

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

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, December 16, 2024, at 6:00 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 6:01 p.m.

INVOCATION

Pastor David Bridges, First Apostolic Church of Morganton, delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Destin Hall, County Attorney, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended: with the addition of Presentation No. 3, Storm Update & Decision Item No. 4, Approval of Contract for the County Attorney.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: To approve the minutes of September 3, 2024 (pre-agenda) and September 17, 2024 (regular) meetings as written.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Phil Smith, Vice Chairman

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

PRESENTATIONS

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

Brian Epley, County Manager, reported that the County has been awarded, for the third 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. The Board was asked to recognize and congratulate the Finance Department for this outstanding achievement.

Margaret Pierce, Finance Director / Deputy County Manager, commended her staff for their hard work putting together the report. She highlighted that staff include statistical data and a letter of transmittal, both of which are not required as part of their report.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Commissioner Burns expressed appreciation for the Finance staff. There being no further discussion, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To recognize and congratulate the Finance Department for being awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

SHERIFF - RECOGNITION OF RETIREMENT FOR MACHO - K9 OFFICER

Sheriff Banks Hinceman honored Macho, a dedicated K9 officer, on his well-deserved retirement. Macho 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. He is the last canine with the Sheriff's Office. His contributions to public safety and his steadfast partnership with his handler have left a lasting impact on the community. Macho was accompanied by his handler, Lieutenant Tim Branch, Mrs. Dawn Branch and their granddaughter Piper.



Key achievements of Macho's distinguished career include:

- Participating in 230 K9 utilizations
- Conducting 27 building searches
- Tracking one (1) suspect, resulting in an arrest
- Performing 129 vehicle searches
- Contributing to the seizure of 235 grams of marijuana
- Assisting in the seizure of 1,138 grams of methamphetamines
- Playing a role in 32 controlled substance arrests

- Being a good boy

Sheriff Hinceman presented Lieutenant Branch and Macho with a commemorative plaque to honor their contributions to the community and the Sheriff's Office.



Motion: To recognize Macho and acknowledge his years of dedicated service and contributions to the citizens of Burke County.

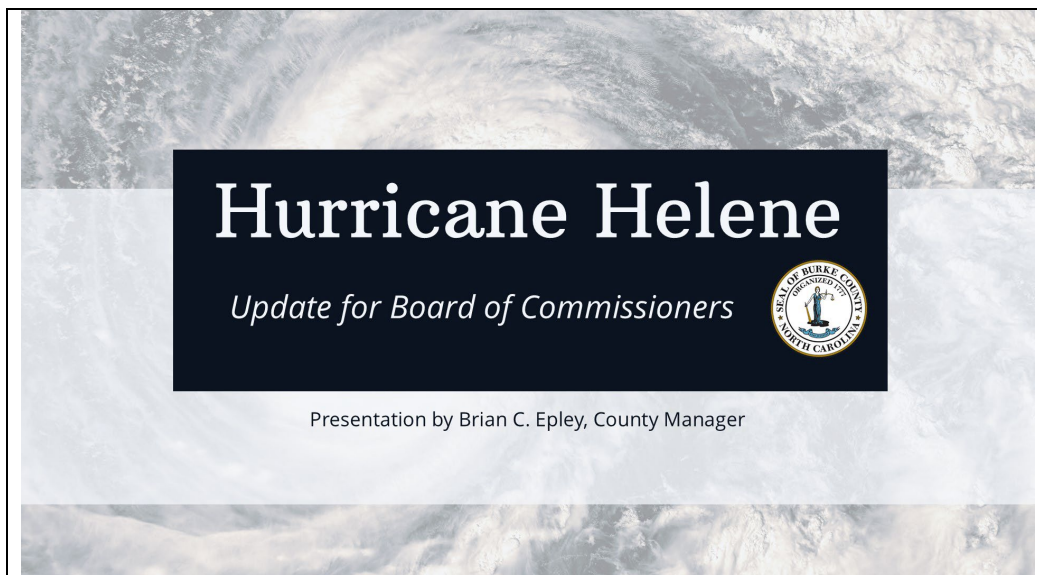
RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Phil Smith, Vice Chairman

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

CM - STORM UPDATE

Brian Epley, County Manager, presented an update on the recovery from Hurricane Helene, highlights of which were as follows:



Day 79

- The Disaster Recovery Center at the Foothills Education Center has had **2,094** visits since it opened on **October 19th**.

Individual and Households Program Total Registrations: 12,878

Individual and Households Program Eligible	7,028	55%
Pending Applicant Action	1,432	11%
Pending FEMA Action	242	2%
Not Eligible (IHP)	2,106	16%
Did Not Report Disaster Related Need	2,079	16%

Total IHP Eligible \$11,119,155
 Repair or Replacement: \$2,698,159
 Rental Assistance: \$10,602
 Other Needs Assistance: \$8,410,394
 # Personal Property, Serious Needs, Funeral, Medical, Clean and Sanitize, Displacement

Registration By Method

Method	Number	Percent
Call Center	2,344	18%
Disaster Survivor Asst.	317	2%
Internet	10,055	79%
Total	5,996	

Self-Assessed Damage Level

Minor	6,487	50%
Moderate	1,428	11%
Major	374	3%
Destroyed	172	1%
Unknown	626	5%
Did Not Answer	3,791	29%

Transitional Sheltering Assistance

Currently Checked in: 196 (405 members)
 Ever Checked in: 378

Housing Inspections

Issued	3,705	
Returned	3,621	97.73%
Pending	84	2.27%



Current Status - Debris Removal

FEMA Requirements:

Monitoring of the debris removal operations is required. For FEMA to determine the eligibility of debris removal operations, the County must provide debris types, quantities, reduction methods, and pickup and disposal locations. FEMA requires the County to monitor all contracted debris operations to document this information and ensure that its contractor removes eligible debris. The applicant may use force account resources (including temporary hires), contractors or a combination of these for monitoring.

Private Debris Management Contractors:

The county has contracted with Debris Tech for tagging and SDR for Debris Removal.

