

Windsor, North Carolina
December 7, 2015
Regular Meeting

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 4:00pm at 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: Ronald "Ron" Wesson, District I
Stewart White, District II
Tammy A. Lee, District III
John Trent, District IV
Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore, District V

Absent: None

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham
County Attorney Lloyd Smith
Finance Officer William Roberson
Network Systems Administrator Joe Wilkes
Register of Deeds Annie Wilson
Council on Aging Director Venita Thompson
Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper
Compliance Officer Stephanie Wiggins
EMS Division Chief Crystal Freeman

No media members were present.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wesson called the meeting to order, and thanked those present for their attendance.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairman Lee led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Before the meeting was underway, Chairman Wesson thanked his fellow Board members for the opportunity to serve as Chairman. He stated that it was his pleasure to serve as Chairman, and that he was proud of the positives strides that the Board has made for the well-being of every citizen in the County.

2015 BOARD REORGANIZATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At this time, the Board participated in a required Board Reorganization and Election of Officers. This process was completed in accordance with **NCGS § 153A-39**.

The full statute is listed below:

NCGS § 153A-39

Selection of chairman and vice-chairman; powers and duties. [During] its first regular meeting in December of each odd-numbered year on the first Monday in December in even numbered years, the board of commissioners shall choose one of its members as chairman for the ensuing year, unless the chairman is elected as such by the people or otherwise designated by law.

The board shall also at that time choose a vice-chairman to act in the absence or disability of the chairman. If the chairman and the vice-chairman are both absent from a meeting of the board, the members present may choose a temporary chairman.

The chairman is the presiding officer of the board of commissioners. Unless excused by rule of the board, the presiding officer has the duty to vote on any question before the board.

Election of Chairman

County Manager Sauer presided over the election of Chairman.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to elect Commissioner Trent as Chairman. Vice Chairman Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Commissioner Trent accepted the nomination as the Chairman of the Bertie County Board of Commissioners for 1 year.

Election of Vice Chairman

Chairman Trent presided over the election of Vice Chairman.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to elect Commissioner Bazemore as Vice Chairman. Chairman Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Commissioner Bazemore accepted the nomination as the Vice Chairman of the Bertie County Board of Commissioners for 1 year.

5-Minute Recess

Chairman Trent called for a 5-minute recess so that Commissioners could switch chairs, and so that the Clerk to the Board could reorganize name plates.

Comments from the Commissioners

Chairman Trent thanked his fellow Board members for their confidence in him to serve as Chairman, and stated that he was looking forward to continuing the Board's important work.

APPOINTMENTS

Program Update by Council on Aging Director, Venita Thompson, and Annette Eubanks of the Mid-East Area Agency on Aging

Council on Aging Director, Venita Thompson, and Annette Eubanks of the Mid-East Area Agency on Aging were present to provide a brief programmatic update.

Ms. Thompson reported that she sometimes receives questions from citizens about the Council on Aging, and that she also has to clarify certain misconceptions.

Ms. Thompson assured the public that the Council on Aging Senior Centers are not just for nutrition services, but they also offer classes, a notary public, and various trips.

She also discussed some unspent funds as well as methods she uses to attract new seniors to the Centers.

Relay for Life Results – Jo Ann Jordan, Volunteer

Jo Ann Jordan was present to give some results about the latest Relay for Life event in Bertie County.

During this presentation, Ms. Jordan reported that Bertie County was the very first Relay for Life chapter in North Carolina, and since its foundation 22 years ago, has raised over \$3 million dollars for The American Cancer Society.

In 2015 alone, Bertie County not only reached its donation goal, but it exceeded that goal by approximately \$16,000. This accomplishment made the 2015 event a “purple” event which is one of the highest designations that The American Cancer Society can bestow on a single Relay event.

Ms. Jordan also reported that Bertie County had the highest per capita donations in the South Atlantic Division equating to \$11.77 per citizen.

Lastly, and most importantly, Bertie received high marks for having the most survivor registrants in the Northeastern North Carolina region.

Ms. Jordan concluded by thanking the Board for their support, and encouraged all Commissioners and members of the public to attend the next Relay for Life Event on May 13, 2016.

EMS/NET Program Update by Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper

Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, was present to introduce the County's new Compliance Officer, Stephanie Wiggins. Ms. Wiggins was hired to fill the role after the former Officer, Crystal Freeman, took a promotion as the EMS Division Chief.

Mr. Cooper also gave a program update to the Board in honor of the two year anniversary of the County's implementation of the County's full time Paramedic program.

Mr. Cooper reported that he and his other administrative staff leaders have a combined total of 63 years of experience in the EMS/NET fields.

Commissioner White inquired about the number of paramedics currently on staff.

Per Mr. Cooper, Bertie County Emergency Services currently retains 27 staff Paramedics.

Mr. Cooper also discussed the current response times, the new Quick Response Vehicles (QRV's) that will be in operation in the New Year, as well as reviewed the various weather events that have occurred over the past year.

Lastly, Director Cooper thanked the Board for their continued support.

