



Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting

December 1, 2025

MINUTES

The December 1, 2025 Organizational and Regular Meeting of the Warren County Board of Commissioners was called to order by County Attorney Shiekell Richardson, followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners in attendance were Bertadean Baker, Victor Hunt, Angelena Kearney Dunlap, Al Cooper, and Tare Davis. Others in attendance were County Manager Crystal Smith and Assistant County Manager Matt Garner.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

A. Election of Chairman to the Board of Warren County Commissioners

- **County Attorney will entertain nominations to fill the Board Chairman position.**
- **After official appointment, the Chairman will preside.**

Commissioner Victor Hunt nominated Commissioner Al Cooper to serve as Chairman of the Board of Warren County Commissioners. Nominations were closed and Commissioner Al Cooper was elected Chair. Chair Cooper assumed leadership of the meeting at this point.

B. Election of Vice-Chairman to the Board of Warren County Commissioners

- **Newly elected Chairman will entertain nominations to fill the Board Vice-Chairman Position.**
- **Vice-Chairman acts in the absence of the Chair.**

Commissioner Baker nominated Commissioner Victor Hunt for the position of Vice Chair of the Board of Warren County Commissioners. Commissioner Davis nominated Commissioner Angelena Kearney Dunlap for the position of Vice Chair. By a hand vote of three to two, with Commissioners Baker, Hunt, and Cooper voting for Commissioner Hunt and Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Kearney Dunlap voting for Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, Commissioner Hunt was elected Vice Chair.

C. Appointment/Re-appointment of Warren County Attorney

- **Shiekell Richardson currently serves in this position.**
- **Pursuant to NCGS 153A-114, the County Attorney is appointed to serve at the pleasure of the Board.**

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Shiekell Richardson was reappointed as County Attorney.

D. Appointment/Re-appointment of Clerk to the Board of Warren County Commissioners

- **Paula Pulley currently serves in this position.**
- **Pursuant to NCGS 153A-111 - Appointment; powers and duties. The Board of Commissioners shall appoint or designate a Clerk to the Board. The Board may designate the Register of Deeds or any other county Officer or employee as Clerk. The Clerk shall perform any duties that may be required by law or the Board of Commissioner. The Clerk shall serve as such at the pleasure of the Board.**

On motion of Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Paula Pulley was reappointed to the position of Clerk to the Board of Warren County Commissioners.

E. Appointment/Re-appointment of Deputy Clerk to the Board of Warren County Commissioners

- **Monique Hinton currently serves in this position.**
- **Pursuant to NCGS 153A-111 - Appointment; powers and duties. The Board of Commissioners shall appoint or designate a Clerk to the Board. The Board may designate the Register of Deeds or any other county Officer or employee as Clerk. The Clerk shall perform any duties that may be required by law or the Board of Commissioner. The Clerk shall serve as such at the pleasure of the Board.**

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Monique Hinton was reappointed to the position of Deputy Clerk to the Board of Warren County Commissioners.

F. Designation of Depositories for Warren County Funds

- **First Citizens Bank & Trust Company**
- **Truist Bank**
- **NC Capital Management Trust**

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, First Citizens Bank & Trust Company, Truist Bank, and NC Capital Management Trust were designated as depositories for Warren County funds.

G. Authorization to Honor Facsimile Signatures for Warren County Operating Accounts, Warren County General Funds:

- **County Finance Officer**
- **Chairman to the Board of County Commissioners**
- **Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners**

On motion of Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, authorization to honor facsimile signatures of County Finance Officer, Shairman to the Board of Commissioners, and Clerk to the Board for Warren County Operating Accounts was approved.

H. Authorization to Honor Facsimile Signatures for Warren County Department of Social Services Trust Fund Account

- **Department of Social Services Director**
- **Finance Officer**
- **County Manager**

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, authorization to honor facsimile signatures of Department of Social Services Director, Finance Officer, and County Manager for Warren County Department of Social Services Trust Fund account was approved.

I. Authorization to Honor Facsimile Signatures for Payroll Account and Warren County Flexible Spending Account

- **Finance Officer**
- **Chairman of the Board of Commissioners**
- **Clerk to the Board of Commissioners**

On motion of Commisioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and duly carried by unanimous vote, authorization to honor facsimile signatures of Finance Officer, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, and Clerk to the Board for the payroll account and Warren County Flexible Spending account was approved.

