



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Monday, November 3, 2025

4:00 PM

Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Work Session - 4:00 PM - Historic Courthouse Courtroom

Present: 5 - Chair Karen Howard, Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, Commissioner David Delaney, Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores and Commissioner Amanda Robertson

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Howard welcomed everyone to the November 3, 2025 meeting.

ADJUSTMENTS AND APPROVAL OF WORK SESSION AGENDA

Chair Howard asked for any agenda adjustments to the work session agenda.

Hearing none, Howard called for a motion to approve the Work Session agenda as presented.

A motion was made by Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, that the work session agenda was approved as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

[25-0562](#)

Vote to adopt a Resolution supporting an amendment to the Constitution to provide that corporations are not entitled to the protections or “rights” of natural persons and to provide that campaign spending does not fall under the free speech protections of the First Amendment and can therefore be regulated

Attachments: [Resolution Supporting an amendment to the Constitution to provide that corporations are not entitled 11-3-2025](#)

Chair Howard read aloud the resolution supporting an amendment to the Constitution to provide that corporations are not entitled to the protections or “rights” of natural persons and to provide that campaign spending does not fall under the free speech protections of the First Amendment and can therefore be regulated.

Commissioner Robertson thanked Chair Howard for reading the resolution. She expressed her support of the resolution.

Commissioner Delaney questioned these kinds of resolutions concerning legal principles addressing current law. He showed an interest in where the county attorney is on these category of issues.

Chair Howard stated that there is a motion and a second on the floor and called for a vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, that 25-74 Resolution supporting an amendment to the Constitution to provide that corporations are not entitled to the protections or “rights” of natural persons and to provide that campaign spending does not fall under the free speech protections of the First Amendment and can therefore be regulated was adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

No: 1 - Commissioner Delaney

RECOGNITION OF RETIREES

[25-0560](#)

Recognize Retiree Steve Newton

Chair Howard read aloud the following statement:

Steve Newton has dedicated his career to public service and emergency management, leaving a lasting impact on communities across North Carolina and beyond. With decades of leadership experience in local government, Steve has served critical roles with Orange County Emergency Management, Wake County Emergency Management, and most recently with Chatham County Emergency Management from 2017 to 2025. Where his work has strengthened public safety, disaster preparedness, and community resilience. Throughout his career, Steve has been instrumental figure during times of crisis, participating in numerous local, state, and national deployments. His expertise and calm leadership have supported communities during natural disasters, public health emergencies, cyber security events, and other significant incidents that have tested the emergency response system. Steve's contributions extend beyond immediate disaster response. His commitment to building strong emergency management programs, fostering interagency collaboration, and mentoring future public safety leaders has made a profound difference in North Carolina's ability to face challenges and protect its residents.

Newton thanked the Board of Commissioners for the recognition and support that has been shown for him and the program through the years.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

[25-0558](#)

The Public Comment Session is held to give residents an opportunity to speak on any item. The session is no more than thirty minutes long to allow as many as possible to speak. Speakers are limited to no more than three minutes each and may not give their time to another speaker. Speakers are asked to sign up in advance. Comments are always welcome in writing

Attachments: [Click Here To Sign Up For Public Comment](#)

The following comments were made in writing.

Teresa Sorella Weedon

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing as a concerned resident of Chatham County to express my thoughts on the ongoing development in our area, specifically with respect to how these changes are shaping the future of our beloved community. Chatham County is a place known for its natural beauty, rolling landscapes, and a unique blend of rural and semi-rural living. It's why so many of us chose to live here—because of the quality of life and the unspoiled environment. However, recent developments in our region, particularly the rapid expansion of suburban-style housing, are threatening to change the very character that makes Chatham so special. While I understand the need for growth and development to accommodate an increasing population, I strongly believe that we must find a balance. The development projects currently underway in many parts of the county appear to prioritize short-term growth at the expense of long-term sustainability. These developments often involve the clear-cutting of trees and the construction of cookie-cutter homes that do not integrate well with the surrounding environment. This approach risks turning Chatham into a suburban sprawl like other regions in the Triangle, such as Raleigh, which have already lost much of their charm and natural character. I would like to take a moment to highlight Fearington Village, a nearby community that has made a concerted effort to coexist with its natural surroundings. This community's success lies in its thoughtful planning, where nature is preserved and integrated into the living environment. It serves as a reminder that development does not have to mean destruction of the landscape, it is possible to build and grow in ways that respect and enhance the natural beauty of the area. Chatham County has an opportunity to be a model for sustainable, thoughtful development. We don't need to sacrifice the things that make our community special in the name of progress. As you continue to make decisions regarding new developments, I urge you to consider the long-term impact on our environment and our way of life. Thoughtful zoning, tree preservation, and design guidelines that promote integration with the landscape should be prioritized. Let's ensure that our county doesn't become just another faceless suburban sprawl but remains a place where natural beauty and quality of life are cherished for future generations. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing how Chatham County can grow in a way that preserves the elements that make it unique and special.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

BOARD PRIORITIES

[25-0552](#)

Receive a presentation on MoveChatham from Bolton & Menk Inc

Attachments: [Bolton & Menk MoveChatham Presentation 11-3-2025](#)

Transportation Planner Thanh Schado introduced Lorna Allen with Bolton and Menk.

Allen updated the Board of Commissioners on the Move Chatham, a multimodal transportation refers to the various ways people and goods move throughout a region. This study will encompass all modes of travel, including automotive, bicycle, pedestrian, trail networks, and transit. Chatham County is inviting public input to better understand current transportation resources and gather your thoughts on future needs. Insights from this effort will help shape a planning initiative to develop long-term vision for multi-modal travel throughout Chatham County.

