

**Town of Swansboro**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**October 28, 2025, Regular Meeting**

In attendance: Mayor William Justice, Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Conaway, Commissioner Pat Turner, Commissioner Joseph Brown, Commissioner Douglas Eckendorf and Commissioner Tamara Pieratti.

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**Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Pledge**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm and Mayor Justice led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment**

Citizens were offered an opportunity to address the Board regarding items listed on the agenda. No comments were made.

**Adoption of Agenda and Consent Items**

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Eckendorf, the consent items below and the agenda as amended to add *Visitor's Center Discussion* were unanimously approved.

- September 9, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- September 9, 2025, Closed Session Minutes
- Tax Refund Requests
  - Beasley, Susan Quigley                      \$21.94                      Over Assessment
  - Hackney, Andrea Marie                      \$21.64                      Tag Surrender

**Appointments/Recognitions/Presentations**

*Recognition of Swansboro High School Student 2 Student Team*

Mayor Justice recognized the Swansboro High School Student 2 Student team, honoring them for their outstanding achievement in being named the 2025 MCEC National High School S2S Team of the Year. The Board and community extended heartfelt congratulations to the team for their exemplary performance and dedication, which had brought great distinction to both the school and the town.

**Business Non-Consent**

*Beautification Committee Proposal Follow-up*

Manager Jon Barlow reviewed that the Beautification Committee had presented a proposal at the August 26, 2025, Board meeting, where the committee outlined its guidelines, proposed bylaws, and purpose. After direction from the board for other options such as private entities to be explored, the town attorney advised on three options which were forming an advisory committee, establishing an independent commission, or the group maintaining a private nonprofit status. Manager Barlow noted different rules apply depending on the option chosen. On October 8, 2025, staff and the proposed

committee met again to reassess these possibilities, including forming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, although concerns over the expense and time were raised. Manager Barlow proposed partnering with existing nonprofits, like the Chamber of Commerce, as a way to support Swansboro's current initiatives.

The Board engaged in a general discussion about the proposal to establish an advisory Beautification Committee. There was overall agreement on the idea of such a committee, recognizing its necessity for the town. Concerns were raised about staff involvement; the consensus was to limit additional staff support to only the town clerk for taking meeting minutes. The Board emphasized that the committee should operate independently in regard to research and drafting proposals, reducing demand on town staff. They also discussed the selection process for committee members, noting that board approval was necessary for appointments with current advisory committees. Concerns were expressed regarding potential jurisdictional overlap with the Historic Commission, particularly with planned enhancements in areas like the downtown historic district that would require approval. Overall, the board requested steps to provide clarity, feasibility, and minimal impact on resources moving forward.

Cynthia Lecorte, Doug Rogers, and Karen Miller, all interested in serving on the proposed committee, address the board sharing that it was desired for the committee to be created as an official town advisory committee named the Appearance Committee under State Statute 160D-304. They reviewed the statute thoroughly and expressed their readiness to adhere to its requirements, proposing five regular and two alternate members. They highlighted the advantages of open meetings for transparency, the town handling finances for accountability, potential grant opportunities, and increased collaboration with town boards. Such committees are common in the state, particularly in historic towns like Wendell and Sanford, which had successful models. The committee was committed to operating within regular business hours to respect town staff and suggested potential projects such as decorative street lighting and enhancements to town areas. They plan to use grant money, sponsorships, and local support to fund these initiatives.

In response to an inquiry from the Board, Attorney Rasberry clarified that if the Appearance Commission were to operate under the town charter, it would not have independent control over funds. Instead, a separate account would be configured within the town's financial system, overseen by the finance department. While the commission could apply for grants, any funds received would be required to pass through the town's accounting system.

On a motion by Commissioner Eckendorf, seconded by Commissioner Turner, with unanimous approval, the Appearance Committee was created as an advisory committee

with the stipulation that no additional staff support beyond the town clerk for meeting minutes would be provided.

Attorney Rasberry shared that final creation of the committee would occur at a future meeting by way of an Ordinance Amendment to the Town Code and/or UDO.

#### *Monthly Financial Report as of September 30, 2025*

Finance Director Sonia Johnson presented the September 2025 financial report. She highlighted the following points:

- The General Fund showed a deficit of \$62,632, primarily due to ad valorem tax revenue not being collected until November-December, which resulted in expected deficits.
- Excess of revenues over expenditures totaled \$12,428, with overall departmental expenditures at 21.14% of budget, while certain areas like non-departmental expenses, downtown facilities, and Mullet Fest exceeded budget expectations.
- Enterprise Funds show a revenue surplus with \$98,287 for Stormwater and \$6,924 for Solid Waste.