Debris Sites

We currently have 3 Debris Sites where Debris is hauled and properly removed.

Debris Sites

- Temporary disaster debris staging/storage areas are required in order to handle the large amounts of debris generated after a storm.
- The first staging site was permitted through our County landfill.
- 2 Alternative sites have been acquired: Burke County Fairgrounds, and a site off of Jenkins Rd. in Salem, NC.



Landfill Sites 1 & 2



Burke County Fairgrounds



Jenkins Rd.

• Air Curtain Incinerators



Efficient Debris Reduction: Quickly converts vegetative debris to ash on-site.

- **FEMA-Approved:** Complies with disaster recovery guidelines.
- **Eco-Friendly:** Minimizes emissions and produces usable biochar.
- **Cost-Effective:** Cuts transportation and landfill expenses.
- **Portable:** Easily deployable to impacted areas.

Debris Removal



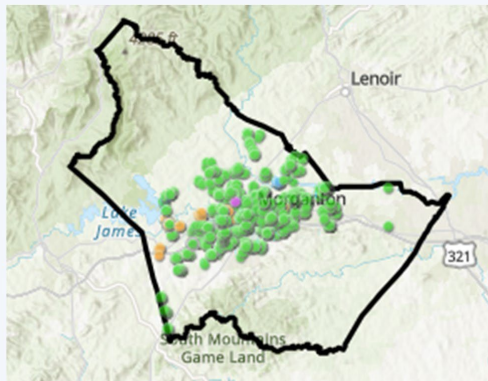
101K Cubic Yards

To date 101,900 Cubic Yards of Debris have been removed from Burke County. The work continues as there is over 600,000 Cubic Yards in total for Burke County



27 Trucks

On average, we have 27 trucks going out daily for debris removal. This includes trucks for vegetative debris, commercial and demolition, as well as pick-up for white goods.



Tickets Today	Removed Today (CY)	Removed To Date (CY)
77	1.6k	101.9k

Emerging Issues & Next Steps



● Waterway Debris

- Debris from waterways that is necessary to eliminate an immediate threat to life, public health and safety or improved property is eligible for removal.
- There are 2 Options for waterway removal, **Option 1** -is to follow our process for debris removal contracting with a debris management consultant, or **Option 2** – is to use the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



● Option 1

Private Debris Management Contractors

Pros:

- Quick mobilization, customizable to county needs.
- FEMA-compliant processes for reimbursement.
 - 100% for 180 Days (currently at 75 days)
- Scalable resources for large/complex projects.

Cons:

- Higher costs, competitive bidding may delay start.
- Requires county oversight to ensure compliance.

● Option 2

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Pros:

- Expertise in clearing navigable waterways.
- They will take care of preapproval and authorization to access private properties
- Simplifies FEMA coordination and public trust.

Cons:

- Hands-off approach, giving county less influence with regards of timing.

● Gated Communities

Public vs. Private Areas:

Disaster Recovery guidelines focus on clearing debris in public spaces. For gated communities, access can be restricted, requiring coordination with private entities (homeowner associations) for entry.

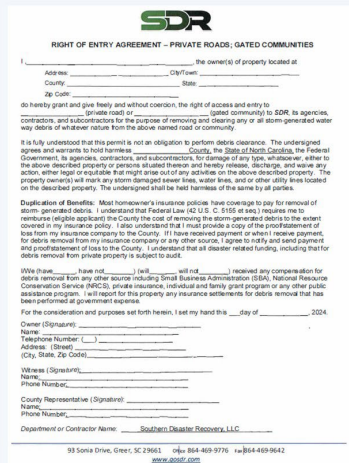
FEMA & State Policies:

Debris removal may be extended to private areas if it impacts public safety. Local governments may need to negotiate access with community associations or homeowners to ensure cleanup compliance.

Going Forward

- Work with community leaders for gate access.
- Ensure compliance with FEMA's guidelines for safety and reimbursement.

Gated Community Process



SDR
RIGHT OF ENTRY AGREEMENT - PRIVATE ROADS, GATED COMMUNITIES

I, _____, the owner(s) of property located at:
Address: _____, City/Town: _____, State: _____, Zip Code: _____

do hereby grant and give freely and without coercion, the right of access and entry to (private road) or (gated community) to SDR, its agencies, contractors, and subcontractors for the purpose of removing and clearing any or all storm-generated water way debris of whatever nature from the above named road or community.

It is fully understood that this permit is not an obligation to perform debris clearance. The undersigned agrees and warrants to hold harmless _____ County, the State of North Carolina, the Federal Government, its agencies, contractors, and subcontractors, for damage of any type, whatsoever, either to the above described property or persons situated thereon and hereby releases, discharges, and waives any action, either legal or equitable that might arise out of any activities on the above described property. The property owner(s) will mark any storm damaged sewer lines, water lines, and/or other utility lines located on the described property. The undersigned shall be held harmless of the same by all parties.

Duplication of Benefits: Most homeowners' insurance policies have coverage to pay for removal of storm-generated debris. I understand that Federal Law (42 U.S.C. §155 et seq.) requires me to reimburse my insurance policy. I also understand that I must provide a copy of the proffstatement of loss from my insurance company to the County. If I have received payment or when I receive payment, for debris removal from my insurance company or any other source, I agree to notify and send payment and proffstatement of loss to the County. I understand that all disaster-related funding, including disaster debris removal from private property is subject to audit.

While I have _____ have not _____ will not _____ received any compensation for debris removal from any other source including Small Business Administration (SBA), National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), private insurance, individual and family grant program or any other public assistance program, I will report for this property any insurance settlements for debris removal that has been performed at government expense.

