North Carolina APCO Chapter Meeting

Pembroke, NC Friday September 18, 2026 | 09:00am

Call to Order ***Samantha Dutch***

Welcome

Pledge of Allegiance

Recognition of 2026-2027 Corporate Partners (Motorola, AT&T, Carolina Recording Systems, Horizon Consoles and Priority Dispatch)

Introduction of Board Members

Samantha Dutch *President*	**P**	Melanie Jones *NC 911 Board Representative*	**P**	Myra Williams *Region D Ambassador*	**P**
Jacob Butcher *1st Vice President*	**P**	Grayson Gusa *Executive Council/Chap His/PIO*	**P**	Samantha Peaks *Region E Ambassador*	**P**
Kyle Thaggard *2nd Vice President*	**E**	Josh Benfield *Compassionate Care/CORE*	**E**	Max "Ryan" Dula *Region F Ambassador*	**P**
Chad Deese *Immediate Past President*	**P**	Ruth Barefoot *Region A Ambassador*	**E**	Ashlee Russell *Commercial Advisor Member*	**E**
Jackie Ezell *Treasurer*	**P**	Morrissa Moyer *Region B Ambassador*	**P**	Jeryl Anderson *Education Advisor*	**E**
Christine Moore *Secretary*	**P**	Hope Downs *Region C Ambassador*	**P**		

<u>Special Welcome & Recognition</u>

We would now like to give special recognition. Please stand when your category is called:

Past North Carolina APCO Chapter Presidents

North Carolina APCO Chapter Life Members

APCO International Senior Members

APCO International Life Members

Registered Public-Safety Leaders (RPLs)

Certified Public-Safety Executives (CPEs)

Additional Corporate Partners

First Time Attendees

Recognition of Retirements – Tracy Trogdon, Randy Beeman and Melanie Jones

Approval of July 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve: Cassie Sexton *Second: Jacob Butcher*

Chapter Reports

Commercial Advisory Council Report ***Ashlee Russell***

- *Nothing to report.*

Compassionate Care Committee/Totes of Love/Core Committee Report ***Josh Benfield***

- *Several cards have been sent since last meeting.*

Executive Council Report/Historian Report ***Grayson Gusa***

- *The 2026 APCO International Conference and Exposition was held during the first week of August in San Antonio, Texas, bringing together 5,206 attendees, 234 exhibitors, with 32 sponsors.*

  Before the conference, the Executive Council held its annual meeting on July 31, 2026. During that meeting, the Council approved the charter for the Colombia Chapter of APCO and reviewed and approved changes to the APCO Policy Manual regarding at-large positions on the Board of Directors.

- *As of August 1, 2026, APCO International has 45,158 members, representing a 7.5% increase over the same time last year. At the chapter level, North Carolina APCO had 1,979 members as of September 17, 2026.*

- *The Motorola Solutions Foundation awarded APCO International a $65,000 grant to support the APCO International Silent Key and Commercial Advisory Council Scholarship Program. The next scholarship application period will begin January 15, 2027, with recipients announced in the spring of 2027.*

- *APCO International has announced the Public Safety Innovation Summit featuring 5x5, which will take place December 1-2, 2026, in Orlando, Florida. Registration is now open, and additional information is available at www.apcosummits.org.*

- *Looking ahead, the 2027 APCO International Annual Conference and Exposition will be returned to Anaheim, California, July 25-28, 2027. Registration is set to open in the spring of 2027.*

- *As North Carolina APCO's Executive Council Representative, I serve as the liaison between our chapter and APCO International. If you have questions or need assistance with matters at the international level, please reach out to me at grayson.gusa@ncapco.org. I am happy to help connect you with the appropriate resources and ensure our chapter members' voices are heard at the association.*

Education Report ***Jeryl Anderson***

- ***Upcoming Training Opportunities***
  - *Save the date for the 2026 Telecommunicator Training Symposium, hosted at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro, November 9-11, 2026. Registration is open. Registration fees include all meals and snacks for full-registration attendees and for day passes.*

    The schedule of presenters is being finalized and will be posted soon.

