

HARNETT COUNTY RESOURCE CENTER AND LIBRARY

2024

HARNETT COUNTY

YEAR IN REVIEW



Harnett
COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

FIRST HALF

JANUARY - JUNE

First Half

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Board of Elections

- Conducted the March 5, 2024, Primary Election.
 - Overall voters: 17,969 total registered voters: 86,359 (20.81% voter turnout).
 - Successfully maintained four early voting locations (35.64% of voter turnout was during early voting).
 - Verified voter history matched vote totals and conducted post-election audits and state-mandated sorts thoroughly and efficiently.
 - Several contests did not get the percentage required and a Second Primary was called.
- Conducted the May 14, 2024, Second Primary Election.
 - Overall Voters: 2,882 total registered voters: 60,485 (4.76% voter turnout)
 - Verified voter history matched vote totals and conducted post-election audits and state-mandated sorts thoroughly and efficiently.



Capital Projects



- Completion of Harnett Regional Jetport Terminal.
- Moved temporary terminal from Harnett Regional Jetport to Dunn-Erwin Landfill for office space.
- Removal and demolition of former Joblink building from CCCC Campus in Lillington.
- Boone Trail:
 - Removed all rotted wood doors and frames from the entrance of gym. Replaced these with storefront windows and doors.
- Tax Office:
 - Removed all cashier counters, replaced with ADA cashier counters.
- Resource Center and Library:
 - Renovated snack bar area to accommodate Stick Boy Bread Company.
- Benhaven:
 - Renovated back portion to accommodate two study rooms and a conference room.
 - Added new picnic area at Benhaven Library with new sidewalk entrance to Library.
 - Renovated two locker rooms at gym and converted them to classrooms.
- HARTS/Transportation:
 - Installed new automatic door openers with large gates.
- Development Services/Inspections:
 - Remodeled front entrance.
 - Installed new ADA compliant counter.
 - Relocated window.

Cooperative Extension

- **4-H**
 - Harnett County Cooperative Extension was highlighted by the NC State Local Foods Program Team with an article they put together that shows the impact our office makes by working together.
 - 12 Harnett County schools registered for the 4-H Embryology program this spring.
 - In March, Harnett County 4-H recognized 42 4-H members for their club work in 2023. 35 4-H Club members completed 4-H Points of Success where they earned certificates, gift cards, medals, and trophies depending on the level they earned.
- **Agriculture**
 - Assisted nine Harnett County farmers with writing, reviewing, and submitting grant applications. Harnett County was awarded four NC AgVentures Grants that totaled \$29,950 in 2024.
 - Completed the Harnett Ag Shelter enclosure. Framing the wall and installing the metal saved the County \$3,000 dollars. The electrical, lighting, and roll up door have also been installed. The equipment and tools housed in this area will help the farmers and residents of Harnett County.
- **Horticulture**
 - On May 30, 2024, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate a greenhouse that was built by the Master Gardener program and was made possible by support from Senator Jim Burgin. The greenhouse is a fundraising opportunity for the Master Gardeners as they grow/sell plants and provide demonstrations for small and mid-size growers. The ceremony also celebrated the work of ECA as they completed a memorial quilt that is now framed and on display at the Ag Center.
- **Family and Consumer Sciences**
 - Safe Plates is NC State Extension's family of evidence-based food safety programming and resources for retail, community, and home-based food safety. Staff taught two SafePlates classes where approximately 25 HCS cafeteria managers were trained, tested, and certified in SafePlates.



Development Services

- **Central Permitting**
 - Made physical and personnel changes to our reception area in Central Permitting to help with customer flow and increase productivity.
 - Processed 3,599 permit applications and issued 2,984 permits since the beginning of 2024.
- **Building Inspection**
 - Filled code enforcement officer position with a Level III certified inspector.
 - Code enforcement officer Steven Gazlay achieved Level III certification in all four trades.
 - Three other inspectors received standard certifications in various other trades.
 - Continue to maintain next day inspections policy, despite the large amount of growth we are having throughout the county.
 - Completed 20,818 inspections since the beginning of 2024.

Development Services cont.

• Planning

- Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update
 - Wrapping-up Phase II of the land use plan update and beginning to draft policy recommendations and the future land use map.
 - Concluded the community survey and analyzed results. Over 1,000 residents participated in the survey.
 - Held two public engagement workshops to educate the residents about the land use plan update and gained valuable insights for the future plan.
 - Increased functionality and user participation in eTRAKit, the online project management and permitting system, by designing a step-by-step user guide for licensed design professionals and providing an in-person demonstration to surveyors at their local chapter meeting. Additionally, staff has increased the types of projects which can be submitted using the eTRAKit software from two to five.
 - Introduced three text amendments to update policy and improve the quality of the Unified Development Ordinance.
 - Reviewed 317 projects, including 976 new lots, since the beginning of 2024.
 - Investigated 52 code cases since the beginning of 2024.

Economic Development

- Triangle Business Journal Names Angie Stewart a 2024 Women in Business Award Winner
- Product Development:
 - The Harnett Economic Development Corporation received \$547,885 in Golden LEAF Funding for Site Development activities at Edgerton Industrial Park in Dunn. This SITE Program funding will support various site preparation activities, including clearing, grubbing, grading, and erosion control. Grant funding is also allowing for the completion of a title opinion and utility capacity analysis. for a 25-acre site.
 - Harnett County and the I-95 Crossroads of America Economic Development Alliance will close on land to construct the first of six planned Class A industrial buildings. The first of which is projected to be approximately 162,000 square feet, subdividable.
- Harnett County Economic Development launched a newly redesigned website (harnettedc.org)

Emergency Services



- Completion of the Municipal Law Enforcement VIPER Radio Replacement Project \$1,681,300 in ARPA funding
- Staffed Northwest Harnett Fire Department with an EMS unit and crew, Medic 16.
- Assumed the Search and Rescue Team operation from the Harnett County Chiefs Association. This will be managed by the Emergency Management Division

Facilities

- Updated all HVAC controls in Courthouse, Government complex, Tax and Deeds and Health science buildings. Had three Techs to earn their Backflow licenses saving the County over \$12,000 by doing this in house.
- Repaved the parking lot at the Government Complex in front of the Department of Social Services and Health building.
- Installed new Septic tank at Boone Trail community center.

Finance

- Began implementation of ePayable system to streamline accounts payable system and provide added layer of protection for the County and our vendors against possible future bank fraud.
- Began implementation of Tyler Enterprise Reporting Planning (ERP) Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) module to bring the annual ACFR report writing function in house. This will help to control rising cost of annual audits and allow the County to have more continuity in its financial reporting structure.
- Began implementation of Tyler ERP Bank Reconciliation module to improve accuracy and efficiency in required monthly processes.
- Provided subject matter expertise support to IT in the conversion of our ERP system from on premises to Cloud based. This migration will give the County staff more flexibility to access our system remotely in the event of a natural disaster or some other work disruption that would restrict access to our offices.
- Provided subject matter expertise support to various County departments concerning issues involving Sales Tax to ensure that all County departments are fully complying with Sales & Use Tax laws.

