

August 3, 2026

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Meeting on Monday August 3, 2026, at 6:00 PM in the WCS Early College, 115 Middle Street, Creswell, NC. Commissioners Tracey A. Johnson, Ann C. Keyes, Carol V. Phelps, John C. Spruill and Julius Walker, Jr. were in attendance. Also, present were County Manager/ County Attorney Curtis S. Potter, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett and County Finance Officer Missy Dixon. Assistant County Manager Jason Squires was not in attendance.

Chair Spruill called the meeting to order. Commissioner Keyes gave the invocation. Presentation of the Colors for the Pledge of Allegiance was performed by the Washington County Panthers Battalion JROTC Color Guard. Commissioner Phelps led the Pledge of Allegiance,

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: None.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Phelps seconded; motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Items listed under Consent are generally of a routine nature. The Board may take action to approve/disapprove all items in a single vote. Any item may be withheld from a general action, to be discussed and voted upon separately at the discretion of the Board.

- a) Regular Meeting Minutes July 6, 2026 & Recessed Meeting Minutes July 14, 2026
- b) Tax Refunds & Releases & Insolvents
- c) Washington County Southern Albemarle Association Delegates—AK made the correction to change Jack Webb to Elaine Lancaster
- d) RESO 2026-024 to Direct the Additional Expenditure of Opioid Settlement Funds for FY27

Commissioner Keyes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Commissioner Phelps seconded; motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM: None.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE: Ms. Sherri Wilkins, Tax Office, Tax Administrator, gave the Board an update on the happenings in the Tax Office. Ms. Wilkins gave a handout to the Commissioners with answers to questions that the Commissioners had after the July meeting where the Tax Settlement Report was presented. Ms. Wilkins proceeded to go down the list of questions and explaining her answers and the breakdowns.

LEGISLATIVE GOALS: Mr. Curtis Potter, CM/CA, talked with the Board about legislative goals created by the NCACC for all counties and asked the Board to come up with some they would like to have taken to the legislature on our County's behalf. Mr. Potter said we need a way to adjust the current solar farm abatement which is 80% and discuss the EMS district tax because we have a two-county system. Mr. Potter said we could do that on our own or with Tyrrell County; nursing program with MTW (all three counties would be working on that). Commissioner Johnson asked if we still have issues with tires. Mr. Potter said we still have issues. Chair Spruill mentioned the occupancy tax

flexibility. We could ask for a variance from the legislature since Senate Bill 484 has defined it.

Commissioner Keyes asked about the homestead exemption. Mr. Potter said we can put this forth in local legislation.

OPIOID SPENDING UPDATE: Ms. Yerlin Villegas, MTW District Health Department Public Health Educator II spoke to the Board and made the following presentation.

 **Martin-Tyrrell-Washington**
DISTRICT HEALTH

**WASHINGTON COUNTY OPIOID
SETTLEMENT FUNDS
2025 - 2026**



Progress Report
July 2025 - June 2026

The two strategies we have chosen from Option A of the NC Opioid Litigation Memorandum of Agreement are:

- Strategy 7: Naloxone Distribution
- Strategy 9: Harm Reduction (Syringe Services Program)

These efforts have contributed to overdose prevention and harm reduction across our three -county region.

Progress Report

Strategy 7 - Naloxone Distribution

- **558 Naloxone kits distributed**
 - Each kit contains 2 doses - 1,116 total doses distributed
 - Distributed to:
 - SSP participants
 - Community members
 - EMS, Sheriff's Departments, Police Departments
 - Schools
- **10 overdose reversals reported by SSP participants**
 - Reversals were made using naloxone provided through opioid settlement funds

Progress Report

Strategy 9 - Syringe Services Program (SSP)

10 new
participants
joined SSP

10,090 sterile
syringes
distributed

4,749 used
syringes safely
collected

- Safe disposal of used syringes through monthly contract with Stericycle.
- HIV/Hepatitis C testing offered monthly through partnership with Beaufort County Health Department

Naloxone Distribution



Martin County Sheriff's Office



Washington County Health
Department Clinic Lobby

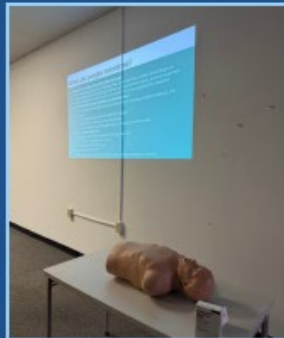


Martin County Health Department
Clinic Lobby

Cont.