Director Johnson Summarized town debt, loan balances, and cash and investment accounts, noting declining TD Bank rates.

#### **Future Agenda Topics**

Future agenda items were shared for visibility and comments. In addition, an opportunity was provided for the board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for placement on future agendas. No additional items were requested.

#### *Visitor's Center Discussion*

The board discussed the urgent need to repair restrooms at the visitor center, especially with upcoming holidays, and proposed installing basic facilities like toilets and sinks. It was confirmed that there were available facilities, including toilets, shower stalls, and a washer/dryer, suitable for a boater facility. Installing either full facilities or just basic restrooms would require similar work. For large events, additional porta potties were suggested as an interim solution. The target for completing comprehensive repairs was suggested to be by Memorial Day. Daily restroom accessibility was emphasized as important, aiming to complete installations fully. Concerns were expressed about potential further delays causing issues, advocating for timely action despite any lease considerations that were still ongoing related to the Church Street dock.

Town Manager Barlow noted that similar work was required for both options, with potential additional costs for showers and laundry. It was also confirmed that mold remediation was in progress, HVAC systems are being upgraded, and drywall repairs are needed, with lease impacts indicating improved taxpayer services.

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Turner, unanimous authorization was given for staff to proceed with repair to the visitor center in order to get the facility and bathrooms reopened.

### **Public Comment**

Mary Pat Smey of 221 Knightheads Drive, shared with the Board that she was in the process of creating a nonprofit similar to the former Swansboro Area Development Foundation (SADF), to support town events and ease staff burdens. Highlighting logistical issues with activities like Veterans Day, she suggested a structure to assist with staffing and budget needs. Tentatively named "Swansboro Civic Alliance," the organization would partner with about 18 local groups, such as Rotary, to boost tourism and involve youth and retirees in events like the Mullet Festival.

### **Board Comments**

Commissioner Turner thanked staff and praised the financials as always being in top shape. She congratulated the appearance committee and expressed high hopes for great things to happen. She recognized Mary Pat Smey's constant involvement and thanked everyone for attending.

Mayor Pro Tem Conaway thanked staff and noted the new black and white police car on patrol. He mentioned two more patrol cars were coming and hoped the chief could deploy them to deter speeders on Highway 24. He suggested contacting the speeding task force as they hadn't visited in a while, believing that their presence in pulling people over might slow traffic. Conaway thanked everyone for attending and participating in the democratic process, noting that while outcomes vary, public input was how the system works.

Commissioner Eckendorf welcomed the new advisory committee aboard. He then asked Manager Barlow for help fulfilling a promise made in open meeting to address public information about the integrated emergency operations center and safety facility. He requested something explaining how the concept started, what it's integrated into, and how grants were awarded recognizing Swansboro's need for an EOC while also addressing the deficient public safety building. Eckendorf apologized for the four-year timeline causing confusion and asked that a document be created to help the public understand what was happening and why.

Manager Barlow explained that after Hurricane Florence in 2019, the town found the current facility substandard. Three engineering firms assessed it from 2019-2020, all concluding it was beyond repair. With early funding, plans for a new EOC, fire station, and police station were developed. The town was still looking for suitable land, with

location challenges for emergency responders. Manager Barlow agreed to create a publicly available document detailing this information.

Commissioner Brown thanked staff and attendees, noting the smaller crowd was positive. He praised Mary Pat's initiative and looked forward to seeing the tax-exempt status completed. Brown highlighted multiple existing organizations in town - Rotary, Masonic Temple, American Legion, VFW - full of the retirees Smey described who could support her efforts. He joked that since retirement, he doesn't know how he had time to work given all the activities available.

Mayor Justice thanked first responders, noting the information source was Mary Pat's Facebook page. He congratulated the new committee and commended Mary Pat's efforts on easing staff tasks, fostering collaboration. On road funding concerns, Justice confirmed ongoing communication with Representative Gable, stating funds remain tight. Two crosswalks are planned near McDonald's and Walmart, with a possible third if funds allow. He appreciated the rapid Mullet Festival relocation, addressed merchant feedback, and offered quarterly discussions to support merchant needs, though merchants opted for self-coalition, which he supports but remains willing to assist.

### **Closed Session**

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Pieratti, and with unanimous approval the board entered closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege was hereby acknowledged; and (5) to establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease.