Allen stated that the comprehensive study covers the entire county and its connections to the neighboring areas. Allen shared an overview of the open houses, stakeholder meetings, surveys, reports, and maps.

The Board of Commissioners thanked Schado and Allen for the update.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

End of Work Session

RECESS

The Board of Commissioners recessed until 6:00pm.

Regular Session - 6:00 PM - Historic Courthouse Courtroom

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Howard called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

INVOCATION and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Howard asked for a moment of silence which was followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADJUSTMENTS AND APPROVAL OF REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

Chair Howard asked for any agenda adjustments. Howard called for a motion to approve the Regular Session agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, that the agenda was approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

[25-0547](#)

Vote to approve the Debt Write-off for the Chatham County Public Health Department (\$12,908.48 for the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024)

A motion was made by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, that the Debt Write-off for the Chatham County Public Health Department (\$12,908.48 for the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024) was approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

[25-0551](#)

Vote to accept \$73,000 from the NC Alliance for Public Health Agencies

to participate in the Thriving Hearts research project in partnership with UNC-Chapel Hill and Orange County Health Department

A motion was made by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, to accept \$73,000 from the NC Alliance for Public Health Agencies to participate in the Thriving Hearts research project in partnership with UNC-Chapel Hill and Orange County Health Department. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

[25-0557](#)

Vote to amend Attachment A of the Chatham County Advisory Committee Policy increasing the number of members appointed by the Board of Commissioners from nine to eleven on the Climate Change Advisory Committee

Attachments: [Attachment A Committee List Amendment 11-3-2025](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, to approve the amended Attachment A of the Chatham County Advisory Committee Policy increasing the number of members appointed by the Board of Commissioners from nine to eleven on the Climate Change Advisory Committee. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

[25-0561](#)

Vote to appoint Deb Gallagher with a term expiring February 28, 2027 and Nicholas Gower with a term expiring February 28, 2028 as Full Board Members of the Climate Change Advisory Committee

Attachments: [Deb Gallagher Advisory Committee Application Climate Change Advisory Committ](#)
[Nicholas Gower Advisory Committee Application Climate Change Advisory Committ](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, to appoint Deb Gallagher with a term expiring February 28, 2027 and Nicholas Gower with a term expiring February 28, 2028 as Full Board Members of the Climate Change Advisory Committee were approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

End of Consent Agenda

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

[25-0559](#)

The Public Comment Session is held to give residents an opportunity to speak on any item. The session is no more than thirty minutes long to allow as many as possible to speak. Speakers are limited to no more than three minutes each and may not give their time to another speaker.

Speakers are asked to sign up in advance. Comments are always welcome in writing

Attachments: [Click Here To Sign Up For Public Comment](#)

Sara Stephens

Thank you so much for allowing me a moment to speak. My name is Sarah Stevens. I am your District Manager with Duke Energy. So I'm the person that you contact on rainy days, or the blue sky days, I am around, for you. You should have my contact information. I know I run into quite a few... quite a few of you very frequently. So please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or just to contact me. Thank you so much for what you do.

Stacey Donelan

I'm Stacy Donilon. I live at 112 Treywood Lane in Chapel Hill, but Chatham County. I'm 57 years old, I'm the better part of middle-aged, but that means that I was growing up in the 70s and 80s and during that time, what you saw was everything on TV and the movies, there was no streaming, and the programming stretched from the 1940s to the then-current day of the 1970s, early 80s. We saw things like Casablanca, Mrs. Miniver, The Sound of Music, we moved up to things like Star Trek, the original series, with the Pattern of Force episode, where there's this Nazi colony. We watched Where Eagles Dare, or the cartoon shorts of the three little pigs beating up on Adolf Hitler caricatures. We cheered for the rebels in the Rebel Alliance in Star Wars. We could not you know, we were so excited when Indy won in Raiders of the Lost Ark. I have never been in the military, but I was always that gung-ho kid who believed in our American ideals, liberty, justice, and equality for all, freedom of speech, of religion, freedom of protest, innocent until proven guilty, brown shirts and stormtroopers grabbing people off the street, or out of schools, or grocery stores, or courthouses, or churches, that is stuff that we think of with Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union, not America. America is a land of promise and opportunity, not bullies. The Statue of Liberty? Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. Free from persecution of the world. You are safe here. We stand for you, the underdog, the downtrodden, the bullied. We have often heard the adage, these colors don't run, in relation to our flag. AI, of course, from Google, says these colors don't run is a patriotic expression. It shows that we will not abandon and retreat from our principles, or our ideals say we won't flee, or from danger, or a fight. But unfortunately, even though our colors of our country don't run, they symbolize courage, but many of my fellow Americans do run. They run away from anything that looks or sounds different than they are. They run away from anything or anyone that believes differently than they do. They run away from anything that says that we have not been perfect since our inception? That is cowardice to the nth degree. We are supposed to strive to be a more perfect union. That means being brave enough to acknowledge and accept our past, imperfect and sometimes cruel and barbaric, and our need to continually try to improve ourselves and our nation. Improve the way we see and accept each other, the structures we've put in place to take care of each other, the ability to respect our different viewpoints and origins as we work toward achieving our common goals. We are supposed to stand up for each other, not tear each other down. I see different flags put up to represent us now. Ones like Communist China or Korea, with presidents' faces blazed against them. Ones that harken back to global atrocities that took every country on Earth to banish. Ones from our country's own violent, racist past. Well, let's be clear. This? This is not our flag. It is not any version of our flag. This, even though I see it, is not our flag. Not any snippet of it tied into some other flag is our flag. This is our flag. It's the only one that we have, and we should revere. One strong enough to resist the temptation of revising history into a bright, shiny lie. One bold enough to encompass, as you spoke to, our vast diversity. We are flawed, but overall, we are

wonderful. Let us remember who we are, the United States of America. Thank you for letting me speak. I appreciate it. Thank you.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

BOARD PRIORITIES

25-0556

Receive a presentation of the FY2027-3033 Capital Improvement Plan

County Manager Bryan Thompson presented the FY2027-2033 Capital Improvement Plan. Thompson shared the high-level overview and stated that more details would be shared with the Board of Commissioners during the CIP Work Session.

