

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2025
8:30 AM

Present: Christopher G. Davis, Chairman
Richard W. King, Vice Chairman
Donald L. Porter, Treasurer
Ronna Rowe Garrett, Secretary

Others Present: Timothy L. Bryant, CEO/General Manager (VIA WEBEX)
Kirk deViere, Cumberland County Commission Chairman/Liaison
Adam Lindsay, Assistant City Manager
Media

Absent: Derrick Thompson, City Council Liaison
Chancer McLaughlin, Hope Mills Town Manager

I. REGULAR BUSINESS

Chairman Christopher Davis called the meeting of July 9, 2025, to order at 8:30 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Davis led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Donald Porter motioned to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard King and unanimously approved.

II. CONSENT ITEMS

Commissioner Ronna Garrett motioned to approved the Consent Item. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Donald Porter and unanimously approved.

A. Approve Minutes of meeting of June 25, 2025

END OF CONSENT

III. INTERN PROGRAM UPDATE

Presented by: Bobby Russell, HR Officer
Lauren Armstrong, HR Programs Specialist

Mr. Bobby Russell thanked the Commissioners for allowing staff to present again this year, the ICON Students and College Interns. He stated we bring high school students in to give them the opportunity to receive a glance of work within a municipality like PWC.

Mr. Russell went on to state from a college standpoint, we look at it as an opportunity to increase our workforce. By introducing college interns to the field of their study and then to prepare them for opportunities for advancement within our organization.

He then introduced Ms. Lauren Armstrong, HR Programs Specialist. Ms. Armstrong provided an overview of the Internship Program.

► **College Interns – Hosting 16** (*increased from 6 in FY24*)

- 10-week program
- 40-hour work week
- Weekly lunch and learns with HR
- Weekly work reports
- Evaluations
- Presentation to officers

► **ICON Students – Hosting 11** (*increased from 4 in FY24*)

- 6-week program
- 32-hour work week
- High school students from Cumberland County Schools
- Job shadowing
- Weekly work reports
- ICON countywide showcase for community partners

Benefits of an Internship Program

► **For PWC**

- Cultivate & attract talent
- Expanded capabilities
- Fresh perspective
- Increased productivity
- Injected enthusiasm
- Local community investment

► **For Interns/Students**

- Career exploration
- Learn new skills
- Networking
- Realistic preview of workplace
- Site-based learning

Ms. Armstrong stated The internship program offers benefits for both PWC and the interns. It is our goal to utilize this program to aid us in talent acquisition by hosting interns here and providing them with a positive experience while they are still students, they will be more inclined to apply to positions here in the future and our hiring managers can personally speak to their qualifications.

Hosting interns increases productivity and broadens our capabilities by bringing in fresh perspectives, alleviating workloads, and allowing existing staff to focus on more strategic tasks. Interns can also be a valuable source of temporary support for specific projects or during busy periods.

Ms. Armstrong went on to state, something people forget that interns also have the ability to do is inject enthusiasm and engagement into our workforce. These students are so excited to be here and work and learn under our professional staff and their enthusiasm is contagious.

Representative Collegiate Institutions

- Belmont Abbey College

- Florida Atlantic University
- Fayetteville State University
- Fayetteville Technical Community College
- Methodist University
- North Carolina State University
- University of North Carolina Charlotte

Representative High Schools

- Cape Fear High School
- Cumberland Polytechnic High School
- Cumberland International Early College High School
- E.E. Smith High School
- Jack Britt High School
- Pine Forest High School
- Seventy First High School
- South View High School

Following the presentation, each ICON and college student introduced himself/herself to the Commission.

College students:

Joshua Blake	Customer Programs Call Center
Edward Krupa	IT Infrastructure
Julio Angel Rivera-Camacho	Facilities
Aria Freeman	Risk Management
Anuja Sonnad	Communications
Mastewal Bailey	Corporate Development (Technical Writing)
Zi McMillan	Procurement
Jacob Nobles	Water Resources Engineering (Engineer)
Nicholas Fonseca	Butler Warner Generation Plant
Archie Titus	Cybersecurity
Madilyn Deweese- Mendoza	IT Applications
Cody Carman	Human Resources
Gaurisankar Shelly Kollassery	IT Data and Analytics
Genevieve Fleming	Water Resources Engineering (Surveying)
Nirvaan Chapatwala	Water Resources Engineering (Engineer)
Imaiya Ward	Corporate Development (Process Improvement)

ICON Students:

Seinna Locklear	Internal Audit
Amaya McCray	Community Relations
Josiah Canady	Cybersecurity
Josiah Annoh	IT Infrastructure
Evan Bunce	Butler Warner Generation Plant
Talayza McLean	Customer Programs
X'aviona Lambert	Customer Programs
Breanna Damron	Human Resources
Kolin Bastidas	Water Construction
Joseph Hunt	Water Construction
Kijon Figaro	Risk Management

Commissioners expressed their elation with the college and high school interns. They offered advice, and encouragement. Commissioner Garrett offered her time through a

lunch and learn. Staff responded to additional questions and comments from the Commissioners.