Fleet

- GovDeals online auction platform for our surplus vehicle sales.
 - Sold 14 vehicles for a total of \$50,373.
 - 880 bids and 15,319 hits to our vehicle pages.
- Fleet staff took on several in-house projects instead of out-sourcing to vendors for an approximate savings of \$36,500.00; in-house projects include:
 - Catalytic converters stolen from 11 vehicles in February. Fleet staff purchased and installed new converters; approximate savings \$11,000.
 - Replaced three transmissions: approximate savings \$2,500 per vehicle.
 - Rebuild of HARTS/Transportation vehicle 7,962; approximate savings \$12,500.
 - Vehicle has new engine, transmission and rear differential.
 - Bodywork and bumper replacement (not requiring paint) for three vehicles; approximate savings \$1,000 per vehicle.
 - Replaced cylinder head on a Dodge Charger; approximate savings \$2,500.
 - Receiving updated diagnostic readings for Ford and Dodge; saving trips and expense to dealerships.
- 854 vehicle work orders were completed during this period.
- Fleet staff worked with Human Resources/Risk Management to ensure consistency in our vehicle lists for insurance purposes. We agreed it was beneficial to review each year prior to annual insurance renewal.

General Services

• Animal Services

- Total municipal cases & animal intake: Cases – 212; Animals – 324. Increased 13.8% over same period last year.
- Municipal Animal Control contract increased to \$25,000 per town. The increase in annual fee supplements a new town dedicated Field Service Officer and associated equipment.

• Community Development

- USDA Housing Preservation Grant (HPG23) program secured three contractors to help with home rehabilitation. Bidding requests will include the three who showed an interest in rehab projects in the county.

• Harnett Area Rural Transit System (HARTS)

- HARTS received a no deficiencies grade earned through a comprehensive tri-annual FTA & NCDOT Proficiency Review whose focus areas were financial management, technical capacity, maintenance, ADA, Title VI, procurement, DBE, legal, planning and coordination, public comment processes, charter bus compliance, safety and security, drug free workplace testing, and EEO. HARTS was only one of four out of fifty-four NC transit systems to receive a no deficiencies grade.
- Secured CAMPO, FAMPO and Transportation Advisory Board resolutions to support the Harnett Area Transit System and the County's application for a Microtransit study.

• Youth Services

- 41 youth admitted into Restitution program.
- 31 youth satisfactorily completed program.
- 480 community service hours.
- Successfully transitioned the Teen Court program under the county's Youth Services Program umbrella. Anticipate first 'court dates' in September-October 2024.

GIS

- 1,521 addresses created.
- 91 development sub phases created.
- 135 road segments created.
- 87 custom map/projects completed.
- 4 zoning/rezoning request completed.
- 5 annexation requests completed.
- 4,340 parcel transfers, splits and recombination's completed.
- 1,885 parcel splits and recombination's completed.
- 251 plats reviewed and mapped.
- 93 easements mapped.
- 25 covenants.
- 125 road sign work orders completed.
- Created a Narcan distribution app for the Health Department.
- Created a Code Enforcement Dashboard for Development Services.
- Updated all Map Gallery maps from Arc Map to Arc Pro format.
- Completed GIS system upgrade from Arc Server to Arc Enterprise.
- Created and implemented Medic 16 Emergency Response Area for Emergency Services.
- Created a brochure map of Lillington for Lillington Chamber of Commerce.

Harnett Regional Jetport

• Staffing

- Hired Heather Lawson as Administrative Assistant. In addition to administrative duties, Heather has worked to improve social media with Harnett Regional Jetport (HRJ) and has adapted to front desk responsibilities well.

• Training

- Staff attended annual Wildlife Hazard Mitigation Training at Fayetteville Regional Airport in January.
- Brent Trout attended the North Carolina Airport Association Spring 2024 Conference in April as an HRJ representative.
- Staff completed two Airport Leadership and Management Program courses so far in 2024.

• Operations

- Staff moved into the new Jetport terminal in March of 2024.
- FAA awarded Non-Primary Entitlement Grant funding to HRJ and a work authorization has been issued for the design and bid of a new fuel farm for HRJ by Parrish and Partners.
- Harnett Regional Jetport hosted several groups since its opening: Director's Meeting, DSS staff meeting, Brookside Christian Academy Class visit, Leadership Harnett, and the Lillington Chamber of Commerce among other events hosted by Harnett County Economic Development Department.
- Harnett County Economic Development Department moved to the terminal in May 2024.
- Operational totals: from January 2024 to June 2024, HRJ conducted 15,328 operations, ending FY 2024 with 32,167 total operations. This is up 7,001 operations from FY 23 (25,166).
- HRJ is at capacity, with 17 of 17 tie-down spots rented, 20 of 20 T-hangars rented, 3 of 3 open hangars rented, and all corporate hangars occupied.
- Construction began on a new private corporate hangar at 497 Airport Road.



Harnett Regional Water

- Completed the Advanced Metering Infrastructure Capital Project in which we replaced all of our existing manually read meters (over 46,000) with new automated meters at a cost of approximately \$16 million dollars. This project was funded entirely from Harnett Regional Water (HRW) reserves.
- Received approval from the NCDEQ to construct the estimated \$10 million-dollar Southwest Wastewater Pump Station and Force Main Project. This project will expand the County's ability to provide sewer transmission capacity along the vital Hwy 87 corridor.
- Began construction on the \$111 million-dollar North Harnett Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity Expansion capital project. This project required the cooperation and coordination to include new legal contract amendments and the securing of funding commitments with three different municipalities in our region.
- Received \$1 million dollars of ARPA funding and NCDEQ approval to begin construction of the St Matthews Rd Utility Extension in Erwin.

Health

- **Mobile Health Program**

- Mobile Unit was on site at Lillington and Dunn Food Pantries to offer COVID-19/Flu vaccines and education on services.

- **HIPAA Privacy and Security Audit**

- Collaborated with Harnett County IT to participate in our annual Tego HIPAA Privacy and Security audit, we passed with a score of 95/100.

- **Workforce Retention**

- Incentivized retention of staff through retention pay plan using state issued CDC funds.

- **Women, Infant, Children**

- The caseload for WIC continues to increase, the monthly active participants is currently at 3,300 as of July 31, 2024. We continue to strive to meet the needs of our participants by providing extended clinic hours, and walk-in appointments. We work to provide information about our services through community outreach which has included local food pantries in Lillington and Dunn, along with Head-start sites.

- **Scam Jam**

- The Harnett County Division on Aging, in collaboration with the NC Senior Medicare Patrol Program (SMP), organized a SCAMJAM Event on Thursday, May 23. The event enlightened attendees about various threats of identity theft, fraud, and scams. Throughout the event, attendees had the opportunity to listen to presentations from various internal and external agencies and visit their dedicated table with resources and handouts.

- **Med Assist**

- On June 28th, the NC Med Assist event, sponsored by the Division on Aging and Alliance Health, was the largest to date, serving 1,102 individuals who received essential over-the-counter medications. 9% of these participants stated they were uninsured or underinsured. Among the attendees, 254 individuals expressed that access to these medications could have prevented their previous visits to the emergency room, translating to an estimated savings of \$381,000 in healthcare costs. Additionally, 73 participants were referred to the Quitline NC for ongoing support in managing their health and wellness. Throughout the event, the Health Department distributed 250 COVID-19 tests and 13 Narcan kits, addressing critical public health needs in the community.



- **“Go Red” Heart Health Lunch and Learn**

- In recognition of American Heart Month, Harnett County Health Department and Harnett Health partnered to offer the “Go Red Lunch and Learn” on February 13, located within the Government Complex Commons Area. The luncheon speakers included Dr. Reddy and Dr. Bahekar, Cardiologists with Harnett Health Heart and Vascular Specialists provided presentations on heart disease and ways to reduce your risk. A capacity crowd was in attendance.