For the consideration and purposes set forth herein, I set my hand this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Owner (Signature): _____
Name: _____
Telephone Number: (____) _____
Address: (Street) _____
(City, State, Zip Code) _____

Witness (Signature): _____
Name: _____
Phone Number: _____

County Representative (Signature): _____
Name: _____
Phone Number: _____

Department or Contractor Name: Southern Disaster Recovery, LLC

33 Sonja Drive, Greer, SC 29615 ☎ 864-469-9776 📠 864-469-9642
www.sdrllc.com

● Identified Communities

- Long Arm
- Paradise Harbor
- Wilderness Edge Subdivision
- High Peak Estates
- Silver Creek Springs
- Laurel Ridge
- Pisgah Preserve
- Harbor Ridge
- Lake Vista
- Pine Mountain
- Enclave
- Upper Creek Community
- Silver Creek Plantation
- Paddy's Creek Gate Code
- River Club Gate Code
- Lake Rhodhiss Estates

● Next Steps for Debris Removal

- **Obtain Signatures:**
 - Get signed authorization letters from official community reps.
- **Access Gate Codes:**
 - Secure gate codes for restricted areas.
- **Collaborate with SDR:**
 - Work with SDR to manage tagging and debris removal.

Home Mitigation Block Grant



Steve McGugan

Assistant Director - Hazard Mitigation

● Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP): Reducing Future Risks After Disasters

- County residents can receive funding to make their homes more resilient through home projects that reduce the long-term risk and impacts of natural hazards, such as floods, wildfires, and storms.
- The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is a FEMA-funded initiative aimed at reducing or eliminating future damages and losses following a disaster. While federally funded, the program is managed in North Carolina by the Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Management.

For property owners, HMGP offers funding for various mitigation strategies, including elevation, home mitigation reconstruction, and acquisition.

- The **elevation project** raises the home as is, demolishes the old foundation, and builds a new foundation that raises the first floor approximately 2 feet above the 100-year flood elevation. In this project, the homeowner is provided temporary lodging while work is done on the home, nothing is moved out of the home.
- The **mitigation reconstruction project** is used when it is determined a home cannot be raised due to the home's instability. The program will move out all the household furnishings and store them, provide temporary lodging, demolish the old home, build a new foundation at 2 feet above 100-year flood elevation and build a new home on the foundation. These are contractor grade homes, no custom furnishings.
- The **acquisition project** buys the property from the homeowner, at the value of the property the day prior to the disaster, once the homeowner relocates, the home is demolished, and the property remains as greenspace into perpetuity.

In all three of these projects, FEMA provides 75% of the cost and the state pays the 25% match, **there is no cost to the homeowner**. The program does not have an income requirement and is intended to assist all of those impacted by the disaster.

Participation in the program is entirely voluntary and property owners may withdraw their applications anytime.



Tax Reassessment of Disaster-Damaged Property



Form Distribution

A form will be included with January 2nd tax bills. Citizens with property damage should complete and return it within 30 days.



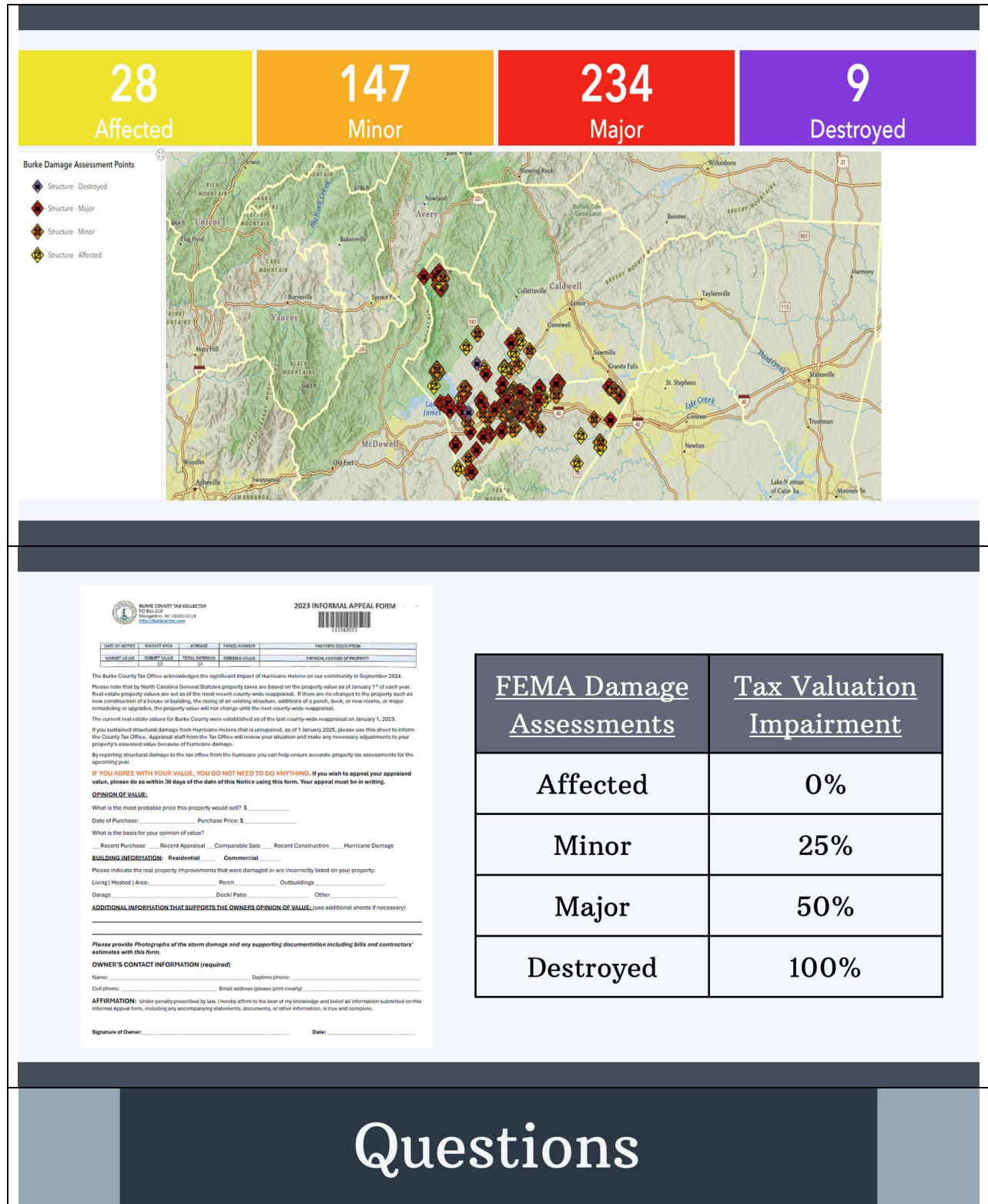
Review & Reevaluation

Tax Assessors will review submissions, and appraisers will conduct site visits for property reevaluations.