Chairman Trent commended Mr. Cooper and his staff and stated that he was proud of the progress that the Departments have made in a short time.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Vidant-Bertie Hospital Directors Council

After some discussion, Commissioner White made a **MOTION** to appoint Bill Pittman to the Vidant-Bertie Hospital Directors Council. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

CADA Board

After some discussion, Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to appoint James Peele to the CADA Board upon his submission of a Board Appointment Application. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda items C-1 thru C-3, C-5, C-6, C-7, C-8- C-9, C-11 as presented. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

1. **Minutes** for Regular Session 11-16-15, Closed Session 11-16-15, and Work Session 11-16-15

2. **Bonds** held for Bertie County officials (Sheriff, Finance Officer, Tax Administrator, and Register of Deeds) as required per NCGS §58-72-20:

The bonds of the officers named in G.S. 58-72-10 shall be carefully examined on the first Monday in December of every year, and if it appears that the security has been impaired, or for any cause become insufficient to cover the amount of money or property or to secure the faithful performance of the duties of the office, then the bond shall be renewed or strengthened, the insufficient security increased within the limits prescribed by law, and the impaired security shall be made good; but no renewal, or strengthening, or additional security shall increase the penalty of said bond beyond the limits prescribed for the term of office.

Commissioner Lee made a **MOTION** to approve the bonds as presented. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

3. **Fees Report** – November 2015

4. **Release Journal** – November 2015

5. **Agreement** with Springsted as the County vendor a job classification and salary study replacing The Mercer Group which was originally recommended and approved by the Board

6. **Declaration** of service weapons as surplus property, and authorize sale to retiring Sheriff's Office staff

- Edwin "Ed" Pittman
Sig P9229, 40 caliber, with the Serial Number of AM74094.

- Carl Hoggard
Sig P9229, 40 caliber, with the Serial Number of AM74085.

7. **Resolution** honoring the service of Cooperative Extension Director, Richard Rhodes

**RESOLUTION HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF COOPATIVE EXTENSION
DIRECTOR, RICHARD RHODES**

THAT, WHEREAS, Richard Rhodes, Bertie County Cooperative Extension Director, will retire on December 31, 2015, after 13 years of outstanding and meritorious service to Bertie County, and 27 years to the State of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Richard began his career with the County on October 1, 2002; and

WHEREAS, as a result of his diligent work and demonstrated dedication to the citizens of Bertie County, he has assisted in various projects including: the implementation of an Energy Fair program in order raise conservation awareness, an on-farm research initiative for test crops, and has participated in countless meetings with local tobacco, grain, peanut, and cotton growers regarding yearly market changes, as well as assisting in a County Administration and Courthouse beautification project in conjunction with the Master Gardner's of Bertie County; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rhode's contributions have spanned outside of the Cooperative Extension office to assist in the erection of a law enforcement monument honoring fallen officers from the local area, as well as became a representative for the NC STEM Teachers Education Program charged with attracting students back to the area upon completion of college studies; and

WHEREAS, throughout his many years of service, Richard has served the people of this County with dedication, passion, and enthusiasm; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Bertie County Board of Commissioners, do hereby extend to Richard Rhodes our sincere and grateful appreciation for his dedicated service to Bertie County and to the State of North Carolina, our congratulations on his well-earned retirement, and our best wished to him for continued success, happiness, and good health in the years to come.

Adopted this 7th day of **December**, 2015.

8. **Review** of residency policy for Department Heads and confirmation that position of Cooperative Extension is covered by this policy

DISCUSSION

Cancelation of December 21, 2015 meeting due to Christmas Holiday

The Board came to a consensus to cancel the December 21, 2015 meeting. The Board will not meeting again until January 4, 2015.

Pending Items/Updates

County Manager Sauer asked the Board to return to a matter that they had previously discussed in the earlier work session regarding grant writer, Emily Miller.

After some discussion, Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve the 12 month initial agreement at a cost of \$2,500 per month for grant services which will be paid via the current Economic Development budget. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Wesson informed the public present of an agreement with the local, non-profit organization of Blue Jay Recreation. He stated that the County would be seeking additional grant funding for funds to renovate and enhance the current recreational area in the Blue Jay Community. The enhancements would include a walking track, picnic pavilion, and a new baseball field.

He also informed all of those present that he was now a member of the NCACC Strategic Plan Committee and that he would bring forth information as it becomes available.

Vice Chairman Bazemore thanked the public present for electing her to the Board, and encouraged all citizens to bring forth their concerns when they arise.

Chairman Trent stated that he appreciated the opportunity to serve as Chairman and he is excited for what's to come for the County.

Commissioner Lee requested Ms. Miller's assistance with a game land grant, as well as announced a free dental event that will take place on April 1st-2nd in Kill Devil Hills. The event would offer free dental services including partial dentures, cleanings, and other procedures. The event is being hosted by Missions for Mercy.

Commissioner White reported that the Perrytown Herring Supper went well this year, and he thanked Mr. Steve Biggs for all of his recent work regarding the new beach access property, as well as for other endeavors.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS

The County Manager gave no remarks at this time.

COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORTS

The County Attorney gave no remarks at this time.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Lee made a **MOTION** to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) and NCGS 143-318.11(a)(4). Vice Chairman Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Commissioner White made a **MOTION** to return to Open Session. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

Economic Development Director, Steve Biggs, requested the Board's approval to seek proposals for a site evaluation and hotel feasibility study in Windsor. It was the consensus of the Board that Mr. Biggs proceed with the project immediately.

ADJOURN

Chairman Wesson adjourned the meeting at 6:35PM.

John Trent, Chairman

Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board