Health cont.

• Girls are Great & Teen Girls Conference

- The Harnett County Health Department, in collaboration with Harnett County Cooperative Extension, and Girls Scouts-North Carolina Coastal Pines hosted the annual “Girls Are Great” and Teen girls conference on Saturday, April 20. “Girls Are Great” and the Teen Girls Conference is an educational program that provides information and discussions on easing the transition from childhood to pre-adolescence and discusses in a fun and friendly setting the emotional and physical changes that occur during puberty. The program is available for tween and teen girls ages 9-16 and their mother or adult guardian.

• Mobile Mammography

- Cancer ranks as the second leading cause of death in Harnett County. The Health Department continues to partner with Rex Mobile Mammography to offer mobile mammography screenings. The Rex Mobile Mammography screening program provides funding assistance for uninsured women to obtain screenings.

• Overdose Prevention

- The Health Department has implemented a series of community educational sessions which included at Veterans Services staff members, DSS staff members, a Narcan training was provided in Dunn at Another Barbershop and a session was provided at the Shawtown High School Alumni Association building located in Lillington.



Human Resources

- Updated the County’s Personnel Ordinance and it was approved by Board of Commissioners.
- Procured an external temporary staffing agency for Election Workers for payroll and onboarding purposes.
- Hosted an Eastern NEOGOV training that included surrounding local government municipalities.
- Planning/designing of the new Harnett Management Academy.
- Planning/designing the in-person customer service training.
- Assisted with Employee Access migration.
- Sent out RFP for TPA for Workers Comp – retained current carrier for one additional year.
- Completed open enrollment in May for the 2024-2025 plan year.
- Held employee wellness events (healthy cooking classes, corn hole tournament, Vitamin C Day, kick ball tournament, and picnic on the lawn).
- Held retirement informational meetings.
- Conducted 12 new hire orientations which led to the successful onboarding of 130 new hires for the County.
- Conducted Accident Reporting Training for managers and supervisors.

Information Technology

- Migration of Tyler ERP, Time, and Attendance to Tyler SaaS Cloud environment.
- Completed migration of County and Municipality E-Mail system from on-premises Exchange to Microsoft 365 environment.
- Implementation of Multi-Factor Authentication for email and all cloud platforms used by the county that we were able to integrate into Microsoft Entra.
- Multiple Cyber-Security initiatives including VPN authentication changes, Cisco Umbrella DNS security, firewall security configuration changes.
- Internet connectivity speed improvements.
- Network switch replacements and security upgrades in multiple departments.
- Backup infrastructure SAN technology renewal.
- Courthouse docket electronic signage project.
- County library and municipality fiber connectivity project that made the library branches network more accessible to all uses.
- Department of Social Services Compass Records Management Server Migration.
- Countywide Laserfiche Document Imaging System Upgrade.
- Tech Renewal: Replaced 160 user computers, 300 IP Telephones replaced.

Legal

- Staff reviewed 677 contracts.
- 119 public records requests were received with an average response time of 9.2 days. The average days to respond depends on the volume of the request, time and resources to fulfill the request, the number of other pending requests, the number of redactions necessary to protect confidential and privileged information, and time to receive the documents from the relevant department(s).
- As of 8/2/24, the County has received \$2,527,924 in Opioid Settlement Funds. Effective July 1, 2024, \$20,000 of the settlement funds were allocated to the Health Department for the purchase of naloxone for community distribution. Discussions are ongoing with the Opioid Task Force to determine the best use of funds with potential funding requests at the next quarterly meeting in October.
- Four workers compensation claims that were in active litigation were successfully resolved.
- Seven other non-workers compensation cases in active litigation or potential litigation were resolved.

Library

- Library services expanded to Western Harnett County
 - Opened Benhaven Public Library, a full-service library branch offering an extensive collection of library materials, public computers & Wi-Fi, programs for all ages, reference assistance, a public meeting room, and study stalls.
- Harnett County Library System Strategic Plan
 - Significant progress has been made in crafting a new strategic plan to guide the library's future direction.
 - Facilitated six community focus groups and conducted 14 interviews with community leaders to identify community needs and priorities.
 - Conducted surveys among staff, the Library Board, and the community yielding approximately 600 responses.
- Key Performance Metrics January 1-June 30, 2024
 - System Wide Number of programs and participants
 - Programs: 730/705 – 10.27% increase
 - Attendance: 15805/19199 – 21.47% increase
 - System Wide Physical Circulations: 141220/16116 – 14.12% increase
 - System Wide Electronic Circulations: 36194/42679 – 17.92% increase
 - Computer usage: 9412/9905 – 5.23% increase
 - New patron registrations: 2581/3432 – 32.97% increase



Parks and Recreation



- Increased participation in programming at Boone Trail Community Center: Summer Day Camp (94.9%) and Afterschool Program (24.5%).
- Offered new programming with Pickleball Clinics, open gym at Benhaven Community Center, and watercolor painting classes.
- Offered three Movies in the Park in Lillington and Angier with over 450 citizens attending.
- Hosted and managed Senior Games events in track, cornhole, and croquet.
- Started the Adult Church Softball League at Neill's Creek Park increasing the number of registered teams by 18.18%
- Added a sidewalk from the Anderson Creek Senior Center to the Picnic Shelter for greater accessibility.

Parks and Recreation cont.

- Graded and implemented erosion control measures to the Anderson Creek Park driveway.
- Replaced large drainage culverts under the Dunn-Erwin Rail Trail to eliminate a large sinkhole within the trail.
- Removed invasive plants and underbrush at Cape Fear Shiner Park along the river to create a vista from the athletic fields.
- Added a Canoe/Kayak drop-off driveway at Cape Fear Shiner Park to lessen the walk to the water access area.
- Completed the walking trail around the ballfield at Benhaven Community Center to connect the park amenities to the gymnasium, library, and Early College.
- Started the Design process for the addition of a restroom facility at Patriots Park
- Completed the Neill's Creek Park Master Plan adopted by the Board of Commissioners.
- Hosted a Triangle Trail Initiative Workshop with 41 attendees representing 30 different agencies.
- Parks had 226,412 visitors and 619 hours of rented facilities (fields, gyms, shelters).

Public Information

- Hosted two Citizen Information Sessions. 18 individuals registered for February and 24 registered for July.
- Led the 3rd Annual Community Day, over 600 individuals registered.
- Received 84 new subscribers for our e-newsletter (Harnett Happenings).
- Established a County-wide cohesive email signature template and document for all Harnett County employees.
- Developed a County-wide Media Policy.
- Completed the FY 2023-2024 Grassroots Grant process, provided State funding to 10 organizations and ARPA funding to six organizations.
- Developed a County-wide Brand and Communications guide.



Register of Deeds

- Completed restoration and preservation project for all marriage licenses from 1911-1961.
- Rearranged office moving all real estate records to the real estate vault.
- Received \$4,700 grant from NC OSBM.
- Received \$30,000 grant from Senator Burgin.