Completion Timeline

The county aims to have the assessment of lost property value completed by the end of February.



Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions and comments. Commissioner Stroud and Mr. Epley discussed various Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMG) opportunities, focusing on scenarios where a homeowner might sell their property while neighbors choose to elevate theirs. Mr.

Epley clarified that a neighborhood does not need to be unanimous in what, if any, part of the HMG options are utilized, which could result in a vacant lot between two (2) elevated homes.

Commissioner Burns asked clarifying questions about property tax evaluations, which Mr. Epley addressed. Commissioner Barrier also inquired about the FEMA reimbursement deadline, and Mr. Epley provided clarification. Commissioner Barrier further questioned how citizens are made aware of the HMG program, as it is managed by the state. Mr. Epley explained that while the county can advertise the program, the state does not actively reach out to residents; individuals must be proactive in seeking information and applying if interested.

Vice Chairman Smith raised a question regarding the impact of homeowners insurance on HMG eligibility. Mr. Epley confirmed that eligibility is not influenced by whether a person has insurance. Vice Chairman Smith also sought clarity on how fair market value is determined for those participating in the acquisition component of the HMG program; however, Mr. Epley was uncertain about the methodology used to calculate this value.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

RECOGNITION OF MIKE WILLIS' RETIREMENT

Chairman Brittain honored Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Director, Mike Willis, as he celebrated his well-earned retirement. Mr. Willis has dedicated an incredible 40 years of professional service to public safety, with a focus on Emergency Management and fire safety. Mr. Willis expressed his gratitude, stated that it was a pleasure to serve and humorously noted that 43 years is a long time. His unwavering commitment and decades of service have made a lasting impact on the Burke County community, and the Board wished him all the best in his retirement.



Depicted from left to right: Commissioner Stroud, Commissioner Burns, Mike Willis, Vice Chairman Smith, Chairman Brittain, and Commissioner Barrier



Depicted in the front row from left to right: Martha Blanton, John Hood, Mike Willis, Vice Chairman Smith, Commissioner Barrier, and Joey Burleson. Depicted in the back row from left to right: Commissioner Stroud, Commissioner Burns, Chairman Brittain, James Robinson, Matthew Chapman, and Robert Bishop.



Mike Willis and his family.

Mr. Willis expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Burke County and for the recognition.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

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.

Jim Frady, 249 Forest Glen Way, expressed gratitude to the Board and the County for their efforts in supporting the community in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. As an Alderman for the Town of Glen Alpine, Mr. Frady invited county input at their town meetings, highlighting the region's potential for growth and the enthusiasm of its citizens. He mentioned the town recently purchased a large tract of land and is considering future uses. He briefly brought up Simpson Field, which he felt was underutilized. He concluded by thanking the county again and expressing eagerness to work together in the future.

There was no one else to address the Board; therefore, Chairman Brittain closed this portion of the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

At the request of the Board, Brian Epley, County Manager, reviewed the following 15 items on the consent agenda, which were approved by a single motion.

BOC - 2025 COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

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.

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

VEDIC* Term – Until Further Notice	Burns
WPCOG - Policy Board: Alternate	Brittain
WPCOG - Policy Board: Delegate	Burns

*Based on BDI bylaws.

Motion: To approve the slate of Commission appointments for 2025 as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

CLERK - RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE BOC 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

In accordance with N.C.G.S. § 153A-40, the following resolution sets the Board's meeting schedule for 2025.

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2024-27.

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

Resolution No. 2024-27 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION
ESTABLISHING THE REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2025

WHEREAS, in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 153A-40, the Board of Commissioners shall hold a regular meeting at least once a month and the Board may by resolution fix the time and place of its regular meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Burke County Board of Commissioners' agenda setting meetings (aka 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, the pre-agenda meeting in December is on a Monday to avoid conflicting with the Commissioners' participation in the Morganton Christmas Parade which is normally held on the first Tuesday of December; and

WHEREAS, board members requested that regular meetings of the Board of Commissioners are held on the third (3rd) Monday of each month, excluding federal holidays, 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 8:00 a.m. on March 6 and 7, 2025 at the N.C. School of Science & Math's Barn on Burkemont Avenue in Morganton; and

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

- NCACC Annual Conference in Pitt County, Greenville Convention Center, August 21-23, 2025.

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 7, 2025	July – N.A.
February 4, 2025	August – N.A.
March 4, 2025	September 2, 2025
April 1, 2025	October 7, 2025
May 6, 2025	November 4, 2025
June 3, 2025	December 1, 2025*

*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 21, 2025*	July 21, 2025
February 17, 2025	August 18, 2025
March 17, 2025	September 15, 2025
April 21, 2025	October 20, 2025
May 19, 2025	November 17, 2025
June 16, 2025	December 15, 2025

*Tuesday

- (3) Establishes the following workshop meetings:

March 6, 2025	8:00 a.m.	The Barn at the NC School of Science & Math 901 Burkemont Avenue, Morganton
March 7, 2025	8:00 a.m.	

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 16th 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

BOC - ADOPTION OF RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR 2025

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.

Note: The Rules are hereby incorporated into the meeting minutes by reference.

Motion: To adopt the 2025 Rules of Procedure for the Burke County Board of Commissioners as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

CLERK - CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION TEAM RE-STRUCTURING

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 requires 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 requests the Commissioners' confirmation of this operational model.

Motion: To confirm the designation of the Burke Child Fatality Prevention Team / Community Child Protection Team as a single county team.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY ACTION

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 people 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 Cline 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					

Motions: To remove Michael Cloy's name from the official roster for Blue Ridge Community Action and thank him for his service to the community. To appoint Rickie Shaun Cline (Seat No. 1) to the Blue Ridge Community Action Board of Directors for 2-year terms ending December 15, 2026. To reappoint Barbara Myers (Seat No. 2) and James Smith (Seat No. 3) to the Blue Ridge Community Action Board of Directors for 2-year terms ending December 15, 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

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

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.

