

Weekly News Summary for Sunday, July 12, 2026.

Dare County Commissioners met for almost four hours on Tuesday, July 7, 2026. The board took action on several matters pertaining to Hatteras Island.

A park for Hatteras Village. The commissioners authorized an application for a Beach and Waterfront access grant for the purchase of the old Channel Bass Restaurant property in Hatteras Village for a small park. The 1.079 acre property is now vacant and the owner has indicated a willingness to sell to the County. Multiple other grants would be needed to complete the project. If the Beach and Waterfront Access grant is granted, Dare County would have five years to complete the project.

Beach grass planting. A \$95,000 contract to plant beach grass was approved. The winning bidder is Coastal Transplants, Bolivia, NC. Some 90,000 plants will be used in Avon and 67,500 in Buxton. The plants to be used must be salt tolerant. Examples are American beach grass, sea oats and bitter panicum. The dune planting is a permit condition of the Buxton and Avon nourishment project.

Dare Water System Capital Improvement Plan. The commissioners adopted the plan. The five-year plan calls for adding a third reverse osmosis unit at Cape Hatteras Water Treatment Plant in fiscal years 2028 and 2029, cost \$2.5 million; engineering and construction of a new well for Cape Hatteras Water Treatment Plant in fiscal year 2027 for \$125,000, overall cost \$1.7 million in Fiscal Year 2031; replacement portable generator for Cape Hatteras in fiscal year 2028 at \$115,000; for pump station for Buxton to Avon in fiscal year 2028 at \$70,000; and for RWS facility in Rodanthe in fiscal year 2028 at \$115,000. A preventative maintenance budget is also included in the five-year plan.

FEMA reps view Buxton Beach. On Friday, Dare County hosted a Buxton Beach tour for federal and North Carolina government agencies. FEMA and North Carolina Division of Emergency Management sent representatives as did the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Disaster Recovery Technical Assistance Team. FEMA and the state are helping fund the Buxton nourishment project.

July 10 was a beautiful day. Surfers and swimmers were in the water. People were on the beach with shade makers. But Dare County Manager Robert L. Outten, standing on the beach at the end of Old Lighthouse Road, pointed toward NC 12. He said 31 houses were gone. A series of northeasters destroyed houses and at least one road. As a result, Dare County moved up its scheduled Buxton nourishment project by one year. The county's nourishment projects are on a five-year schedule. The first project was 2006. This project has a new twist. A groin, used to protect the old U.S. Navy base and the lighthouse, will be repaired. The county hopes that the groin will hold the sand in place for five to seven years. Some two million cubic yards of sand will be pumped on the Buxton beach.

The total Buxton project budget is \$42.2 million, excluding the cost of debris and house removal to make the beach suitable for nourishment. The county is funding the groin repair.

The current FEMA grant budget for nourishment is \$30,014,875, of which 75% or \$22,511,156, is from FEMA and will be sent through the State of North Carolina. The required federal match is 25%, about \$7.5 million, which will come from a special state fund. Most states do not fund the required match.

Housing initiatives. Two Dare County housing initiatives reported to the Board of Commissioners.

At the Dare County Board of Commissioners meeting July 7, 2026, both the Dare Education Foundation and Dare Housing Foundation delivered optimistic reports. Education Foundation Executive Director Ben Sproul and Dare Schools Superintendent Steve Basnight delivered a proposal to expand teacher housing at Run Hill Ridge development in Kill Devil Hills. This proposal presented two options: build another eight units or a dozen units on Run Hill Ridge. Demand exceeds availability and the foundation will build 12 new units.

TowneBank will provide mortgage financing for \$3.5 million at 2.9% interest rate and will also donate \$100,000. By unanimous vote, Dare commissioners agreed to provide \$1.15 million for the project, which totals \$4.75 million.

Dare Housing Foundation. President Donna Creef provided the update to the commissioners.

The Housing Foundation concentrates on developing workforce housing.

In the eight months of its existence, the foundation has incorporated as a nonprofit and set up an office and equipped it in space provided by Towne Bank.

This foundation is new to the scene, though it was preceded by a county housing task force. TowneBank is providing free office space which has been equipped. The foundation is looking a publically owned land for building four-unit quadraplexes. The foundation is exploring a community land trust.

Cape Point now accessible. Cape Point was closed to both off-road vehicles and pedestrians on Tuesday morning, July 7, due to the presence of multiple unfledged least tern chicks in the area, according to the National Park Service. As reported on the Cape Hatteras National Seashore website, Cape Point is now accessible to pedestrians and off-road vehicles via the Bypass Road through Ramp 44.

The tallies for birds and sea turtles as of July 10 are as follows: American Oystercatcher, 5 chicks, 9 fledglings; colonial waterbirds, 37chicks, 15 fledglings; piping plover, 6 fledglings; Wilson plover 5 fledglings. Sea turtle nests number 250 on Cape Hatteras National Seashore beaches.

Update from 4 for the Fourth which was actually run on the third. After collecting the final numbers, Barrier Island Group reported the July 3 run event grew 33% from last year. Some 220 registrations were counted. At the end of the day after all expenses were paid Barrier Island Group was able to share in excess of \$3,000 with local groups including Mighty Milly family. It was a hot, hot, hot day even starting at 7 o'clock in the morning. Organizers used over 500 bottles of water! "Thankfully, no issues arose. All participants finished upright and unassisted."

Shellfish lease applications due August 1

Individuals interested in leasing public coastal waters to cultivate shellfish must have the 2026 Shellfish Lease & Aquaculture Program applications in by August 1.

Don't wait until the last moment. Applications that are incomplete, submitted incorrectly or that propose ineligible lease sites will be denied. Applications denied after Aug. 1 cannot be resubmitted until 2027. All application fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable.

All new applications must include a comprehensive Storm Preparation and Gear Management Plan.

The Division accepts bottom lease and water column applications annually from March 1 through Aug. 1. Shellfish lease site investigations are conducted April 1 through Oct. 1 to align with submerged aquatic vegetation growing seasons.

Application materials and program details are available at [deq dot nc dot gov slash shellfish hypen lease](http://deq.nc.gov/shellfish-lease).

It's time to GO OUT FOR A RUN!

A brand-new season of OBX GO FAR starts September 21 and ends October 24.

Register by August 1 to lock in early registration pricing! Prices increase after August 1.

Register today at [obxgofar dot org slash home](http://obxgofar.org/home).

Cape Hatteras Elementary will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:30 to 3:30, starting out front of the school. After School Students will be allowed to be dismissed to GO FAR coaches after they check in at after school and upon returning at 3:30 the GO FAR coaches will escort them back.

Cape Hatteras Secondary will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays immediately following dismissal until 4:30.

Practice will be alongside the track team. A 1-mile challenge will be available for interested participants!

Reading is Sweet will be giving out books on Tuesday, July 14, at Cups and Cones in Avon. The time for the give-away is 2 to 3 in the afternoon.

Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station hosts Mel Poole, retired from the National Park Service, telling the story of the Mirlo Rescue which occurred August 16, 1918. The presentation begins on Monday morning, July 13, at 11 o'clock in the 1874 Station.

Stay safe. This is Radio Hatteras.