

Windsor, North Carolina
April 20, 2015
Regular Meeting

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00pm inside the Kelford Community Building located at 107 Broadway Street, Kelford, 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
 Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston
 Network Administrator Joe Wilkes
 Economic Development Director Steve Biggs
 Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper
 Finance Officer William Roberson

Gene Motley of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald and Thadd White of the Bertie Ledger-Advance were present from the media.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wesson welcomed all of those present and thanked them for their attendance. He thanked the Town of Kelford for hosting tonight’s meeting.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairman Lee led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Miles Davis of the ABC Board approached the Board to thank them for allowing him to speak about the “Save a Life Tour,” which is a partnership between the Bertie County ABC Board as well as the Bertie County Public School System.

The tour will visit the Bertie County High School gymnasium on May 1st beginning at 8:30 am. All students will participate in the activities provided, and the tour is designed to discourage young people from drinking and driving as well as texting and driving.

Mr. Davis stated that he had received word from Luther Snyder, Director of the “Stop Underage Drinking Campaign in North Carolina,” that Bertie County’s ABC Board was one of the most proactive boards that he had ever seen in the effort to eliminate under aged drinking.

Mr. Davis reiterated that the “C” in “ABC” stands for control and that the Bertie County ABC Board as a whole takes the responsibility of education and prevention very seriously.

He stated that this event was being provided to the County at no cost to the taxpayers.

Mr. Davis thanked the Board of Commissioners for their continued support.

Michael Freeman of the ABC Board encouraged the Commissioners to attend the event.

James Pugh stated that he hoped this event would encourage students to use common sense while driving and avoid distracted driving.

APPOINTMENTS

Aging Services expenditures for Bertie County presentation by Annette Eubanks, Aging Program Director, and Venita Thompson, Council on Aging Director

Annette Eubanks, Aging Program Director, and Venita Thompson, Council on Aging Director were present to report on the current Aging Services expenditures through March 2015.

It was reported that the County had underspent funds by 8% or more in the following areas: Level I Home Management, Congregate Nutrition, General Transportation, Medical Transportation, and Housing & Home Improvements.

The Board agreed that the citizens in need of these services were present and that it was very important to use the additional funding before the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Thompson was encouraged to network with local churches, the Bertie/Windsor Chamber of Commerce, as well as through the media to secure additional clientele for these services.

Chairman Wesson stated that finding the citizens in need of these services should be the highest priority, and that the Board would be looking for an update regarding this matter in late May or early June.

Marc Finlayson of the Highway 17 Association – update on the advocacy efforts to promote the Raleigh to Norfolk Interstate highway project

Mr. Marc Finalyson of the Highway 17 Association was present to provide an update to the Board on its advocacy efforts to promote the Raleigh to Norfolk Interstate highway project.

The Highway 17 Association’s priority for the 1-495 Coalition will be to secure, through Congressional legislation or Federal Highway Administration promulgation, a “future interstate” designation for the US 64 and US 17 corridors between Raleigh and Norfolk. At the same time, the organization is also looking to facilitate the planning, design, and permitting, the right of way construction of projects along the US 64 and US 17 corridors to bring those corridors up to interstate standards.

Additionally, Mr. Finalyson requested that the Board show its support for his organization’s initiatives by adopting a Resolution of Support.

The Board concurred and Mr. Finalyson assured the Board that he would have a proposed Resolution sent to the County in the near future for its consideration.

Presentation of appreciation for Norman & Jean Cherry, Walter “Pete” Jernigan, Jr., and the late Carolyn Jernigan

The Board presented Certificates of Appreciation to Norman Cherry, Jean Cherry, Walter “Pete” Jernigan, Jr., as well as to the late Carolyn Jernigan.

The above named individuals worked tirelessly to secure a Senior Nutrition Site in the Town of Kelford, the location of tonight’s meeting.

Venita Thompson, Council on Aging Director, thanked each individual for their dedication to the project, and stated that hundreds of senior citizens have taken advantage of the Nutrition Site, and do so on a regular basis.

Non-Emergency Transport update by Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper (including recommendation by County Attorney for improved collections – use of property liens)

Mitch Cooper, Emergency Services Director, was present to provide a report regarding Non-Emergency Transport.