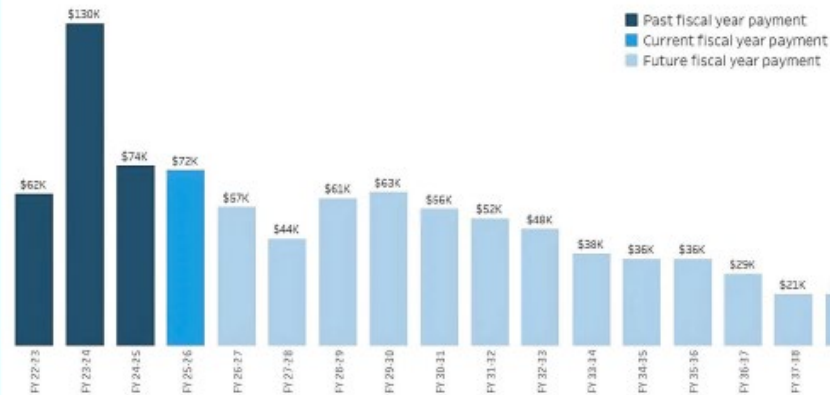
Narcotics Training



Returned Syringes

Funding Overview

Washington County is receiving \$902,799 in opioid settlement funds from 2022 through 2038.



Next Steps & Recommendations

Strategic Priorities:

- Explore sustainable funding beyond 2026
- Expand harm reduction education and community outreach efforts
- Continue strengthening partnerships with schools, EMS, and law enforcement
- Continue to maintain transparent reporting and data tracking to guide future improvements

NEW HOPE STAND LOCATION

- HOPE STAND in search of a New Location
 - We do have a HOPE Stand in stock, and we are currently looking for a location to place the stand. We are looking for an area closer to the outskirts of our three counties.

INCREASE OPEN ARMZ CLIENTS

- Open Armz Re-Entry serves the 2nd Judicial District (Martin, Tyrrell, Washington, Beaufort, and Hyde counties). With a client list of over 100, the program is rapidly expanding beyond our grant's capacity. For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, we are very grateful to have received \$10,000 from Washington County opioid settlement funds to add to our budget. This will help the coordinator purchase care package items to help recently released clients acclimate back to the civilian world. It will also help purchase bus tickets and gas cards to assist clients in getting to rehab facilities.

Questions?



Yerlin Villegas
Public Health Educator II
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(252) 793 - 1607

Miranda Keel
Health Education Supervisor
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CRESWELL RESILIENCE PROJECT UPDATES & FUTURE CLIMATE SCENARIO INTEGRATION: Ms. Holly White, NCDEQ Resilience Planner, gave the following presentation.

