



Minutes

**Board of County Commissioners Town Hall Meeting
Tuesday, July 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM
Pender County Public Assembly Room
805 S. Walker Street, Burgaw, NC**

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

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 6:00 p.m.

2. DISCUSSION

Chairman Burton opened the town hall by thanking the citizens for coming and then turned it over for discussion.

Mrs. Regina Fennel, a citizen, questioned why the tax department was sending emails rather than sending the information in the mail. Fennel had to go to the tax office to get hard copies and an explanation for the email she received. Commissioner Burton questioned if she received help at the tax office with Fennel responding, the tax office explained the definition of value change delta. Fennel stated that in the beginning they were told to appeal, and it would be reviewed, and now they are being told to appeal, and they will see if it is going to appeal. Colby Sawyer, County Manager, explained that if the county agreed with the appeal, it would not need to go to the Board of Equalization and Review. However, if the county did not agree, it would go before the Board of Equalization and Review. Fennel stated flood zones impact home values. Her sister's home was reduced by \$2,000 with a letter stating if they disagreed with that, to appeal, so they did. Fennel stated there was a General Statue that states if there are misclassifications, refunds can be received. Chairman Burton advised Fennel to give her information to staff so they could help her navigate the issue.

Mrs. Saunders, a citizen, appealed their taxes, and was given a new figure. The Saunders appealed again and are waiting for a response. Saunders stated that a lot of people do not

understand the tax process and do not have email or printers to process an appeal. Mrs. Fennel questioned why there were no tax personnel present at the meeting to deal with these questions. Fennel also stated that people need water. Fennel questioned how much was given to non-profit organizations and whether the budget could be modified. Sawyer responded that \$50,000 was budgeted for non-profit organizations and that after speaking with representatives Smith and Jackson, additional state funding was received, and all non-profit organizations will receive their full funding request. Fennel questioned why there was not more section 8 housing. Meg Blue, Assistant County Manager/Finance Director, explained there were vouchers, there were just not enough landlords for the vouchers. Fennel stated low-income housing was needed. Fennel suggested using some of the land Pender County owns for low-income housing.

A citizen questioned working with developers for some low-income housing, water, roads. Chairman Burton explained that developers pay for water development in new neighborhoods.

Mrs. Fennel brought up a safety issue at the Courthouse Square in Burgaw. Fennel explained there were holes and people were falling or twisting their ankles and getting hurt. Fennel questioned who was responsible for repairing this. Sawyer stated it was the County's responsibility and that Parks & Recreation had already walked the property and were looking into ways to fix it.

Chairman Burton thanked Dr. Hall from the Board of Education for attending the meeting.

Commissioner Groves stated he was going to see Mrs. Fennel. Groves talked about buying F-250s for county employees and allowing them to drive them home two counties away. Groves said he spoke with David Rouzer's office, and they stated if the county would put a plan together, they might get some federal funding for water. Groves was asking the manager a second time to start a plan. Groves noted that house building now was terrible and people were paying double what the homes were worth.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]