



- WHEREAS, first responders including law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel, 911 dispatchers, correctional officers, and members of other organizations in the public safety sector, come together to protect and aid our community in the event of an emergency; and,
- WHEREAS, first responders risk their lives and safety every day in the performance of their duties to protect our citizens; and,
- WHEREAS, first responders are tasked with handling dangerous and complicated situations; and,
- WHEREAS, nationwide, law enforcement officers will go through an average of 188 critical incidents throughout the course of their career; and,
- WHEREAS, first responders often experience stress that has real physical impacts including cardiac issues, diabetes, obesity, and sleep issues; and,
- WHEREAS, first responders are up to 25.6 times higher risk for developing post-traumatic stress disorder when compared to individuals without such experiences; and,
- WHEREAS, first responder wellness includes management of issues including, but not limited to sleep, fitness, nutrition, fatigue, anger management, posttraumatic stress and loss; and,
- WHEREAS, we recognize the integral role first responders play in our communities and the benefits derived from their hard work, commitment, sacrifice, and unhesitating dedication; and,
- WHEREAS, research shows that fostering a strong wellness culture inside first responder agencies enhances relations within the communities they serve.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaims March 23-27, 2026, as

First Responder Wellness Week

in Gaston County.

Chad Brown, Chairman

Jim Bailey

Bob Hovis, Vice-Chairman

Cathy Cloninger

Tom Keigher

Allen R. Fraley

Scott Shehan

To be Adopted the 24th Day of March 2026