

**Windsor, North Carolina**  
**May 20, 2013**  
**Regular Meeting**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for a regular meeting at 7:00 PM in the Askewville Town Hall, 105 Askewville Railroad Street, Askewville with the following members present or absent:

Present:	J. Wallace Perry, Chairman Charles L. Smith, Vice-Chairman Rick Harrell John Trent Ronald "Ron" Wesson
Absent:	None
Staff Present:	Interim County Manager John E. Whitehurst Assistant County Manager Misty Gibbs County Attorney Lloyd Smith

Chairman Perry opened the meeting.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Wesson asked for prayers for the residents of Oklahoma who had recently been devastated by tornadoes. Commissioner Wesson led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**MAYOR JOHN PIERCE WELCOMED THE BOARD AND CITIZENS**

Askewville Mayor John Pierce welcomed the Board and citizens to the meeting. Mayor Pierce thanked the Board for coming to Askewville.

**COMMENTS REGARDING SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL**

Mr. Rod Mumma stated that his understanding was that the Board was considering how to deal with solid waste in the county. Mr. Mumma stated that he felt that any action to close the current convenience centers would be premature until the Board has had more time to study the matter. Mr. Mumma stated that he believed the containers to hold trash or recyclables were costly. Mr. Mumma stated that people struggling financially would find it difficult to take on an additional bill.

Mr. Donnie Taylor stated that citizens in his community have to drive about 20 miles to the nearest convenience center. Mr. Taylor stated that it is expensive to drive that far. Mr. Taylor stated that he would pay for door to door pick up. Mr. Taylor stated that the residents on his road are in favor of door to door trash pick-up.

Mr. Kent Williams commended the Board for having meetings in different towns. Mr. Williams stated that he felt the Board should advertise the meetings more, since he was not aware of the first meeting in Powellsville.

Mr. Williams stated that he had just heard about the discussions regarding solid waste. Mr. Williams stated that he was waiting to hear more about the pros and cons before making a decision. Mr. Williams stated that he does business in Virginia where there is countywide trash pick-up and he has seen a problem with trash cans in the road. Mr. Williams stated that he has his own dumpster, which he and a few other families use. Mr. Williams stated that he does not want to be charged for door to door trash pick-up he is not receiving.

Mr. Donnis Perry stated that he too had to drive fifteen to twenty miles to dump trash or either burn the trash. Mr. Perry stated that trash pick-up service was provided by J&J Waste years ago and he felt the service worked well. Mr. Perry stated that he was willing to do his part to get that service. Mr. Perry asked that the Board of Commissioners be honest and up front with citizens with the details of any proposed change.

Ms. Kathy Myers stated that the community needs to know more about the details of the proposed change in solid waste disposal services. Ms. Myers stated that residents in her community would like to see the current convenience centers stay in operation. Ms. Myers stated that there is concern about how much trash will be left on roads and thrown in the woods. Ms. Myers stated that there is also concern about those people who will not pay for the service.

Mr. Terry Pratt stated that the local trash sites are working. Mr. Pratt stated that he has worked in several counties that have door to door trash pick-up and has seen cans left in the highway. Mr. Pratt stated that citizens will put food scraps in the trash cans, which will attract bears, dogs and coyotes. Mr. Pratt stated that citizens can now take large solid waste items to the convenience center, but will have to be responsibility for getting those items to the landfill if the convenience centers are closed.

Mr. Pratt stated that he would like to see the Commissioners oppose House Bill 983 regarding game fish. Mr. Pratt stated that that bill would make fish less available to average citizens.

Ms. Jackie Mumma stated the County might be able to consider opening up more convenience center sites or have door to door pick-up in some areas and have convenience centers also.

Chairman Perry stated that the Board began looking at options for solid waste disposal after receiving calls from citizens regarding adding more convenience centers. Chairman Perry stated that it costs \$82,000.00 per site per year to operate each of the five convenience centers.

Mr. Terry Pratt asked what the \$82,000.00 paid for at those sites. Commissioner Trent explained the cost of providing the convenience centers.

Chairman Perry clarified to the public that the landfill is operated by a different company than the company operating the convenience centers.

Mr. Donnis Perry stated that if there are enough players in the game, one could negotiate.

Mr. Rod Mumma stated that the County should use the money it cut from its budget for the 911 center feasibility study toward a trash feasibility study.