Social Services

- Child Support collected \$9,600,000 million dollars this year for Harnett County families, paternity and support was established for 90.02% of our cases.
- Program Integrity collected \$333,501 last year.
- Adult Services participated in the Citizen Information Session on 7/24/24.
- Low Income Energy Assistance Program processed 1,223 applications from 1/1/24-3/31/24.
- Monthly contacts with children in foster care averages over 98% (Federal requirement is 95%).
- Spoke with the Lillington Rotary Club and the YMCA regarding Foster Care Placement and partnered with local churches to support foster children and raise awareness.
- Foster Care had a State IV-E review with no errors.
- Foster Care Placement worker won the Statewide Family Champion Award based on her dedication, commitment to the families she works with and willingness to go beyond the minimum.
- Held our quarterly foster parent support meeting including an Easter egg hunt to support foster parents as well as all children that are in agency custody.
- Received a grant for participation at the Daniel Memorial National Independent Living Conference in Orlando, Florida.
- Participated in the NC Child Welfare Joint Planning Session and NC Child Welfare Indian Gathering.
- Made a Child Abuse and Neglect presentation to Harnett County newly hired Paramedics.
- Child Protective Services (CPS) served on the planning committee with five other agencies for The Harnett County Trauma Summit and served as a panel participant for the Summit.
- Organized the county Prevent Child Abuse event where pinwheels were planted to raise community awareness and held Elder Abuse Walk.
- Designed and sold Prevent Child Abuse t-shirts to raise money to assist in meeting needs of families receiving CPS services in our county.
- DSS supervisors participated in Narcan training held by the Harnett County Health Department.
- CPS social workers participated in Narcan and car seat training provided by the Harnett County Health Department.
- Collaborated with the Dunn Police Department on a child death case that resulted in arrests with murder charges.
- Navigated the first known Child Labor Trafficking case in the county and closely worked with State and Federal Agencies.
- Maintained high standard service provision, exceeding both regional and State data, with as many as 6 vacancies in the unit. HCDSS CPS timely initiated 93.8 % of our CPS Investigations compared to the regional rate of 92.6% and the State rate of 92.5%. CPS also surpassed timely case completion with a rate of 36.6% compared to the regional rate of 26.5% and the State rate of 31.0%.
- 11 staff members attended the Social Services Institute in Hickory, NC.
- Medicaid held an event at DSS for all the Medicaid Healthcare Provider companies.
- Food and Nutrition Services has an active caseload size of 8,667 cases.
- Adult Medicaid has an active caseload size of 10,890 cases.
- Children's Medicaid has an active caseload size of 38,877 cases.
- The Adult Services Unit was selected from the counties in our region to participate in the APS Opioid Pilot Project which is sponsored through the Administration for Community Living.

Soil and Water

• Technical Assistance

- Voluntary Agriculture District Program(VAD): Enrolled 1,139 acres (Jan-July 2024) into the VAD for a total of 26,400 acres enrolled on 699 parcels Countywide. VAD enrolled parcels are protected by a voluntary conservation agreement for a minimum of 10 years for agricultural production. Public notice is provided creating awareness that the VAD enrolled properties are working farms creating an informed community among current or perspective landowners.
- Agriculture Cost Share Programs (FY 2024): Provided \$166,943 to Harnett farmers for installation of conservation practices via the NC Agriculture Cost Share Program saving 29,970 tons of soil from eroding and impacting 1,822 acres (21 contracts). Cost share contracts have a maintenance period requiring land to remain in agricultural use from 1 to 10 years depending on the best management practice installed. 2024 FY contracts have a combined maintenance period totaling 105 years.
- Stream Debris Removal Funding Secured: \$116,327 in additional Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP) funds secured to continue clearing debris waterways allowing for unrestricted waterflow and easing lowland flooding during heavy rain events – July 2024
- Conservation Equipment Rental Program: 558 acres no-till acres planted using District's Great Plains No-Till Grain Drills (2). Average planting per rental is 12 acres (\$120) vs the cost of the same model grain drill is \$34,000 - FY 2024.
- Community Conservation Assistance Program: Secured \$50,000 for the Town of Erwin to conduct a stream restoration project in Porter Park serving to protect both water quality and citizen safety. Secured an additional \$10,000 from a Water Resources Development Grant (WRDG) for a feasibility study to supplement the project funding.
- Beaver Management Assistance Program: Partnering with the USDA, 64 beaver dams were removed, and 137 beavers trapped to alleviate flooding on private and public properties valued at \$302,766. A cost benefit analysis reflects \$25.44 was saved for every \$1 of County contribution. – FY 2024

• Conservation Education (Youth and Adult)

- Keep Harnett Beautiful: Organized Spring Litter Sweep, over 482 volunteer hours valued at \$40,000, 49 cleanups completed on 82 roadways collecting over 1,500 bags and 800 large items – April 2024
- NC Envirothon Program: Coached and sponsored four Envirothon teams all advancing from Area level to State level competition (20 students) – Jan - April 2024.
- Youth Education Events: 1,126 students (Field Days, Classroom Presentations, Camps, Service Projects, Area and State Envirothon Contests) Jan-July 2024.

Solid Waste

- Hosted Hazardous Waste disposal and paper shredding events for County citizens.
- Participated in Keep Harnett Beautiful Spring litter sweep (April 2024).
- Received NCDEQ approval for new cell expansion of Dunn Erwin landfill.
- Purchased a Construction and Demolition Industrial Shredder to be placed in operations at the Dunn Erwin landfill to extend the lifespan of the landfill.

• 2026 Revaluation Work

- Made tremendous progress on the field site visits. Vincent Valuations brought on additional staff to complete field work and data entry work. Over 1/3 of county has been reviewed through July 2024.

• New Assistant Tax Administrator

- Sara Tyree joined our team in April 2024 and has been onboarded. She began work on personal property assessment improvements that are planned for FY '25.

• Collections

- Achieved a 98.80% overall collection rate for tax year 2023 bills, which is .29% higher than tax year 2022 bills.

• Public Outreach

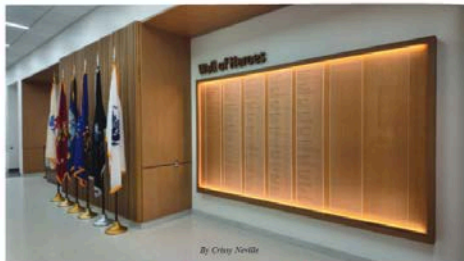
- Increased outreach efforts for tax relief programs by issuing a March press release in the local newspaper and social media. Also, published payment plan information in the County newsletter in April. Revaluation information updated weekly on our website. We continue to seek opportunities to connect with citizens and local businesses to assist with property tax matters.

• Growth Management

- Staff continue to meet the needs of the growing tax base. Our real property parcels increased from 73,865 in December 2023 to 74,880 in June 2024. Our personal property abstracts increased from 12,217 in tax year 2023 to 15,242 in tax year 2024. With this increase we continue to focus on data clean-up to ensure accurate assessments and efficient collections.

Veterans Services

- Ribbon Cutting for Benhaven Library. We now have office hours there two days a month for Veterans and Families.
- Three Staff Members attended the Veteran Battlefield Documentary in Fayetteville. This was in preparation for possibly hosting a presentation of this documentary in Harnett County.
- The Harnett County Health Department trained our office staff on the use and administering NARCAN. We now have 14 doses of NARCAN available in our office.



of Honor and other medals awarded for valor and heroism," Truesdale explained.

