



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Karen Howard, Chair
Katie Kenlan, Vice Chair
David Delaney
Franklin Gomez Flores
Amanda Robertson

COUNTY MANAGER: Bryan Thompson

Resolution of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners Honoring George Moses Horton Day in Chatham County

WHEREAS, George Moses Horton was born into slavery around 1798 in Chatham County, North Carolina, and despite being denied formal education, taught himself to read using old spelling books and the King James Bible; and

WHEREAS, Horton displayed extraordinary literary talent from an early age and went on to become the first African American in the South to publish a book, “The Hope of Liberty” (1829), while still enslaved, a landmark accomplishment that challenged the limitations placed on enslaved people and inspired generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Horton earned widespread acclaim in his lifetime for his poetry, which was often deeply personal, eloquent, and politically resonant, and which captured the pain of bondage and the hope for freedom, including poems secretly written and sold to students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and

WHEREAS, his work continues to be celebrated for its historical, literary, and cultural significance, and his life stands as a powerful example of courage, perseverance, and intellectual brilliance in the face of unimaginable hardship; and

WHEREAS, Chatham County takes pride in being the birthplace of George Moses Horton and seeks to honor his legacy through education, reflection, and the celebration of African American history and achievement; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chatham County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaims June 28, 2025, as George Moses Horton Day in Chatham County, and encourages schools, libraries, community organizations, and residents to commemorate this day by learning about Horton’s life, reading his poetry, and honoring the rich African American heritage that is part of Chatham County’s history.

Adopted, this the 16th day of June 2025.

Karen Howard, Chair

ATTEST:

Jenifer K Johnson, Clerk to the Board

Integrity – Respect – Collaboration – Community – Equity – Service – Accountability