Creswell Resilience Project Updates and Future Climate Scenario Integration



August 3, 2026



Learning to Live with Water

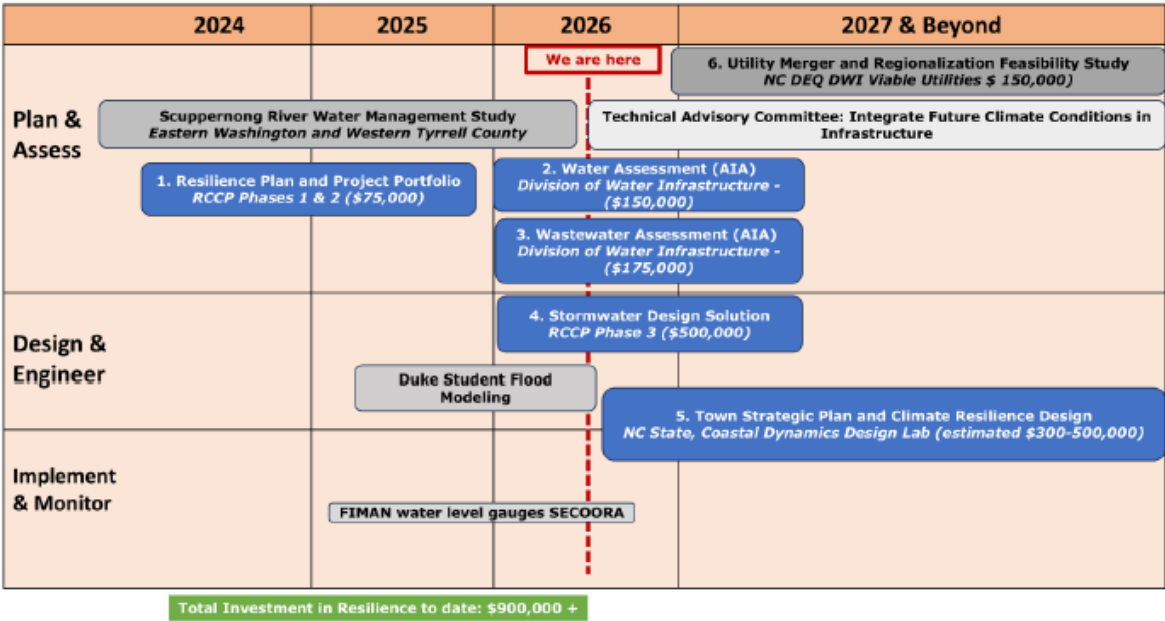


Mayor Alfrieda Williams:

- “Our water is the color of ginger ale”
- “Toilets don’t flush when it rains”
- “We want to learn to live with water”
- “We don’t want Band-Aids but longer-term solutions”
- “The Community should understand all of their options”

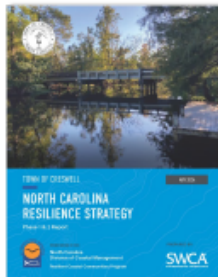


Town of Creswell – Confirmed and Potential Projects



Stormwater Management Project

RCCP Grant Award (Phase 3): \$500,000



- Awarded in 8/2024
- Reduce Flooding Impacts in the 1st-4th Street Area: Feasibility and Design
- Evaluates short, medium, and long-term stormwater management projects to alleviate flooding in the downtown area



AWARDED: DEQ Asset Inventory and Assessment Grants

Purpose: Facilitates full inventory of assets and assesses their condition to prioritize rehabilitation and/or replacement.

- Drinking Water: \$150,000
- Waste Water Treatment: \$175,000



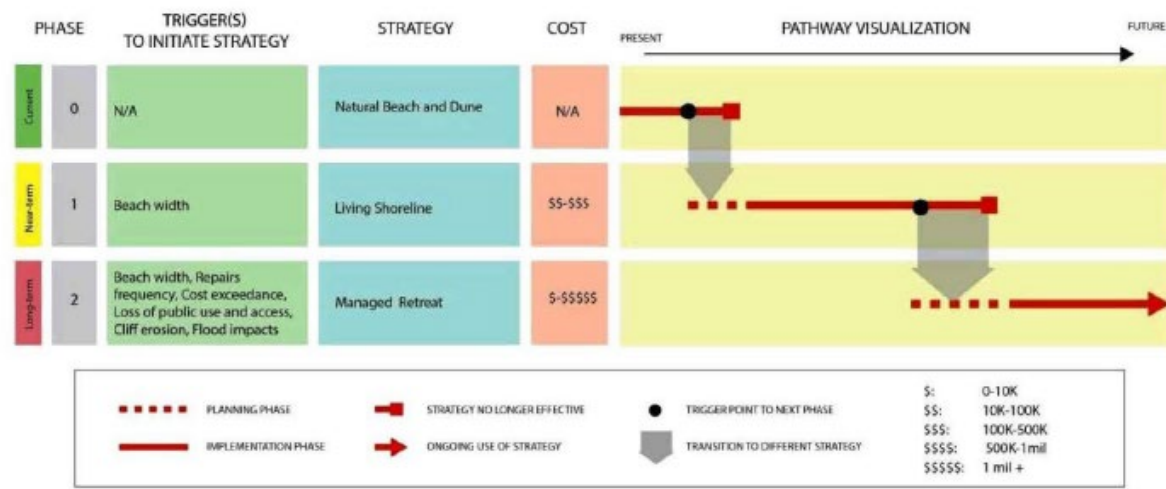
Coastal Dynamics Design Lab

Creating Innovative Designs for Long-term Solutions (\$250,000)

