



Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting

August 4, 2025

MINUTES

The August 4, 2025 Regular Meeting was called to order by Chair Angelena Kearney Dunlap, followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners present were Victor Hunt, Bertadean Baker, and Al Cooper. Commissioner Tare Davis was unable to attend. Others present include County Manager Crystal Smith, County Attorney Shiekell Richardson, and Interim Finance Officer Chuck Murray.

1. PRESENTATIONS

A. Presentation of Congressional Record to Warren County Sheriff John Branch by the Office of Congressman Don Davis

District Director for Congressman Don Davis presented Congressional Record to Warren County Sheriff John Branche for participation in a First Congressional District roundtable discussion with Congressman Don Davis and other Sheriffs.

B. Presentation of Congressional Record to Mr. Patrick Brown of Brown Family Farms & Produce by Office of Congressman Don Davis

District Director for Congressman Don Davis presented Congressional Record to Mr. Patrick Brown of Brown Family Farm for hosting a roundtable.

C. Heroic Hands: Celebrating Public Service County Recognition

County Manager Crystal Smith recognized John Franks, Victoria Lehman, Paula Pulley, Shiekell Richardson, Reggie Steverson, Karen Solomon, Chris Tucker, Sierra Thomas, Terrance Williams, Dr. Margaret Brake, Sheriff John Branche, Sheila Baskett, Melissa Fitts, Marshall Brothers, and Tanika Alston as nominees for Heroic Hands recognition, and announced Reggie Steverson as the winner of the Heroic Hands Award recipient.

D. FY24 Audit Report - Jennifer Reese and Tara Roberson, Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans & company, LLP

Jennifer Reese of Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans & Company, LLP presented the FY24 Audit for Warren County. The full report is available at <https://warrencountync.com/161/Finance>. On motion of Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the FY24 Audit Report was accepted as presented.

2. ADOPT SUGGESTED AGENDA

On motion of Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Suggested Agenda was approved with the addition of Item 7G, Consider Approval of Contract to Audit Accounts for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025 Between Warren County and Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans & Company, LLP in an Amount not to Exceed \$136,300.

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS - REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Rules for Citizen Comments: Please sign up to speak. The maximum time allowed to each speaker will be FIVE (5) minutes; Clerk to the Board will keep time. Any group of people who support or oppose the same position should designate a spokesperson. Please address only those items which may not have been addressed by a previous speaker. If a response from the County Manager or Board of Commissioners desired, leave a copy of your comment(s) with the Clerk to the Board. Order and decorum will be maintained. This is not a question and answer session.

NCGS § 153A-52.1. Public comment period during regular meetings. The board of commissioners shall provide at least one period for public comment per month at a regular meeting of the board. The board may adopt reasonable rules governing the conduct of the public comment period, including, but not limited to, rules (i) fixing the maximum time allotted to each speaker, (ii) providing for the designation of spokesmen for groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions, (iii) providing for the selection of

delegates from groups of persons supporting or opposing the same positions when the number of persons wishing to attend the hearing exceeds the capacity of the hall, and (iv) providing for the maintenance of order and decorum in the conduct of the hearing. The board is not required to provide a public comment period under this section if no regular meeting is held during the month. (2005-170, s. 2.)

