

Weekly News Summary for Sunday, January 4, 2026.

Happy New Year.

The New Year started with a plunge. Just after 10 a.m., on January 1, people plunged into the cold, maybe around 50 degrees, Atlantic Ocean water for the first annual Polar Plunge sponsored by the Buxton Civic Association.

An estimated 100 people turned out for the event gathered at Ramp 43 to plunge or watch the plunge.

So, are you tired of the cold weather?

The National Weather Service is promising warming with temperatures reaching the 60s and 70s mid-week.

Dare County Board of Commissioners meets for the first time in 2026 on January 5. The agenda has a couple of updates including from the Dare County America250 Committee and from County Manager Robert L. Outten about the Public Works project, part of the Phase III Capital Improvements Plan.

The Dare County Tourism Board is asking for consent to spend \$230,000 to share the cost with the Town of Nags Head to purchase a stoplight at the entrance to the Soundside Event Site, which is at Grouse Street and U.S. 158. Funds come from the Soundside Event Site restricted fund.

Action is requested on two letters of support.

The first is a letter to the U.S. Senate supporting the SPEED Act, HR 4776. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the bipartisan SPEED Act. The act “would strengthen county involvement in decision-making and make needed commonsense reforms to the federal environmental review process,” states the agenda item description.

The second letter of support comes from Phillips Boatworks, LLC. Owner Jay Phillips is seeking support for his proposals for the Buxton Passenger Dock and Research and Training Center.

Dare County received stormwater grants for the design and installation of stormwater projects on Old Lighthouse Road and NC12 in Hatteras Village within NCDOT Right of Way. No local funding match required. The county staff is asking for approval of Fred Smith Company as contractor and to authorize Outten to negotiate and execute a contract not to exceed \$734,000.

Two planning matters are on the agenda. The first is a public hearing on a Zoning Text Amendment affecting Martins Point Single Family Residential zone. The second is a text amendment changing the definition of Family Child Care Home.

Four projects were slated for Phase III. Listed on Phase III are building new EMS stations in Nags Head and Rodanthe. The Rodanthe station, currently co-housed with the Chicamacomico Banks Volunteer Fire Department, has this written on its future project button: “On hold until further notice.” The Nags Head EMS station is also co-housed with Nags Head Fire and Rescue. In the capital budget, the Nags Head station is marked at \$13,145,000. Dare County has purchased new sites for both Nags Head and Rodanthe.

The remaining two projects in Phase III are renovation and reconstruction of Public Works facilities in Buxton and Manteo. The Manteo project has started. The cost is \$42,525,000. The Buxton project will cost \$8,143,698.

Dare County Board of Commissioners convenes at 9 a.m., Jan. 5, 2026 in the Commissioners Meeting Room, 954 Marshall C. Collins Drive, Manteo. A time for Public Comments is provided. Additionally, a digital connection is available for Hatteras Islanders to deliver public comments at the Fessenden Center Annex on Buxton Back Road, Buxton.

Affordable housing in the future? The property purchased for the Rodanthe Emergency Medical Services station is the Waves site of an old hardware store. The property has 5.62 acres and is listed in the Dare Housing Foundation report as a possible site for co-locating affordable housing with the EMS station.

Welcome center under construction. The Sarah Owens Welcome Center/Rest Area on U.S. 64 on Roanoke Island temporarily closed to the public on December 31 for a renovation project.

The \$1.4 million contract, awarded to the A.R. Chesson Company of Elizabeth City, includes the upgrading and installation of electrical, HVAC and plumbing systems, as well as general construction and landscaping in and around the welcome center building.

The project is expected to be complete by mid-May.

The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is debuting this season's popular video series, "The Outer Edge."

By sharing the stories of residents who call these shores home, the second season takes viewer on a dive into the history, landscape, and culture that have helped shape the Outer Banks.

Season 2 includes five episodes and 18 unforgettable Outer Banks personalities bringing their passions to life.

To mark the debut, the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is holding three local premieres, free of charge, this week.

Showings kick off January 7 at the R/C Kill Devil Hills in [Theater #7](#) and [Theater #1](#), followed by a **Hatteras Island event on January 8 at [Cape Hatteras Secondary School](#)** and a January 9 showing at [The Pioneer Theater](#) in Manteo.

Doors open at 6 p.m. all three nights, with a showtime of 6:15 p.m. and an approximate run time of one hour.

Also this week, the following events are listed:

Monday, January 5, all are invited to a free Community Dinner at the Buxton United Methodist Church across from the Cape Hatteras Secondary School. Serving starts at 5 o'clock

On Thursday, January 8, a free community dinner is set for St. John United Methodist Church at 40336 McMillan Road, Avon. Serving starts at 5 o'clock.

On Saturday, January 10, the Really, Really Free Market opens at 9 o'clock at the Avon Volunteer Fire Department on Harbor Road in Avon. Everything is free.

Also on January 10, the traditional Old Christmas will be celebrated in Rodanthe at the Rodanthe-Waves-Salvo community building. The Oyster Shoot starts at 1 p.m., followed by dinner, an oyster roast and live music for dancing. Old Buck will make an appearance.

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