Currently, the Wall recognizes nearly 50 soldiers. Nominations are ongoing; candidates must have served in any of the five military branches and meet these criteria:

- **Time frame:** World War I and forward
- **Discharge:** Honorable only
- **Rank:** Any rank

• **Residency Criteria:** Former or current resident of Harnett County and has been established as a resident for five years.

• **Vital Status:** Living or deceased

• **Awards:** One of the Medals for Heroism — Medal of Honor, Silver Star, Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, Air Force Cross, any award with a V or Valor device except for unit awards w/V, Soldier's Medal, Airman's Medal, Navy Marine Corps Medal, and Coast Guard Medal.

All nomination forms should include documentation, discharge DD Form 214 and an award citation if possible.

The Wall of Honor is another feature inside the McKinney Parkway office that was added simultaneously with the Wall of Heroes. The wall monument showcases service members selected for their military service

and dedication to their respective communities. Large hanging plaques present more than a photo of and biographical information on each honoree; the stories outlined represent exceptional community service, professional excellence and personal sacrifice. Service to country, community and family are the common denominators in the two honorees featured. Like the Wall of Heroes, candidates to be considered can still be nominated.

To qualify, the specific criteria the candidate must meet are as follows:

- **Time frame:** World War I and forward
- **Discharge:** Honorable only
- **Rank:** Any rank

• **Residency Criteria:** Former or current resident of Harnett County and has been established as a resident for five years.

• **Vital Status:** Living or deceased

• **Service:** Must have given service to country and community through impacts to education, medical, political and/or community impact.

"Those on both Walls are nominated by the citizens, and we have a committee of citizens from across the county, not only veterans, but also community leaders, pastors etc., and they will sit down and look at the package. I go through the criteria, and if they feel the person should be up here, they get put up," Truesdale



Harnett Life - Spring 2024

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Saluting Soldiers Harnett County Veteran Services

"Freedom isn't free" is an American idiom found across a spectrum of speech, from presidential talks to country music songs. When used in patriotic, poetic, and everyday plain talk, the phrase can seem a tall order and is personally experienced. In Harnett County, an appreciation of freedom is more than just language; it's a living, multi-faceted memorial open to the public via Harnett County Veterans Services. The Harnett County Veterans Park, Wall of Heroes, Wall of Honor and other tributes salute the county's soldiers and military advancement as every war and conflict and from all Armed Forces branches.

Harnett County Veterans Services is found within the circa-2011 Harnett County Resource Center & Library at 452 McKinney Parkway in Lillington. Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, the Harnett County Veterans Park provides the Veterans Services office. Created in 2004 in conjunction with the building of the adjacent Harnett County Courthouse, the Park was dedicated on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2006.

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Harnett Life - Spring 2024

- Participated in an interview with Harnett Life Magazine for their Spring Edition. They wanted to showcase the Harnett County Veterans Park, Wall of Heroes, Wall of Honor, and the USS Harnett County display.
- Hosted the Annual Memorial Day Ceremony in the Resource Center and Library.

Workforce Development

- Staff provided 320 services to Harnett County Employers and provided outreach to 16 new employers.
- Registered and served 24 Veterans for training opportunities and referred to Veteran Services office for benefits.
- Hosted four Employer Hiring Events: SR Solar 1/31, Harbor Freight Tools 5/23, 5/24, 6/13, and on 6/19 hosted 16 employers at the Multi-Employer & Resource Fair
- Registered 196 new customers.
- Staff provided 5,414 employment services to individuals of Harnett County.
- Provided 313 Job Referrals to Jobseekers.
- Provided Customers in need of work attire in surrounding areas.
- Participated in various community outreach opportunities.

County Manager's Office

• Performance Management

- On January 23, 2024, at the Board of Commissioners retreat, an update to the existing Strategic Plan for FY2025 was presented. This information included a review of the Goals, Objectives and the alignment of Key Strategic Actions for FY2025. The Board of Commissioners agreed with the update and directed staff to update the Strategic Plan to reflect the new information.
- TEAM Harnett completed business plan training sessions with our partners from the UNC School of Government. Business plans related to the Strategic Plan and the TEAM Harnett Performance Management plan showing how the departments relate to the business of the County. County administration worked closely with the departments during the creation of the plans.
- For FY2024, TEAM Harnett reviewed thirty-one (31) Key Strategic Actions and Other Strategic Actions directly related to the Harnett County Strategic Plan.
- Status of 31 action items as of June 30, 2024
 - 6% pending action
 - 46% In-Process
 - 48% Completed

• Opioid Task Force

- In January, we launched a new executive committee structure. The Executive Committee consists of our OTF Co-Chairs, the OTF Coordinator (me), other important leaders, and two designated co-chairs from each of our three subcommittees: (1) Education & Prevention, (2) Treatment & Recovery, (3) Harm Reduction. The slide below illustrates the process to be followed in order for Opioid Settlement funding to be utilized. Graphic included below for your reference.
- In March, our partners at Campbell hosted the 2024 Recovering Hope Conference: Faith-Driven Responses to the Overdose Crisis. This was very well attended and Dr. Tillman has continued to engage a network of faith leaders since.
- In May, the County Commissioners adopted a resolution to allocate \$20,000 of Opioid Settlement Funds to community-based naloxone distribution. Health + Legal have created a policy to regulate this.
- In June, we launched our website and presented at the Harnett County School Board meeting to bolster that relationship.

SECOND HALF

JULY - DECEMBER

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Board of Elections

- Conducted 14 outreach events throughout the county.
- Held an I Voted sticker Contest where middle school students designed the I Voted sticker for the General Election.
- Recruited and trained over 400 election workers for Primary and General Election.
- Conducted the March 5, 2024, Primary:
 - Voter turnout 20.81%
 - 17,969 voters
- Conducted the May 14, 2024, Second Primary:
 - Voter turnout 4.76%
 - 2,882 voters
- Conducted the November 5, 2024, General Election:
 - Voter turnout 69.71%
 - 63,962 voters
- Completed the following projects:
 - Department of Social Services 2nd floor up fit.
 - Renovated the Neill's Creek Park concession stand and bathrooms.
 - Renovated Boone Trail gymnasium front entrance, concession area, and restrooms.

Capital Projects

Cooperative Extension



- Hosted the largest Farm City Week, engaging over 1,000 participants and featuring a keynote by NC State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean, Dr. Garey Fox, on the future of agriculture. Recognized agricultural award winners during the Farm City Banquet.
- 4-H reached 500+ students from Harnett County Schools during Ag Science Field Day and led the Dinah Gore 4-H Healthy Food Challenge, engaging nearly 500 participants in cooking healthy, local foods.
- Agriculture secured \$800,000 in grant funding from the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission for a Farmers Market in Lillington.
- Horticulture developed a Market Gardener Group to bolster the local foods program.
- Community Development educated residents on estate planning, managing heirs' property, and disaster preparedness, promoting long-term resilience and well-being.