1. Scott Murray, Roanoke River Basin Association representative, stated he is participating in the creation of the Unified Development Ordinance. He stated that he has concerns about Solar Farms and comments and statements that have been made regarding Solar Farms that he doesn't feel are true. Mr. Murray stated that the current allowable size of Solar Farms, which is 50 to 150 acres, is sufficient and not too restrictive.
2. Joe Zeno, Chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustments, questioned the lack of enforcement of the sign regulations in the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Zeno stated that signs are supposed to be 5 feet from the Right of Way, 350 feet from another sign, and permits with allowable dates are required. Mr. Zeno stated that the ordinance is not being enforced and it needs to be.
3. Milo Alston stated that limiting time allowed for Citizen Comments is silencing voices. Mr. Alston stated that he has visited many of the solid waste convenience sites and questions why some are paved and some are not. He further emphasized the need for more gravel at those that are not paved.
4. Doug Gross stated he is a forestry graduate and spoke about erosion and water shed concerns that are affected by removal of trees for solar farms. He stated that only 15% of solar energy is usable and the other 85% is released into the environment as heat.
5. Reinaldo Espinosa stated there needs to be an investigation of the Planning Board, and that Lauren Miller and Evelyn Woodson should be given back their seats on that board. He stated that the County continues to have problems getting people on Boards and that they only appoint who they want to appoint.
6. Ken Ferruccio spoke stated there seem to be conflicts with the newly appointed members of the Planning Board. Mr. Ferruccio stated that it is prudent for the Board of Commissioners to keep solar and high impact land use entities out of Warren County. He stated we are in a political zoning minefield right now.
7. Deborah Ferruccio stated that 3 minutes is not enough time for citizens to speak. Ms. Ferruccio stated that Horizon Solar is a subsidiary of TED Renewables which is a subsidiary of a Japanese company, and that they are looking for 2,000 acres of land for solar. She asks that the Board of Commissioners stick to the 150 acre maximum size for solar farms.
8. Joe Hollingsworth of TED Renewables stated people have concerns about projects coming in without full disclosure, but they have held an event to inform the public of their project and will hold training in August.
9. Bill Keeny of TED Renewables stated that they want to be transparent and that the office is open to the public if anyone wants to come by and ask questions. He stated that development of solar farms will have a significant impact on tax revenue.
10. Carolyn Ross Holmes stated she believes in smart and sustainable growth using clarity and fairness in the process. Ms. Ross-Holmes believes that with smart growth, things can co-exist if done in a strategic, community-driven way.
11. Drew Goodwin of Peete River Farm stated that getting adequate infrastructure should come before expanding solar farms, and asked that solar farms be done in such a way that they do not hurt what is currently in place.
12. Mike Naughton spoke about misappropriation of county money. He stated that he went to court against a member of the Arcola Volunteer Fire Department and feels that the firefighter was in court on county time.
13. Barbara Espinosa stated that she spoke to Commissioner Davis and he told her that it is up to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners to determine if an item can be added to the agenda. Ms. Espinosa stated that it is illegal to add items.
14. Steve Hill, a home owner in Buck Springs and property owner of land near where Horizon is planning a solar farm, stated he has seen the plans for the solar farm and the buffer is weak. he further stated that the plan calls for pollinators but the plant listed is an invasive species that is not allowed in North Carolina.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Consider Approval of the June 2, 2025 Budget Work Session, June 2, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, June 18, 2025 Work Session Minutes, and July 7, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the minutes of the June 2, 2025 Regular Meeting, June 18, 2025 Work Session, and July 7, 2025 Regular Meeting were approved.

B. Tax Collector's Report for May 2025 and June 2025 Presented for Board's Information in Accordance with NCGS 105-350

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Tax Collector's Report was approved.

C. Tax Release Requests (over/under \$100) in Accordance with NCGS 105-381 "Taxpayer's Remedies" as Information Only

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Tax Release Requests were approved.

5. COUNTY MANAGER'S UPDATE – Crystal Smith

A. Recommendation Community Economic Development Director - McKinley Perkinson

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the appointment of McKinley Perkinson as Community & Economic Development Director at a starting salary of \$90,000 per year and a start date of August 16, 2025 was approved.

B. Request Resolution - Historical Marker for Soul City - Representative Rodney Pierce

On motion of Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Resolution in Support of Historical Marker for Soul City was approved.



RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION TO ESTABLISH A NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORICAL MARKER RECOGNIZING SOUL CITY IN WARREN COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Warren County Board of Commissioners recognizes the historical and culture significance of Soul City to our community, and to civil rights, community development, and African American determination in our State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Soul City was founded in the early 1970's by Civil Rights Leader Floyd B. McKissick, Sr. as a groundbreaking federal urban development initiative aimed at creating a new town led by Black visionaries; and

WHEREAS, Soul City represented an effort to promote racial equality, economic opportunity, and sustainable rural development during a period of social change; and

WHEREAS, Soul City was a bold experiment backed by US Department of Housing and Urban Development that sparked important conversations about equity and planning; and

WHEREAS, Soul City brought critical infrastructure to Warren County; and

WHEREAS, designating Soul City with a State Historical Marker will ensure that future generations understand and appreciate this unique chapter in North Carolina's history.

NO THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 4th day of August, 2025, the Warren County Board of Commissioners express full support for the application to establish a North Carolina State Historical Marker in Warren County.

C. Responses to Citizen Comments

Clerk to the Board Paula Pulley has spoken with Donna Hopkins who appeared before the Board of Commissioners requesting that Deerfield Road be upgraded and asked her to come in to discuss the Roads Improvement Program. A resident of Deerfield Road submitted a request in 2016 and, at that time, the other residents of the subdivision were not interested in participating. Further, there is a Declaration of Restrictions and Provisions for Private Road Maintenance document for the subdivision on file at the Register of Deeds that states property owners are responsible for road maintenance. County Manager Crystal Smith has worked on the grievance filed by Evelyn Woodson. Ms. Woodson was told to submit her evidence by July 24, 2025, and it has not yet been received. After some discussion, Chair Kearney Dunlap stated to give Ms. Woodson until Friday, August 8, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

to respond.