    To our commercial partners: We are still in need of sponsorship for several items on our wish list. If you are able to assist us with this training event, please speak with Grayson Gusa or Samantha Dutch for more information.

- ***Announcement***
  - *On behalf of NC APCO, we are excited to invite you to be a part of our Regional Training Initiative, which is a program launched in 2025 with a simple but powerful mission: bring*

    FREE, high-quality training directly to North Carolina telecommunicators and, through our virtual offerings, to public safety professionals around the globe.

    If your agency is interested in hosting or if you have any questions, please email Samantha Peaks at Samantha.peaks@ncapco.org.

- ***NC APCO Scholarship Update***

  - *The NC APCO Scholarship Program was created to support the professional development and leadership growth of our members by helping reduce the financial burden of training and educational opportunities. Scholarships of up to $1,000 are available for approved programs, with NC APCO paying registration fees directly. Any remaining scholarship funds may be used to reimburse approved travel-related expenses such as lodging, airfare, mileage, parking, and meals, up to the approved award amount.*

The program will have two application cycles each year. The September application cycle, is now open through September 30, includes the RPL, CPE, APCO International Conference & Expo, the NC 911 Conference, and the 911 Chaplain Academy.

Applicants will be notified of scholarship decisions within 30 days of each application deadline, and the chapter will award at least two scholarships during each application cycle, with the potential for additional awards based on available funding.

To be eligible, applicants must be current APCO members in good standing and submit a completed application before the deadline. Members may receive an NC APCO scholarship once every three years. Scholarship recipients will be asked to sign a Letter of Responsibility, successfully complete the approved program, and submit reimbursement documentation within 30 days of completing the program.

The policy also includes a hardship waiver process for members who are unable to complete their program due to circumstances such as illness, family emergencies, agency staffing shortages, or military obligations.

Ultimately, the goal of the scholarship program is to invest in our members by making leadership development, continuing education, and professional growth more accessible. We want to help remove financial barriers, so more members have the opportunity to attend conferences, pursue leadership programs, and participate in training that benefits both them and the public safety communications profession.

- ***Friendly Reminders***
  - *Effective July 1, 2022, ALL Telecommunicators are required to have 40 hours of Telecommunicator training. As a reminder, if you work for a municipality or your communications center is run by a Sheriff, your agency is required to have your communications staff go through the Telecommunicator Certification Course. All other agencies can choose to do the Telecommunicator Certification Course or other telecommunicator training that is equal to a minimum of 40 hours.*

  - *Today is September 18, 2026, you have **THREE months and 12 days** to finish your 2026 Telecommunicator In-Service Training. If you do the training in-house, the training lesson plans, power points and handouts are now available through the NC Justice Academy website at no charge.*

    1. *It is required for those TC's that work under the direction of a Sheriff or for a municipality, to become Telecommunicator Certified through the Sheriff Standards NC Telecommunicator Certification Course.*

    2. *It is required for all staff hired on or before June 30th of the given year.*

    3. *If you do not do the classes in house, you can get it online from Richmond CC, Alamance CC, (be sure to mention mandatory check-in assignment and not getting a certificate from both) or the NC Justice Academy.*

4. *Instructors remember you must successfully test out of a class to teach it. These tests can now be taken on line through the NC Justice Academy training portal. Also, if you are an instructor, do not forget to go to the NC Justice Academy website Acadis training portal and do your annual Instructor Update class, this is how you will keep your General Instructor Certification. Emails for this with the link came out on January 1, 2026.*
5. *If you need to renew your General Instructor Certification, be sure to send in the required documents within the month that you expire. If you fail to complete this process, your certification will lapse.*

6. *Instructors are responsible for maintaining their own certifications and documents and providing School Directors with those certificates if required, along with your assigned Acadis Instructor Number, which can be found on your dashboard on the NC Justice Academy Acadis Training portal.*

7. *Sheriff Standards will only send instructor certificates to the instructors themselves. Reminder emails do get sent out to keep you on task.*

It is our Chapter's goal to continue to provide quality training for our members across the state at a cost-effective price. We thank you for your support in our efforts by attending the training and we only want to widen our efforts.