Thompson stated that a Capital Improvements Program/Plan is:

The county's long-term plan for important improvements.

The beginning of the budget process.

The operating effects of the Approved CIP will inform the budget process.

The required debt service contribution will be set.

The required capital reserve contribution will be set.

Thompson stated that County staff presents a recommended capital improvements program (CIP) on November 3. Copies of the document will be available the next day in the County Manager's Office and on the County website. Public input is an important goal of the Board of Commissioners; the public hearing is November 17. Following public input, Commissioners will hold a work session November 18 beginning at 9:00am to review plan in detail. Staff's goal is an adopted revised plan for December 15.

Thompson stated that Chatham County's plan is a 7-year CIP, which gives our departments and agencies the ability to think ahead and plan for larger projects. This also gives us some time to plan for the funding needs associated with these projects. Review and prioritize requests, with the goal of finding the best way to schedule and fund them.

Thompson shared the two types of CIP Projects: those that are debt-funded, which of course are paid for with borrowing and those that we call 'pay-go', which are paid for with our capital reserve.

Thompson stated with Borrowing, the county goal is to be prudent about how to schedule debt-funded projects and when to borrow. Keeping in mind our debt capacity and that Growth in the County may require more cost-heavy projects, such as more schools. Pay-as-you-go capital projects are funded through capital reserve. Prior to FY 2016, CIP projects that did not involve debt were paid for from the general fund as needed and possible, but there was no mechanism for up-front funding. The FY 2016-2022 established a capital reserve to pay for all general fund projects, including school projects, that do not require debt. By establishing a capital reserve, the county can be better assured that funds will be available when needed. The reserve also gives the county greater flexibility to address needs as they arise.

Thompson stated that the county funds the larger facilities needs through debt, and we are strategic about how we do that. School debt is repaid from a few sources; impact fees, lottery proceeds, debt reserve, and restricted sales tax. The county currently contribute 9.7 cents on the tax rate to the debt reserve. The county's financial consultant has created a model of the debt so that we know exactly how much we

need to contribute and when, in order to be prepared to take on the debt and be in the best position to borrow. In other words, these tools help us to prepare and plan for borrowing. The county debt reserve and debt model are two of the key factors that contributed to our AAA bond rating. Smaller projects that are not funded through borrowing are funded through the capital reserve. Thompson noted, these projects have been increasing in cost and complexity. The recently completed animal shelter and Agricultural Center phase 2 are examples. These types of projects can really tax our ability to fund more than 1-2 projects with capital reserve funds.

Thompson noted that the county can only control what is the countys to control. In years past we were building in 5-8% inflation for construction costs to allow for fluctuations. However, it's a 7-year CIP so it's very difficult to anticipate the construction industry that far in advance. Bids for recent projects have indicated that 5% was not enough. We are now anticipating 10-12% inflation for construction in our project budget. If bids come in high, we will need to make adjustments to keep projects on schedule.

Thompson shared changes from last year:

Schools – HVAC Installation at Existing Gyms [\$3,085,590]

As a result of ARPA funding [\$2,000,000], this project has moved up two years in the CIP schedule from FY28 to FY26. Additional capital reserve funding will be needed to fully complete the project [\$1,085,590]. Project completion is expected by December 2026 (FY 27), compliant with the ARPA grant's expenditure deadline of December 31, 2026.

Schools – Margaret Pollard Expansion [\$2,332,800]

Due to lower than projected enrollment growth, this project has been pushed back by two years to FY29. Now scheduled to be completed during FY 2030. School system requested this change.

Schools – Paving Repair [+\$939,219]

This is a long-term project intended to extend beyond the seven years of the FY2027-2033 CIP to address paving repair needs over time. The budget for this project has increased with the addition of FY2033 scheduled in the CIP and funding shifted in some years for prioritized paving projects.

Schools – Wastewater Replacement at Silk Hope School (move to Future) [\$763,500]

CCS requested a redesignation of project to "Future" status as a result of an inability to purchase adjacent land required for the project. However, the project is fully funded, and in the event land becomes available, this project can be "reactivated" or "rescheduled".

School system requested these changes

Schools – Mobile Classrooms [\$1,346,915]

Due to lower than projected enrollment growth, this project has been pushed back to FY29. Now scheduled to be completed during FY 2032.

Schools – New Elementary at Chatham Park (Northern Village) [\$54,000,000]

Due to lower than projected enrollment growth, this project has been pushed back one year to FY28. Now scheduled to be completed during FY 2031.

County Buildings

Agriculture & Conference Center Phase II [-\$556,817]

During the November 19, 2024, CIP Work Session, the Board of Commissioners directed staff to amend this project's timeline to begin design work in FY2026. The project budget had a reduction from projected savings by starting the project earlier.

Siler City Center for Active Living Renovations [+\$201,340]

This project's budget is recommended to increase for an enclosed front-covered entrance and a contract alternate for additional office space in the building.