6. FINANCE OFFICE – Chuck Murray

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. Consider Approval of Purchase of 2025 Chevrolet Tahoe in an Amount not to Exceed \$53,006.98 by the Warren County Sheriff's Office from Capital Chevrolet Inc. Under the North Carolina Sheriff's Association Contract

On motion of Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the purchase of a 2025 Chevrolet Tahoe in an amount not to exceed \$53,006.98 by the Warren County Sheriff's Office from Capital Chevrolet, Inc. under North Carolina Sheriff's Association Contract was approved.

B. Consider Approval to Vote to Approve the Purdue Plan for Opioid Abatement - County Attorney Shiekkel Richardson

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Purdue Plan for Opioid Abatement was approved.

C. Consider Approval for County Attorney Shiekkel Richardson to Sign the Governmental Entity Settlement Agreement (GESA) Sackler Release - County Attorney Shiekkel Richardson

On motion of Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, and duly carried by unanimous vote, it was approved for County Attorney Shiekkel Richardson to sign the Governmental Entity Settlement Agreement (GESA) Sackler Release.

D. Consider Approval of Participation in the 9-Defendant Opioid Settlements Including Alvogen, Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Indivior, Mylan, Sun Pharma, Zydus, and Sandoz - County Attorney Shiekkel Richardson

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, participation in the 9-Defendant Opioid Settlements including Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Indivior, Mylan, Sun Pharma, Zydus, and Sandoz was approved.

E. Consider Recommendation to Approve Amendment to Warren County Economic Development Commission Bylaws to Allow Ex-officio Members to Designate an Alternate to Attend Meetings in Their Absence

On motion of Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, amendment to the Warren County Economic Development Commission Bylaws to allow ex-officio members to designate an alternate to attend meetings was approved.

F. Consider Acceptance of Proposal for Services from Germano Architecture & Interiors for the John Graham Gym Shelter Project for Pre-Design, Schematic Design, Construction Documents Phase, and Construction Phase Services not to Exceed \$54,207.50 - Chris Tucker, Emergency Services Director

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the proposal for services from German Architecture & Interiors for the John Graham Gym Shelter Project for pre-design, schematic design, construction documents phase, and construction phase services not to exceed \$54,207.50 was approved.

G. Consider Approval of Contract to Audit Accounts for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025 Between Warren County and Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans & Company, LLP in an Amount not to Exceed \$136,300

On motion of Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the contract to audit accounts for FY25 between Warren County and Winston, Williams, Creech, Evans & Company LLP in an amount not to exceed \$136,300 was approved.

8. BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS

A. Consider Approval of Appointment of Janelle Lyons to a First Three-Year Term on the Warren County Economic Development Commission Board of Directors Beginning August 1, 2025 and Ending July 31, 2028 as Recommended by the Economic Development Commission Other Statements of Interest received in the last six months from Latarshia Turner-Brothers,

Corei Somerville, Robert Steverson, Sharon Britt, Grady Strickland, and Lawrence Hooven

On motion of Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the appointment of Janelle Lyons to a three-year term on the Warren County Economic Development Commissioner beginning August 1, 2025 and ending July 31, 2028 was approved.

B. Consider Reappointment of Mary Catherine Harris as Jury Commissioner for a Two-Year Term Beginning July 1, 2025 and Ending June 30, 2027 as Nominated by Clerk of Superior Court Rolanda Hedgepeth

On motion of Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Mary Catherine Harris was appointed to the Jury Commissioner for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2027.

9. BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' UPDATES

Commissioner Cooper attended the recent NACo Conference where he attended sessions on housing, infrastructure, technology, energy, economic development, innovation hubs, and recreation.

Commissioner Baker attended NACo Conference, Let's Talk Warren County focusing on emergency preparedness, a Veteran Services event, and the 80th Anniversary celebration of the Warren County Health Department.

Commissioner Hunt participated in a tour with the Dean of Agriculture and Chancellor of North Carolina State University.

Chair Kearney Dunlap attended the NACo Conference, Let's Talk Warren County, the Veterans Services 6888 Battalion Movie event, and the 80th Anniversary of Warren County Health Department.

Chair Kearney Dunlap stated the next Let's Talk Warren County will take place on September 9th at Buck Springs Park.

10. CLOSED SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5) FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Board entered Closed Session.

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Board returned to Open Session.

11. ADJOURN August 4, 2025 BOARD MEETING

On motion of Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the August 4, 2025 Regular Meeting was adjourned at 9:05p.m.

Paula Pulley, Clerk to the Board