- What is special about your Town?
- How do you imagine Creswell's Future?
 - Reinvigorating Downtown Corridor
 - Preserving historic and cultural heritage
 - Recreational Space / Park
 - Town Hall



Adaptation Pathways



Mayor Alfredia Williams also spoke to the Board and went over the items she would like the Board to consider:

1. That the Board consider conveying the approximately seven-acre portion of the former school property to the Town of Creswell for future public use.
2. That, if additional consideration is needed, the approximately seven-acre parcel be removed from the auction process while the Town's request is under review.
3. That the Board establish a reasonable timeline for considering the Town's request for the

seven-acre parcel, should a decision not be made immediately.

4. That the Board establish the term of the previously approved long-term lease for the smaller playground parcel. I requested consideration of a long-term lease, such as 99 years, or another lease term the Board believes is appropriate, so the Town can continue planning and pursuing grant opportunities.

The purpose of these requests is to provide the Town of Creswell with the opportunity to preserve property for future public use, including a community playground, a future town hall, resilience planning, greenway connections, and other community improvements that will benefit both Creswell and Washington County.

Chair Spruill said the Board would take this request under advisement.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT Ms. Dixon went over the budget transfers and budget amendments that were in the Commissioners' package. Ms. Dixon handed the Board a couple of budget amendments that need replacement in their package.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the budget transfers/amendments BT# 2027-003 – BA# 2027-014 as presented. Commissioner Keyes seconded; motion carried unanimously.

OTHER ITEMS BY COMMISSIONERS OR STAFF:

- a) Capital Projects Update, Mr. Cutis Potter, CM/CA

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

JOHN C. SPRUILL, CHAIR
TRACEY A. JOHNSON, VICE-CHAIR
ANN C. KEYES
JULIUS WALKER, JR.
CAROL V. PHELPS



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**Capital Projects Update
7/29/2026**

Emergency Management Training & Operations Center

- **Project Start Date:** May 19, 2025
- **Completion Date:** July 18, 2026 **Revised:** September 6, 2026
- **Project Duration:** 438 of 452 Days (27-day extension for change orders)

- **Past 30 Days:**
- Started up AC units (7/23/26)
- Permanent lighting up and running
- Continued with PM&E
- Working on fire alarm system
- Finished installing casework
- Installed wood doors with hardware
- Installed interior partitions
- Started on landscaping (5" of rain last week)
- Tested for BDA System building
- Installed VCT in multiple rooms
- **Next 30 Days:**
- Finish landscaping
- Pave parking lot
- Install storefront
- Finish flooring
- Finish final paint
- Test sprinkler system and fire alarm
- Contractors punch list
- Architect's punch list
- Final inspection
- Get temp CO or Final CO

- **Pea Ridge Water Main Expansion**
- **Project Start Date:** January 12, 2026
- **Completion Date:** January 12, 2027

