

Chowan County Board of Commissioners

Regular Meeting

Monday, January 20, 2026

Chowan County Public Safety Center

305 West Freemason St.

Edenton, NC 27980

6:00pm

This meeting was recorded. A copy of the recording is in the clerk's server meeting file labeled January 20, 2026.

Present: Chairman Bob Kirby, Commissioners Larry McLaughlin, Ron Cummings, Ellis Lawrence, Chris Evans, Tray Taylor and Tony Shaffer.

Staff present County Manager Kevin Howard, Finance Officer Cathy Smith, County Attorney Lauren Arizaga-Womble and Board Clerk Susanne Stallings.

Regular Meeting

Chairman Kirby called the regular meeting to order and led the pledge.

Commissioner McLaughlin then offered the invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Stallings noted the addition of an additional budget amendment (BA2026-037) to item 7a.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the agenda as amended.

Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Public Comment

Chair Kirby opened the floor for public comment.

Kathleen Miglorie, 1222 Sound Shore Dr. asked the Board for any additional information regarding the Project Teapot and information on infrastructure impacts.

Susan Inglis 101 E Water Street discussed farmland and woodland preservation initiatives and programs overed to promote these programs. She encouraged the Board to look into these matters and put them on a future planning meeting agenda for discussion.

Chair Kirby called for any further public comment, there was none.

Consent Agenda

All items on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and may be enacted by one motion. If a County Commissioner requests discussion on an item, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separate

- a. Minutes
Minutes of the January 5, 2026 Meetings.
- b. 2026 Commissioner Committee Appointments
The Board will accept the 2026 Committee Appointments from the Chair.
- c. Tax Refunds and Releases

Advance Auto	\$107.25	Overpayment
Dunton, E.	\$250.01	Overpayment
Eure, F.	\$121.16	Overpayment
Jordan, E.	\$103.21	Overpayment
Smith, A. & Son	\$230.13	Overpayment
Hollowell, J.	\$114.88	Overpayment
Byrum, R.	\$147.67	Overpayment
- d. Surplus

Item/Description	VIN or Asset ID	Method for Disposal
Eaton Whiteline Console Furniture	5790, 5791, 5792, 5793 and 5794	Contract disposal with installation of new consoles
2014 Ford Econoline Van (326,763 miles, transmission is bad)	1481	This van has been listed and sold twice on Gov Deals. In both sales the bidder defaulted and did not pick up the van. It is requested that the Board amend the previously approved disposal method to allow staff to take the vehicle to a scrap yard for disposal.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Library Update

Librarian Anna Kallas with the Shepard Pruden Memorial Library provided the Board with an update from the Shepard Pruden Memorial Library. A copy of the report is in the meeting file labeled January 20, 2026. Ms. Kallas reviewed the Library Board’s decision to cancel the annual Harry Potter event at the Library due to potential litigation concerns. She shared information where another library was issued a cease and desist order from Warner Brothers for similar programming. She stated the cost to purchase licensing rights to have the programs is not feasible. She noted that programming this year will focus on Americas 250th. She provided information on other upcoming Library programming and events as well as reported that she is working with the County Maintenance Department to address some maintenance needs at the Library. A copy of her report is in the meeting file labeled January 20, 2026.

Water Forgiveness Research

The Board requested that the County Manager investigate the precedence for issuing forgiveness

on water bills following leaks/repairs. Mr. Howard reported that there is no precedence for issuing mass credits. He stated that when there are leaks that cause the tank to drain and stir up the sediment in the lines it is estimated that 500- 1,000 gallons are used to flush a line. He stated that if the Board wished to pursue this in the future, that a policy be adopted that details the procedure for issuing credits based on repairs that require flushing.

Commissioner McLaughlin stated he was contacted by a constituent that wanted a discount on his bill because of the flushing he had to do after a repair. He stated that the costs for a discount are not insurmountable and he feels it would be wise to develop a policy or protocol in the future.

Chair Kirby recommended that this be listed as a topic for the annual retreat agenda.

2026 Retreat Planning

Board Clerk Susanne Stallings asked that the Board provide her with suggested retreat topics.

She noted that some dates were sent out to the Board for potential retreat dates. She stated that based on feedback, it is recommended that the schedule the 2026 retreat for February 25, 2026. It was noted the retreat will be held at the Public Safety Center, 2nd floor training room.

Financial Items

Finance Officer Cathy Smith presented the following:

Current Fiscal Year Budget Amendments

BA2026-035

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
Register of Deeds			
11-3418-415-00	*Preservation/Automation	775.48	
11-4180-298-00	*Dept Supplies - Auto/Pres		258.49
11-4180-440-00	*Contr Svcs - Automation/Pres		258.49
11-4180-511-00	*C/O - Auto / Pres		258.50
Sheriff's Office			
11-3431-232-00	*Sheriff Donations	400.00	
11-4317-440-00	*Donation - Expense		400.00
11-3431-235-00	*Sheriff Executions	10,262.50	
11-4316-440-00	*Sheriff Executions		10,262.50
11-3431-240-00	*Project Lifesaver	100.00	
11-4317-298-00	*Project Lifesaver		100.00
Animal Shelter			
11-3438-894-00	*Donations - Chowan	3,415.00	
11-3438-894-01	*Donations - Gates	330.81	
11-3438-894-02	*Donations - Perquimans	1,075.32	
11-3438-894-03	*Donations - Other	1,574.70	
11-4381-600-00	*Donation - Expense		6,395.83
11-3438-895-00	*Adoption - Chowan	175.00	
11-3438-895-01	*Adoption - Gates	347.15	
11-3438-895-02	*Adoption - Perquimans	207.36	
11-3438-895-03	*Adoption - Other	319.85	
11-4381-441-00	*Contr Svcs - Spay/Neuter		1,049.36
11-3438-897-00	*A.W.A.R.E. Reimbursement	10,604.51	
11-4381-601-00	*A.W.A.R.E. Reimbursement		10,604.51
Cooperative Ext:			
11-3495-370-00	*AG Program Fees Discretionary	140.00	
11-4953-440-00	*Ag Program Fees Discretionary		140.00
11-3495-378-00	*4-H Fees Discretionary	2,023.00	
11-4953-448-00	*4-H Fees Discretionary		2,023.00
Recreation			
11-3612-487-00	*Recreation Donations	1,650.00	
11-6130-299-01	*Donations - Dept Supplies		1,650.00
11-3612-504-00	*Recreation Special Events	420.00	
11-6132-453-00	*Recreation Special Events		420.00
Senior Center			
11-3616-533-00	*Reg Fees - Trips	22,378.00	
11-4268-312-00	*TRIPS - Senior Citizens		22,378.00
11-3616-533-01	*Registration Fees Activities	67.00	
11-4268-299-01	*Activities - Dept. Supplies		67.00
11-3616-535-04	*Silver Sneakers	735.00	
11-3616-535-06	*Renew Active	891.00	
11-4268-352-02	*Healthways		1,626.00
11-3616-535-01	*Donations - Fitness	302.66	
11-4268-352-01	*Donations - Fitness		302.66
11-3616-537-00	*Albemarle Comm - Health Promotion	756.00	
11-4268-601-00	*Albemarle Comm - Health Promotion		756.00
DSS			
12-3531-230-25	*DSS Donations	350.00	
12-5310-499-00	*DSS Donations Expense		350.00
	Balanced	59,300.34	59,300.34
	Total Discretionary Income Received FYE 2026	269,012.57	
Justification:			
	<i>To amend the 2026 budget to include Discretionary income for December 2025.</i>		

BA2026-036

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
Insurance Proceeds			
11-3493-890-00	Insurance Proceeds	2,170.65	
Sheriff's Office			
11-4310-353-00	Maint & Repairs - Vehicles		2,170.65
	Balanced	2,170.65	2,170.65
Justification:			
<i>To amend the 2026 budget for Sheriff's Office to include insurance proceeds received 01/07/26.</i>			

BA2026-037

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
School Cap Projects			
42-3591-235-00	Contribution from School Capital Reserve Fund	738,307.00	
42-5913-634-00	School Capital Outlay		738,307.00
	Balanced	738,307.00	738,307.00
Justification:			
<i>To amend the 2026 budget to include School Capital Outlay in the Capital Project Fund. School C/O is already budgeted in the School Capital Reserve Fund, but auditors recommend that we include a budget for the Capital Project Fund as well.</i>			

Commissioner Lawrence moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

External Board/Committee Report

Commissioner Lawrence reported on the COA Board noting that they received a clean audit. He noted that COA continues to wait on the State for a budget.

Commissioner Shaffer reported on the Hospital Directors Council noting some impacts to their budget from state cuts. He also reported on the DSS Board that was informed that State reimbursement to DSS was being reduced from 50/50 to 25/75. He stated that the DSS Director believes the reduction can be absorbed in the current budget however there will be impacts to future DSS budgets.

Commissioner McLaughlin reported on the Senior Center Advisory Board noting a consultant is being hired to look into mitigating the acoustics in the senior center.

Chair Kirby reported that the Albemarle Commission is working on its budget and is proposing an increase to the dues for the upcoming fiscal year.

Manager's Report

Audit

Mr. Howard noted that there is a delay with the audit due to the federal shutdown, he noted that a budget will be presented in March.

Jail

Mr. Howard noted that over the past 6 months the County has been in talks and looking at different options for the future of the jail which include building a regional jail with Gates and Washington Counties, joining Albemarle District Jail (ADJ), joining Bertie Martin Regional Jail or building a jail just for Chowan. He noted that he plans to present the proposed options at the next meeting noting that ADJ has provided cost estimates to the Board for a proposed contract to join ADJ.

Timely and Important Matters

Animal Shelter

Mr. Howard noted that a director has been hired and the staffing is being filled, he hoped to have the shelter back fully open to the public the next week.

Public Comment Question

Chair Kirby requested that Mr. Howard speak with Ms. Miglorie regarding her questions from public comment to get more information.

Adjourn

Being no further business, Commissioner Cummings moved that the meeting be adjourned. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Bob Kirby, Chair

Susanne Stallings, Clerk