

News Summary for Sunday, December 21, 2025.

The business news this week focuses on the performance of the island's real estate market through November of this year. Looking at the long-term trends, the best summary would be that residential numbers for this year are not much different than what we saw through most of 2024, writes Radio Hatteras Business correspondent Tom Hranicka. And this is probably good news because it suggests that the local market is not declining. In contrast, national reports indicate that the selling prices of homes have started to drop in some major metropolitan areas.

On the other hand, the undeveloped lot market on Hatteras Island is continuing to show weakness. The most significant news is that 30-year fixed rate mortgage interest rate was 6.23 percent at the end of November.

Interest rates have come down this year, but they are still in the lower 6 percent range. Forecasts for next year indicate some further declines, but not much, writes Hranicka.

The number of homes for sale peaked in April with 181 residential properties. That number has declined steadily with November reporting 129 for sale. This means that the selection of properties available for buyers is not as large as it once was. The number of homes sold each month has remained reasonably steady with an average of 19 sales per month since January 2023.

The median sale price of residential properties remains unchanged between \$550,000 and \$650,000.

In other news related to the Hatteras Island economy, meal tax receipts through September were basically flat in comparison to last year, while occupancy tax receipts were down 3.4 percent reflecting weakness in the vacation rental market.

Finally, last month, Dare County issued a stop work order for the 180 site travel trailer park and campground currently under construction at the former Ocean Edge Golf Course because of grading activity that exceeded what existing permits allow. No updates on the stop work order have been reported while the county reviews permits for the development.

Cape Hatteras Lighthouse update. On December 15, the National Park Service issued an update on the Restoration of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse.

Fresnel Lens: Fabrication of the first-order Fresnel lens was completed in October 2025. The lens will be installed at the top of the lighthouse near the end of the project.

Metal Repairs: Metal components, including stair treads, railing materials, bronze windows, door components, etc. are being produced in an offsite metal fabrication facility. All of the lighthouse's 16 brackets that support the gallery decking and top of the lighthouse have been exposed to determine the scale of metal cracking; alternative plans are being reviewed to determine the most practicable repair solution.

Masonry Repair: Exterior masonry repair and repointing has been largely completed and interior repointing will continue in 2026. Granite and marble cleaning mock-ups were performed inside and outside the lighthouse. All stone cleaning will take place near the end of the lighthouse project. All of the granite base stones and the granite pediment at door entry have been assessed and repairs are underway.

Landscape: Minor design work is currently in progress to address initial plantings and refine plans for phase 1 plantings. Construction of a replica stockade fence around the Double Keepers' Quarters and Primary Keeper's Quarters has been completed and painting is scheduled for early 2026.

Ongoing Reviews: Assessments are ongoing related to the daymark mineral paint applications, mock-ups of the interior stair treads, metal ornamental fence, and bronze window hardware.

The Hatteras-Ocracoke Ferry Service will be operating alternate schedules on Christmas Day, which is a traditionally low ridership day.

The Hatteras-Ocracoke route, will also be running an alternate schedule on Christmas Eve.

Go to [ncdot.gov](https://www.ncdot.gov), punch divisions, select ferry and go to routes and schedules.

The North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles will open a temporary driver license office in Manteo to provide continued service to Outer Banks residents while the Nags Head office undergoes maintenance, according to a news release issued Wednesday evening by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

The temporary office is located in the former College of The Albemarle – Dare County campus at 132 Russell Twiford Road and will offer express services on a walk-in basis.

All NCDMV offices statewide will be closed Wed, Dec 24 through Friday, Dec 26 in observance of the Christmas holiday.

The Nags Head Driver License office at 2808 S. Croatan Highway (U.S. Hwy. 158) is scheduled to reopen on Monday, December 29, noted NCDOT.

Many driver license services, including renewals and duplicates, are also available online at NCDMV dot gov

Effective Tuesday, March 3, 2026, the NWS Weather Forecast Offices from Caribou, Maine to Charleston, South Carolina will extend their marine zones for their marine forecasts and warnings from approximately 20 to 25 Nautical Miles offshore to approximately 60 Nautical Miles offshore. These changes will improve consistency and service delivery of marine forecasts and warning services provided to the marine community along the east coast of the United States. These changes have also been made in coordination with the United States Coast Guard and other partners and stakeholders.

If March 3, 2026 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to March 4, 2026. The current marine zone numbers and names have been changed to reflect the extension of the marine forecast and warning areas to approximately 60 Nautical Miles offshore.