Mr. Cooper reported that a total of 47 Advanced Life Support (ALS) calls were performed between January 16, 2015 and April 20, 2015.

He also reported that a total of 164 Basic Life Support (BLS) calls were performed between the same time frame of January 16, 2015 and April 20, 2015.

Commissioner Bazemore asked how the hiring process works for NET and EMS.

Mr. Cooper stated that applications are filled out and sent to the County Human Resources Officer, Carolyn Fornes, a file is started, and then the applicants are called into the office to complete various testing, as well as interviews.

Chairman Wesson expressed concerns regarding the diversity of employees between the two departments. He stated that he understood the need to hire qualified individuals, but encouraged Mr. Cooper to continue to find diverse candidates for employment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes for Regular Session 4-7-15

County Manager Sauer recommended this item for approval.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes for Regular Session 3-2-15. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Approve Closed Session minutes for 4-7-15

County Manager Sauer recommended this item for approval.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes for Closed Session 4-7-15 with the first portion being approved and released, and with the second portion being approved, but withheld until notified by the County Attorney. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Budget Amendment in the amount of \$25,000 for Water Department hydraulic model update approved by the Board on April 7, 2015

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the Budget Amendment as requested. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Discuss USDA/FSA County office lease with Assistant County Attorney, Jonathan Huddleston

Assistant County Attorney, Jonathan Huddleston, stated that things were in order with the USDA/FSA County office lease, and that if the Board is satisfied with the rental rate and length of the extension, he recommended the item for approval.

The contract would be extended through December 31, 2018.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the USDA/FSA County office lease extension to December 31, 2018. Vice Chairman Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Discuss and consider for approval the consolidation of four water districts and creating a single water utility fund, and review the Resolution adopting an agreement between Bertie County and the County Water Districts

County Manager Sauer reminded the Board that this item was discussed previously in June 2014, and that a formal resolution was needed to consolidate the Water Districts for accounting and budget purposes only.

Each Water District would still have its own separate identity for debt service obligations but the funding from all of the districts would be placed into one (1) account versus four (4) to simplify accounting processes.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to sign and approve the resolution to consolidate the four Water Districts and create a single water utility fund, and to approve the Resolution adopting an agreement between the County and the County Water Districts. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Trent informed the Board that contracts had recently been signed with various vendors involved in the renovation of the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail and those renovations are slated to begin on or before May 9th.

Commissioner Bazemore informed the Board that she would be bringing forward a potential funding resource, a TIGER Discretionary grant for transportation initiatives, at an upcoming meeting.

Vice Chairman Lee proposed that the County release Closed Session minutes to the County website upon review by the County Attorney.

Chairman Wesson informed the Board of a project called the "Youth Bertie Backpack Initiative." The program would allow some of the most impoverished students to receive a back pack full of community donated food items to take home with them to eat over the weekend. This initiative would also coincide with additional breakfast and lunch meals provided at each school to assist even more children in need.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS

County Manager Sauer informed the Board of a request received by Jo Ann Jordan, the organizer of the Bertie County Relay for Life event.

Ms. Jordan requested that the Board approve the Resolution declaring May 2015 as Relay for Life Month, as well as for the Board to become a sponsor of the event with a donation of \$500 as given in previous years.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the Resolution declaring May 2015 as Relay for Life Month, as well as for the Board to sponsor the event with a donation of \$500. Vice Chairman Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

County Manager Sauer also reminded the Board of its April 30, 2015 meeting with the four (4) Economic Development/Marketing firms that responded to the request for qualifications. Interviews will begin at 8:30 a.m., and County Manager requested that the Chairman recess this meeting until 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2015.

ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS

The Assistant County Attorney gave no remarks at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONTINUED

James Pugh recommended that since the Board of Commissioners appoints members to each board and committee, that the Board of Commissioners should receive reports from various members from each group on a periodic basis.

He stated that each member should be held accountable for their appointments and that it would allow the Commissioners to know each member, as well as to stay up to date on current matters within each board or committee.

The Board concurred.

RECESS

Chairman Wesson recessed this meeting until 8:30AM on April 30, 2015 at the Roanoke-Cashie River Center.

Ronald D. Wesson, Chairman

Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board