

# Weekly News Summary for Sunday, August 9, 2026

**On August 4**, between 2 and 4a.m., 6.47” of rain fell in Rodanthe flooding NC 12 in northern Hatteras Island villages and in the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. Dare County will host a community meeting to discuss related imminent closures of N.C. Highway 12. The meeting will be Tuesday evening, August 18, 2026, from 6 to 7:30 at the Fessenden Center in Buxton. Representatives from Dare County and NCDOT will review the circumstances surrounding closures of N.C. Highway 12 and discuss existing procedures.

**On the afternoon of August 5**, a water-related fatality occurred in Hatteras village. Cape Hatteras National Seashore rangers and the Hatteras Island Rescue Squad provided immediate assistance and Dare County Emergency Medical Services provided additional medical care to the adult individual. A moderate risk of rip currents was forecast for all area beaches; the Seashore is not aware of any other hazards around the time of the incident. John Wofford Tatum, Jr., 44 years old from Mebane, NC, was pronounced dead at the scene, following resuscitation attempts by a bystander.

**Dare commissioners will hold special meeting, Monday morning, August 10 at 9am** in the Commissioners Meeting Room at 954 Marshall C. Collins Dr., Manteo. The agenda was published Friday afternoon. Board chairman Robert Woodard will open the meeting. Public comments are the next and can be offered in Manteo and in Buxton at the Fessenden Center Annex. The next three items deal with Limited Obligation Bonds with an Initial Resolution, followed by a public hearing and finishing with an approving Resolution. Coastal Family Collaborative, Restoring Childcare Access on Hatteras Island Through A Non-Profit Model, returns to the podium. And the Dare County Water System brings a capital project ordinance amendment for consideration. Public Outreach efforts for the Parks & Recreation Tax Referendum are next to last on the agenda. Finally, an amendment to the 2026 Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule is offered.

**Update on childcare for Hatteras Island.** Coastal Family Collaborative Executive Director Heather Jennette, who had presented a proposal to the Commissioners outlining a community-led initiative to establish the non-profit, Tidal Tots Childcare Center, that will restore licensed childcare services to Hatteras Island, noted during her presentation that Hatteras Island has been without a licensed childcare facility since December 2025. This created challenges for working families, local employers and the long-term sustainability of the year-round community. To help launch the new nonprofit childcare model, Coastal Family Collaborative requested a one-time county investment of \$125,000 to cover the cost of leasing a former childcare facility for 3 years while the organization establishes a stable, self-sustaining operation. A small committee was appointed to work out detailed numbers and will make a report.

**Dare County commissioners held a regular monthly meeting August 3.** Some of the items covered include:

**Buxton Beach Nourishment.** The dredge began pumping sand onto the beach Friday, July 31. The contractor was praised for the project’s rapid progress. The project will place about 2M cubic yards of sand along 2.9 miles of shoreline between the Haulover Day Use Area and the end of Old Lighthouse Road. Sand is being dredged from an offshore borrow area approximately 2-3 miles from the shoreline and crews advance roughly 200-300’ each day. For more information about the Buxton beach nourishment project, visit [MoreBeachToLove.com](http://MoreBeachToLove.com).

**The Commissioners** unanimously adopted an ordinance establishing local regulations for the sale of kratom products in Dare County. The ordinance is intended to promote consumer safety by establishing clear standards for retailers, helping consumers identify compliant products and providing law enforcement with a consistent framework for enforcement. Kratom is a plant-derived product that is marketed for a variety of uses, including pain relief and increased energy, but it is not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for medical use.

**Last item from Aug 3:** Commissioners unanimously approved a dog park on a piece of county-owned property at 47730 Buxton Back Road in Buxton. The project will include changing the existing fencing from a wooden split-rail style to a black wrapped chain link style. The purpose of this enhancement is to create a designated, safe and accessible off-leash area for residents and visitors to enjoy with their pets. No public dog park is located on Hatteras

Island. The selected property is already frequently used by community members walking and exercising their dogs. The cost of the project will not exceed \$25,000. In other news:

**The Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative** recently helped the Hatteras Island Rescue Squad obtain a zero% interest loan through the USDA's Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program. The \$201,738 loan was used to renovate the Squad's headquarters building in Buxton.

The Squad's headquarters building, located on Hwy 12 in Buxton, was constructed in 1996 and has had minimal upgrades since. Renovations made possible through these funds include repairs to structural support columns, replacing the garage doors and doorframes, replacing exterior sheeting and trim and installing new windows and a new awning. These upgrades will improve the building's resilience, extending its life and enhancing the rescue squad's ability to serve the community.

The funds came to the cooperative in the form of an 80% grant with a 20% match from the cooperative. The money was then loaned, at zero percent, to the squad. Once the organization repays the cooperative, the funds will remain in the community as part of a revolving loan program where the repaid money can be loaned out again for other economic and community development projects. Cape Hatteras Electric continues to look for community partners to expand the revolving loan program. If a non-profit organization would like more information about the grant program, call (252)995-5616 and ask to speak with Laura Ertle.

**Ending an impasse** that jeopardized health coverage for many area patients, ECU Health and UnitedHealthcare have reached a multi-year agreement restoring in-network access to care "for more than 100,000 UnitedHealthcare-covered patients and supporting rural health sustainability in eastern North Carolina," according to the statement from ECU Health, as reported by Outer Banks Voice on Saturday, August 8. The agreement became effective on Friday, Aug 7.

