

**ENDA  
CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR SESSION  
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026  
6:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVE AGENDA**

- 1. PUBLIC HEARING – CRAVEN COUNTY RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK ORDINANCE: Chad Strawn, Planning Director and Donnie LaVelle, Planner II**
- 2. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION 4-H PRESENTATION: Ashley Brooks, Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development**
- 3. PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – AGENDA TOPICS**
- 4. CONSENT AGENDA**
  - A. Minutes of December 15, 2025 Regular Session**
  - B. Tax Releases and Refunds**
  - C. Planning – Request to Set Public Hearing – Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Applications**
  - D. Planning – Request to Set Public Hearing – Community Development Block Grant CARES Act (CDBG-CV) COVID**
  - E. Planning – Request to Set Public Hearing – 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-NR) Program Amendment**
  - F. Sheriff – Calendar/Donation Checks – Budget Amendment**

**DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS:**

- 5. PLANNING – CRAVEN COUNTY RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK ORDINANCE ADOPTION: Chad Strawn, Planning Director and Donnie LaVelle, Planner II**
- 6. WATER – DAVIS WELL PUMP REPLACEMENT – BUDGET AMENDMENT: Elliot Thomas, Water Superintendent**
- 7. APPOINTMENTS**

8. COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: Arey Grady
9. PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – GENERAL TOPICS
10. COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT: Jack Veit
11. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS



1 **THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CRAVEN COUNTY MET IN REGULAR**  
 2 **SESSION IN THE COMMISSIONERS’ ROOM OF THE CRAVEN COUNTY**  
 3 **ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 406 CRAVEN STREET, NEW BERN, NORTH**  
 4 **CAROLINA, ON MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026. THE MEETING CONVENED AT 6:00**  
 5 **PM.**

6  
 7 **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- 8 Chairman Denny Bucher
- 9 Vice-Chairman Jason R. Jones
- 10 Commissioner Chadwick Howard
- 11 Commissioner Sherry Hunt
- 12 Commissioner Tim Mason
- 13 Commissioner E. T. Mitchell
- 14 Commissioner Beatrice R. Smit

15  
 16 **STAFF PRESENT:**

- 17 Jack B. Veit, III, County Manager
- 18 Gene Hodges, Assistant County Manager
- 19 Arey Grady, County Attorney
- 20 Craig Warren, Finance Director
- 21 Amber Parker, Human Resources Director
- 22 Shane Digan, Assistant to the County Manager
- 23 Abigail G. Wilson, Clerk to the Board

24  
 25 County Attorney, Arey Grady, recited the following invocation, followed by the Pledge of  
 26 Allegiance.

27  
 28 *This is the day, the year, You, O Lord, have made. Let us rejoice and be glad in*  
 29 *them, for by Your grace You provide for us possibility and hope for our future.*

30  
 31 *As we continue in our service to You in 2026, may we pause often to acknowledge*  
 32 *that each moment is a gift that You desire us to enjoy. Each challenge is an*  
 33 *opportunity that You strengthen us to overcome. Each disappointment is a siren*  
 34 *to return to faith in Your mercy. Each encounter is a grace gift given that we*  
 35 *would share the unconditional love You offer us all.*

36  
 37 *As we step into Your design for this new year, we pray to be faithful stewards of*  
 38 *Your bounty, just arbiters of Your commandments, compassionate witnesses to*  
 39 *Your kindness, and worthy disciples to Your Gospel of love.*

40  
 41 *We offer our hopes and fears for this new year and our whole selves to Your*  
 42 *keeping, praying in the strength of Your name. Amen.*

43  
 44 *Based upon the invocation given by Chaplain Margaret Grun Kibben at the*  
 45 *01/02/2024 session of the US House of Representatives.*

46 At Commissioner Smith’s request, Chairman Bucher relayed that she was absent due to her  
 47 recovery from a recent medical procedure.

48  
 49 A motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to approve the agenda, as presented, seconded by  
 50 Commissioner Mason and carried in a 5-0 roll call vote.