Parks

Northeast District Park Dam [+544,074]

The budget for this project has increased due to the estimated construction cost required to remove the current dam and then to rebuild it, as well as creation of a temporary access road and creation of a staging area for contractors to access the pond. Where the pond and dam are located is at the lowest point in park, surrounded by park facilities and a walking trail. In order for the contractor to access the dam and bring in equipment, a temporary access road will be cut in. The pond will be drained, fish removed and relocated, the dam rebuilt, fish restocked, and where the new dam intersect with the walking trail crushed gravel will be laid to prevent foot traffic from eroding the dam

Trails - 15/501 and 64 River Access Restrooms [-300,000]

This project is recommended for removal from the CIP as the county cannot place a restroom at either location prohibited by NCDOT right-of-way and recent flood events that are unsuitable for a vault-style restroom. Also, based on recent flood events and potential for future events, the 64-access site is not a suitable location to place a vault-style restroom.

Utilities Projects

Remove the following projects due to the utility merger with the City of Sanford/TriRiver Water

Looping Watermain Hatley Road [-\$3,391,000]

Looping Watermain Renaissance Drive [-\$1,419,000]

Thompson reviewed the completed Projects:

New Central Services

Construction of a new 38,000 square foot Central Services building (including approximately 8,000 square feet of warehouse space). Personnel finished moving into the New Central Services building in April 2023.

This project was substantially complete during the last CIP process and has now been officially closed out in the prior fiscal year (FY25)

County Fiber Extension to Siler City

ARPA –Enabled funded, project ended over budget as a result of the number of rock borings required to route the fiber to county facilities in Siler City.

Thompson reviewed the new projects:

Schools – HVAC Upgrades [\$63,646,528]

This project is to upgrade and/or replace outdated and inefficient HVAC systems across school facilities based on a facility MEP (mechanical, electrical, plumbing) assessment with an expected completion in 2025. Work related to the HVAC upgrades is projected to span 10 years (FY31-FY41), beyond the 7-year CIP schedule. Smaller HVAC upgrades will be funded with capital reserve funds, while larger replacements of thru-wall units with package units will be debt-funded and timed with future county borrowings. For the FY27-33, \$14,471,886 is planned between FY31 through FY33.

Schools – Roofing Replacement/Repair

Roof replacements and repairs across school facilities based a completed roofing assessment, with work beginning in FY27. [+\$4,998,318] Project spans FY2027 to FY2036, beyond the current CIP schedule. Total cost estimated at \$27,795,306. Repairs and replacements scheduled in the FY2027-2033 CIP are funded through capital reserves, with some alterations to the requested schedule of work. Larger roof replacements in outyears require debt funding.

*Elections**Voting Machine Equipment*

Replace existing voting machine equipment with updated models compliant with the latest federal Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG 2.0) standards. [+\$675,811] Funding recommended for FY2032, allowing setup and training prior to a general election cycle in FY2033 (calendar year 2032). Voting equipment standards at the Federal level are subject to changes, and this project prepares the county to comply with new election guidelines and mandates.

*Technology**Justice Center and Historic Courthouse Camera System Replacement*

Replace current analog cameras with a modern digital camera system and transition from multiple DVRs to a centralized network storage solution. [+\$600,000] This replacement will reduce points of failure, improve system reliability, provide data backup capability, and streamline maintenance. Storage and control system upgrades are also included.

Thompson reviewed the projects not recommended:

Parks – Earl Thompson Park - Project not recommended due to a lack of identified funding. Parks Reserve and Article 46 funding is currently fully allocated to other park projects.

Solid Waste & Recycling – Food Waste Composting Facility - Project not recommended as a food waste collection pilot is being conducted at collection centers in the current year. Pilot success will provide information on the project's potential future design.

Solid Waste & Recycling – Transfer Station - Project not recommended as a feasibility study is required to fully develop a business case for this project. Funding sources and costs also need to be identified.

Thompson reviewed the bond ratings and stated that diligent planning is a key contributor to our ratings. Standard & Poor's specifically highlighted very strong management, budgetary flexibility, and liquidity as well as a strong economy and budgetary performance – all key factors in maintaining our AAA rating. The interest rate shown (2.54%) is the All-in TIC (True Interest Cost) from the 2025 Refunding.

Thompson reviewed the next steps.

The Board of Commissioners thanked Thompson for the presentation.

The Board of Commissioners discussed the process for project requests, the debt model, affordable housing bond, land acquisition for parks and farmland preservation, and Sheriff's Office substation in Northeast.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

[25-0553](#)

Vote to approve a Fee In Lieu Of Agreement for the Affordable Housing Element of the Vickers Village development

Attachments: [Vickers Village Presentation 11-3-2025](#)
[Vickers Bennett Group Restated Affordable Housing Agreement 11-3-2025](#)

Community Development Officer Jamie Andrews presented an update on the Fee In Lieu Of Agreement for the Affordable Housing Element of the Vickers Village development.

Andrews' follow-up presentation on the Vickers Village project, building on a prior presentation from October.

Andrews reviewed the original intent of the project, outlined updated financial findings, and presented options for the Board's consideration.

Andrews explained that the Vickers Village development was initially envisioned as a compact community in northeast Chatham County that would provide ten homeownership opportunities at affordable price points for low- and moderate-income residents earning at or below eighty percent (80%) of the Area Median Income (AMI). The target population included early-career professionals such as teachers, public servants, and service-sector workers.

Andrews stated that the project's affordability strategy included several mechanisms, such as designating specific lots for affordable purchase, reimbursing certain development impact fees, limiting luxury interior finishes and sales-related costs, and offering down payment assistance. These measures were intended to reduce the overall cost of homes and make them accessible to eligible buyers.