Ms. Jackie Mumma asked the Board to weigh the cost of the services.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

#### **DEPUTY TAX COLLECTOR JODIE RHEA REGARDING REQUEST FOR REFUND OF TAXES BY MR. JAMES OWEN CASTELLOE**

Mr. Jodie Rhea stated that he had received a request from Mr. James Owen Castellloe for a refund of taxes paid on property that was incorrectly classified. Mr. Rhea stated that Mr. Castellloe has been paying taxes on 20 acres of crop land that should have been classified as woods land. Mr. Rhea stated that the property has now been reclassified as woods land, which has resulted in a lower value on the property. Mr. Rhea stated that under N.C.G.S. 105.381(a)(3), Mr. Castellloe would be entitled to a refund of taxes paid for five years. Mr. Rhea stated that the current assessment has been corrected, so Mr. Castellloe is eligible to be refunded taxes for tax years 2009-2012 in the amount of \$213.45.

Chairman Perry asked Mr. Rhea if he has spoken with Mr. Castellloe and he is agreeable with this proposal. Mr. Rhea answered yes.

Commissioner Harrell introduced a **MOTION** to refund \$213.45 to Mr. James Owen Castellloe for taxes on this property. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

#### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR MITCH COOPER REGARDING FIRST CALL EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION UPDATES**

Mr. Cooper discussed the First Call Emergency Notification system that can be used in the event of emergencies to get information to citizens. Mr. Cooper stated that all land line phone numbers are in the system and citizens can also register to receive alerts on their mobile phones via text or call and can register for email alerts as well. Mr. Cooper stated that a low number of citizens have registered in the system for alerts via mobile phone or email and encouraged citizens to register and to spread the word in their communities. Mr. Cooper informed citizens that they can register by clicking on the First Call

icon on the Bertie County website. Mr. Cooper stated that the next goal is to cross train the Communications Center staff to use the system. Mr. Cooper stated that the County pays an annual fee through its LEPC to have this system and that each call also costs the County money.

Mr. Donnis Perry asked if there is a cost to citizens to register for the service? Mr. Cooper stated that there was no cost to citizens.

Commissioner Wesson asked if citizens can check to see if their phone numbers are correct in the system? Mr. Cooper stated that the information comes directly from CenturyLink. Commissioner Wesson asked how often the system is updated. Mr. Cooper stated that the system has not been updated yet in 2013.

Mr. Matt Roebuck asked if citizens can go on the site and register other people? Mr. Cooper stated that citizens can register others.

Mr. Cooper stated that the system can be set up to call groups as well, using fire departments and county employees as examples of groups that can be set up.

Mr. Cooper discussed how the system operates.

Ms. Kay Brantley asked if college students can register? Mr. Cooper stated that college students can register, but the system will only call them for events at the address they register.

Mr. Kent Williams stated that the County needs to let the public know that systems such as this are in place. Mr. Williams stated that citizens do not know about the community meetings either.

Mr. Jackie Mumma suggested that a mailed letter go to every resident of Bertie County each time there is need to get information out to the public.

Commissioner Wesson discussed the new all call system used by the Town of Windsor.

Assistant County Manager Misty Gibbs stated the County had sent out notice of the community meetings via the following methods:

Emailed to radio stations

On County website

Posted at county buildings

Mayors and Commissioners of towns sent notice via email and mail

Mayors and Town Commissioners have partnered to spread the word in their communities

Mailed to all churches in Bertie County

Emailed to all town clerks

Emailed to the local newspapers

Emailed to the local television stations

All employees and key agencies notified via email

The Bertie Ledger ran an article about the meetings listing the dates and times of meetings

Emailed to fire departments and EMS

A reminder is emailed to town officials, fire departments and EMS of the town where the meeting will be held a week before each meeting

Ms. Gibbs stated that that the Board is dedicated to enhancing the way it gets information out to citizens so a new Bertie County website will launch after July, the beginning of the next fiscal year. Ms. Gibbs discussed the benefits of the new website including online forms and services, a mobile version, ability to post video and audio files, enhanced graphics, reports on sections of the website receiving the most traffic, enhanced calendar of community events and meetings, enhanced page to post agendas and minutes to the web, all content is indexed and catalogued allowing visitors to perform site searches, eNewsletter application, ePayment processing is a possibility and citizens can sign via website for mass emails from departments.

The Board, staff and citizens discussed the new website.

### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

Assistant County Manager Gibbs stated that there were no new applications submitted for the immediate vacancies at this time.