51  
 52 **PUBLIC HEARING – CRAVEN COUNTY RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK**  
 53 **ORDINANCE**

54  
 55 Planning Director, Chad Strawn, stated that the Board is requested to enter into public  
 56 hearing for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the County’s proposed  
 57 Recreational Vehicle Park Ordinance. He noted that a copy of the proposed ordinance was  
 58 made available for public viewing on the Craven County Website and at the Craven County  
 59 Planning Department beginning on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. The public hearing notice was also  
 60 published in the *Sun Journal* on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. At 6:04 PM, a motion was made by  
 61 Commissioner Mason to enter public hearing. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman  
 62 Jones and carried unanimously.

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Vice-Chairman Jones stated that there were no citizens signed up to speak.

At 6:04 PM, a motion was made by Commissioner Hunt to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mason and carried unanimously.

**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION 4-H PRESENTATION**

Ashley Books, Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Board on the Craven Poultry Program and recognized two Craven County 4-H members, Elizabeth Peluso and Lexi Gilkey, who earned major national honors at the 2025 National 4-H Poultry and Egg Conference in Louisville, KY, as follows:

- Elizabeth Peluso earned National Reserve Champion in the Egg Chef Challenge after winning county, district, and state contests. This is her third national award, adding to previous top finishes in Poultry Judging and Avian Bowl, and highlights both her dedication and the support of Craven County 4-H.
- Lexi Gilkey excelled in the National Poultry Judging Competition, competing with the Union County team. She placed 4th in Production Hens, contributed to a 2nd place team finish, ranked 7th overall out of 88 competitors, and helped her team earn 3rd place overall. Her performance demonstrates adaptability, strong evaluation skills, and the quality of training provided through Craven County 4-H.

Chairman Bucher and Vice-Chairman Jones presented certificates to Ms. Peluso and Ms. Gilkey for their outstanding achievements, and a photo opportunity was taken.

**PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizens from the public that signed up to speak.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Mason to approve the consent agenda, inclusive of the Minutes of December 15, 2025 Regular Session; Tax Releases and Refunds (**Credits = \$3,666.30; Refunds = \$1,222.01**); Planning – Request to Set Public Hearing on February 2, 2026 at 6:00 PM, or soon thereafter, for each of the following three (3) topics:

- 1) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Applications
- 2) Community Development Block Grant CARES Act (CDBG-CV) COVID
- 3) 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-NR) Program Amendment; and

Sheriff – Calendar/Donation Checks budget amendment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and carried in a 5-0 roll call vote.

***Sheriff’s Office***

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
1014310-38301	\$10,750.00	1014310-43222	\$10,750.00
Miscellaneous Donations		Supplies – Donations	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,750.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,750.00</b>

**Justification:** The Sheriff’s Office received two (2) donations totaling \$750 from Craven County citizens, along with the annual calendar donation of \$10,000. The calendar check and donation checks will be used towards the purchase of a variety of items needed by the Sheriff’s Office, at the Sheriff’s discretion.

**DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: PLANNING**



124 **CRAVEN COUNTY RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK ORDINANCE ADOPTION**

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126 With having held the public hearing, Chairman Bucher proposed postponing the presentation  
127 of this item, adoption of the proposed Craven County Recreational Vehicle Park Ordinance,  
128 until the next meeting, due to Commissioners Smith and Mitchell being absent. A motion  
129 was made by Vice-Chairman Jones to table this item, as stated. The motion was seconded by  
130 Commissioner Mason and carried unanimously.

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132 **DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: WATER**  
133 **DAVIS WELL PUMP REPLACEMENT**

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135 Elliot Thomas, Water Superintendent, presented for approval a budget amendment in the amount  
136 of \$80,415 for the replacement of the Davis Well Pump located on Dover Road in Craven  
137 County. Mr. Thomas informed the Board that this pump recently ceased functioning around early  
138 November 2025. After a diagnostic assessment of the pump was conducted, recommendation  
139 was made for a complete replacement. He added that to do so, the well requires additional work.  
140 He noted that replacement of the pump will allow the AIA study to focus on other assets. The  
141 Water Department received a project quote from Charles R. Underwood in the amount of  
142 \$80,415 to complete the scope of work, which was provided to the Board for review. Mr.  
143 Thomas addressed various questions from the Board regarding the project, including the pump’s  
144 location, the district it serves, duration of time the pump will be offline and the impact, if any,  
145 this project may have on the residence receiving services, and the company’s capability for  
146 performing the work. A motion was made by Commissioner Howard to approve the following  
147 budget amendment, in the amount of \$80,415, for replacement of the Davis Well Pump. The  
148 motion was seconded by Commissioner Mason and carried in a 5-0 roll call vote.