Pursuant to a motion duly made and seconded in closed session the board returned to open session with nothing to report.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Conaway, seconded by Commissioner Pieratti, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

# Regular Meeting October 28, 2025



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1. Please turn cell phones to "off" or "vibrate".

2. The Board offers the public three opportunities to speak during the meeting:

A comment period is offered at the beginning and end of the meeting. Please note that a separate opportunity is provided for those items requiring a public hearing.

Public Hearing(s) – There are 0 public hearings scheduled for this meeting.

2

# PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizen opportunity to address the Board for items listed on the agenda.

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# AGENDA AND CONSENT ITEMS

**Action Needed:** *Motion to Adopt the Agenda as prepared (or amended) and approval of the Consent Items*

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# Recognition of Swansboro High School Student 2 Student Team

**Presenter: Mayor William Justice**

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## NEW BUSINESS/NON-CONSENT

### Beautification Committee Proposal Follow-up

Follow-up discussion and direction regarding the proposed Beautification Committee, including review of structural options.

***Recommended Action:*** *After discussion, provide feedback and direction on the preferred structure for the Beautification Committee.*

**Presenter: Jon Barlow – Town Manager**

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# NEW BUSINESS/NON-CONSENT

## Financial Report

**Presenter: Sonia Johnson – Finance Director**

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### **TOWN OF SWANSBORO FINANCIAL REPORT (AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)**

REVENUES

EXPENDITURES

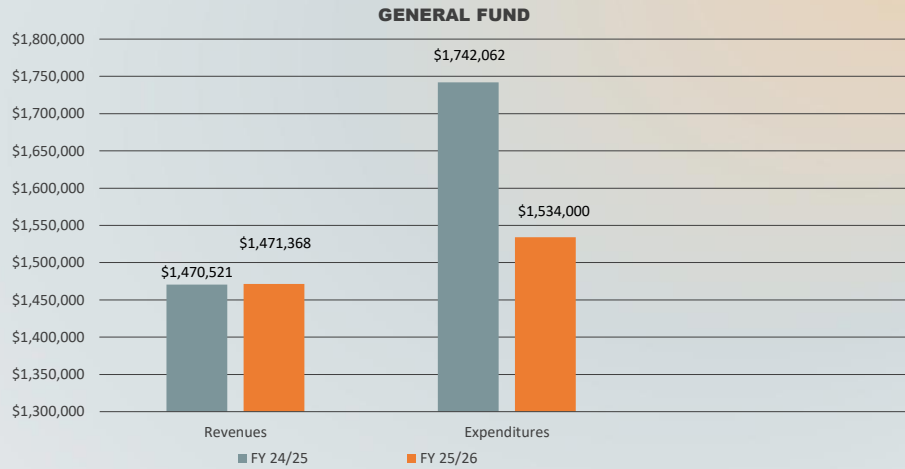
LOAN PAYMENTS

INVESTMENTS

GRANT UPDATE

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**TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
REVENUES/EXPENDITURES  
TWO YEAR COMPARISON  
(AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)**

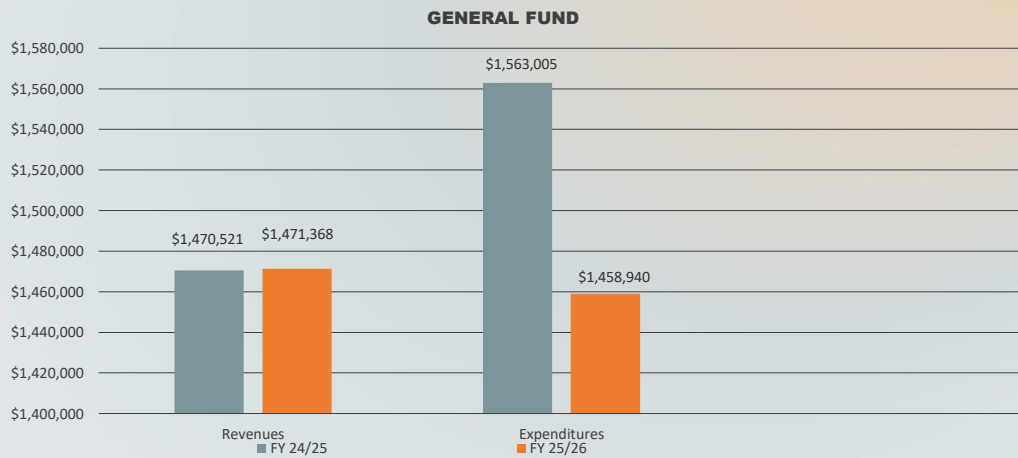


**ENCUMBRANCES INCLUDED**  
Total Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures **(\$62,632)**

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**TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
REVENUES/EXPENDITURES  
TWO YEAR COMPARISON  
(AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)**