2. PRESENTATIONS

A. Recognition of Warren County Volunteers

B. Recognition of Warren County Health Department for Earning Accreditation with Honors

C. Recognition of Retirement of Ruby Elam of DSS

3. ADOPT SUGGESTED AGENDA

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the suggested agenda was approved.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS - REGULAR BOARD MEETING

- Chris Adcock provided information showing that, because of tax abatement available to solar farms, a current 700 acre solar farm paid less than \$100,000 in property taxes over a 7 year timeframe. Mr. Adcock stated that TED Renewables and Horizon Solar are not friends to Warren County.
- Lauren Miller stated that TED Renewables said there are no harmful chemicals associated with solar panels, but she has information from a Ph.D. that says different. Mrs. Miller also shared concerns about Planning Director Mark Bloomer, stating that he tries to persuade the Planning Board members and makes recommendations to the Board of Commissioners that go against what the Planning Board recommends.
- Barbara Espinosa, a member of the Planning Board, is upset about the letter from Planning Director Mark Bloomer that is included in the agenda packet for Item 8 D. Mrs. Espinosa stated that how Mr. Bloomer runs meetings needs to be addressed, and that cancellation of meetings and inadequate information provided is a concern.
- Carl Lynch provided petitions signed by hunting clubs asking the Board not to change the current Solar Farm Regulations.
- Victoria Lehman, Warren County Board of Education member, spoke about the Warren County High School Football making history by reaching the fifth round of post-season play. The Eagles will play against Tarboro on Friday, December 5th at 7:00 p.m. in Tarboro and she asks that everyone attend.
- Reinaldo Espinosa stated that a Planning Board Member recently called 911 on someone who was disrespectful at a Planning Board meeting. Espinosa said that Planning Director Bloomer needs to go and that the Board of Commissioners need to do their jobs correctly and give citizens respect.
- Deborah Ferruccio stated that Chris Adcock covered some of her points during his comments. She followed up by saying that if we allow large scale solar farms it will open the door for other high impact land uses. Ms. Ferruccio hopes the Board of Commissioners will do what the citizens want and keep the regulations as they are.
- Dwayne Hicks stated that he has spoken with citizens in the county that are concerned about how long it takes to get permits from the Planning/Zoning/Code Enforcement office. Hicks stated that staff is being paid to do the work so there is no reason it should take so long.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes of October 6, 2025 Regular Meeting, October 15, 2025 Work Session, October 30, 2025 Solar Listening Session, and November 3, 2025 Regular Meeting

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the minutes of October 6, 2025, October 15, 2025, and November 3, 2025 were approved.

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

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Tax Collector's Report for October 2025 was accepted.

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

Remedies" as Information Only

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Tax Releases Requests were accepted.

6. COUNTY MANAGER'S UPDATE – Crystal Smith

A. Update on Public Utilities Projects

Public Utilities Director provided updates on the following projects:

- US Highway 1 Water Main Extension - This will feed the land purchased by the County and marketed by Community & Economic Development. The County received a grant from the NC Rail Division in the amount of \$500,000 and is waiting to hear if a grant from GoldenLEAF will be awarded. These grant funds will be used to cover the water main extension expenses.
- Soul City Boulevard Water Main Replacement - This project was awarded a grant in the amount of \$925,000 will require the use of Public Utilities Fund Balance to cover the remaining cost as the project is estimated at \$994,630.
- Pleasant Hills Pump Station - The current pump station is down to one operational pump and a pumper truck has had to come out every day since July 1, 2025 to pump the station. Public Utilities has the money to replace the pump station, but it is now considered to be in a flood plain based on the most recently updated FEMA flood plain maps so drawings will have to be redone and EPA will have to approve the project.

7. FINANCE OFFICE – Chuck Murray

A. Consider Approval of Budget Amendment #2 to the FY26 Budget

- **Budget Amendment #2 (see attached) to the FY 2026 Budget Ordinance is being presented for approval. This amendment does the following:**
 1. **This amendment is necessary to recognize grant funding and grant expenditures for Library, Health Department, and private grant funding for Heritage Quilters.**

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Budget Amendment #2 to the FY26 Budget was approved.

8. ACTION ITEMS

A. Appointment of Marian Cascone as Tax Administrator for a Two-Year or Four-Year Term

- **In accordance with NCGS 105-294 and 105-349, the Board of Commissioners must appoint a Tax Administrator to serve a two-year or four-year term.**

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Marian Cascone was appointed as Tax Administrator for a four-year term beginning December 1, 2025 and ending November 30, 2029.