County Managers Office

• Strategic Plan and Performance Management

- On January 23, 2024, at the Board of Commissioners retreat, Rebecca Jackson presented the update to the existing Strategic Plan for FY2025. This information included a review of the Goals, Objectives and the alignment of Key Strategic Actions for FY2025. The Board of Commissioners agreed with the update and directed staff to update the Strategic Plan to reflect the new information.
- TEAM Harnett completed business plan training sessions with our partners from the UNC School of Government. Business plans related to the Strategic Plan and the TEAM Harnett Performance Management plan showing how the departments relate to the business of the County. County administration worked closely with the departments during the creation of the plans.
- For FY2024, TEAM Harnett reviewed thirty-one (31) Key Strategic Actions and Other Strategic Actions directly related to the Harnett County Strategic Plan.
- Status of 31 action items as of June 30, 2024: **6% are pending action, 46% are In-Process, 48% are Completed.**
- For FY2025, TEAM Harnett will review forty-two (42) Key Strategic Actions and Other Strategic Actions directly related to the Harnett County Strategic Plan.
- Status of 42 action items as of September 30, 2024: **24% are pending action, 64% are In-Process, 12% are Completed.**

Development Services

• Central Permitting

- Processed 3,040 permits so far this calendar year. That is an average of approximately 144 permits per week or 29 permits per day.
- Completed a renovation of the Permitting lobby which created additional space for a new staff position (Administrative Support Specialist) which improved the level of customer service for Central Permitting, Building Inspections as well as Planning Services.
- Central Permitting has filled two vacancies created by the departure of existing staff members.

• Building Inspection

- Completed 12,618 inspection stops, for an average of 122 inspection stops per day.
- This year, Steven Gazlay achieved all Level III standard certificates, Justin McLeod obtained Building and Electrical Level I certifications, Daniel Floyd earned Plumbing Level I, and Ricardo Honrada, who holds Level III certifications in all trades, joined our team.

• Planning

- Updates to the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan is nearing completion.
- Planners have reviewed 285 projects, including 22 Final subdivision plats (consisting of 760 lots), eight Preliminary subdivision maps (consisting of 544 lots), and 10 commercial site plans.
- The Harnett County Board of Adjustment will have conducted 29 Special Use Permit Hearings from July 1, 2024, to December 9, 2024.
- Sarah Arbour successfully complete zoning certification training from the NC School of Government and is now a Certified Zoning Officer.

Economic Development

- Launched a redesigned Economic Development website.
- Acquired land for a new class A industrial park – Harnett 95 Industrial Center
- Made various announcements including Rooms to Go expansion, Revels Turf & Tractor relocation, and Industrial Park.

- New Fire Marshal Inspector hired and assigned to the Dunn area.
- Search and Rescue (SAR) training of over 20 Emergency Services employees which will enhance our SAR capability.
- Second Harnett Paramedic Academy class graduated six new paramedics.
- Emergency Services personnel provided support to our western counties during and after Hurricane Helene.

Facilities

- Added two new employee shelters to the Government Complex.
- Replaced all ramps at the Health Department and Department of Social Services to meet the American Disabilities Act 2024 code requirements.
- Replaced water heaters at the Health Department to commercial tankless water heaters.
- Replaced the front entrance roof at Boone Trail.
- Installed new carpet and painted the hallways at the Department of Social Services.
- Scheduled to begin replacing the pavement in the Shawtown parking lot during the month of December.

- Clean audit report of the County's financial statements.
- Successfully converted the financial system to Software as a Service (SaaS).
- Implemented automated bank reconciliation tool to help improve efficiency.
- Updated the pCard policy and Tyler pCard module to improve efficiency.
- Transitioned Finance related policies, procedures and forms to SharePoint to serve as a central repository site for departments.

Fleet

- GovDeals online auction platform for our surplus vehicle sales: (Sold 19 vehicles for a total of \$139,085 and received 821 bids and 15,365 hits to our vehicle pages).
- Staff completed several in-house projects to save time and reduce outsourcing delays, including bodywork on six vehicles, reworking a dog box for Animal Control, replacing an engine, and rebuilding a motor—saving approximately \$13,500.
- Complete rebuild of motor and rear end; approved FY 2025 expansion request.
- Our team also handled 20 on-site repairs for flats, busted hoses, and similar issues, avoiding the need for wrecker services.
- 893 vehicle work orders were completed during this period.

Emergency Services



Finance

General Services

- **Animal Services**

- Identified a potential site for the new Animal Shelter.
- Assigned one field service officer to serve as town officer for Angier, Coats, Erwin, and Lillington.

- **Community Development**

- Received bids for first four family homes for repair – Total \$ 53,050.
- Negotiations for lowest, responsive bidder begin Dec 2 – 6.

- **Harnett Area Rural Transit System (HARTS)**

- Completed first year of two-year North Harnett Transit Study; deliberate public engagement activities are next on the study's agenda.
- Requested Fayetteville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to consider adding a transit study in FY26 budget, awaiting further coordination.
- North Carolina Department of Transportation indicates Harnett County is #1 for funding consideration for the next round of MicroTransit studies; \$0 match for the county.

- **Youth Services**

- Held first Teen Court proceedings in October.
- Teen Court participant referrals are increasing and expect Juvenile Justice to start referring cases. Currently, 90 – 95 percent of referrals are from school resource officers.

GIS

- **Key Data Processed**

- 1,714 addresses created, 56 development sub-phases, 195 road segments, and 115 road sign work orders completed.
- Processed 3,732 parcel transfers, splits, and recombination's, including 1,511 splits/recombination's.
- Reviewed and mapped 205 plats, 138 easements, and 18 covenants.
- Completed 18 zoning/rezoning requests and 2 annexation requests.
- Delivered 50 custom maps and projects.

- **Technology Enhancements**

- Developed dashboards for Tax Real Property Collections and Naloxone Distribution.
- Created a Lillington Yard & Bulky Waste Collection app and updated the Harnett County Departments application.

- **Staff Highlights**

- Tammy Ward retired after 32 years of service.
- New hire: Reece Pollard, GIS Technician.
- Plat Review Certifications awarded to five team members, Sheila Bennett was promoted to Senior GIS Technician and re-certified as an NC Certified Property Mapper, Seth Purvis earned ICS-100 and ICS-200 certificates, and Kayla Robinson passed the NC Property Mappers Association Regular Mapping Class.

Harnett Regional Jetport

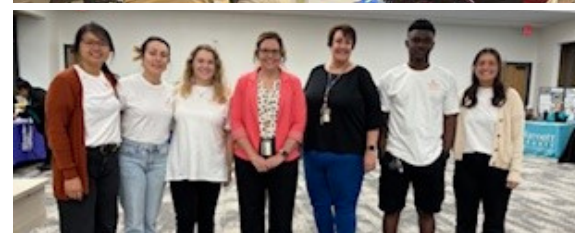
- Held the first annual Harnett Regional Jetport Jamboree – a community event with static display aircraft and vehicles, county and local industry vendor booths, food trucks and Jetport terminal tours. Event was held November 16, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with an estimated attendance of roughly 1,000 people. Fly in activity had operations of over 100 flights that day alone.

Harnett Regional Water

- Completed the approximate \$16M Advanced Metering Infrastructure Capital Project, replacing over 46,000 manually read meters with automated ones, funded entirely by HRW reserves.
- Gained approval from the North Carolina Department Environmental Quality (NCDEQ), to construct the estimated \$10M Southwest Wastewater Pump Station and Force Main Project, enhancing sewer capacity along Highway 87 corridor.
- Began construction on the \$111M North Harnett Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity Expansion Project, requiring coordination with three municipalities and securing funding commitments.
- Secured \$1M in American Rescue Plan Act funding and NCDEQ approval for the St. Matthews Rd. Utility Extension Project in Erwin.

