

This is Radio Hatteras. Hello, I'm Grace with the Weekly News Summary for Sunday, May 12, 2024.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, in coordination with the Dare County Board of Commissioners, is holding a public meeting Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 6 o'clock in the Fessenden Center, located at 46830 N.C. 12 in Buxton.

Colonel Ron Sturgeon, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District commander, and his team will discuss the process, the limitations, and the way forward at the former Naval Facility on Buxton Beach, where three-tenths of a mile of beach is closed due to debris and petroleum contamination from the former naval facility.

Colonel Sturgeon will open the meeting and talk about the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program and the property at Buxton. A media release states he will update attendees on the contract recently awarded to remove a pipe and sample the soil around the pipe.

Dare County Commissioners and National Park Service officials will be in attendance.

At the end of the briefings, attendees will be able to ask questions. The meeting will end at 8 o'clock.

On Tuesday, May 7, Buxton Civic Association members Brian Harris, Heather Jennette, Wendi Munden, and Jason Hall attended the Board of Commissioners meeting. Jennette spoke at the meeting on behalf of the association. She thanked the commissioner for taking the Buxton Beach issue to Washington, D.C. About the Corps of Engineers, she said "we invited them. They did not come. We need to have these people in the same room."

Robert L. Woodard, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners told Jennette and others "we're not going to let up on this."

Proposed Dare County Fiscal Year 2025 budget presented

On Tuesday, May 7, Dare County Manager Robert L. Outten presented the county's recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2025 to the Dare County Board of Commissioners. The recommended budget includes no property tax increase. The rate remains at 40.05 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

General Fund Budget Expenditures

The proposed General Fund Budget totals \$136,171,205. Public safety which includes the county's Emergency Medical Services, Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management is the highest category at \$43.6 million or 32%. Education includes Dare County Schools and College of The Albemarle - Dare Campus is at \$32 million or 23.5%. Human services at just about \$20 million comes in at 14.6%; General government is at \$16.8 million or 12.3%.

Dare County Schools

Dare County's contribution to Dare County Schools for Fiscal Year 2025 is proposed to increase by \$2.5 million to a total of \$30.8 million. Included is \$1.63 million for increased pay supplements for staff.

Dare County Employees

The proposed budget provides funding for four new full-time positions and one part-time position, as well as various reclassifications and certification pay.

A 4% cost of living pay adjustment for full-time and part-time benefits-eligible county employees is included. Additionally, the part-time hourly pay rate for Parks and Recreation

personnel is raised to \$15 per hour. The 3% employer 401K contribution is maintained and the merit plan remains in place but will change to an increase in salary.

Proposed Increases for three volunteer fire department tax districts

Three volunteer fire department tax districts in Dare County have requested tax rate increases in the proposed budget.

The only fire department on Hatteras Island to request a rate increase is Chicamacomico Banks Volunteer Fire and Rescue, which covers Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge and a portion of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore halfway to Avon. The department is unusual in that volunteers respond to vehicle accidents and provides a water rescue team. The department is asking for a two cent raise to cover the cost of a new fire engine to replace two very old engines. The new engine costs \$1 million. Additionally, the fire department and Dare County are planning a new station to house fire and water rescue services and the Dare Emergency Medical Services station serving the villages.

Proposed Rate Increase for water customers in unincorporated areas

Based on Dare County's Fiscal Year 2025 operations and maintenance and capital budgets, a rate study recommends the county implement a 5% rate increase for Fiscal Year 2025 for base and volume charges. The 5% increase is included for all water customers in the unincorporated areas of Dare County. The increase will help meet regulatory standards and increasing operation cost.

Proposed Budget Public Hearing:

The Dare County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing for the proposed budget during the board's meeting that will be held at 9 a.m. on Monday, June 3, 2024, at the Dare County Administration Building, which is located at 954 Marshall C. Collins Drive in Manteo. In-person comments on the proposed budget will be accepted during the public hearing held in Manteo, as well as the Fessenden Center Annex, which is located at 47013 Buxton Back Road in Buxton.

To view the complete proposed budget, including the manager's letter to the Dare County Board of Commissioners that includes highlights of all proposed changes, go to Dare N C dot gov slash Finance.

Dare Schools proposed building plans

During the Dare County Board of Commissioners meeting May 7, 2024, Dare County Schools provided a nine-item list of capital improvement priorities in narrative form.

These priorities are not routine maintenance items like painting, roof replacement, chillers, HVAC, air handlers, gym floors, windows and siding but bigger ticket items.

Dare County Schools is recommending that the list of specific priorities be addressed starting in Fiscal Year 2027 through Fiscal Year 2029.

The list has a big, red "Proposed" stamped across the first page. The Board of Education is expected to take up this priority list at its upcoming meeting on Monday, May 13, 2024.

For Hatteras Island Schools are first and fourth priority.

First on the list is Cape Hatteras Secondary School Cafeteria and Kitchen. Elevating and rebuilding the entire section is the only long term solution. The estimate is \$7 million.

Fourth on the list is a Cape Hatteras Elementary Expansion. Classroom size requirements mandating fewer students per teacher increases the number of classrooms needed. The estimated cost is \$3 million.