IV. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Safety

Mr. Bryant stated the team continues to work safely overall. The total recordable injury rate (TRIR) remains at 0.0 and the team continues to remained focused on keeping safe work practices at the forefront of our minds to ensure all of our team members go home in the same or better condition than what we had been when we arrived to work on that day.

People

Mr. Bryant gave kudos to the HR team for the ICON and College Student Intern Presentation. He stated our participation has definitely increased this year. He thanked Mr. Russell, Ms. Armstrong, and the Chief Officers for their support of this program.

Mr. Bryant also announced graduates of PWC's Career Choice Professional Development Program. There are:

Nikole Bohannon, Master of Public Administration from Liberty University
David Gajowiak, Master of Business Administration, FSU
Ashley Jackson, Associate Degree in Business Administration, FTCC
Maxwell Matthews, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Liberty University
Kenny Pierpoint, Master of Business Administration, UNC Pembroke
Teddy Warner, Associate Degree in Civil Engineering Technology, FTCC

Mr. Bryant stated since 2023 we have had 68 team members to enroll, and we have invested \$130,000 in the program.

Running the Business

Summer storm season is here. Mr. Bryant stated with almost daily electrical storms, and what has come to be excessive rainfall, the PWC team continues to perform well. Preparing for and working through these particularly challenging conditions, in addition to responding to the storms, the PWC

team continues to invest in our infrastructure improvements across our territory to strengthen the electrical grid as well as addressing aging water/wastewater infrastructure to minimize customer outages and inconveniences.

Mr. Bryant urged all of our team members and our customers to continue to plan for the 2025 tropical storm season, including identifying an alternate location to move to if there are extended electrical or water outages. PWC does not provide alternate locations. It should be part of our customers' storm planning process. You can find additional information in the storm guide at faypwc.com.

V. COMMISSIONER/LIAISON COMMENTS

County Chairman Kirk DeViere

County Chairman DeViere stated the County does not have any formal board meetings in July; however, they are participating in professional development and conferences as they gear up for August (coming off their budget and strategic planning).

Assistant City Manager, Adam Lindsay

Mr. Lindsay stated the City is also completing their Summer Internship Program and it is great to see such a great group of people and be around a great number of kids. He also commented on the summer storm season, and their work on storm water issues, as they have had their fair share of challenges. The City appreciates the partnership with PWC and the messages we put out regarding the dangers of the weather

Commissioner Donald Porter

No Comments

Commissioner Ronna Rowe Garrett

Commissioner Garrett stated she coaches a lot of CEOs. She tells them the most valuable thing you bring to the table is not your technical skills, but it is your people and leadership skills to motivate others to be successful. She commended PWC, the staff, leaders and Mr. Bryant. It is evident there is investment in people. And when employees feel valued and respected they will stay at the table.

Commissioner Richard King

No Comments

Commissioner Christopher Davis

Commissioner Davis stated he echoes the applause of the internship program as well as the investment in PWC's employees. It is what makes us different, and it is what makes us great.

VI. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

The Commission acknowledges receipt of the following reports and information.

- A. Utility Payments by Payment Type – June 2025
- B. Career Opportunities
- C. Actions by City Council during the meeting of June 23, 2025, related to PWC:
 - Determination of Utility Assessment Appeal - 8038 King Road – Appeal was approved by Council

VII. CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES 143-318.11(A)(3) FOR LEGAL MATTERS

Commissioner Ronna Garrett motioned to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(A)(3) for legal matters. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard King and unanimously approved at 9:09 am.

There being no further discussion, upon motion by Commissioner Donald Porter, seconded by Commissioner Richard King and unanimously approved, the Commission returned to open session at 10:27 am.

VIII. CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES 143-318.11(A)(6) FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS

Commissioner Ronna Garrett motioned to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(A)(6) for personnel matters. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Donald Porter and unanimously approved at 10:28 am.

There being no further discussion, upon motion by Commissioner Donald Porter, seconded by Commissioner Richard King and unanimously approved, the Commission returned to open session at 10:50 am.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, upon motion by Commissioner Donald Porter, seconded by Commissioner Richard King, and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.