B. Consider Approval and Execution of EJCDC E-500 Agreement Between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services for the US Highway 1/158 Water Main Extension at an Estimated Cost of \$1,000,000 - Public Utilities Director Eric St. Sing

- **This will provide water to property owned by Warren County for future economic growth.**
- **Grant funds are being sought for this project by Warren County Community and Economic Development**

On motion of Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the EJCDC E-500 Agreement Between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services for the US Highway 1/158 Water Main Extension at an estimated cost of \$1,000,000 was approved based on the availability of grant funds.

C. Consider Approval and Execution of EJCDC E-500 Agreement Between Owner and Engineer

for Professional Services for Soul City Boulevard Water Main Replacement at an Estimated Cost of \$994,630 - Public Utilities Director Eric St. Sing

- **Grant funds in the amount of \$925,000 are available for this project and the remaining balance will be paid from Public Utilities Fund Balance.**

On motion of Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Davis, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the EJCDC E-500 Agreement Between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services for Soul City Boulevard Water Main Replacement at an estimated cost of \$994, 630 and using grant funds in the amount of \$925,000 and obligating \$69,630 from Public Utilities Fund Balance was approved.

D. Consider Approval of Site Plan for Norlina Fire Department Substation to be Located at 855 Oine Road - Planning Director Mark Bloomer

Assistant County Manager Matt Garner provided background information on the purchase of the land from the Norlina Fire Department Substation and EMS Station 4. The location is located in the Interstate Overlay District and Fire Stations are a permitted use.

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Site Plan for Norlina Fire Department Substation located at 855 Oine Road was approved.

E. Consider Approval of Grant Administration Contract with Wilson County Substance Prevention Coalition in the Amount of \$75,000 - Health Director Dr. Margaret Brake

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Grant Administration Contract with Wilson County Substance Prevention Coalition in the amount of \$75,000 was approved.

F. Consider Approval to Lift Suspension of Soul City Volunteer Fire Department - Commissioner Tare Davis

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the suspension of Soul City Volunteer Fire Department is lifted effective January 1, 2026. Commissioner Davis thanked everyone that worked to get Soul City Volunteer Fire Department in compliance. Fire Chief Don Stith stated that the Department is being restructured and they are working to make things much better.

G. Consider Approval of 2026 Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting and Work Session Schedule - Clerk to the Board Paula Pulley

On motion of Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Baker, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the 2026 Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting and Work Session Schedule was approved.

H. Consider Approval of 2026 Holiday Schedule - Clerk to the Board Paula Pulley

- **This is the same Holiday Schedule followed by the State of North Carolina**

On motion of Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the 2026 Holiday Schedule was approved.

I. Consider Approval to Direct Staff to File Application with Local Government Commission (LGC) Requesting Approval for a Lease-Purchase Option that Occurred in August 2024 for EMS Upgrade of Equipment in an Amount not to Exceed \$3,267,951

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Staff is directed to file application with Local Government Commission requesting approval of a lease-purchase option that occurred in August 2024 for EMS upgrade of equipment in an amount not to exceed \$3,267,951.

9. BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS AND RE-APPOINTMENTS

A. Consider Appointment of Dr. James Crenshaw (Dentist), Dr. Robert Shaw (Medical Doctor), Dr. Christian O'Malley (Veterinarian), and Latarsha Turner-Brothers (At-Large) to the Board of Health

for Three-Year Terms Beginning January 1, 2026 and Ending December 31, 2028

On motion of Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, Dr. James Crenshaw (Dentist), Dr. Robert Shaw (Medical Doctor), Dr. Christian O'Malley (Veterinarian), and Latarsha Turner-Brouthers (At-Large) were appointed to three-year terms on the Board of Health beginning January 1, 2026 and ending December 31, 2028.

10. BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' UPDATES

- Commissioner Davis recognized elected officials in attendance
- Commissioner Kearney Dunlap reminded those in attendance of the Angel Tree at DSS and encouraged those that can to help with that project. She further reported that she attended the Board Retreat on November 16th, JCPC meeting on November 10th, and Veterans Service event on November 10th.
- Commissioner Hunt wished everyone a happy and safe holiday season.
- Commissioner Baker encouraged everyone to participate with the Angel Tree project at DSS.
- Commissioner Cooper reported that he attended the Haliwa Saponi Library event, he has been studying up on solar farms, attended an event hosted by Rodney Pierce, and attended the Veterans Services celebration.

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

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Board entered Closed Session.

On motion of Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the Board returned to Open Session.

12. ADJOURN December 1, 2025 BOARD MEETING

On motion of Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Kearney Dunlap, and duly carried by unanimous vote, the December 1, 2025 meeting was adjourned.

Paula Pulley, Clerk to the Board