Motions: To reappoint James Gordon to Seat No. 2 on the Burke County Board of Equalization & Review for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027. To reappoint Doris Smith to Seat No. 4 on the Burke County Board of Equalization & Review for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

CLERK - EMS PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

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 was requested.

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

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

Motion: To remove Nicole Hudson's name from the official roster for the EMS Peer Review Committee and thank her for her service to the community. To appoint Kaylee Pittman to the EMS Peer Review Committee, Seat No. 2 (Nurse) for the remainder of a 2-year term ending November 15, 2026; to appoint Zack Williams to the EMS Peer Review Committee, Seat No. 3 (EMS Personnel) to complete the remainder of a term ending November 15, 2025; to appoint Robert Bishop to Seat No. 5 (E.M.) on EMS PRC for the remainder of a 2-year term ending November 15, 2026; and, to appoint Joey Burleson to the EMS Peer Review Committee, Seat No. 7, First Responder East, to complete the remainder of a term ending November 15, 2025. To reappoint Allen Hudson to the EMS Peer Review Committee, Seat No. 8 (First Responder South) and April Traxler, Seat No. 4 (Medical Facility) to complete the remainder of terms ending November 15, 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

CLERK - APPOINTMENT TO JCPC - SEAT NO. 15

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 was requested.

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

Motion: To remove Brandi Tolbert's name from the JCPC roster and appoint Judge Scott Conrad to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, Seat No. 15, Chief District Court Judge or Designee, to complete the remainder of a 2-year term ending June 30, 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

CLERK - APPOINTMENT TO MORGANTON PLANNING BOARD ETJ

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.

Motion: To appoint Louis Vinay to the Morganton Planning Board for the ETJ (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction) to complete the remainder of a term ending June 3, 2027.

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

CLERK - RESOLUTION AMENDING PLAT REVIEW OFFICERS

As indicated in the following documentation, 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 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. Resolution No. 2024-28, reflects the aforementioned requests from Morganton, Valdese and Rhodhiss.

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2024-28.

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

Resolution No. 2024-28 reads as follows:

BURKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION UPDATING PLAT REVIEW OFFICERS

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Statutes (GS 47-30.2) requires the board of commissioners in each county, by resolution, to appoint persons to serve as Plat Review Officers to review each plat before it is presented to the register of deeds for recording and certify that it meets the statutory requirements for recording; and

WHEREAS, the City of Morganton, via a resolution adopted November 4, 2024, requests the designation of Benjamin Ealy, as a Plat Review Officer for the City of Morganton; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Valdese, via correspondence dated November 21, 2024, requests the appointment of Ashley Young, a staff member at the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, as a Plat Review Officer for the Town of Valdese in the place and stead of Larry Johnson who retired; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Rhodhiss, via correspondence dated November 21, 2024, requests the appointment of Ashley Young, a staff member at the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, as a Plat Review Officer for the Burke County portions of the Town of Rhodhiss.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Burke County Board of Commissioners hereby:

- appoints Benjamin Ealy as a Plat Review Officer for the City of Morganton; and

- appoints Ashley Young as a Plat Review Officer for the Town of Valdese and the Burke County portions of the Town of Rhodhiss; and
- removes Larry Johnson as a Plat Review Officer for the Town of Valdese.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution designating the Plat Review Officers be recorded in the Burke County Register of Deeds Office and indexed in the name of the Review Officers.

Adopted this 17th 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

CLERK - REALIGNMENT OF TERMS FOR THE SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

Currently, the terms for the members of the Social Services Advisory Board end in June, 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 9/30/26
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 9/30/27
Originally appointed by the State on July 1, 2024.		

	Term Ends	Suggested New Term
Seat No. 4 (Mo Schwind)	September 21, 2026	Change to 9/30/26
Originally appointed by the DSS Board with a term of 9/19/23 through 9/21/26.		

	Term Ends	Suggested New Term
Seat 5 (Keith Bowman)	July 1, 2027	Change to 9/30/27
*Originally appointed by the State on July 1, 2024.		

Motion: To approve the new slate of terms for the Social Services Advisory Board members as presented.

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

HR - POLICY MODERNIZATION PRESENTATION

During the pre-agenda meeting, Mark Miller, Human Resources Director, presented proposed 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 – <u>Recruitment and Selection</u> was updated and has been approved by the Board – April 2024
Review Process Process Workflow Steps for Policy Revision <u>Update-</u> • 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 <u>Review-</u> • Review policy drafts with employee listening groups, HR Sub-Committee, Department Heads, legal review, and County Manager. <u>Approve-</u> • 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 <u>Implement-</u> Implement policies, update procedures and rollout to the organization Targeted complete roll-out: April-May 2025 
Up For Review Article 1 – <u>Personnel Administration System</u> 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.

Motion: To approve the draft of Article 1, Personnel Administration System, of the Burke County Personnel Policy as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

SHERIFF - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SALE OF COUNTY-ISSUED K9 MACHO

In accordance with N.C.G.S. § 17F-21 (a) (1), the Sheriff requested 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.

Motion: To adopt Resolution No. 2024-29.

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

Resolution No. 2024-29 reads as follows:

Burke County
North Carolina

Resolution Declaring Property Surplus and Authorizing Sale of County-Issued K9 Pursuant to
North Carolina General Statute 17F-21 (a) (1)

WHEREAS, K9 Macho retired from the Burke County Sheriff's Department on November 8, 2024; and

WHEREAS, K9 Macho was a dedicated law enforcement officer to the citizens of Burke County for more than 8 years; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute 17F-21 (a) (1), permits Burke County to sell a retired service animal, at a price determined by the local government, to the officer or employee who had normal custody and control of the service animal during the animal's public service.

