



Minutes

Board of County Commissioners Retreat Meeting
Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 4:00 PM
Pender County Hampstead Annex
15060 Hwy 17, Hampstead, NC 28443

PRESENT:

Vice Chair Brad George
Commissioner Jerry Groves
Chairman Randy Burton
Commissioner Brent Springer
Commissioner Jimmy T. Tate

ABSENT:

OTHER

Colby Sawyer, County Manager

PRESENT:

Meg Blue, Assistant County Manager
Other Staff and Members of the Press and Public

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Burton called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

2. INVOCATION

Chairman Burton led the invocation.

3. RETREAT OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Colby Sawyer, County Manager, explained the Retreat was a set of topics to talk about for the new budget. This was in the hope of bringing a budget that the Board wanted to see. In order to do this, there needed to be good discussion and hear what the priorities were from the board and the public.

4. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND OUTLOOK

Meg Blue, Assistant County Manager, introduced Mitch Brigulio, of Davenport and Company. Brigulio went over the financial standing of Pender County. He noted that Pender County has a double A2 with Moodies and a double rating Standard and Poors. Pender County's debt ratio, compatibility and affordability were discussed. Chairman Burton questioned if, between staff work and the Board's conservativeness, the county was in good shape. Brigulio stated yes, the county took a proactive approach to financing and paying for the debt.

Brigulio went over utilities' financial standing. James Proctor, Interim Utilities Director, stated the county currently services 13,000 customers with an additional 13,000 houses expected and sewer would be needed sooner. Proctor explained the challenges with getting water to those individuals who had paid the connection fees years ago. It is hard to get money to finance a project with little revenue resulting from the project. Proctor noted that it cost about one million dollars for one (1) mile of pipe run.

5. BREAK

5:24pm - 5:34pm.

6. FUTURE CAPITAL PROJECTS & LONG-RANGE PLANNING

Sawyer asked the Board for any capital needs the county needed to think about.

Chairman Burton suggested parks, green space and water.

Commissioner Springer suggested economic development, a county fair and a new courthouse.

Commissioner George suggested more industrial parks.

Commissioner Tate suggested owning all convenience sites rather than leasing them, county wide, and a water quality of life improvement plan.

Commissioner Groves suggested a plan for getting water to people whose wells are drying up.

7. 2026 PROPERTY REAPPRAISAL UPDATE

Colby Sawyer, County Manager, introduced Ryan Vincent, of Vincent Valuations. Vincent gave the final presentation on the property re-appraisal process. Vincent stated the appraisals were based on 100% market value and property owners would see a 105 to 110% increase. Vincent suggested everyone review their re-appraisal, compare with other homes and appeal if necessary. Meg Blue, Assistant County Manager, noted the letters were going out at the end of March and citizens had until May 15th to appeal them.

8. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Colby Sawyer, County Manager, provided an update on current capital projects.

The Department of Social Services building was 98% complete and was expecting a completion date of 4/6/2026.

Central Pender Park was 85% complete and expects a completion date (without sewer) with in the next month.

The Law Enforcement Center was 70% complete and expects a completion date in October 2026.

The Hampstead Library is expected to start in April with an expected completion in May 2027.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Burton recessed the meeting until 9 am on March 27 at 7:29pm.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]