Health Department

- **Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Awareness:** Hosted the Be Heart Smart Lunch & Learn in partnership with Harnett Health, featuring cardiologist Dr. Amol Bahekar discussing PAD prevention and treatment, alongside exhibitors and a heart-healthy lunch.
- **Catch My Breath Program:** Conducted a youth vaping prevention program with Dunn Police Athletic League to educate youth on the risks of vaping and empower them to live vape-free.
- **Fall into Fitness Challenge:** Engaged approximately 150 residents in a 4-week virtual fitness program, encouraging physical activity through newsletters and activity logs.
- **Mobile Mammography:** Partnered with Rex Mobile Mammography to provide screening services, ensuring uninsured women have access to vital health screenings.
- **Elderly Nutrition Program:** Served 4,922 congregate meals and 19,420 home-delivered meals, supporting seniors with essential nutrition, social engagement, and independence.
- **Caregiver Recognition:** Celebrated National Family Caregiver Awareness Month with educational events and a celebration honoring caregivers' dedication. The Caregiver Support Group meets monthly to provide ongoing resources.
- **Prenatal Health Fair:** Hosted by the Prenatal Clinic with support from Campbell University students, offering resources and education for expectant parents.
- **Flu Vaccine Drive-Thru:** Held flu vaccine events at two locations in October to improve community access.
- **Naloxone Distribution:** Distributed 489 kits to individuals and organizations to combat opioid overdoses.
- **Kindergarten Physicals:** Provided physicals at four elementary schools using the mobile medical unit.
- **Environmental Health Growth:** Issued record numbers of new pool and septic permits, with septic permits increasing by an unprecedented 25%.



Human Resources

• Employee Development

- Launched the Harnett Management Academy with 18 employees in the first cohort.
- Conducted 10 new hire orientations, onboarding 121 employees.
- Delivered Customer Service Training to 476 employees, with 98 managers/supervisors completing follow-up sessions.
- 496 employees attended Harassment Prevention Training.
- Conducted NEOGOV, Workers' Compensation, and Retirement training sessions.

• Recruitment Efforts

- Held the County's first Career Fair with 185 registrants, 135 attendees, and 6 hires (to date).
- Participated in multiple career fairs, including Ft. Liberty Hiring Our Heroes and Central Carolina Regional Resource Fair.
- As of November 27, 2024, there are 54 vacancies.

• Employee Engagement

- Hosted the Annual Holiday Luncheon and Awards Ceremony, serving 1,015 employees and County Commissioners.
- Held a Wellness Fair with 184 attendees that included chair yoga sessions.
- Partnered with Cooperative Extension to offer healthy cooking events for employees.
- Partnered with Piedmont Pharmaceutical Care Network (PPCN) for Weight Management (24 participants) and Diabetes Management programs (13 participants).



• Policy and Planning

- Rolled out a Citizen Complaint Policy with an online reporting form.
- Updated the RCL All-Hazards Emergency Preparedness Plan with Emergency Management.

Information Technology

- Installed 150 computers and 225 new phones.
- Relocated Harnett Regional Jetport and Economic Development staff to the new terminal building.
- Upgraded Courtroom six Audio/Visual technology and installed digital signage at the courthouse.
- Migrated DSS Compass Pilot software and moved/connected 60 new desks at DSS.
- Worked with the Sheriff's Office on Body Camera software setup.
- Completed 4,748 IT request tickets and began firewall replacements (5 of 16 locations complete).
- Implemented new Secure Socket Layer Virtual Private Network technology and enhanced email security with advanced Barracuda settings.
- Upgraded LaserFiche, GIS servers, and core software for Harnett Regional Water.
- Advanced projects for CityWorks, Water Information Management System, and billing software test servers.
- Began SharePoint implementation and refreshed edge switches across multiple departments.
- Conducted North Carolina National Guard cybersecurity audit and improved configuration.
- Upgraded Development Services meeting room with advanced Audio-Visual technology.

Legal

- Reviewed 695 contracts.
- Fulfilled 178 public records requests with an average turnaround of 7.5 days.
- Received \$3.66M in Opioid Settlement Funds, with \$500K appropriated for strategic plan goals.
- Heard 93 School Bus Stop Arm violation appeals.
- Resolved 5 workers' compensation claims and 10 litigation cases.

Library

- Finalized and adopted the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan for the Harnett County Public Library System.
- Hosted Summer Reading Program activities in eight library locations, offering 338 programs attended by 9,818 participants—a 70% increase in programming and a 109% increase in attendance compared to the previous year.
- Organized a comprehensive Staff Development Day, fostering professional growth and team building among all staff members.
- Launched monthly programs tailored for adults with special needs, enhancing inclusivity and community engagement.
- Implemented monthly outreach initiatives to serve senior citizens and individuals with disabilities, extending library services to underserved populations.
- Conducted a Canva workshop to promote digital literacy and empower participants with graphic design skills.
- Represented the library system at fall festival events across all municipalities and at Campbell University, increasing visibility and community connection.
- Introduced a monthly library newsletter to provide patrons with timely updates on programs, services, and events.

Parks and Recreation

- Hosted six weekly sessions of full day summer camp at Boone Trail Community Center in July and August.
- Held a Church Men's Softball League in July and August at Neill's Creek Park.
- Launched an Afterschool Program at Benhaven Community Center.
- 42 individuals participated in our Pickleball Clinics at Neill's Creek Park.
- Presented Movies in the Park at Angier Depot and Lillington River Park with over 450 people in attendance.
- Organized a Senior Citizen bus trip to the NC State Fair for 96 seniors. The trip filled up within four days of opening registration.
- Increased participation in the Harnett County Men's Senior Golf Tournament by 48%.
- Offered Christmas Programming including Letters to Santa mailboxes at six locations and Santa's Workshop event.
- Over 1,200 individuals participate in open gym programs at Benhaven and Boone Trail.
- Began working with Alta Planning on Greenway Feasibility Studies for three segments of greenway trails.
- Removed plum trees from front of Agricultural building.



Parks and Recreation cont.

- Applied for greenway trail acquisition funding through the Great Trails State Program to convert the Rail Easement along South River Road to a greenway easement.
- Applied for park development funding for Phase 1 of the Renovation of Neill's Creek Park through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- Led brainstorming sessions with County staff and Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to discuss future programming ideas.
- Partnered for an Eagle Scout Project to add a bicycle maintenance station to the Mountain Biking trails at Anderson Creek Park.
- Added bleachers to Cape Fear Shiner Park.
- Repaired the Asphalt Walking Trail at Barbecue Creek Park that was damaged by tree roots.
- Completed the systematic design and construction drawings for new restrooms at Patriots Park.
- Repaired drainage areas around Government Complex grounds (IT, Social Services, Detention Center).
- Added a new Walking Trail along Cape Fear River at Cape Fear Shiner Park.
- Renovated the water access point at the Cape Fear River Trail Park to make it more usable for Emergency Personnel.
- Replaced damaged or missing Bollards on the Dunn-Erwin Rail Trail to increase trail safety.
- Harnett County parks had over 218,500 people attend its parks from July through November.
- Rented ballfields, picnic shelters, gymnasiums, and meeting spaces for a total of 534.75 hours.