**The N.C. Department of Transportation's** Ferry Division plans to host public listening sessions in September as the division works toward compliance with a new tolling mandate in the state's 2026 budget law passed by the General Assembly in July. It requires the Ferry Division to begin tolling all untolled routes by Jan. 1, 2027. It also requires the establishment of a \$150 annual pass to be made available to permanent residents of 20 NC coastal counties. The Ferry Division has scheduled five public listening sessions in communities close to the ferries where the new tolling requirement will be imposed.

During the listening sessions, people can learn more and let division staff know their thoughts and concerns about the tolling requirement. All meetings will be from 6 to 8 in the evening. The date and location of the closest meeting for Hatteras Island is September 8, at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum, 59200 Museum Drive, Hatteras. Additional meetings will be held in Washington, Grantsboro, Knotts Island and Ocracoke.

**The Frisco Volunteer Fire Department** has taken a major step toward replacing one of its aging fire engines, signing a contract for a new \$1.3 million Pierce pumper that is expected to take approximately three to four years to build, reports the Island Free Press. Frisco VFD Chief Steve Faranello said the department signed the contract for the new engine in late July. The truck will replace one of the department's existing pumpers, which has become increasingly expensive to maintain.

**Home insurance rates more than national average.** NC homeowners are paying more than the national average for home insurance after premiums climbed nearly 47% since 2020, according to a new report.

Sam Walker for OBX News writes that LendingTree, an online marketplace that allows consumers to compare loans, insurance and other financial products, found in its 2026 State of Home Insurance report that NC homeowners pay an average of \$2,566 a year for home insurance, 7.1% above the national average of \$2,395.

The marketplace said home insurance rates in NC have risen 46.9% since 2020. Premiums increased another 6.2% over the last year.

The report comes as base rate increases on new and renewing homeowners insurance policies are already in effect across NC under a January 2025 settlement between the NC Department of Insurance and the NC Rate Bureau, which represents companies writing policies in the state.

**Coastal Review**, which is published by the Coastal Federation, this year recognized the Hatteras Island-based online news service, Island Free Press “For Excellence in Collaborative Coastal Community Journalism.” The two publications have partnered for the last decade to expand coverage of critical coastal issues affecting Hatteras and Ocracoke islands. Editor Joy Crist said she and owner Donna Barrett were “beyond honored to receive this award....” Congratulations!

**The traditional Hatteras Village Fish Fry is a must this summer.** When the weekly Fish Fry started is a guess. Some say the first fry was in the 1940s by the Hatteras United Methodist Church ladies. Others report that 1959 was the starting point, when the village fire department ladies auxiliary was formed and invited to join the church ladies. But it’s a fact that Hatteras villagers have been serving up fried fresh fish from the village docks, potato salad, cole slaw, hushpuppies and iced tea on Saturdays for a very long time and they are very good at it.

This year, an adult plate with two pieces of just right fried fish and all the sides is \$18. For \$13, a small plate is available with one piece of fish.

Serving opens at 5 p.m., at the Hatteras Village Volunteer Fire Department. A line forms before 5 p.m. Serving goes on until sold out. Take out or eat at picnic tables behind the fire station.

The Fish Fry finishes the 2026 season serving fish on Saturdays, August 22 and 29, the Saturday before Labor Day. The fish fry is a fundraiser. After expenses, the monies earned are split four ways: Hatteras Volunteer Fire Department, Hatteras Ladies Fire Auxiliary, Hatteras Village Civic Association and Hatteras United Methodist Church. Those agencies in turn donate to various charities and organizations in the Hatteras Island community.

**New Record store to open!** This fall, Route 12 Records will open in Buxton. Josh and Jess Nonnenmocher will open the store in the old ABC store in Osprey Shopping Center. It will be Hatteras Island’s only independent record, music and electronics store and music lesson studio. Josh has the Mahi Mahi Mixed Tape show on Radio Hatteras. His show runs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays each week. Congratulations.

**Citizens are invited to hear Randy Finninger, the Secretary of Dare County Board of Elections, who** will discuss that safeguarding the democratic process is protected, accessible, and transparent. He will highlight the changes Dare County voters will experience in the 2026 midterm elections. The meeting will be held Wednesday, August 12, at the Fessenden Center in Buxton, 46830 N Carolina Hwy 12, starting at 7 in the evening.

**The Restoration Advisory Board** for the Buxton Naval Facility Formerly Used Defense Site property will hold its next quarterly public meeting on Thursday, August 13, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Cape Hatteras Anglers Club in Buxton.

Doors open at 5:15. Representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will provide an update on the ongoing environmental restoration project at the former military site.

The meeting is open to the public, with a 15-minute question-and-answer period scheduled for 7:15 p.m.

The Restoration Advisory Board was established in 2025 to improve communication between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Buxton community as environmental cleanup efforts continue at the former naval facility. The board includes representatives from the Corps, federal and state agencies, local government, the National Park Service, and community members, and serves as a forum for sharing project updates, discussing cleanup activities, and gathering public input.

**The Pine Burr Market in Hatteras Village** has announced a schedule change for the remainder of its summer season, moving its weekly market from Saturday afternoons to Friday mornings. Organizers said the market will now be open every Friday morning from **9 to 1** through Labor Day, replacing its previous Saturday schedule.

**Be safe out there. This is Radio Hatteras.**