



September 23, 2025

## Town of Coats

### WHY WE CONDUCTED THIS REPORT

The Office of the State Auditor (OSA) received allegations via the State Auditor's Tipline that the Town of Coats (the Town) does not properly post its meeting minutes, notice of its Planning Board meetings, or notice of the Board of Commissioners' regular meetings electronically or on the meeting room door.

### OBJECTIVES

- Determine if the Town violated N.C.G.S. § 143-318.12.
- Determine how constituents are notified of Board of Commissioners meetings and Planning Board meetings.
- Determine if the Town failed to post meeting schedules and meeting minutes.

### WHAT WE FOUND

The methods the Town uses to post its meeting minutes appear to comply N.C.G.S. § 143-318.12 which requires public bodies to provide notice of public meetings to anyone who requests such information.

During our review, OSA determined that the Town posts notices of the Board of Commissioners' regular meetings and the Planning Board's meetings on the Town's website.<sup>1</sup>

The notices include the date and time of each monthly meeting. After public meetings are held, the Town generally posts the meeting agendas and meeting minutes on its website.

However, at the time the allegations were submitted to OSA, the Town had not yet posted the meeting minutes for four Board of Commissioners meetings, including two special closed sessions, an emergency closed session, and a regular meeting. The Town had also not yet posted the meeting minutes for one of the Planning Board's regular meetings. The dates for each of these meetings are provided below.

#### Board of Commissioners Regular Meetings

- 03/03/2025 - Special Closed Session
- 03/05/2025 - Emergency Meeting Closed Session
- 03/17/2025 - Special Closed Session
- 05/08/2025 - Regular meeting

<sup>1</sup> The Town of Coats <http://www.coatsnc.org/>

**NOTE:** OSA maintains strict confidentiality when handling personally identifiable and other sensitive information in accordance with State and federal law. OSA takes all necessary precautions to ensure that sensitive information is not compromised or improperly shared. This special report is based on the limited information available to OSA during our investigation and is not exhaustive. This report does not constitute an audit or attestation engagement conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. A copy of this Investigative Report has been provided to the Town of Coats' leadership and published online for review by the residents of the Town of Coats and all citizens of North Carolina.

## WHAT WE FOUND

### Planning Board Meetings

- 05/01/2025 - Regular meeting

As of the date this report was published, the Town has posted the minutes for each of the meetings provided above.

During our investigation, OSA contacted the Town Clerk about the methods the Town uses to inform residents of its public meetings. The Town Clerk informed OSA that one method the Town uses to fulfill the requirements set forth in N.C.G.S. § 143-318.12 is the Town's "Sunshine List." The Sunshine List is a list of individuals and organizations who have signed up to receive electronic notifications about all the Town's public meetings. The Town Clerk also confirmed that the Town posts meeting notices on the door of the meeting room.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town should update its website to provide information to constituents about how to sign up to receive electronic notifications about its public meetings via the Sunshine List.

The Town should also inform constituents about the best method to contact the Town with questions regarding public meetings and meeting minutes.