Andrews explained that since the project's initial adoption in 2021, staff have reevaluated the financial feasibility and determined that the level of County subsidy required is significantly higher than originally anticipated. Current estimates indicate that approximately \$155,000 in County support would be needed per unit, which staff identified as a substantial concern.

Andrews presented an option to proceed with the project under its current structure, which would result in ten units—two units affordable at sixty percent (60%) of AMI and eight units at eighty percent (80%) of AMI—at an estimated total County cost of approximately \$1.7 million. She noted that other variations could reduce the number of units or adjust affordability levels, but each option would involve trade-offs.

As an alternative, Andrews outlined a fee-in-lieu option, as allowed under the existing agreement. She explained that staff had negotiated an updated payment reflecting inflation, increasing the per-unit payment from \$47,000 to \$52,600, based on Consumer Price Index adjustments. Acceptance of this option would result in a total payment of \$526,000 in lieu of constructing the affordable units, and the affordable housing requirement within the development would be waived.

Andrews noted that, if accepted, the fee-in-lieu funds would be reinvested in other affordable housing initiatives. Potential options discussed included establishing a revolving loan fund to support scattered-site single-family housing, partnering on low-income housing tax credit developments to leverage federal funding, collaborating with Habitat for Humanity on current or future homeownership projects, or pursuing

other partnership opportunities as they arise.

Andrews emphasized that no specific direction was being requested at this time, but that staff sought to present viable options and demonstrate that the proposed fee-in-lieu funds could be leveraged for alternative affordable housing investments.

The Board was advised that a draft agreement had been included in the agenda materials to formalize the fee-in-lieu option. The recommended action was for the Board to review and consider approving the amendment to accept the \$526,000 payment and waive the affordable housing requirement for the Vickers Village development.

The Board engaged in discussion and asked questions of staff following the presentation by Community Development Officer Jamie Andrews.

Commissioners asked questions about the timeframe and duration of the proposed agreement. Staff explained that the affordable housing requirement is tied to the development approvals, and if waived, the fee-in-lieu payment would be made as lots are sold to builders, which is expected to occur in the near term. Staff indicated that, once approved, the amendment would permanently resolve the affordable housing requirement for the project.

Commissioners asked questions regarding whether the Board could revisit or renegotiate the agreement in the future if project conditions changed. Staff advised that acceptance of the amendment would settle the affordable housing obligation, and any future modification would likely require a formal revision process, typically initiated by the developer.

The Board of Commissioners discussed under the proposed amendment, all County incentives tied to the provision of affordable housing, including fee reimbursements, would be eliminated. Staff confirmed that, without affordable units, the County would not provide fee reimbursements or other related support.

Commissioners asked questions about the timing of the fee-in-lieu payment and the potential impact of inflation on its value. Staff clarified that payments would be received as lots are sold, which is anticipated in the near future, minimizing concerns about diminished purchasing power over time.

Board discussion also addressed the relative scale of the \$526,000 fee-in-lieu payment. Commissioner Delaney expressed concerns that the amount may be limited in its impact and encouraged consideration of additional funding strategies for affordable housing beyond this specific project. Staff and Board members noted that this funding would supplement, not replace, existing affordable housing funding sources, including dedicated sales tax revenues and grant programs.

The Board discussed the origin of the proposal to amend the agreement. Staff explained that the increasing cost of the project had been a concern for both the County and the developer, and the proposal resulted from ongoing discussions between both parties. It was noted that the affordable housing requirement stems from the Compact Communities Ordinance and is typically negotiated as part of development approvals.

Further discussion emphasized that the developer and County staff had been working collaboratively with shared information about rising costs. Staff also noted that,

historically, payment-in-lieu options have been used in similar developments due to challenges associated with implementing on-site affordable units.

Board members expressed differing perspectives on how to proceed. Commissioner Delaney indicated a preference for honoring the County's original 2021 commitment to support the construction of affordable units, emphasizing the importance of maintaining commitments despite increased costs. Others emphasized the need to respond to current financial realities and make a decision based on updated project conditions.

The Board of Commissioners generally agreed that the decision before them was a policy determination regarding whether to proceed with the original approach or accept the fee-in-lieu and reinvest those funds in alternative affordable housing initiatives.

Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to accept the revised fee-in-lieu agreement, the Board continued discussion.

Commissioner Delaney expressed concern with the broader policy implications of accepting fee-in-lieu payments, stating that the County should avoid moving away from delivering actual affordable housing units.

Commissioner Delaney emphasized the importance of honoring the County's original 2021 commitment and improving future contracts to better account for rising costs, rather than modifying agreements after the fact. Commissioner Delaney indicated an intention to vote against the motion.

Commissioner Gomez Flores sought clarification that the fee-in-lieu option had been included in the original agreement. Staff confirmed that both the fee-in-lieu and direct support for units were contemplated in the original contract, and that exercising this option did not represent a departure from the agreement.

Discussion also focused on the relative impact of the proposed investment. One Commissioner Gomez Flores noted that the County would be contributing a significant sum—approximately \$1.7 to \$2 million—for only ten units under the original structure and compared this to other projects where a similar or smaller investment supported a substantially higher number of units. Commissioner Gomez Flores expressed support for the fee-in-lieu option, stating that it would allow the County to achieve a greater overall impact through alternative affordable housing initiatives.

