



Minutes

Board of County Commissioners Budget Session Meeting
Thursday, May 7, 2026 at 4:00 PM
Pender County Public Assembly Room
805 S. Walker Street, Burgaw, NC

PRESENT: Vice Chair Brad George
Commissioner Jerry Groves
Chairman Randy Burton
Commissioner Jimmy T. Tate

ABSENT: Commissioner Brent Springer

OTHER PRESENT: Colby Sawyer, County Manager
Meg Blue, Assistant County Manager
Katie Barber-Jones, Hartzog Law Group
Other Staff and Members of the Press and Public

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairman George led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. INVOCATION

Commissioner Groves led the invocation.

4. HEALTH DEPARTMENT: MOSER

Carolyn Moser, Health Director, presented the item. Moser went over the Health Department and several of its functions as well as the other departments under the Health Department. Moser stated they were not asking for any new positions or vehicles this year, and the only increases were due to state and federal cuts and the way forward.

5. DSS: BLANKENSHIP

Rich Blankenship, DSS Director, presented the item. Blankenship stated they were not requesting any new positions or vehicles this year. There was one (1) reclassification and several grade increases due to the way forward. The rules now required individuals to be recertified twice a year for programs, which meant more work for the DSS workers.

6. HOUSING: MARTINDALE

Brianna Martindale, Housing Director, presented the item. Martindale stated the department was fully staffed at this time, but they were asking for one (1) property manager to oversee Seven Oaks. This individual would free up Brianna to do what she needed to do.

7. PENDER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES: SAUER

Rick Sauer, Emergency Services Director, presented the item. Sauer went over the current fire, EMS and equipment/Capital/Radio needs. Sauer stated they need 15 positions for Fire, 1 additional ambulance, 8 staff for the ambulance, a list of equipment/capital/radio needs.

8. INSPECTIONS: TURBEVILLE

Jerry Turbeville, Inspections & Permitting Director, presented the item. Turbeville stated they were in need of 2 vehicles, midsize SUVs and the way forward.

9. LIBRARY: PHILLIPS-BELL

Allen Phillips-Bell, Library Director, presented the item. Phillips-Bell explained they would need a new position, a youth services librarian, for the new library.

10. BREAK

5:35pm to 6:03pm.

11. PLANNING AND HAZARD MITIGATION: BRANTLEY

Colby Sawyer, County Manager, introduced Tim Owens, the new Planning Director. Justin Brantley, Assistant Director, noted that they needed some new laptops, the way forward changes and had 2 vacancies they were working on filling.

12. SOLID WASTE: BARNHILL

Susan Barnhill, Solid Waste Director, presented the item. Barnhill noted there was little change to the budget. Their main focus was the new Montague Station and the up fit of the Transfer Station.

13. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: BATSON

Tommy Batson, Emergency Management Director, presented the item. Batson stated there were little changes. There was the way forward, 1 reclass and 1 new position.

14. SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL: SHERIFF CUTLER & MAJOR COLLIER

Sheriff Alan Cutler, presented the item along with Major Collier and Captain Strickland. With the new Law Enforcement Center, and the almost tripling of beds, there was a large need for detectives. To get the facility running with 136 beds, they would need 25 new detectives and 2 new cooks. The jail would need one (1) new narcotics investigator and two (2) SRO's at JH Lea School (late 2027, so they could wait until next year's budget). They would like four (4) new telecommunications individuals, one (1) additional sworn deputy for animal control, one (1) dedicated finance person, one (1) dedicated IT person and one (1) dedicated HR person.

15. CLOSING REMARKS

The meeting adjourned at 7:16pm.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]