Chairman Perry explained the new process for filling vacancies on boards.

Ms. Gibbs discussed the immediate vacancies and the upcoming vacancies, noting that applications are due by May 24, 2013 for those boards with vacancies in June 2013. Ms. Gibbs stated that all vacancies through December 2013 are listed on the Boards website, vacancies are advertised in the newspaper biannually and current board members will receive a letter prior to their term expiring letting them know that they must reapply if they wish to be reappointed.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Gibbs stated that the Assistant County Attorney had made changes to the minutes from April 15, 16 and 29, 2013 and there were no changes to the minutes from May 6, 2013.

Commissioner Trent introduced a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from April 15, 16 and 29, 2013 with changes by the Assistant County Attorney and to approve the minutes of May 6, 2013. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

#### **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 352 – BLACK BEAR MANAGEMENT**

The Board tabled this matter.

#### **REGULATOR STATION EASEMENT AGREEMENT**

County Attorney Smith stated that the proposed agreement asked the County to grant an easement forever and for free to Piedmont Natural Gas Company. Mr. Smith stated that he had spoken to Interim County Manager Whitehurst and they felt that the County should not give the piece of property away. Mr. Smith suggested that the Board have the Tax Department assess how much the piece of property is worth and then charge that fee to Piedmont Natural Gas.

The Board instructed the County Attorney to call the Tax Department and have staff check on this value.

#### **JCPC BUDGET**

Interim County Manager Whitehurst discussed the proposed budget from the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) for fiscal year 2013-2014.

Commissioner Smith introduced a **MOTION** to approve the JCPC budget. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

Commissioner Wesson stated that he had attended the Mid East Commission meeting and the Assistant Secretary of Commerce had presented at the meeting. Mr. Wesson discussed the changes in unemployment in North Carolina.

Chairman Perry stated that he attended a meeting at Arrowhead Beach regarding hydrilla and its effects on the waterways in the region. Mr. Perry updated citizens on this meeting.

Chairman Perry stated that he had attended a legislative meet and greet for the Northeast District that morning in Edgecombe County with Cooperative Extension Director Richard Rhodes.

Mr. Terry Pratt discussed hydrilla and other submerged aquatic vegetation. Mr. Pratt encouraged others to clean their boats after taking them out of the water to avoid the spread of submerged aquatic vegetation. Mr. Pratt stated that Civics 101 should be returned to schools.

### **COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS**

There were no reports.

## COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS

There were no reports.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS CONTINUED

### MR. CARNELL SPIVEY REGARDING PARK IN LEWISTON-WOODVILLE

Mr. Carnell Spivey stated that he is interested in finding community grants to construct a park in Lewiston-Woodville. Mr. Spivey asked if the Board knew of any funds available.

Commissioner Wesson mentioned Golden LEAF funding possibilities, noting that Mr. Spivey would have to have 501 (c)(3) status or apply through the Town in order to obtain grant funding.

### MR. GARY TERRY REGARDING UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr. Gary Terry discussed the funds owed by the State of North Carolina for the extended unemployment benefits that had been offered in the past. Mr. Terry discussed the historic average for unemployment payments and noted that unemployment is designed to be a temporary measure.

### MR. JAMES PUGH REGARDING DECISIONS BY THE BOARD

Mr. James Pugh asked that the Board consider all citizens when making decisions and let everybody be somebody.

### MS. KATHY MYERS REGARDING UNEMPLOYMENT

Ms. Myers stated that the employer, not the employee, pays for unemployment benefits and everytime those benefits are extended, employers have to pay more money. Ms. Myers stated that employers have struggled because of this. Ms. Myers stated that her company does have jobs open and people are not coming in to apply for those jobs.

Mr. Gary Terry stated that the move to change the way unemployment is handled in the State is to reduce taxes so more businesses can come into North Carolina.

### COMMISSIONER TRENT REGARDING CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION WASTE

Commissioner Trent stated that the Board does listen to citizens when they speak and used the landfill construction and demolition waste situation as an example of listening to citizens. Commissioner Trent stated that the Board had worked to have the landfill allow free dumping of C&D waste by citizens of Bertie County again and had succeeded in having that done.

## ADJOURN

Chairman Perry informed citizens that the next community meeting would be held in Kelford. Chairman Perry adjourned the meeting.

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J. Wallace Perry, Chairman

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Misty J. Gibbs, Clerk to the Board