Additional comments highlighted the complexity of affordable housing development and the importance of Board understanding. Commissioners expressed appreciation for staff's efforts to provide detailed background information through individual briefings, which helped clarify the history and constraints of the project. It was noted that decisions such as this reflect the Board's responsibility to adapt to changing conditions while working within legal and financial limitations.

Board members acknowledged that affordable housing strategies are inherently complex and require ongoing collaboration among staff, developers, and policymakers. Several Commissioners emphasized the importance of remaining flexible and making data-driven decisions, particularly when project costs and expected outcomes change significantly.

Support was expressed for accepting the fee-in-lieu and reinvesting the funds in other affordable housing efforts, with confidence that staff would identify opportunities to maximize community impact. It was noted that, while the amount may be modest

relative to need, it represents a meaningful contribution toward broader housing goals.

Chair Howard called for a vote on the motion.

Following the vote, Commissioner Delaney raised a point of order regarding comments made during the prior discussion about participation in one-on-one meetings with staff.

Commissioner Delaney expressed concern that remarks from the Chair and Vice Chair may have implied criticism of individual Board members and questioned whether such commentary was appropriate under Board procedures. Commissioner Delaney stated that any criticism of fellow Board members should not be made indirectly or without clear attribution.

Chair Howard indicated that the Board of Commissioners needed to proceed with the remaining agenda items and redirected the discussion accordingly.

Commissioner Delaney continued, emphasizing that it is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that Board discussions remain respectful and do not include negative or disparaging remarks about other members.

Commissioner Delaney further noted that each Board member engages with staff differently and expressed a preference for discussing and deliberating issues during public meetings rather than in separate sessions, citing their understanding of state law considerations. Commissioner Delaney stated that they had engaged with staff independently prior to the meeting and rejected any implication that they had not adequately participated in the process.

Commissioner Delaney concluded by reiterating their objection and indicating readiness for the Board to move forward with the remaining business.

A motion was made by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, to approve a Fee In Lieu Of Agreement for the Affordable Housing Element of the Vickers Village development. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

No: 1 - Commissioner Delaney

[25-0554](#)

Vote to adopt a Resolution and approve an Ordinance for a revision to an approved CD-CC (Conditional District - Compact Community), Vickers Village, to modify the phasing schedule for Condition Numbers, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 22 of the last modified phasing schedule approved in November 2024, located off US 15-501 N and Jack Bennett Road, Williams Township

Attachments: [More information from the Planning department website](#)
[Resolution Vickers Village Consist Stmnt 10-20-2025](#)
[Ordinance Vickers Village Zoning Extension Request Ordinance](#)

Zoning Administrator Angela Plummer presented the request to adopt a resolution and approve an ordinance revising the approved Conditional District – Compact Community (CD-CC) for the Vickers Village development to modify the phasing schedule for

Conditions 5, 6, 7, 8, and 22, as last amended in November 2024.

Plummer explained that the requested revisions were due to delays in securing a builder for the development.

As a result, updated timelines were proposed to extend the phasing schedule. Plummer clarified that the revisions to both the zoning approval and subdivision approval were aligned and included a correction from a previously stated 12-month extension to an actual 24-month extension.

Plummer outlined the updated schedule as follows:

- Phase 1 (first plat): on or before December 2028
- Phase 2: extending into 2029
- Phase 3 (commercial lot final plat): on or before December 2030
- Building permit validity: to remain in effect through December 2029

The Board of Commissioners confirmed that the revised timelines reflected the proposed extensions.

Chair Howard called for a motion to adopt the resolution, approve the ordinance, and approve the associated consistency statement.

A motion was made by Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kenlan, to adopt 25-75 Resolution and approve an Ordinance for a revision to an approved CD-CC (Conditional District - Compact Community), Vickers Village, to modify the phasing schedule for Condition Numbers, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 22 of the last modified phasing schedule approved in November 2024, located off US 15-501 N and Jack Bennett Road, Williams Township. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

[25-0555](#)

Vote to approve a request by Warren Mitchell, P.E. on behalf of Vickers Bennett Group, LLC for twelve (12) month extension of First Plat to extend the development schedule, consisting of 183 lots located off US 15-501 N, Vickers Rd, SR-1719, and Jack Bennett Rd SR-1717 parcels #18847, 18848, 60719, 18636, 60653, 79965, 89281, 89395, 80493, 69057, 89206, 18857, 87996, 89272, 18856, 87093, 93157, 79288, 93156, 93155, 93154, 85875, and 18914

Attachments: [More information from the Planning department website](#)

Subdivision Administrator Kim Tyson presented a request by Warren Mitchell, P.E. on behalf of Vickers Bennett Group, LLC for twenty-four (24) month extension of First Plat to extend the development schedule, consisting of 183 lots located off US 15-501 N, Vickers Rd, SR-1719, and Jack Bennett Rd SR-1717 parcels #18847, 18848, 60719, 18636, 60653, 79965, 89281, 89395, 80493, 69057, 89206, 18857, 87996, 89272, 18856, 87093, 93157, 79288, 93156, 93155, 93154, 85875, and 18914.

Chair Howard called for a motion to approve.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Robertson, that the request by Warren Mitchell, P.E. on behalf of Vickers Bennett Group, LLC for twenty-four (24) month extension of First Plat to extend the development schedule, consisting of 183 lots located off US 15-501

N, Vickers Rd, SR-1719, and Jack Bennett Rd SR-1717 parcels #18847, 18848, 60719, 18636, 60653, 79965, 89281, 89395, 80493, 69057, 89206, 18857, 87996, 89272, 18856, 87093, 93157, 79288, 93156, 93155, 93154, 85875, and 18914 be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson

[25-0564](#)

Receive a presentation on the options for the selection of a county attorney

Attachments: [Selection of County Attorney Presentation 11-3-2025](#)

County Manager Bryan Thompson stated that the current Chatham County Attorney is planning to transition out of the role and Thompson shared a presentation for the Board of Commissioner to explore options for selection of the next County Attorney.

