

Jason S. Lunsford, MPA, JD

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RELEVANT LEGAL EXPERIENCE

City of Shelby, Shelby, North Carolina

October 2023-Present

City Attorney

- Represent all City departments by providing legal guidance, contract review, and as needed court hearings for evictions, small claims cases for money owed, code enforcement violations including corresponding court filings for liens, and filing *lis pendens* and demolition liens.
- Assisted in drafting Shelby's first Uptown Social District Policy and accompanying Resolution.
- Prepared and facilitated Request for Proposals (RFP) for Shelby's Municipal Service District (MSD) pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-535 *et seq.*, which was awarded to Uptown Shelby Association February 2026.
- Successfully litigated to mediation a Chapter 19 (nuisance abatement) claim against a local hotel for continued drug sales, drug overdoses, assaults, breach of the peace, and prostitution.
- Presenting on a panel at the annual Summer Conference for Municipal Attorneys in 2026 concerning Chapter 19 claims and how cities can utilize this statutory authority to enforce nuisance violations caused by businesses such as massage parlors, hotels, and motels.
- Provide guidance and representation to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and City Council. Representation includes attending board meetings, answering questions concerning parliamentary proceedings, assisting in quasi-judicial hearings, and appeals to Superior Court for Cleveland County.
- Assist in real estate acquisitions pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 158-7.1 (economic development) and sales pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160A-269 (upset bids) by preparing and reviewing purchase and sale agreements, economic incentives, economic development contracts, and quitclaim deeds.
- Partnering with Developing Finance Initiative (DFI) with the School of Government (SOG) regarding entering into Public-Private Partnerships for the redevelopment of two historic buildings; the Hotel Charles and the Webbley Mansion, which was formally owned by Governor O. Max Gardner. This includes preparing bid documents, contracts, reviewing site plans, and historic preservation compliance review under Chapter 160D of the N.C. General Statutes.

Office of Special Counsel · Central Regional Hospital, Butner, North Carolina

March 2020–Oct. 2023

Assistant Special Counsel

- Represented patients receiving treatment for mental health under both involuntary commitment (IVC) as well as adults adjudicated *non compos mentis*. In addition, I represented patients that were court ordered to receive capacity restoration due to pending criminal charges (ITP).
- Collaborated with defense counsel for ITP patients and assisted with providing updates regarding care, hospital treatment, length of stay, and client requests. Similarly, I worked with prosecuting attorneys regarding potential dismissal of charges as well as providing counsel on the commitment process to include effectively committing a defendant to a state psychiatric hospital.
- Taught at the Civil Commitment Conference through the School of Government (SOG) (2023) focusing on trial advocacy and the IVC process and at the Spring Public Defender Conference (2023) covering the ITP process for criminal defendants.
- Provided recommended updates for the SOG IVC Defender manual.
- From March 2020 until August 2020, I worked at the Raleigh Office of Special Counsel within Holly Hill Hospital adult admissions where I represented over 80 patients per week, which consisted of the largest caseload at the time.

Durham County Public Defender · Durham, North Carolina

July 2016 – January 2020

Assistant Public Defender

- Represented indigent defendants at initial appearances within the Durham County Jail arguing for appropriate bond relief to include unsecured bonds, reductions, pleas for time served, and dismissal of charges.
- Conducted numerous district court bench trials for traffic, misdemeanor, and domestic violence offenses and alleged probation violations.
- Successfully conducted two jury trials for a client charged with DWI after appeal from district court with the first resulting in a mistrial and the second resulting in acquittal due to insufficient evidence of the charged offense.
- Provided counsel to patients held on involuntary commitment proceedings throughout the local Durham hospitals and participated in weekly hearings representing the respondent's due process rights and request for discharge from further hospitalization.
- Taught a CLE on Probable Cause to Arrest for Suspicion of DWI (2019) and the IVC process (2018).

Jason Lunsford, Attorney at Law · Durham, North Carolina February 2016 – July 2016
Independent Contractor under supervision of Scott Holmes of Meece Law Firm, P.A.