NOW THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BURKE COUNTY HEREBY RESOLVES THAT:

1. K9 Macho be declared surplus property; and
2. Robert "Banks" Hinceman, the Sheriff of Burke County, is authorized to sell K9 Macho upon his retirement to his handler, Lt. Tim Branch, at a set price of \$1.00.

Adopted this the 16th 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

TAX DEPT. - TAX COLLECTION REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024

The Board of Commissioners were presented with the Tax Collection Report for the period ending November 30, 2024, at the pre-agenda meeting 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

Motion: To accept the Tax Collection Report for November 2024 as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

TAX DEPT. - RELEASE REFUND REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024

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 submitted timely

The Board of Commissioners were presented with the following list of releases and refunds for consideration during the pre-agenda meeting. The Net Release results from the Report Amount minus the Rebilled Amount.

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

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

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

[illegible]

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

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for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Browning Rochefort (current member) to the Library Board of Trustees, Seat No. 1, Morganton – City, for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations for Seat No. 4. Commissioner Barrier nominated Mark Patrick. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Mark Patrick to the Library Board of Trustees, Seat No. 4 (at-large), for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Brian Barrier, Commissioner

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

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, relayed 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

There being only one eligible applicant for Seat No. 1, Chairman Brittain opened the floor for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Jessie Stout to the Public Health Advisory Board (Seat No. 1, Pharmacist) for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027.

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

Chairman Brittain explained that Seat No. 5 is statutorily designated for an optometrist but has been open to citizens in past years when no optometrist applied. He noted that the applicant, Dr. Ken Bonfield, met the requirements to fill the seat and then opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Burns nominated Ken Bonfield. With no other nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Dr. Ken Bonfield to the Public Health Advisory Board (Seat No. 5, Optometrist or Private Citizen) for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027.

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

There being only one applicant eligible for Seat No. 7, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Joset Taylor, R.N., to the Public Health Advisory Board (Seat No. 7, Registered Nurse) for the remainder of a term ending December 31, 2026.

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

Chairman Brittain reminded the Board that Isaac Crouch, who was not reappointed to Seat No. 5, remains eligible for appointment to Seat No. 9. He then opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Barrier nominated Crystal Gupton, while Chairman Brittain nominated Isaac Crouch. With no other nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a vote.

Motion: To appoint Crystal Gupton to the Public Health Advisory Board (Seat No. 9, At-large) for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027.

RESULT:	APPROVED [3 TO 2]
MOVER:	Brian Barrier, Commissioner
AYES:	Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, and Mike Stroud
NAYS:	Jeffrey C. Brittain and Randy Burns

Motion: To appoint Isaac Crouch to the Public Health Advisory Board (Seat No. 9, At-large) for a 3-year term ending December 31, 2027.

RESULT:	FAILED [2 TO 3]
MOVER:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain and Randy Burns
NAYS:	Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, and Mike Stroud

CLERK - APPOINTMENTS OR REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE TDA

Kay Draughn, Clerk to the Board, reported that on the Tourism Development Authority, the terms of appointment end on 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.

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, as set forth 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 nominations for Seat No. 4. Vice Chairman Smith nominated Samantha Reid. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Samantha Reid to the Tourism Development Authority Seat No. 4 (COT Hotel/Motel) for a 2-year term ending December 31, 2026.

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

There being only one applicant eligible for Seat No. 6, Chairman Brittain opened the floor for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Dianne Reihl to the Tourism Development Authority Seat No. 6 (Travel / Tourism At-large) for a 2-year term ending December 31, 2026.

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for nominations. Vice Chairman Smith nominated Mitch Kerce. There being no other nominations, Chairman Brittain opened the floor for a motion.

Motion: To reappoint Mitch Kerce to the Tourism Development Authority Seat No. 8 (COT Hotel/Motel) for a 2-year term ending December 31, 2026.

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

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for a motion.

Motion: To appoint Commissioner Phil Smith as Chair of the Tourism Development Authority for 2025.

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

BOC/CM - APPROVAL OF GENERAL COUNSEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN WILSON, LACKEY, ROHR & HALL, P.C. AND BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Brittain relayed that Destin Hall / Wilson, Lackey, Rohr & Hall, P.C. was appointed as the County Attorney for the Burke County Board of Commissioners on December 2, 2024, and that the contract was unavailable at the time of the organizational meeting. At the invitation of the Chairman, County Manager Epley stated his availability to respond to questions about the agreement.

The Board of Commissioners were requested to approve the General Counsel Agreement with Wilson, Lackey, Rohr & Hall, P.C. to provide legal representation and counsel for Burke County. The agreement commenced on December 2, 2024 (appointment date), and outlines the terms, responsibilities, and compensation for legal services.

Key Contract Terms

1. Retainer Services:
 - A monthly retainer fee of \$3,000, payable on the 1st of each month.
 - Includes continuous availability for legal services and attendance at regular monthly business meetings of the Board.
2. Additional Services:
 - Legal work outside the scope of the retainer will be billed at \$300/hour for attorneys and \$150/hour for paralegals/legal assistants.
 - Time is billed in 0.1-hour increments and includes court appearances, document preparation, research, communications, and other related tasks.
3. Reimbursable Expenses:
 - Costs for copies, court fees, and attendance at approved legal conferences, including lodging and meals, will be reimbursed.
 - Pro-rated expenses apply when the firm represents multiple counties at conferences.
4. Termination:
 - Either party may terminate the contract at any time, with or without cause.
5. Billing and Payment:
 - The firm will submit monthly invoices for services rendered and expenses incurred, payable within 30 days.

Budgetary Effect: N.A. Funding is included in the FY 24 - 25 budget.

Motion: To approve the contract between Burke County and Wilson, Lackey, Rohr & Hall, P.C. for legal representation as presented. Further, authorize the Chairman to execute the agreement on behalf of the Board.