North Carolina Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey has set May 4, 2026, as the hearing date for the North Carolina Rate Bureau's proposed 68.3% dwelling insurance rate increase. The hearing will begin at 10 a.m. in the Second Floor Hearing Room at the Department of Insurance, 3200 Beechleaf Court, Raleigh.

Dwelling insurance policies are not homeowners' insurance policies. Dwelling policies are offered to non-owner-occupied residences of no more than four units, including rental properties, investment properties and other properties that are not occupied full time by the property owner.

The hearing will be held unless the N.C. Department of Insurance and the N.C. Rate Bureau are able to negotiate a settlement before that date. State law gives the Insurance Commissioner 45 days to issue an order once the hearing concludes. Once the order is issued, the NCRB has the right to appeal the decision before the N.C. Court of Appeals. A court of appeals order could then be appealed to the N.C. Supreme Court. The NCRB and DOI can settle the proposed rate increase at any time during litigation.

The NCRB filed the average 68.3% dwelling increase on Oct. 30. The filing covers insurance for fire and extended coverage at varying rates around the state. Under the NCRB proposal, the increases would be felt statewide with most consumers seeing a double-digit increase.

The last NCRB dwelling rate increase filing was in July 2023, when the Rate Bureau requested an average statewide 50.6% increase. A negotiated settlement resulted in an average 8% increase, which took effect Nov 1, 2024.

THE OUTER EDGE VIDEO SERIES - SEASON 2. The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau announces the return of the popular video series, [The Outer Edge](#). By sharing the stories of residents that call these shores home, the second season takes viewers on a dive into the history, landscape and culture that has helped shape the Outer Banks. Season 2 includes five episodes and 18 unforgettable Outer Banks personalities bringing their passions to life.

The Bureau is holding 3 local premiers in early January to introduce these videos to the community before sharing them with the world.

Wednesday, January 7, 2026 R/C Kill Devil Hills Movies 10;

Thursday, January 8, 2026 Cape Hatteras Secondary School, Buxton.

Friday, January 9, 2026 The Pioneer Theater in Manteo

Doors open at 6 o'clock all three nights with a showtime of 6:15 and an approximate run time of one hour.

Dare County Trash collection for Christmas and New Year's. All Dare County offices and facilities will be closed on Wednesday, Dec 24, Thursday, Dec 25, and Friday, Dec 26, 2025, in observance of the Christmas holiday.

Additionally, all Dare County offices and facilities will be closed on Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026.

These closures include the Dare County C&D Landfill in Manns Harbor, the Buxton Transfer Station and the Manteo Recycle Yard, which will be closed on Wednesday, December 24, Thursday, Dec. 25, and Friday, Dec. 26, 2025, and will reopen and operate with regularly scheduled hours on Saturday, Dec. 27, 2025. The same facilities will be closed on Jan. 1, 2026 but will reopen Jan. 2, 2026.

The C&D Landfill side of the Manns Harbor facility will be closed on Saturdays until further notice. The Transfer Station side of the facility will remain open during this time. Contractors who typically dispose of C&D materials at the landfill on Saturdays will still be able to dispose of those materials at the Transfer Station, which operates on the same property at 1603 Cub Road in Manns Harbor.

Residential Trash Collection Schedule - Week of Christmas 2025:

There will be one residential pickup per area on Hatteras Island during the week of Christmas.

--Monday, Dec. 22, 2025: Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras. Trash collection will resume on Monday, Dec. 29, 2025.

--Tuesday, Dec 23, 2025: Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo and Avon. Trash collection will resume on Tuesday, Dec 30, 2025.

No residential trash collection will occur for the remainder of the week.

Commercial dumpster collection for Hatteras Island will take place Monday, Dec 22 and Wednesday, Dec 24, 2025.

For the week of New Year's celebrations:

Residential trash collection for Hatteras Island

Monday, Dec. 29, 2025: Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras.

Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025: Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo and Avon.

Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025: Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras.

Thursday, January 1, 2026: Closed - No trash collection.

Friday, Jan. 2, 2026: Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo and Avon.

Commercial dumpster collection for the unincorporated areas of Dare County and the Town of Kitty Hawk will take place on Monday, Dec. 29, Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025, and Friday, Jan. 2, 2026.

Celebrate this season. As is our practice, the news crew is taking one week off on Sunday, December 28. We'll be back in the New Year, January 4, 2026. Stay warm and safe out there. And thanks for listening.