioner Barrier inquired about how frequently this occurs locally. Mr. Fisher-Wellman stated that since January 1, 2024, children have spent the night in the DSS office for approximately 240 days. With no further discussion, Chairman Brittain proceeded to the next item of business.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

CM – HURRICANE HELENE DEBRIS PICKUP

At the request of Chairman Brittain, County Manager Brian Epley provided an update on the progress of debris pickup following Hurricane Helene. Mr. Epley reported that additional contractors are being mobilized each week to accelerate the cleanup process. The county estimates approximately 400,000 cubic yards of residential debris, and Burke County was the first in the region to secure FEMA approval for commercial debris collection, estimated at an additional 200,000–250,000 cubic yards.

Mr. Epley highlighted that there are two (2) FEMA-approved staging areas at the landfill, with additional alternative sites being set up at the fairgrounds and other locations. Thus far, approximately 75,000–80,000 cubic yards of debris have been collected. The next priority will focus on the waterways.

He also noted that debris collection for private properties, such as gated communities, is typically not FEMA reimbursable. However, an exception has been made for Hurricane Helene, which is expected to streamline that process. Additionally, Burke County has become the first in the state to secure an air quality permit for air curtain burning—a method of incinerating debris. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) plans to showcase Burke County as a best-practice model for handling large volumes of debris, given the challenges of staging and chipping such material, both of which are time-intensive processes with logistical limitations.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions and comments and requested further clarification on the staging sites. Mr. Epley explained that the staging areas help reduce traffic by dispersing debris drop-off to multiple locations, which minimizes travel distances from collection points.

A discussion followed regarding disposal methods. Commissioner Burns shared concerns raised by citizens about air quality impacts. Mr. Epley assured the Board that any site permitted for air curtain burning undergoes sampling both before and after burning to ensure compliance with air quality standards. He added that burning will be conducted at the landfill, while staging sites serve primarily to reduce traffic and streamline operations.

BOC – REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Chairman Brittain reminded citizens about the county beautification project where people can report areas of litter that need to be addressed via the county's website. He also issued reminders for the Christmas Parade and county holiday closures.

ACTION ITEMS**BOC - RESOLUTION AMENDING 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Chairman Brittain stated that the following resolution amends the Commissioners' 2024 meeting schedule by moving the December 17th regular meeting to Monday, December 16th at 6:00 p.m. due to a scheduling conflict.

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2024-30.

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

Resolution No.2024-30 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

WHEREAS, last December, the Burke County Board of Commissioners adopted its regular meeting schedule for 2024, designating the third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. for regular meetings, unless otherwise noted; and

WHEREAS, a scheduling conflict has arisen for the December 17, 2024, regular meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to reschedule the December meeting to ensure full participation and accommodate the needs of its members and the public;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Burke County Board of Commissioners as follows:

1. Amended Meeting Date: The regular meeting previously scheduled for Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. is hereby rescheduled to Monday, December 16, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.
2. Meeting Location: The meeting will take place at the Burke County Services Building, Commissioners' Meeting Room, 110 N. Green Street, Morganton, NC, unless otherwise noted.
3. Public Notice: The Clerk to the Board is directed to provide proper public notice of this change in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes, including updating the county's website and notifying local media.
4. Effective Date: This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

Adopted this 2nd day of December 2024.

/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

ADJOURN

Motion: To adjourn at 4:11 p.m.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**

MOVER: Brian Barrier, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

Approved this 17th day of February 2025.


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

Attest:


Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board