149  
150 *Water*

151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
	<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>			
	6000000-39901	\$80,415.00	6007010-47302	\$80,415.00			
	Current Year Fund Balance		C/O Other Improvements				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$80,415.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$80,415.00</b>			

159 **APPOINTMENTS**

160  
161 *Pending*

162  
163 Chairman Bucher reviewed the following pending appointments:

- 164 • Craven Aging Planning Board (NC Senior Tar Heel Rep)
- 165 • Craven County Clean Sweep Committee (2 vacancies)
- 166 • Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (Under 21)
- 167 • Volunteer Agricultural District

168  
169  
170 *Current*

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172 Havelock/Craven County Library Board

173  
174 Commissioner Howard nominated Sherry Hunt for reappointment. There being no additional  
175 nominations, Mrs. Hunt was reappointed by acclamation.

176  
177 *Upcoming*

178  
179 Chairman Bucher reviewed the following upcoming appointment (s) to boards and committees:

- 180 • Jedediah Stancil (Ft. Barnwell/EMS Paramedic)

181  
182 **COUNTY ATTORNEY’S REPORT**

185 *Approval of Conveyance after Expiration of Upset Bid Period – Biddle Road (Lot 6 Egypt Land),*  
186 *New Bern (Parcel Number 3-021-022)*

187  
188 County Attorney, Arey Grady, informed the Board that the County previously received and  
189 approved an offer to purchase this real property, in the amount of \$3,200.00, subject to the  
190 completion of the upset bid process. The offer was advertised and multiple upset bids were  
191 received; \$15,000.00 became the highest and final offer to purchase. He noted that the County  
192 originally acquired this property through a tax foreclosure, with past due taxes and costs of  
193 foreclosure totaling \$3,161.88. The tax value of this property is \$10,800.00. Copies of the Deed,  
194 Lien Waiver, Foreclosure Deed, GIS information, and proposed resolution approving the  
195 conveyance were provided for the Board’s review. Mr. Grady recommended the Board authorize  
196 this transaction, and adopt the resolution, which in turn will authorize the execution and delivery  
197 of the necessary documents. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Jones to adopt the following  
198 resolution approving conveyance after expiration of the upset bid period for Parcel Number 3-021-  
199 022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Howard and carried in a 5-0 roll call vote.

200  
201  **CRAVEN COUNTY**  
202  **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE**  
203  **AFTER EXPIRATION OF UPSET BID PERIOD**  
204

205 WHEREAS, Craven County owns certain real property identified as Tax Parcel 3-021-022  
206 (hereinafter “the Real Property”), the Real Property having been acquired by Craven County in  
207 deed recorded in Book 3844 Page 452 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County;  
208 and,

209 WHEREAS, Craven County previously received and approved an Offer to Purchase the Real  
210 Property, and Craven County subsequently advertised said offer for upset bids as required by  
211 North Carolina General Statute §160A-269; and,

212 WHEREAS, the upset bid period required under North Carolina General Statute §160A-  
213 269 has expired; and,

214 WHEREAS, the Craven County Board of Commissioners deems it advisable and in the  
215 best interest of the County to sell its interest in the Real Property to the successful bidder  
216 and to convey its interest in said property by quitclaim deed.

217 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
218 CRAVEN COUNTY THAT:

219 Section 1. The last and highest bid of Natasha Perkins in the sum of \$15,000.00  
220 for the Real Property is hereby accepted, and the Offer to Purchase previously executed by  
221 Craven County subject to the provisions of North Carolina General Statute §160A-269 is hereby  
222 ratified and confirmed in its entirety.

223 Section 2. Upon payment of the full purchase price, the Chairman, the County  
224 Manager, the Assistant County Manager, the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners and/or  
225 County Attorney are authorized to take all actions necessary to accomplish the transactions  
226 contemplated by this Resolution, including but not limited to the execution and delivery of  
227 the quitclaim deed attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

228 ADOPTED THIS 5<sup>th</sup> DAY OF JANUARY, 2026.  
229

230 **PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – GENERAL TOPICS**

231  
232 Vice-Chairman Jones stated there are three (3) citizens who signed up to speak.

