



MS. CYNTHIA M. ISENHOUR – 2025 JUDGE WILLIAM GASTON AWARD

Cynthia “Cindy” Isenhour, a proud native of Dallas, North Carolina, is the daughter of Jack and Carolyn Maxwell, and is a devoted member of Dallas Methodist Church. She is a graduate of North Gaston High School, Gaston College, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Cindy has been married for forty-two years to her husband, Jeff, who served as the Assistant Chief of the Gaston County Police Department. Together they raised two sons, Jeff “Beau” and Jason. They are also the proud grandparents of five grandchildren, Hannah, Ian, Maddie, Charlie, and Avett, who she considers “the highlight of her life.”

Cindy began her public service career in 1976 as a dispatcher with the Dallas Police Department. Four years later, she joined the Gaston County Police Department, serving in both patrol and special investigations.

In 1985, Cindy joined the Gastonia Police Department, where she served for twenty-five years in a variety of roles, including as a Sergeant in Patrol, Vice, and Criminal Investigations, as well as a Polygraph Examiner. She became the first female officer in the department’s history to be promoted to Captain, leading both the Patrol and Criminal Investigation Divisions. She also commanded the Hostage Negotiations Team and served as Interim Assistant Chief. In 1999, she attended and graduated from the 199th Session of the FBI National Academy.

Cindy contributed significantly to the law enforcement profession through her service in professional organizations. She served as secretary for the Gaston County Law Enforcement Association and the NC Law Enforcement Women’s Association. She also represented the Association on the NC Training and Standards Commission and was a leader in the NCFBI National Academy Associates, serving as secretary/treasurer and later as the first female president of that organization.

Along with her career achievements, Cindy has given generously of her time and talents to the community. She has served on the Gaston County Women’s Shelter Advisory Board, the Tourism Advisory Board, and for fifteen years on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

During her tenure as Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Cindy helped guide important planning and improvement efforts throughout our park system. Under her leadership, the County updated its Comprehensive Master Plan and advanced major projects at Poston, Dallas, South Point, Tryon, and Bessemer City Parks. These efforts have brought numerous improvements including new playgrounds, restrooms, shade structures, and expanded trails that will be enjoyed by residents and visitors for years to come.

Cindy’s insight and passion have strengthened our visitor economy and supported the continued growth of Gaston County as a premier destination. As Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, she brought collaborative leadership, steady vision, and a genuine commitment to the well-being of our community. Her leadership elevated recreational opportunities, guided thoughtful planning, and championed initiatives that benefit both residents and visitors.

Cindy, the County Commission is honored to present you with the **2025 Judge William Gaston Award** in recognition of your exemplary leadership and your continuing efforts to make Gaston County a better place to live, work, and play.