- Practice devoted to low-cost criminal representation for traffic offenses including speeding, driving while impaired (DWI), careless and reckless, and other misdemeanors including domestic violence.
- Assisted with deed searches and tax records for clients seeking to amend their homeowner's association bi-laws.
- Represented and counseled on landlord tenant laws and negotiated continued residency for a client facing eviction.

Wake County Public Defender's Office · Raleigh, North Carolina January 2016 – July 2016
Volunteer Attorney under the mentorship of Sam Hamadani and Emily Mistr.

- Interviewed clients at the Wake County Detention Center for misdemeanor attorneys within the office.
- Assisted in plea negotiations and representation for clients facing various misdemeanor charges.
- Worked with Emily Mistr to assist clients charged with driving while license revoked to preserve their ability to restore their license privilege.

EDUCATION

North Carolina Central University School of Law, Durham, North Carolina
 Juris Doctor, *Cum Laude* (Top 17%), May 2015

- Honors: Dean's List, *Phi Delta Phi* International Legal Honors Society, *Pro Bono* Service Award
- Published: Jason Lunsford, *Confronting Judicial Efficiency: State v. Whittington and the Effects of Notice-and Demand Statutes on States and Defendants in Light of an Evolving Crawford Analysis*, N.C. CENT. L. REV. Vol. 37 (2015).
- Activities: *Law Review* (Fall 2014, Spring 2015), *Civil Litigation Clinic*, *Evidence Tutor* Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, *Research Assistant for Scott Holmes* (Summer 2014).

Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio
 Master of Public Administration, May 2009

- Honors: *Sylvester Murray Award* (2009), awarded to a Master of Public Administration student who has excelled academically, and who exhibits outstanding potential for future success; *Pi Alpha Alpha National Honors Society* for Public Affairs and Administration.

Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, Minors: Pre-Law and Philosophy, *Cum Laude*, May 2006

- Honors: **Pi Sigma Alpha**: National Honors Society for Political Science (2005); **Deans List**: several semesters; **College of Arts and Sciences**: *Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Academic*

Achievement (2006); **Student Affairs: Leadership Excellence Award** (2006) for Outstanding Leadership and Dedication to the University Community; *Senior Recognition Award* (2006) for Contributions to the University, *Margaret Swanson Davis Award*: Presented to the senior who has displayed outstanding scholarship and whose contributions as an independent (non-Greek) student has enhanced campus activities (2006).

- Activities: *Office of Student Affairs*: Mentor to incoming freshman and transfer students
Undergraduate Student Senate Elections Commission: Debate Moderator for student government elections.

PUBLICATIONS

“*The Law on Tape: How to Secure Police Recordings the Right Way.*” NCBarBlog.com, Published November 7, 2025, accessible at: <https://www.ncbarblog.com/gps-the-law-on-tape-how-to-secure-police-recordings-the-right-way/>

BOARDS

- North Carolina Association of Municipal Attorneys, Board of Directors 2025-2027

MEMBERSHIPS

- NC Bar
- Cleveland and Lincoln County Local Bar
- Western District of North Carolina
- American Bar Association (ABA)
- NC Bar Association (NCBA)
- North Carolina Association of Municipal Attorneys (NCAMA)
- North Carolina Association of Police and Sheriffs’ Attorneys (NCAPSA)
- Rotary, District 7680 (July 2024-present)

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Legal Aid (2015): Volunteer Attorney for Landlord Tenant Disputes. I provided phone consultation regarding potential legal rights, remedies, and advice in filing small claims actions.
- Durham Expunction Clinic (2019): Partnership with the D.E.A.R. Foundation to provide expunction relief pursuant to updated legislation designed to offer aid indigent individuals whose charges were previously dismissed.
- Durham Driver’s License Restoration Clinic (2018): Partnership with the D.E.A.R. Foundation along with the Durham District Attorney’s office, reviewed indigent individual’s driver’s records and provided assistance in restoring their license.
- Durham Teen Court (multiple years): Counseled at risk youths facing potential juvenile convictions through the Teen Court Diversion Program and acted as the judge while cases were tried before their peers.