**(ACTUAL)**



**(ENCUMBRANCES NOT INCLUDED)**  
Total Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures **\$12,428**

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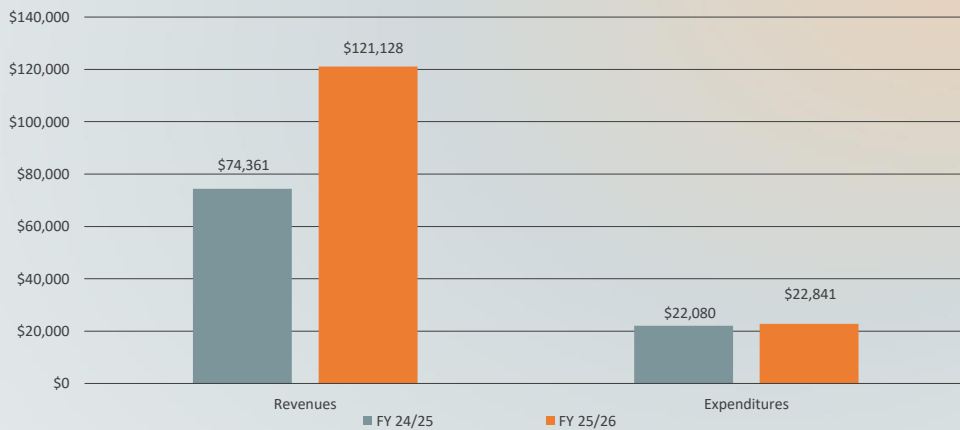
| DEPT.                | BUDGET           | YTD ACTUAL       | (PURCHASE ORDERS)<br>ENCUMBERED<br>BALANCE | SPENT %<br>September 30, 2025 |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| NON DEPARTMENTAL     | 581,365          | 268,205          | 135  | 46.2%                         |
| GOVERNING BODY       | 297,004          | 9,372            | 1,100                                      | 3.5%                          |
| ADMIN SERVICES       | 445,135          | 97,945           | 1,321                                      | 22.3%                         |
| FINANCE              | 337,748          | 75,787           | 975  | 22.7%                         |
| LEGAL                | 59,300           | 9,104            | -  | 15.4%                         |
| PUBLIC BUILDINGS     | 288,335          | 45,701           | 3,022                                      | 16.9%                         |
| FIRE                 | 1,607,343        | 382,135          | 19,801                                     | 25.0%                         |
| PERMITTING           | 301,128          | 64,656           | 1,727                                      | 22.0%                         |
| PLANNING             | 92,066           | 21,034           | -  | 22.8%                         |
| POLICE               | 1,429,971        | 248,159          | 11,153                                     | 18.1%                         |
| PUBLIC WORKS-STREETS | 840,983          | 62,602           | 1,576                                      | 7.6%                          |
| POWELL BILL-STREETS  | 126,580          | 4,121            | 191  | 3.4%                          |
| PARKS & RECREATION   | 573,067          | 78,747           | 10,989                                     | 15.7%                         |
| DOWNTOWN FACILITIES  | 108,451          | 35,102           | 247  | 32.6%                         |
| FESTIVALS & EVENTS   | 154,689          | 51,258           | 22,572                                     | 47.7%                         |
| EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT | 12,000           | 5,014            | 250  | 43.9%                         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>7,255,165</b> | <b>1,458,940</b> | <b>75,060</b>                              | <b>21.14%</b>                 |

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**TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
REVENUES/EXPENDITURES  
TWO YEAR COMPARISON  
(AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)**

