



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

March 24, 2026

2025-2026 Board Members

President Patrick Baker
Pres Elect Bill Bartee
Past Pres Kim Brattain
Secretary Bill Gill
Treasurer Craig Field
Exec Dir Christine Cipriano

Directors 2024-2026

Benton Bragg
John Cantrell
Tish Atkins Charles
Dena Diorio
Jesse Hite
Virginia Owen

Directors 2025-2027

Byrd Bergeron
Karen Calder
J Hill
Ayo Johnson
Lori Keeton
Michael Orzech
Robert Shaw
Elizabeth Teagarden
Mike Wollinger

Membership Co-Chairs:

Linwood Bolles &
Shelley Dean

Programs

Elizabeth Teagarden



COMMUNITY LIFELINE *Strengthening Public Safety Through Workforce Development*

by **Paul Bartholomy**

This week our club welcomed an outstanding panel from Central Piedmont Community College for an inside look at the college's ambitious "Community Lifeline" initiative, a transformative workforce development effort centered at the Levine Campus in Matthews. President Dr. Kandi Deitemeyer, Provost Dr. Heather Hill, Associate Vice President Dr. Chris Nesbitt, and Vice President Catherine Butler shared how Central Piedmont is expanding its impact across Mecklenburg County while preparing the next generation of public safety professionals. Their presentation was both informative and inspiring, highlighting the college's continued growth and deep commitment to serving our community.

The panel explained that Community Lifeline is designed to strengthen emergency response training for firefighters, EMS professionals, law enforcement officers, and emergency management teams. The project includes a major new training facility with classrooms, simulation spaces, flexible real-world training environments, residential and commercial response settings, live-burn areas, and a critical response driving course. What stood out most was the collaborative vision behind the project, bringing multiple public safety disciplines

together so they can train as they often respond in real life: side by side.

Central Piedmont's leaders emphasized that this initiative is about much more than buildings and equipment. It is about meeting the region's rapidly growing demand for highly trained first responders, improving response readiness, and equipping public safety professionals with the best training possible close to home. Just as meaningful was the discussion around resiliency and mental health support, with the college recognizing that sustaining a strong workforce also means helping first responders process the many stressful and traumatic situations they face throughout their careers.

The discussion and Q&A made clear that this project will have a meaningful impact not only in Mecklenburg County, but likely across the broader region as well. Members appreciated learning how Central Piedmont is thinking boldly about workforce needs, public safety, and long-term community preparedness. The presentation was a strong reminder that the college is not only educating students, but also helping build a safer, stronger, and more resilient Charlotte region.

The recording can be found here:

With slides: <https://vimeo.com/1178218718?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Without slides: <https://vimeo.com/1178216098?fl=pl&fe=sh>

The program introduction begins at about 26 minutes 40 seconds.