

Weekly News Summary for Sunday, October 11, 2026.

Much news affecting Hatteras Island and Dare County happened last week and is not all included here. So, listen at 5 o'clock on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, October 12 through October 14 for more information.

At their October 5, 2026. meeting, Dare's commissioners approved an updated Capital Improvement Plan and the related capital project ordinance that established a \$57.5 million Parks & Recreation project plan, and formally authorizing the capital projects.

County Chief Financial Officer Matt Motyka presented the addition to the county's FY2027–FY2031 Capital Improvement Plan. The addition added the projects identified through McGill Associates' Parks and Recreation Recommendations and Implementation 2025-2035 Plan.

If the sales tax referendum on the November 3 ballot is approved the projects' addition will allow the county to expedite project implementation. The plan includes \$57.5 million for a range of projects across Dare County. The plan organizes the projects by immediate, mid-range and long-range priorities while allowing flexibility to adjust the order of projects based on community and contractor feedback.

Motyka said that the financing model shows both that the proposed financing plan works and that the county can support the identified projects financially within its debt coverage policy. The decision also represents an important step, moving the projects from recommendations to an actionable capital plan by formally committing the \$57.5 million in projects to the county's Capital Improvement Plan.

County Manager Robert L. Outten flashed a series of slides across a screen at the Fessenden Center in Buxton on the evening after the Board of Commissioners took action on the Parks and Recreation projects. He would make the presentation twice more.

Financing for 20 years will pay for the listed projects built on a three-year time frame. Principal and interest along with maintenance money will absorb the revenue stream from the quarter of one cent. On the list for Hatteras Island are the following projects: Fessenden Center renovations; playground improvements, adding accessible play equipment and access; installing a splash pad somewhere on Hatteras Island; and outside pickleball courts.

Becky Huff delivered her last report on ad valorem tax collection and accepted her charge to collect the 2026 taxes amounting to \$123.5 million including county and municipal levies based on a valuation of \$27.96 billion. Huff reported that the department collected \$73.23 million leaving uncollected \$294,815.20. That translates into a collection percentage of 99.60%. Huff is retiring.

In a message from Dare County commissioner Mary Ellon Balance, the letter is commenting on the Town Hall meeting held Friday, October 9, 2026. Some 111 citizens showed up at the Fessenden Center.

Last night's Highway 12 town hall was a positive, productive conversation about our challenges and the need for short-term and long-term solutions.

Thank you to Senator Jerry Tillett for organizing the meeting and to Senators Michael Lazzara and Norman Sanderson and Representative Keith Kidwell for listening. Their roles in transportation, funding, and environmental policy are especially valuable to this effort.

Chairman Bob Woodard and the Dare County Board of Commissioners have advocated for solutions for years, including the Highway 12 Task Force's work with stakeholders to develop viable options. Thank you to my fellow commissioners Ervin Bateman, Steve House, and Carson Creef for attending and supporting this important issue.

Our immediate push is relocating the road at Pea Island, with bridges as the long-term solution. We need state and federal investment, and our current focus is securing state funding and the state's help advocating for federal support.

At the meeting's close, I asked everyone to write their federal legislators and urge them to care for and invest in our national parks—including safe, reliable access. Please encourage friends and family across the country to do the same. Cape Hatteras National Seashore belongs to all Americans, and their voices matter, too.

There is work ahead, but last night was an encouraging step forward.

On Thursday, October 8, NC12 fully reopened. The crews rebuilt protective sand dunes and fixed shoulders after paving. The highway on Hatteras Island was closed for several days due to severe ocean overwash, damaged pavement, and erosion near the Pea Island Visitor Center caused by a late September nor'easter. Standing water remained along portions of the highway shoulders.

An extended climbing season for Bodie Island Lighthouse starts October 13. Climbing will be offered Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays through November 5. Tickets must be purchased through recreation dot gov and can only be purchased beginning at 7 o'clock in the morning of the day of the intended climb. To purchase tickets, go to recreation dot gov slash ticket slash facility slash 252034.

The Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center and parking lot area reopened Friday, October 9 following emergency repairs to the damaged parking lot. Restroom facilities are not currently available at the Visitor Center area. Parking spaces may be limited. Please drive carefully while storm clean-up in the area continues.

You can help out at Cape Hatteras Elementary. The Dare Education Foundation is looking to revitalize the Outdoor Classroom at Cape Hatteras Elementary School, as part of Outer Banks Volunteer Week. On October 13, from 3 to 6 in the afternoon, volunteers will be weeding, clearing vines, adding screening (fine gravel) to pathways, soil, and mulch. Bringing garden tools is helpful but not required!

Tis the season

As the holiday season approaches, the Dare County Department of Health & Human Services is partnering with numerous community organizations, churches, and local volunteers to ensure that families and individuals across the county experience a joyful and meaningful holiday. Applications for holiday assistance programs opened October 6 on Hatteras Island.

Thanksgiving Basket Program. For Hatteras Island, monetary donations may be mailed to the Fessenden Center, P.O. Box 859, Buxton, NC 27920. For donations, contact Amanda Farfan at 252-475-5764. Residents who would like to apply for the Thanksgiving Basket Program can do so from **October 6 through November 6, 2026**, at the Frisco campus of Department of Health and Human Services or by contacting Jessica at 252-475-9370.

Hatteras Island Angel Gift Program. The Hatteras Island Angel Gift coalition is seeking sponsors, donors, and applicants for the upcoming holiday season. Donors may contribute through local Donation Boxes and Angel requests displayed in businesses, or by offering monetary and toy donations.

Applications will be available and accepted at the Frisco campus **October 6 through November 6, 2026**. Eligible applicants must reside on Hatteras Island and may request gifts for children ages 0–17. Phone interviews will be conducted after application submission. Families who have received assistance for three consecutive years will be reviewed by the committee, and sponsorship is not guaranteed. For program or donation inquiries, contact Stephanie Tenpenny at 252-423-6130. For application questions, contact Jessica Nonnenmocher at 252-475-9320.

Last weekend, the Cape Hatteras Secondary School Marching Hurricane Band took the field with energy, enthusiasm and heart at the Peanut Festival. The outstanding performance brought this year's show, Ghost Ship, to life. The band won first place overall; first place Visual; second place Music; and third place General Effect. The announcement concluded with "a heartfelt thank you to our directors, staff, families, volunteers, and community who continue to show up, support, and cheer on our students. The pride and support surrounding our Marching Canes

is what makes moments like this even more meaningful. We are so fortunate to be part of a community that believes in our students and celebrates their accomplishments right alongside them.”

The Band marches again October 17 at the Pasquotank Panther Band Classic.

The North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission meets October 28 and 29 in New Bern. At 2:30 in the afternoon of October 28, the commission will engage in a Discussion of Oceanfront Erosion. Topics include NCDOT Highway 12 Update by Paul Williams; Dare County Task Force update by Dare County Manager Bobby Outten; Barrier Island 101 by Dr. Laura Moore; and Cape Hatteras National Seashore Update delivered by Superintendent Dave Hallac. The entire meeting will be streamed.

Just to repeat: There was much more news affecting Hatteras Island and Dare County last week that was not included in this summary broadcast. Please listen at 5 o’clock on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, October 12 through October 14 for more information.

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