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

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

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 that serves 15 counties. MCOs help to keep Medicaid pricing consistent by maintaining contracts with service providers in the area. He clarified the PHM does not provide direct services, they are in a partnership with providers who wish to be Medicaid

Dr. Holden outlined the four (4) 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
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Members Served

(12 months ending 9-30-24)

Numbers of Persons Served by Disability

		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

PARTNERS

11/14/2024

3

Members Served

(12 months ending 9-30-24)

Cost of Persons Served by Disability

		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

PARTNERS

11/14/2024

4

Burke County Funds

Expenditures 7-1-24 to 10-31-24

Burke Detention Center

Correctional Behavioral Health (TOTAL Expended: \$16,253)	Budget: \$48,760
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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

PARTNERS

11/14/24

5

Burke County Funds

Services 7-1-24 to 9-30-24

Burke Detention Center

Correctional Behavioral Health (Online Services) Total Number of Inmates Served: 81	Number of Sessions: 119	Inmates Under Suicide Watch: 38
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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

PARTNERS

11/14/24

6

Questions?

Commissioner Stroud asked Dr. Paul Holden if people leaving jail have jobs lined up or if they tend to cycle through the system. Dr. Holden explained that it varies. Some individuals return to stable home lives, while others face challenges such as homelessness or substance use issues. Those who volunteer to participate receive referrals to agencies or providers for support, often addressing issues like housing or addiction. Participation is voluntary and not everyone opts to engage with these services. Dr. Holden responded to a few clarifying questions from Chairman Brittain. There being no further discussion, Chairman Brittain called for a motion.

Motion: To accept the report as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

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

Roxanne Powell, Senior Services Director, and Molly Eller, Veteran Services Officer, presented an operational update for the Senior Services and Veteran Services departments. The highlights of Ms. Powell's portion of the presentation were as follows:



Senior Services & Veterans Services





Burke Senior Center
FY 24-25 Funding: \$246,343
501 N. Green St.
Morganton, NC 28655



East Burke Senior Center
FY 24-25 Funding: \$159,940
101 Main Ave.
West Hildebran, NC 28637



OUR LOCATIONS

FY 2024-2025	BSC	EBSC	Totals
Participant List	2,254	589	2,843
New Registrations	164	24	188
Average Daily Attendance	139	46	185



192 Active Volunteers
FY 24

VOLUNTEERS



Approx. 8,008
Volunteer Hours

Volunteers: The Heart of Our Senior and Veterans Services

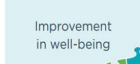
- Volunteers play a crucial role in delivering essential services, such as Meals on Wheels.
- While funding covers meal costs, it doesn't include delivery to participants' homes.
- Volunteers step in to deliver meals and perform daily wellness checks across the county.
- Their dedication ensures our programs run smoothly and meet community needs.
- Without their generosity, our organization would face significant challenges in serving those who depend on us.

Volunteer opportunities

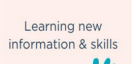
TAB (Telephone Assurance for Burke)- providing daily calls to homebound seniors
 Meals On Wheels- Delivering hot meals to senior participants (13 routes)
 Instructors of Activities and Wellness programs
 Technology Coaching
 Special Events
 Staff Support / Reception
 Advisory Councils
 Community Ambassadors/ Outreach
 SHIP- Medicare Counseling