Public Information Office

- Grew the citizen electronic newsletter subscription by 7.3% in 2024.
- Enhanced social media content, resulting in a 132.6% increase in followers, a increase of 126.9% boost in reach, and an 84.7% growth in content interactions compared to 2023.
- Led and hosted the first Family Funday at our Benhaven location in Western Harnett County attracting over 200 participants.
- Organized a Summer Citizen Information Session in July, attracting 24 registrants, 8 in-person attendees and 92 video views on our YouTube channel.
- Launched and trained website users on the Monsido platform to enhance website accessibility and ensure compliance with federal requirements.
- Built a robust employee Intranet, offering various resources to support staff.
- Distribute 40+ news releases throughout the 2024 year.
- Increased positive media coverage by strategically pitching stories that captured public and media interests.
- Subgranted funds from the Grassroots Art Program Grant to 12 local Harnett County organizations and two County departments.
- Launched a survey to gauge interests in a mobile app, receiving in 150 participants.
- Served on the planning committee for the Jetport Jamboree, which drew an estimated 1,000 attendees.



Register of Deeds

- “Thank-A-Vet” Program kicked off on November 8.
- Register of Deeds, Matthew S. Willis, elected Historian of the North Carolina Association of Registers of Deeds in September.
- Register of Deeds, Matthew S. Willis, reelected Harnett County Register of Deeds on November 5.
- Increased the number of citizens registered for the free Fraud Notification system.
- Staci Harper-Clark, Deputy I, received the North Carolina Association of Registers of Deeds certification.
- Our office has recorded 10,200 documents.
- Reorganized the office to centralize all original real estate documents in one location and created a dedicated plat cabinet room, providing easier access for Harnett County citizens.

Social Services

- Department of Social Services (DSS) Management Team provided care boxes to Watauga and Caldwell County DSS during Hurricane Helene.
- Child Support sponsored a Community Day in August, a July food drive for clients in need, and participated in the Harnett County Partnership for Children’s Fall Event.
- Foster Care exceeded the federal contact requirement of 95%, held a Halloween Bash for foster children, displayed adoption awareness materials in November, and completed training for 10 new foster parents.
- Partnered with Little River Cruisers for a toy drive benefiting foster children.
- Adult Services passed state monitoring in all five areas, held a fundraiser for the Elderly Christmas Cheer Program, and transferred guardianship of a ward to a family member.
- Child Protective Services (CPS) staff worked with over 300 children daily, coordinated Thanksgiving meals for families, supported a federal human trafficking case, and participated in school orientation event at Northwest Harnett Elementary School.
- Processed Food and Nutrition Services cases for western counties and assisted the D-SNAP Disaster Virtual Call Center for 26 counties during Hurricane Helene.
- Hosted a Medicaid Resource Event and maintained a satellite office at Benhaven School for Medicaid and Food and Nutrition Services.
- DSS passed the single county audit, received Active Assailant Training, and met state MOU processing requirements for Medicaid and Food and Nutrition Services.
- Created the “DSS Impact Award” to recognize employees upholding the department’s mission and values.
- Participated in the Harnett County Career Fair to recruit new staff.

Solid Waste

- Hosted a shredding event for County citizens on November 14th.
- Hosted a Hazardous Waste disposal event for County citizens on November 16th.
- Purchased a new Excavator, Tractor, Ejector Pan, and Industrial Shredder.
- Received State approval for Construction & Demolition expansion at the Dunn-Erwin landfill.

Soil and Water

• Technical Assistance

- Enrolled 1,280 acres into the Voluntary Agriculture District (VAD) program, bringing the total to 26,541 acres across 704 parcels, protecting working farms through 10-year conservation agreements.
- Allocated \$37,009 through the Agriculture Cost Share Program for conservation practices, saving 29,970 tons of soil from eroding and impacting 705 acres over 5 contracts with a combined 5-year maintenance period.
- Secured \$126,204 in Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP) funds for debris removal in waterways, reducing flooding risks during heavy rains.
- Supported conservation tillage on 558 acres through the No-Till Equipment Rental Program and obtained \$19,596 in grant funds from the Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation to purchase a new Land Pride No-Till Grain Drill.
- Obtained \$50,000 for a stream restoration project in Porter Park, Erwin, and \$10,000 for a feasibility study via the Water Resources Development Grant.
- Partnered with USDA to remove 47 beaver dams and trap 117 beavers, alleviating flooding on private and public properties valued at \$287,500. A cost benefit analysis reflects \$22.45 was saved for every \$1 of County contribution.

• Conservation Education

- Engaged 1,658 students in youth-focused conservation events, including field days, classroom presentations, and Envirothon contests.
- Hosted two NC Veterans Farm Program workshops for 15 transitioning military personnel, connecting them with agricultural resources for career planning.



Tax

- Increased overall collection rate from 98.51% to 98.80%.
- Implement best practices for the safety of county assets and employees.
- Listed and assessed roughly \$650,000,000 in real and personal property.
- Implemented process improvements for Vehicle Tax System (VTS), valuation reviews and increased abstracts reviewed monthly from 10% to 20%.
- Held four public informational meetings on business personal property tax essentials on 11/25/2024 & 12/10/2024 in preparation for the 2025 listing time period.
- Held two public informational meetings on aircraft property tax essentials on 12/03/2024 in preparation for the 2025 listing time period.

Veterans Services

- Supported the National Day of Prayer and hosted Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies at the Harnett County Veterans Park.
- Organized a Department of Veterans Affairs Housing Symposium.
- Participated in Veterans Day programs at Dunn Elementary, Boon Edam, and Hood Memorial Christian Church.
- Engaged in the Harnett Regional Jetport Jamboree.
- Collected toys for Toys for Tots.

Workforce Development

- All Workforce Development staff have been certified as Reentry Professionals by Assistant Secretary Workforce Solutions Andrea DeSantis.
- Conducted United States Postal Service hiring events from September 17-19.
- Participated in multiple community outreach events, including:
 - October 8: Shawtown Community Development Center and October 11 Morse Clinic in Dunn to assist homeless and individuals who are in jeopardy of being homeless.
 - October 15: Harnett County School orientation.
 - October 29: Dunn Library recruitment.
- Total served end of 1st quarter, September 2024:
 - Staff served 73 employers, provided 2,943 services to customers, registered 108 new customers, referred 184 customers to job openings, and assisted nine veterans.
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant
 - Re-entry -(2) On the Job Training (1) Paid Work Experience and (2) Entered CDL Training.
 - Substance Disorder-(1) On the Job Training and (1) Paid Work Experience.
 - Small Business -(2) On the Job Training and (2) Paid Work Experience.
- Hosted Customer Service Week (October 7-11) and the Annual Job and Resource Fair (October 30).
- Collected and donated toys for Beacon Rescue Mission, Hurricane Helene victims, and adopted 10 children through Big Blessings.

Opioid Task Force

- \$35,000 of settlement funds allocated to Recovery Alive, Inc. to establish a female recovery home and fund a part-time peer support specialist to operate the home.
- \$230,464.20 of settlement funds allocated to the North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition to fund two years of a three-year contract for harm reduction outreach services which includes Narcan education and distribution, post overdose response, recovery support services, and linkages to care. Year one of the contract is being funded by Alliance Health which will allow the County to gather data and determine the effectiveness of the program.
- New data has also been released regarding Overdose ED visits and fentanyl deaths
 - Over 40% reduction in Overdose ED visits from 2023.
 - Almost 60% reduction in fentanyl positive deaths from 2023.

For more information, contact:
Harnett County Manager's Office
455 McKinney Parkway
Lillington, NC 27546
(910) 893-7555

2024 Year In Review