North Carolina 9-1-1 Board Report and Update ***Melanie Jones***

- ***9-1-1 Board Report***

  Two training classes have been approved by the 9-1-1 Board for use of ETSF, which are the Boulder Crest Foundations "Struggle Well" (1-, 2- and 5-day courses) and the RAK Academy's "The Advanced CTO: How to go from Good to Great".

  The Text-to-911 PSA Campaign is live and available on traditional television and mobile streaming, along with the "Hold the Line" campaign and recruitment campaign. If you would like to have any of these PSA's tagged for your agency, please reach out to Kristen Falco.

  For Board funded Primary PSAPs, the Board purchased CTO Daily Observation Report Tracker and Policy Management software to compliment the training offerings through Virtual Academy. Kristen will be working to get virtual training sessions scheduled for those PSAPs interested in using these modules in Virtual Academy. More information will be sent out in the upcoming weeks about training opportunities.

  The Board staff are working with Salesforce to help automate Board processes such as the PSAP Assessments, grant submissions and revenue expenditure reports. It is already being used for

assessments and grants, and more information will be shared as the revenue expenditure reporting portion of the software is built out.

All enhanced push-to-talk radios have been distributed to the PSASs, RapidSOS Collaborator onboarding is ongoing and almost fully implemented across the state, and the low earth orbit satellite units are being configured while one PSAP has been fully deployed, along with approved laptops.

The Board awarded several grants at the August Board meeting for multiple PSAPs. Congratulations to those who will be receiving grant funding.

- ***Due Date Reminders***
  - *CAD-to-CAD initiative for the FY2028 cycle are due by December 15, 2026.*
  - *Any requests for seat count increases for primary PSAPs or training seat requests for the upcoming fiscal year are due to staff by October 1, 2026.*
  - *Cybersecurity Remediation Initiative submission deadline has been extended through February 1, 2027 for any PSAPs interested in submitting funding requests.*

Treasurer's Report ***Jackie Ezell***

Checking account $8,510.44 Business Savings Account $102,552.23 Total: $111,062.67

Regional Ambassador – Region A ***Ruth Barefoot***

- *Nothing to report.*

Regional Ambassador – Region B ***Morrissa Moyer***

- ***Granville 9-1-1***
  - *Staffing and Openings: They are hiring, almost fully staffed.*
- ***Johnston County 9-1-1***
  - *Staffing and Openings: They are hiring.*
- ***NC SHP***
  - *Staffing and Openings: They have continuous openings posted statewide on their website.*

Regional Ambassador – Region C ***Hope Downs***

- ***Chowan County***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: They recently installed new Evans Consoles, which have received positive feedback from staff.*
  - *Staffing and Openings: They are undergoing leadership change, as Director Herman Weiss resigned today. Keri Thrasher has been named the Interim 9-1-1 Director.*
- ***Cumberland County Emergency Services***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: They implemented automated voice dispatch for the fire service.*

- *Special Recognition and Promotions: They recently completed their IAED Emergency Medical Dispatch re-accreditation, and continue to maintain their Tri-ACE status. Three team members were recognized during Cumberland County's annual Valor Awards. Assistant Manager Sheena Craver recently earned her ENP credential.*