**STORMWATER ENTERPRISE FUND**

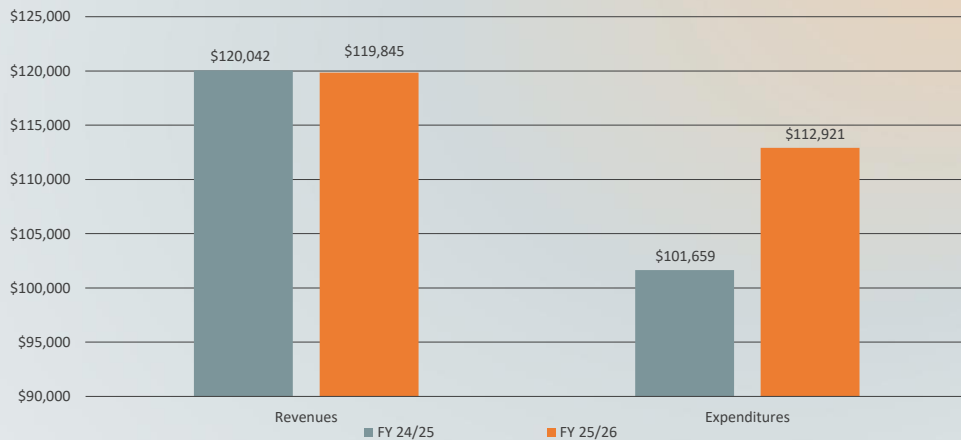


**ENCUMBRANCES INCLUDED**  
Total Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures **\$98,287**

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**TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
REVENUES/EXPENDITURES  
TWO YEAR COMPARISON  
(AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)**

**SOLID WASTE ENTERPRISE FUND**



ENCUMBRANCES INCLUDED  
Total Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures- **\$6,924**

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**TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
LOAN REPORT  
(AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)**

| Item  | Principal Balance  | Interest Rate | End Date   | Annual Debt Service |
|---|--------------------|---------------|------------|---------------------|
| <b>Town Hall/Tanker</b>                                       | \$241,087          | 2.69          | 03/21/2028 | \$84,724            |
| <b>Fire Truck</b>   | \$92,139           | 2.08          | 11/01/2026 | \$47,512            |
| <b>Sleeping Quarters</b>                                      | \$50,000           | 2.43          | 12/14/2026 | \$26,823            |
| <b>Vehicles(Police &amp; Fire Department) &amp; Software</b>  | \$22,955           | 1.84          | 7/15/2026  | \$23,377            |
| <b>Cab Tractor/Dump Truck</b>                                 | \$208,276          | 4.82          | 4/3/2029   | \$58,491            |
| <b>Jet Vac Truck, Police Vehicle, (2) Fire Chief Vehicles</b> | \$570,000          | 4.40          | 12/31/2029 | \$129,183           |
| <b>Total Debt</b>   | <b>\$1,184,457</b> |               |            | <b>\$370,110</b>    |

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**TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
CASH & INVESTMENTS REPORT  
(AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2025)**

**CASH & INVESTMENTS**

| BANK  | BALANCE     | INTEREST RATE |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| First Citizens Bank                         | \$379,632   | .05%          |
| NC CMT-General                              | \$5,819,753 | 4.22%         |
| TD Bank<br>(SCIF Funds for EOC & Sidewalks) | \$9,743,505 | 4.07%         |

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**GRANT UPDATE**

|   | Budget       | YTD Expenditures | Encumbrances | Unencumbered |
|---|--------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| American Rescue Plan Act Fund                   | \$1,102,599  | \$1,100,792      | \$1,807      | \$0.00       |
| Swansboro Bicentennial Park Boardwalk Extension | \$386,650    | \$384,314        | \$0          | \$2,336      |
| Emergency Operation Center                      | \$9,654,868  | \$56,399         | \$0          | \$9,598,469  |
| Emmertton School Repairs                        | \$499,000    | \$326,578        | \$0          | \$172,422    |
| Stormwater Master Plan                          | \$400,000    | \$264,209        | \$0          | \$135,791    |
| Main Street Dock Replacement                    | \$170,164    | \$0              | \$0          | \$170,164    |
| Total Outstanding Grants                        | \$12,213,281 | \$2,132,292      | \$1,807      | \$10,079,182 |

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Any Questions

?

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## NEW BUSINESS/NON-CONSENT

### Future Agenda Items

Future agenda items are shared for visibility and comment. In addition, an opportunity is provided for the Board to introduce items of interest and subsequent direction for placement on future agendas.

***Action Needed:*** Discuss and provide any guidance.

**Presenter: Alissa Fender, MMC – Town Clerk**

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# PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizen opportunity to address the Board.

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# MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Town Manager  
Jonathan Barlow

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## BOARD COMMENTS

Mayor William Justice  
Mayor Pro Tem Jeffrey Conaway  
Commissioner Douglas Eckendorf  
Commissioner Joseph Brown  
Commissioner Patricia Turner  
Commissioner Tamara Pieratti

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## CLOSED SESSION

*Motion to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged; and (5) to establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease.*

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ADJOURN