233  
234 1) James Purifoy – 252 Keener Avenue, Bridgeton (Complaints of Butler Trailer Park at 250  
235 Keener Avenue, Bridgeton)

236 2) Ray Griffin – 1981 Streets Ferry Road, Vanceboro (Prayer/Jesus)

237 3) David French – 104 Johnson Street, New Bern (Post Hurricane Florence  
238 Challenges/ReBuild NC)

239  
240 Chairman Bucher welcomed in attendance Tax Administrator, Leslie Young, who provided an  
241 update from the Tax Department. Ms. Young updated that today, January 5, 2026, was the last  
242 day to pay property taxes without incurring interest and is the first day for listing personal  
243 property. She updated on new processes implemented by staff to meet customer service needs for  
244 the high volume of tax payments at this time of year. She relayed citizens' appreciation for their  
245 efforts. She thanked County Management and the Board for their support in securing free  
246 parking in the parking lot adjacent to the Tax office for citizens to utilize this time of year to  
247 access the Tax office for tax payments. Ms. Young acknowledged how these few changes have  
248 made the process more efficient and looks forward to providing this level of customer service in  
249 the future. Ms. Young addressed Commissioner Howard's follow-up question regarding the real  
250 estate market status. While providing an overview analysis of the market, she indicated that at  
251 this time, the market in Craven County is steady. Chairman Bucher thanked her and her staff for  
252 their efforts.

253  
254 **COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT**

255  
256 County Manager, Jack Veit, indicated this time of year is big for the Tax Department and he  
257 thanked them for doing a great job. He reported on his recent attendance at the Havelock Bypass  
258 Opening event. While the road is now open, remaining work continues and he is looking forward  
259 to seeing the project completed. He participated in two County facility tours with Commissioner  
260 Howard around District 6, and Commissioner Mason to finish his orientation with the County.  
261 He informed the Board that with it being the start of a new year, it also moves us into budget  
262 preparation season for fiscal year 2027. A budget kick-off meeting will be held with staff this  
263 week, and a Department Head meeting will be held later in January. Partners will present their  
264 budget requests to the Board of Commissioners in April and May and the Board will meet in  
265 May for budget work sessions.

266  
267 **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

268  
269 Commissioner Mason reported on the County orientation staff conducted with him that it was  
270 comprehensive and he is impressed by the work ethic and professionalism of County staff. He  
271 noted that the County provides a lot of services, especially by the Health Department, and  
272 possibly more than citizens realize. He thanked all involved for the recent facility tour.

273  
274 Commissioner Howard thanked County staff for their customer service, specifically at the  
275 Planning Department, Human Resources and Tax. They provide speedy responses to inquiries  
276 made by him and citizens.

277  
278 Commissioner Hunt commented on Craven County being special and unique, and that after her  
279 recent trips over the last several weeks to the Durham/Chapel Hill area, she is rededicated to  
280 keeping Craven County unique and as special as it is.

281  
282 Vice-Chairman Jones thanked in attendance Sheriff Hughes for his staff's efforts in restarting the  
283 trash pick-up program with inmates on rural roads throughout the county, as was started some  
284 years ago by the Board, to cover trash pick-up on roads that NCDOT does not cover. He  
285 informed the Board that long-time Commissioner Bobby Pollard of the Town of Dover recently  
286 passed right before Christmas. He noted that Commissioner Pollard was the Recreation  
287 Commissioner and fought hard for the needs of the Town of Dover; he was a good friend. He  
288 extended his condolences to the family for their loss.

289  
290 Chairman Bucher recently attended a visitation of a resident from Commissioner Jones' district  
291 who recently passed, Ray Dail; he was a great citizen and involved with the local volunteer fire

292 department. He extended condolences to the family for their loss. Chairman Bucher welcomed  
293 Sheriff Hughes to provide comments. Sheriff Hughes stated he was thankful for a quiet start to  
294 the new year and thanked the Board for their support over the last year and looks forward to  
295 another good year.

296  
297 At 6:47 PM, a motion was made by Commissioner Mason to adjourn. The motion was seconded  
298 by Commissioner Hunt and carried unanimously.

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304 Chairman Dennis K. Bucher  
305 Craven County Board of Commissioners

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310 Abigail G. Wilson  
Clerk to the Board