Thompson reviewed the statutory requirements:

§ 153A-114. Appointment; duties.

The board of commissioners shall appoint a county attorney to serve at its pleasure and to be its legal adviser.

- 1. Counties must appoint a specific person or firm to serve as the official attorney to represent them.*
- 2. The appointment is at the Board's discretion. Structure, selection process, and terms are flexible.*
- 3. The attorney must be licensed to practice law in North Carolina.*
- 4. The appointment must occur in open session by action of the majority of the Board.*

Thompson shared the options for the Board of Commissioners:

Option 1 - Continue with Current Firm (Poyner Spruill LLP)

Considerations:

Firm has established familiarity with the County's operations, history, and prior legal matters.

Firm currently engages in working relationships with County staff.

Provides expertise across multiple legal areas (e.g., human resources, land use, real estate).

County Attorney selection limited to the attorneys on staff at Poyner Spruill LLP.

Option 2 - Solicit Proposals from Different Legal Firms (RFP)

Considerations:

Allows competitive evaluation of services, fees, and firms.

Opportunity to identify firms with specific approaches or characteristics.

Requires investment of time and resources to develop request for proposals (RFP), evaluate proposals, and conduct interviews with multiple firms.

Potential loss of institutional knowledge during transition.

Option 3 - Hire a Staff Attorney who Serves as County Attorney

Considerations:

Provides full-time in-house counsel dedicated solely to the County.

Fully integrated within County operations and organizational structure.

Greater institutional knowledge over time.

Involves recruitment, hiring, and ongoing management of the attorney position.

May still necessitate retaining external counsel for specialized areas (e.g., land use, human resources), which could increase overall costs.

Potential loss of institutional knowledge during transition.

Option 4 - Hybrid Model – Staff Attorney for County/Staff + County Attorney on Retainer Structure:

Staff Attorney: Provides legal support to County departments, drafts and reviews contracts/policies, and ensures compliance with daily operations. Board Attorney: Serves as County Attorney.

Considerations:

Provides both internal Staff Counsel and access to external Board of Commissioner counsel.

Retainer would prospectively provide specialized external expertise if required for particular legal matters.

Potential budget impact from funding both a Staff Attorney position (salary and benefits) and County Attorney on retainer.

Option for long term transition strategy for Staff Attorney to County Attorney only.

Potential loss of institutional knowledge during transition.

The Board of Commissioners discussed the options and process for selecting a new County Attorney, particularly in preparation for the anticipated transition at the end of the year.

Board members discussed the advantages and limitations of selecting legal representation through a firm versus hiring in-house counsel. It was noted that working with a law firm provides access to a broader range of attorneys and specialized expertise, while an in-house model would limit the County to a single individual. Questions were raised regarding the timeline for making a decision, and staff advised that while the process could take approximately several months depending on the approach, it would be beneficial for the Board to establish direction well in advance of the current attorney's transition.

Several Commissioners expressed appreciation for the services provided by Poyner Spruill and current County Attorney Bob Hagemann, citing positive working relationships, strong legal expertise, and access to a deep bench of attorneys within the firm. Commissioners emphasized the importance of selecting a successor who is not only knowledgeable in local government and land use law, but also capable of building trust with the Board of Commissioners, exercising sound judgment, and providing clear, confident guidance in complex situations.

The Board of Commissioners discussed multiple options for proceeding, including continuing with Poyner Spruill, issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to evaluate other firms, or considering alternative models such as in-house or hybrid legal services. Commissioners favored maintaining continuity with Poyner Spruill while meeting potential candidates within the firm, including in closed session or through informal meetings, to assess fit and working style. Commissioner Delaney expressed interest in issuing an RFP to ensure a broader review of available legal services and market options.

Staff and the current County Attorney provided clarification on the process. It was noted that the Board of Commissioners has broad discretion in selecting legal counsel, including whether to solicit proposals or proceed directly with a firm. The RFP process was described as flexible, allowing the Board of Commissioners to determine scope, timeline, and evaluation criteria. It was also explained that interviews could be conducted in closed session, as permitted by law.

Additional discussion addressed specific candidates within Poyner Spruill, including

both senior associates and partners who could assume the role of County Attorney, with continued access to firm resources. Mr. Hagemann indicated his willingness to assist in the transition and remain available as a resource in a limited capacity.

The Board of Commissioners also considered the practicality of in-house counsel at this time. Staff advised that, based on current workload and organizational needs, the County may not yet be positioned to support a full-time in-house attorney.

Following discussion, the Board of Commissioners reached general consensus to proceed with Option One, which involves working with Poyner Spruill to identify one or more qualified attorneys for consideration. The Board of Commissioners agreed to meet with potential candidates, likely in closed session, to assess qualifications and fit. It was further understood that, if this approach does not result in a suitable candidate, the Board of Commissioners may pursue a broader search through an RFP process (Option Two).

Staff and the current attorney offered to coordinate next steps, including scheduling candidate meetings and providing background materials for Board of Commissioners review.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS REPORT

Intergovernmental Relations Manager Lindsay Ray provided an update on federal and state legislative matters, as well as community initiatives.