- ***Currituck County 9-1-1***
  - *Additional Information: They will host The Healthy Dispatcher at their facility in November.*
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: After the successful implementation of Emergency Fire Dispatch earlier this year, they are now preparing for Emergency Police Dispatch and an upcoming CAD system upgrade. Public Safety radio improvements are also underway, including antenna replacements at four radio sites in September.*
  - *Special Recognition and Promotions: Training and QA Manager Layla Armstrong earned her Associate's Degree in 9-1-1 Communications and Operations. Telecommunicator Erin Gillen successfully delivered a healthy baby boy over the phone on September 5th.*
  - *Staffing and openings: They continue to make progress in staffing, training, technology and community engagement. Staffing has improved significantly over the past few months, with employees progressing through the training academy and continued emphasis on professional development. They will begin their next hiring cycle soon, with a tentative new-hire academy planned for February 2027.*
- ***Edgecombe County***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: They installed Xybix dual-lift consoles in their center this spring. The staff are loving them, especially the individual heaters.*
- ***Harnett County***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: They are in the process of implementing ASAP-to-PSAP, with an anticipated go-live date in mid-October.*
  - *Staffing and openings: They have two full-time Telecommunicator and one Training/QA Manager openings. Their most recent training academy, consisting of five (5) Telecommunicators, is nearing completion of on-the-floor training. They expect to release them soon.*
- ***Pender County***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: The new building project is progressing well, and the staff are eagerly anticipating the move. Installation of equipment, consoles and radio systems is scheduled to begin next week.*
  - *Special Recognition and Promotions: Shift Supervisor Heather Johnson recently gave birth to a daughter, Olivia. New hires Stephanie Burns and Lakisha Imes received their TCC certification. C-Shift for their outstanding performance during the evacuation of the primary communications center in July. During a major rainstorm a fire started in the building which required staff to evacuate and transition operations to the back-up center. The team successfully maintained operations with no downtime. Thank you to everyone who reached out following this event, it was greatly appreciated.*

- *Staffing and openings: They are currently hiring for five (5) open positions. Applications are still being accepted and reviewed.*

- ***Wayne County***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: They are moving forward with the implementation of ASAP-to-PSAP and PowerDMS (for policy management and timekeeping).*
  - *Special Recognition and Promotions: 9-1-1 Director Christopher Barnes, ENP, was selected as Wayne County Employee of the Year.*
  - *Staffing and openings: They are currently experiencing a significant staffing shortage, with approximately seven (7) Telecommunicator vacancies and one (1) call-taker vacancy. They are actively recruiting and anticipate bringing new trainees onboard soon.*

Regional Ambassador – Region D ***Myra Williams***

- ***Alamance County 9-1-1***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: They are in the midst of a new CAD and new facility projects that they are hoping to have completed by early 2027.*
  - *Staffing and Openings: They have two vacancies and are reviewing potential applicants for both. Finding suitable applicants has been a challenge recently.*
- ***Guilford Metro 9-1-1***
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: New Octave CAD is set to go live March 23, 2027.*
  - *Special Recognition and Promotions: The training program received APCO accreditations at the August conference.*
  - *Staffing and Openings: They have eight vacancies in the 9-1-1 center and one vacancy in the Training Section.*
- ***Kernersville Communications***
  - *Special Recognition and Promotions: Jeff Lemons (who was awarded APCO TC of the Year in 2021) retired with 28 years of service. He will be greatly missed amongst the agency.*
- ***Moore County 9-1-1***
  - *Additional Information: They have started publishing a SITReport weekly for the 9-1-1 center for all staff. This includes details like budget status, staffing updates, training initiatives and other information. If anyone would like to see this contact Communications Manager Rebekah Pate and she will share it.*
  - *Equipment and/or Technology Upgrades: They are currently going through VIPER9 upgrades.*
  - *Staffing and Openings: Staffing is short, but stable.*
- ***Randolph County 9-1-1***
  - *Special Recognition and Promotions: They had four telecommunicators receive their TERT certification at the end of July: Amelia Burr, Brandon Adkins, Ethan Fox and*

Elizabeth Privett. They had several team members receive their CIT certification at the beginning of June: Amelia Burr, Molly Scott, Amy Patterson, Fanni Torres, Julie Blakely and Kendra Hurley.