Loss of cell and internet service on Tuesday

Communications to-and-from Hatteras Island, including cell phones and internet, was knocked out Tuesday afternoon due to a damaged fiber optic cable, reports Island Free Press.

Reports are that customers of Brightspeed and all mobile phone providers were affected by the outage. Service was restored just before 11 that night.

Dare County Emergency Management's Compact Rapid Deployables were set up at Hatteras Island fire stations to provide the public access to Dare County's 911 Communication Center.

The equipment allows firefighters and emergency responders to connect to Wi-Fi when power is out. Volunteers were also staffing fire department stations during the outage.

The emergency cell towers have an operating range of two miles. Towers were deployed in Rodanthe, Salvo, Avon, Buxton, Frisco, and Hatteras.

During the same time Hatteras Island Community Emergency Response Team emergency communications hot spots were set up at three central locations. The hot spots allow connection to Starlink satellite systems.

CERT holds annual meeting

Last Saturday, Hatteras Island Community Emergency Response Team heard Dare County Sheriff Doug Doughtie deliver remarks.

For his years of consistent dedication and efforts for the team, Kenny Brite was presented an award.

In the annual election of officers and board members, Brite was elected president of the Team. Misty Gillikin was elected vice president. Mandy Fuller is secretary and Ronnie Pope, treasure. Board members are Judy Swartwood, Wayne Mathis, Amy Flowers and Leslie Kriewald.

Hatteras Island to host Little Pink Houses of Hope Retreat

Nine breast cancer survivors and their families will enjoy free week-long vacation on Hatteras Island this next week.

The nonprofit organization provides free week-long vacations for breast cancer patients and their families to provide an opportunity to reconnect and celebrate life in a relaxing environment.

For the past 13 years, Hatteras Island has welcomed the families on this retreat. All activities and services are provided free of charge so that families can focus on spending quality time together. Throughout the week families will enjoy a variety of activities, including paddleboarding, ceramic painting, and an evening cruise in the sound. Generous sponsors of the event include Koru Village, Ocean Cure, Sun Realty, and Slash Creek Outfitters.

Lots things to attend this week

Chicamacomico water rescue team has set Monday, May 13 for a community beach cleanup starting at 11 a.m. Lots of debris is scattered north of the Rodanthe pier. The Public is invited. Meet on the Dean Street beach.

Dare County Board of Education meets in regular session at 5 o'clock Monday, May 13 in the commissioners meeting room attached to the Dare County Administration Building at 954 Marshall C. Collins Drive, Manteo.

On Tuesday, May 14, the Community Housing Task Force will meet in the county's Administration Building in Manteo. The meeting is set for 9 in the morning.

A 5-on-5 meeting bringing together representatives from Dare County and Dare County Schools is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15 at 3 o'clock in Room 185, Dare County Administration Building, Manteo. The committee will discuss issues related to Dare County Schools.

On Thursday, May 16, at 1 o'clock, the renovated Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum at the end of Hatteras village will hold a ribbon cutting.

Starting at 6:30 that same day, the Cape Hatteras Secondary Academic Awards Ceremony will be held in the campus auditorium in Buxton.

On Saturday evening, starting at 6:30, Soccer Circus comes to Hatteras Island at the Buxton Back Road Field. This is the inaugural Dave Kelmer Memorial Women's Alumni Game, featuring soccer alumni and current soccer players. Fan events include a header challenge and Dizzy Bat penalty kicks. Games for children feature a soccer dart board and soccer pool table. Raffles with local prizes will be held. At 6:55, words will be said for former coach Dave Kelmer. A walkout with local kids happens followed by the National Anthem and game kickoff. Concessions feature kettle corn, baked goods, burgers and hotdogs, drinks and snacks. Be there.

Throughout 2024, Jen Carlson is writing about shipwrecks and rescues in advance of the 150th anniversary to the Chicamacomico Lifesaving Station.

Careful Concern by Jen Carlson

On August 11, 1889, a small sloop named June became stranded on a sandbar while trying to enter the Oregon Inlet. By the time the Oregon Inlet station crew got to her side, she was in a bad condition being swamped by the waves and the continuous surf breaking over her.

Three men were carefully transferred from the sloop to the surfboat and transported back to the station. There, they were provided dry clothing donated by the Women's National Relief Association and stayed overnight before moving along their journey. Unfortunately, nothing could be done to save the June and soon she broke up under the onslaught of the ocean.

All in a Day's Work by Jen Carlson

Sometimes it is about being there for one of your own: On May, 9, 1887, a child of one of the Caffey's Inlet crew members went missing. A community search was made and the three-year-old was soon found in a neighbor's well. Keeper Daniel B. Austin jumped into action and began using techniques taught by the United States Life-Saving Service to restore drowning victims. Soon, there were faint signs of life and before long, the child began to feebly cry to the relief of the worried parents. Keeper Austin continued careful treatment of the child and brought it safely through the distressing time. After a long nap, the child had fully recovered from the scary accident.

Now, be safe out there. Stay weather aware. Thanks for listening. This is Radio Hatteras.