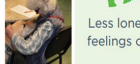
Senior Programs



Improvement in well-being



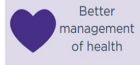
Learning new information & skills



Less loneliness and feelings of isolation



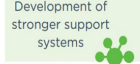
Increased volunteerism



Better management of health



Increased physical activity



Development of stronger support systems



Increased creativity

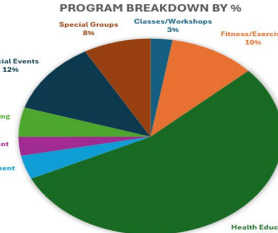


Better and easier access to services

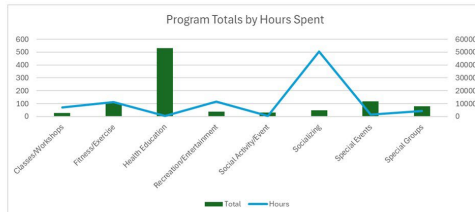


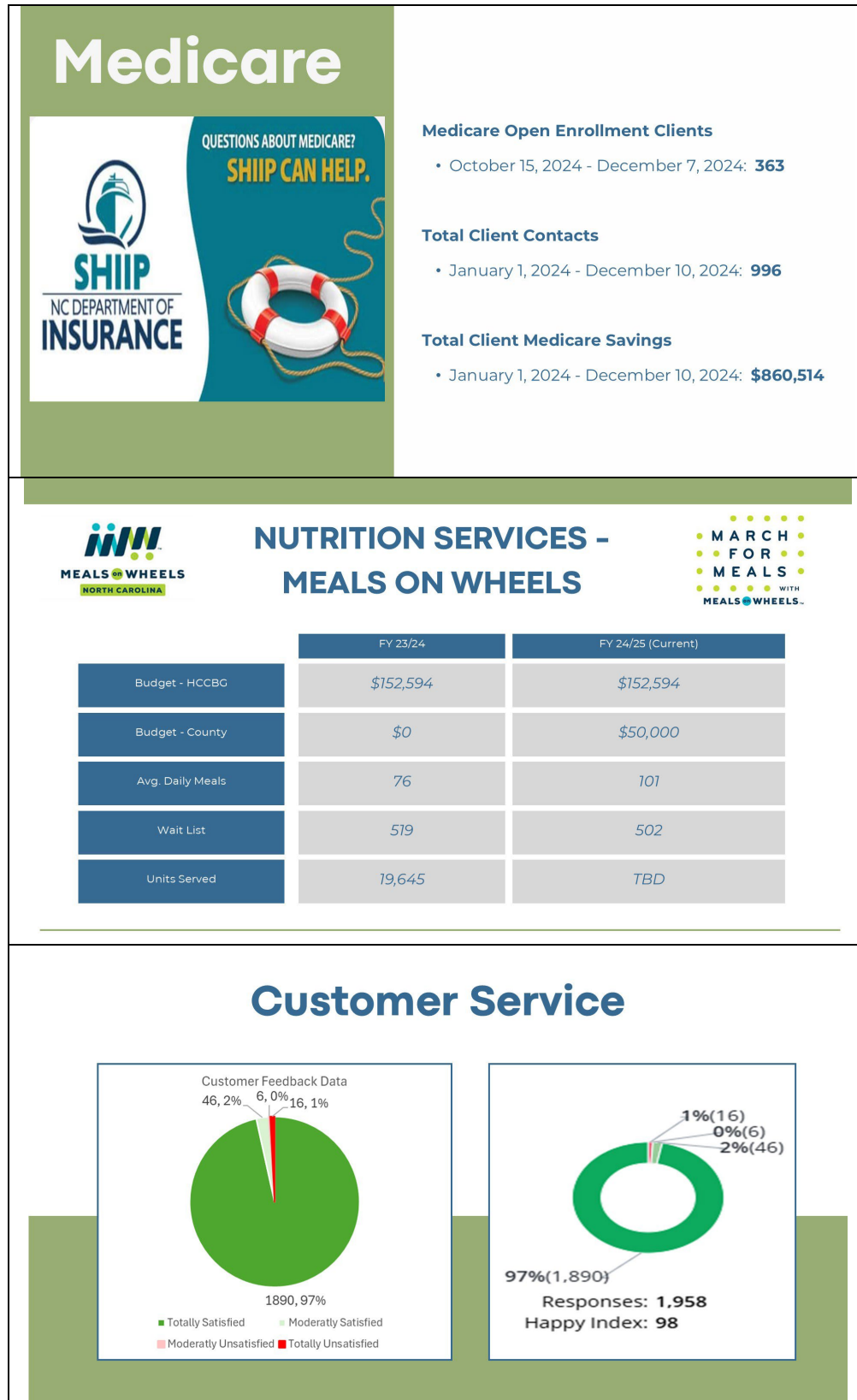
Improvement in advocacy skills

PROGRAM BREAKDOWN BY %



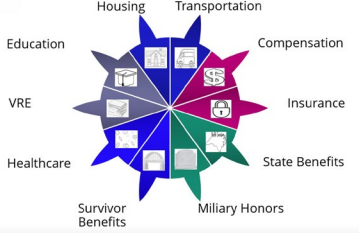
Program Totals by Hours Spent





Ms. Powell introduced Ms. Linda McGalliard who shared her positive experience using the

services at the Senior Center. Afterward, Ms. Eller began her portion of the presentation, highlights of which were as follows:

	Mission To serve Veterans, their dependents, and survivors. Through counsel, enrollment, and education regarding benefits, programs, and assistance available, in accordance with federal and state regulations. 									
VETERAN SERVICES FY 24-25 Funding: \$81,655 	PROGRAMS <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Blue Ridge Honor Flight</td> <td>Memorial Day Program</td> <td>Operation Green Light</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VetSmiles</td> <td>Veterans Day Program</td> <td>Veteran Stand Down</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">VTC</td> </tr> </table>	Blue Ridge Honor Flight	Memorial Day Program	Operation Green Light	VetSmiles	Veterans Day Program	Veteran Stand Down	VTC		
Blue Ridge Honor Flight	Memorial Day Program	Operation Green Light								
VetSmiles	Veterans Day Program	Veteran Stand Down								
VTC										

Ms. Eller then read the following letter:

David L Tubergen
411½ N Green Street
P.O. Box 2971
Morganton, NC 28680-2971
828-437-0177 / 828-475-9994

12/12/2024

To: Burke County Commissioners

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Molly Eller, Burke County Veterans Service Officer and Director Burke County Veteran Services, is an outstanding asset to our community. In addition to her daily duties, she is the one who puts on the Memorial Day Events and the Veteran's Day Events in our community. Always an outstanding performance.

In Molly's daily efforts must consider the amount of funds she brings into the community with her service claims she produces anytime a veteran comes into her office and request assistance. If and when a claimant gets judged for their disability, he would then be given a rating from the Veterans Administration. Depending on this rating it could be upwards to \$4,000 a month to as little as \$150 a month for lesser degrees of disability.

Any way you look at it, Molly is bringing in thousands of dollars to our local economy by her sole efforts with the VA system. On a monthly basis, Molly hosts a Veteran's Coffee Call with guest speakers for our veterans. You really ought to drop by one day to see the crowd, the first Thursday of the month at 0930, that is 9:30 AM.

If you have any comments or questions for me, feel free to drop me a line at Tubergen@burketruth.net and I will quickly reply.

Dave Tubergen
David L. Tubergen
2023 Governors Medallion Award Winner
Junior Vice Commander DAV #43-Morganton
Prior Chapter Commander DAV #43
Member of American Legion, Vietnam Veterans of America, AFSA,

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments. Vice Chairman Smith emphasized that Senior Services and Veterans Services are a valuable use of taxpayer funds. Ms. Eller addressed a clarifying question from Commissioner Stroud. There being no further discussion, Chairman Brittain opened the floor for a motion.

Motion: To accept the reports as presented.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

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

BOC - REPORTS & COMMENTS

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for reports and comments from Board members and professional staff. Professional staff and the entire Board extended holiday well wishes to the community. Commissioner Stroud congratulated Destin Hall on his appointment as county attorney. Commissioner Barrier reported on his recent meetings with Jim Wilson, Library Director, and Alan Wood, President & CEO of BDI, as well as his visits to several convenience sites, where he expressed appreciation for the staff working there. He also met with Sheriff Hinceman and toured the Sheriff's Office and jail facilities. Chairman Brittain shared details about upcoming holiday closures, meetings, and community events. He encouraged citizens to spay or neuter their pets, consider adopting or fostering animals from Animal Services, and offered friendly reminders to avoid littering, pick up trash, and secure loads when transporting waste to landfills or convenience sites.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

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)
- Burke County Public Health Advisory Board
- Hickory Regional Planning Commission
- Drexel Planning Board - ETJ Alternate
- Burke County Planning Board
- Partners Health Management's Human Rights Committee

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments and then encouraged citizens to participate and get involved.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

CLOSED SESSION – NOT NEEDED; NOT HELD

ADJOURN

Motion: To adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, 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