- ***Rockingham County 9-1-1***
  - *Staffing and Openings: They have five vacancies.*

Regional Ambassador – Region E ***Samantha Peaks***

- ***Richmond County Emergency Communications***
  - *Staffing and Openings: Three employees are currently in the CTO phase completing on-the-floor training. They currently have three open positions and their agency is hiring.*
- ***Scotland County***
  - *Additional Information: They recently hosted a leadership training with participants from Richmond County, Scotland County and High Point. The training was very successful.*
  - *Staffing and Openings: Three employees are currently in training.*

Regional Ambassador – Region F ***Ryan Dula***

- *Nothing to report.*

President's Report ***Samantha Dutch***

- *We welcome Lizzy Goddard, 1st Vice President for South Carolina APCO to our meeting.*
- *NC APCO and NC NENA have been working on collaboration with other state chapters to participate in events, get ideas from one another and support one another.*
- *Southeast Night Out at APCO 2026 was held in lieu of our usual state chapter dinner and it was a great success.*
- *Reminder to register for the upcoming Telecommunicator Training Symposium.*
- *Call for Papers for the 2027 NC Public-Safety Communications Conference is live and will close November 15th. This is a **hard** deadline.*

Old Business

Regional Training Initiative Update ***Samantha Peaks***

- ***September Training***
  - *Hosted a virtual training session "Creating a Personal Stress Plan" featuring Sarah Saunders – 47 registered. Still waiting for final attendee numbers. Certificates will be issued once attendee evaluations are completed*
- ***Upcoming Training***
  - *October 13, 2026, 10:00am-12:00pm – In-person regional training in Apex. Flyer and registration information will be available soon.*
  - *November 17, 2026, 2:00pm EST – Samantha Hawkins will present "How to Lose a 9-1-1 Trainee in 10 Ways". This session will be virtual.*

We are continuing outreach to agencies that previously expressed interest in serving as Regional Training Initiative host sites. We are also continuing to seek agencies interested in hosting future regional training opportunities. Agencies and presenters interested in participating in the initiative are encouraged to reach out.

Legislative Update/9-1-1 Goes to Raleigh ***Jacob Butcher***

- ***Legislative Update***
  - *Cary Emergency Communications – Hosted Rep. Julie von Haefen. Her post specifically says the invitation came from people she met through 9-1-1 Goes to Raleigh. She spent approximately two hours in the center, spoke with telecommunicators and listened to calls and radio traffic.*
  - *High Point 9-1-1 – Hosted Reps. Alan Branson, Tracy Clark and Amanda Cook. They toured the center and completed simulated 9-1-1 calls using the training platform.*
  - *Caswell County 9-1-1 – Hosted Sen. Jonah Garson and Commissioners Ingram and Smith. Discussed the importance of reclassification of our telecommunicators, as well as the mental and physical well-being of staff, and had the opportunity to showcase the ever-changing technology in the center. (Photos are on Caswell County 9-1-1 page – Josh Benfield advised allowed to use them.)*
  - *Mecklenburg EMS Agency (Medic) – NC Rep. Jordan Lopez visited for a firsthand look at the real challenges and opportunities our 9-1-1 professionals face every day. (Photos are on Mecklenburg's Facebook page – Corrine Walser advised allowed to use them.)*
  - *Buncombe County 9-1-1 – Rep. Prather came to visit giving staff the opportunity to highlight their operations, speak with line-level telecommunicators and also participate in simulated 9-1-1 calls.*
  - *Guilford Metro 9-1-1 – Rep. Virginia Foxx was hosted an able to see the incredible work being done at the center. This visit was a direct result of the 9-1-1 Goes to Washington efforts.*
  - *Raleigh-Wake will be hosting Rep. Schietzelt from District 35 on 9/22, another direct result of our 9-1-1 Goes to Raleigh efforts.*
- ***9-1-1 Goes to Raleigh***
  - *The event is tentatively set for April 2027. The Legislative Committee is meeting regularly and in development of some streamlining software to make the experience easier on our attendees.*
- ***Legislation***
  - *S725 – Remains held at the desk of the House of Representatives after passing the Senate with unanimous, bipartisan support from the Senate.*

Public Comments/New Business

- *Herman Weiss – Wanted to say thank you to APCO for all they have done for his career as he moves on to another career.*

New Business ***Samantha Dutch***

Next Chapter Meeting – *We look forward to seeing you at our next chapter meeting which will be held Friday, November 20, 2026 in Burke County.*

Adjournment

Motion to approve: Melanie Jones *Second: Grayson Gusa*