Ray began by sharing concerning federal developments related to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Ray reported that, due to ongoing federal shutdown conditions, the federal government is expected to issue only partial SNAP benefits, approximately half of the normal monthly amount, with payments also delayed. Ray noted that legal challenges are underway and that there is currently no clear timeline for resolution of the federal shutdown. Advocacy efforts are ongoing, with both the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) actively engaging with federal lawmakers to encourage a resolution.

Ray also provided a brief update on the North Carolina General Assembly, noting that limited activity is anticipated in the upcoming session. Staff indicated they would monitor developments and provide updates during the Board's next meeting and Capital Improvement Plan work session.

Turning to positive updates, Ray announced the official launch of "Chatham Celebrates America 250," a countywide initiative commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States. Ray explained that the celebration includes a 250-day series of events leading up to a culminating event on June 27, 2026, at the Agricultural Center. The County previously established a planning committee by resolution in 2024, and the initiative has received a \$10,000 grant to support planning and promotional efforts.

Ray encouraged Board members and the public to visit the program website for event updates and to submit additional community events for inclusion. Ray noted that Chatham County's approach differs from other jurisdictions by featuring a broad series of events rather than a single celebration, including both standalone events and existing community events themed around the anniversary.

Ray also highlighted community engagement efforts, including outreach at the

Pittsboro Street Fair, where staff connected with residents, recruited volunteers, and expanded the program's newsletter distribution.

Additionally, Ray described a planned "passport" program, which will allow participants to attend events and collect stamps throughout the celebration period. Individuals who complete the program will be eligible for commemorative items at the final event, with the first 250 participants receiving a special gift.

During discussion, a Board member raised concerns about the branding of the program website under "VisitPittsboro.com," suggesting it may not fully represent the entire county. Staff acknowledged this as a longstanding issue and indicated that options for website naming and branding are being explored, while noting the practical challenges of transitioning established platforms.

The Board of Commissioners expressed enthusiasm for the America 250 initiative and appreciation for staff's work coordinating the program.

CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk to the Board Jenifer Johnson reminded the Board of Commissioners of the Climate Change Retreat on Thursday and the Conference Center.

MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Bryan Thompson provided a brief report to the Board.

Thompson informed the Board of Commissioners that the County recently received formal notice from ICG regarding the termination of its previously approved economic development incentive agreement. He explained that the company cited changes in its anticipated timeline and project alignment as the reason for discontinuing the agreement. Thompson noted that the company did not indicate its future intentions or whether it may reengage with the County at a later date. Thompson confirmed that no action is required by the Board at this time.

Thompson also reminded Board members to participate in the ongoing Halloween costume contest voting.

Looking ahead, he advised that a portion of the upcoming Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) work session will include planning for the Board's annual retreat.

Thompson further noted that the CIP information is currently available on the County's website and that a PDF version will be made available the following day.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Delaney had no reports.

Commissioner Robertson reported that the Central Pines Regional Council (CPRC) met recently and highlighted a collaborative initiative with Durham County involving a "Street Medicine Program." The program provides medical services, mental health support, and outreach to unsheltered individuals and is supported by grant funding. Robertson noted the potential for future collaboration opportunities for Chatham County.

Commissioner Robertson also attended the "State of Our Schools" event, expressing

appreciation for student participation and presentations, as well as the leadership and support demonstrated by school administration and staff. Robertson further shared that Superintendent Jackson presented at a Leadership Triangle session, providing valuable insight into public school funding challenges to regional leaders.

Additional updates included:

- Participation in the Leadership Triangle program and related regional discussions
- A meeting with the new West Chatham Chamber of Commerce CEO, highlighting potential collaboration on climate initiatives
- Attendance at a Chatham Literacy event, where she noted strong community engagement and fundraising efforts to support literacy programs

Commissioner Kenlan reported attending a candlelight vigil hosted by the Chatham Diversion and Advocacy Department in Siler City to honor victims and survivors of domestic violence. Kenlan shared that the event was meaningful and included remarks from a survivor advocate. Kenlan noted the strong presence of community partners and expressed appreciation for County staff and programs supporting individuals impacted by domestic violence. Kenlan also shared her interest in an upcoming climate workshop.

Commissioner Gomez Flores reported meeting with the new United Way director, who outlined a strategic goal to assist over one thousand individuals in moving out of poverty by 2030, with a focus on expanding funding efforts.

Gomez Flores also provided an update regarding Health Department financials, noting that although certain debts are written off, the County continues to receive partial repayments. Gomez Flores further explained that the total amount of write-offs has decreased compared to the previous year, largely due to changes in service delivery, including reduced provision of adult services as private providers increase in the area. Additionally, Gomez Flores shared a visual update on progress related to a previously approved easement for UNC Health Chatham Hospital signage, noting initial site clearing and preparation work in Siler City.

Commissioner Howard reported participating in a joint Triangle West and Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) meeting, highlighting the importance of improved regional coordination on transportation planning. Howard noted that increased collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries is helping to create more integrated and effective transportation systems that better reflect how residents travel across county and municipal lines.

Commissioner Howard also provided updates on several regional initiatives and upcoming engagements, including ongoing coordination efforts among larger communities through the Central Pines Regional Council, as well as planned discussions focused on improving civility and communication in public meetings.

Howard further reported on her upcoming participation in an Oil and Gas Commission meeting, where she plans to monitor potential development activity near the Chatham-Lee County line, and an upcoming Governor's Crime Commission meeting, which will include discussion on victim services and potential impacts of federal funding changes.

Commissioner Howard emphasized the importance of continued regional collaboration, proactive planning, and information sharing as Chatham County responds to growth and emerging challenges.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Howard called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Amanda Robertson, that the meeting was adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Howard, Vice Chair Kenlan, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores, and Commissioner Robertson