- **Project Duration:** 198 of 365 days
- **Past 30 Days:**
 - During the past billing period, Hendrix-Barnhill Co., Inc. continued critical-path construction activities, with primary efforts focused on the installation of the 12-inch water main within Section 1 of the project and the continued installation of the 6-inch water main along Davenport Forks Road and Jones White Road. Daily operations also included traffic control setup and maintenance, erosion and sediment control measures, clearing and grubbing within the project limits, and trench excavation.
 - Pipe Installation Crew #1 resumed installation of the 12-inch PVC water main within the Town of Roper and continued potholing operations to locate existing utilities. Work activities included trench excavation, pipe installation, joint assembly, bedding and backfilling, installation of fittings and appurtenances, and temporary surface restoration. Traffic control was maintained throughout all operations in accordance with MUTCD requirements.
 - Pipe Installation Crew #2 continued installation of the 6-inch water main within Section 4 along Davenport Forks Road and has progressed onto Jones White Road. Activities included trench excavation, pipe installation, traffic control, and coordination with utility owners to avoid conflicts with existing infrastructure. Surface restoration and stabilization measures were implemented as work progressed to maintain compliance with NCDEQ standards.
 - Trenchless Installation Crew #1 continued horizontal directional drilling operations along Highway 32. Current work is taking place near White's Creek, where multiple bores are scheduled for completion over the next 30 days.
 - Trenchless Installation Crew #2 completed the casing bore adjacent to Ivy Lane and is currently excavating the bore pit at Pea Ridge Road. The crew anticipates completing the bore and jack at this location during the upcoming week. Upon completion, the crew will mobilize to the Highway 32 crossing associated with the booster pump station.
 - Clearing & Grubbing Crew #1 completed the initial clearing and grubbing activities at the booster pump station site, preparing the area for upcoming construction operations.
- **Next 30 Days:**
 - Over the next 30 days, construction activities will remain focused on continued installation of the 12-inch water main within
 - The Town of Roper and continued progression of the 6-inch water main along Davenport Forks Road and Jones White Road.
 - Planned activities include:
 - Continued open-cut installation of the 12-inch and 6-inch water mains by both pipe installation crews.
 - Completion of scheduled bore and jack operations at Pea Ridge Road, followed by mobilization to the Highway 32 booster pump station crossing.
 - Continued horizontal directional drilling operations at planned bore locations along Highway 32.
 - Ongoing site development activities for the booster pump station.
 - Continued maintenance of traffic control, erosion and sediment control measures, and site stabilization throughout active construction areas.

Courthouse Elevator Modernization

- **Project Start Date:** February 16, 2026
- **Completion Date:** May 8, 2026 **Revised:** July 8, 2026
- **Project Duration:** 134 of 84 days
- **Past 30 Days:**
 - State inspection passed
- **Next 30 Days:**
 - Final invoicing in process
 - Ribbon cutting date?

- b) Request for Closing Offices for Employee Appreciation Events, Ms. Julie Bennett, Clerk to the Board
 - i) Fall Fling, Friday, October 9, 2026 – 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM
 - ii) Employee Holiday Luncheon, Friday, December 18, 2026 – 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Commissioner Phelps made a motion to approve Closing of Offices for Employee Appreciation events as listed above. Commissioner Keyes seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Johnson said she was appointed to the NACo Board of Directors.

Commissioner Keyes said she was busy working around the county.

Commissioner Phelps stated that Cycle to the Coast would be stopping at Scuppernong Church on October 9, 2026.

Chair Spruill and Commissioner Phelps gave a presentation at the Ruritan building and it was well received

Mr. Potter noted that the next EMS Peer Review will be August 13, 2026.

Mr. Potter thanked Sheriff Norman and Lt. Hinson on working with Ms. Zoll on the Axon quote for the body cameras.

Mr. Potter said that the next Coffee with the Manager will be on October 14, 2026. He said the first one went well with over 20 participants.

Commissioner Phelps made a motion to go into Closed Sessions pursuant to NCGS§143-318.11(a)(3) (attorney-client privilege) and NCGS §143-318.11(a)(6) (personnel). Commissioner Keyes seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Walker made a motion to return to Open Session. Commissioner Phelps seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Back in Open Session, **Commissioner Keyes made a motion to waive the normal recruitment procedures for posting most positions externally, and to approve the County Manager's recommendation to promote Jamar Whitaker from the Interim EMS Director position to the permanent EMS Director position based on performance and experience, effective immediately. Commissioner Walker seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

Commissioner Phelps made a motion to increase the County Manager's base salary to \$157,300 in addition to a \$275 monthly travel stipend for all in-state mileage and/or meals, effective July 16, 2026. Commissioner Keyes seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Phelps made a motion adjourn. Commissioner Walker seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Julie J. Bennett, NCMCC, MMC
Clerk to the Board

John Spruill
Chair