

Windsor, North Carolina
January 21, 2016
Regular Meeting

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00pm at the Powellsville Town Hall located at 106 E. Main Street in Powellsville, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: Ronald “Ron” Wesson, District I
Stewart White, District II
John Trent, District IV
Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore, District V

Absent: Tammy A. Lee, District III

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer
Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston
Finance Officer William Roberson
Information Technology Director Scott Pearce
Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper
Economic Development Director Steve Biggs
Water Superintendent Ricky Spivey

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Trent led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Town of Powellsville Mayor, Mr. Thomas Asbell, thanked the Commissioners for holding their meeting in the Powellsville community. He officially welcomed the County to the Town of Powellsville, and stated that he looked forward to this annual meeting each year.

There were no other public comments in this section.

APPOINTMENT

Pound the Sound review and video presentation by Windsor Chief of Police, and President of the Windsor Rotary Club, Todd Lane

Windsor Chief of Police, and President of the Windsor Rotary Club, Todd Lane was present to provide a brief presentation about the success of the first annual Pound the Sound event in June 2015.

The Board also viewed the event's highlight video on the Pound the Sound website.

Chief Lane also requested that Board consider sponsoring the 2016 event which will take place on Saturday, June 11, 2016.

After some discussion, the Board voted to increase their sponsorship from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to sponsor the 2016 Pound the Sound event in the amount of \$5,000. Chairman Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

The Board commended the work of the event organizers and stated that they were looking forward to this year's event.

Economic Development update by Economic Development Director, Steve Biggs

Economic Development Director, Steve Biggs, thanked the Board for their action and support during the announcement of the impending closure of the Golden Peanut facility in Aulander, and also reviewed the latest action that has been taken to assist those affected.

The plant is due to close on February 1, 2016.

Mr. Biggs reported that a job fair was held with participation from over a half dozen employers back on January 8th, and that a great number of the effected employees attended. He assured the Board that he was still in the process of following up about whether or not those candidates had success at securing additional employment.

Additionally, Mr. Biggs reported that two companies were currently interested in purchasing some of the Golden Peanut equipment as well as purchasing or renting the building for their production needs.

Also, Mr. Biggs stated that he was currently working with leaders on the State level to secure interest in a possible hotel location as well as about the latest highway project in Bertie County.

He stated that a hotel feasibility study will be completed in the near future, and that it would take approximately 4-6 weeks.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Discuss Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Board (BMRJ) term limits

The Board honored Mr. Henry J. Freeman's decade of service representing Bertie County on the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Board.

Additionally, Vice Chairman Bazemore made a **MOTION** to reappoint Lawrence Carter to the BMRJ Board. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Mid-East Commission

Chairman Trent thanked Commissioner Wesson for his dedicated service with the Mid-East Commission.

Chairman Trent made a **MOTION** to reappoint Ronald "Ron" Wesson to the Mid-East Commission Board as the County's Commissioner Representative. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chairman Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda collectively as presented. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

1. **Tax Release Journal** – December 2015
2. **Minutes** for Regular Session 1-4-16, Closed Session for 1-4-16, and Town Hall 1-5-16
3. **Resolution** in support of a regional back-up PSAP project with only Martin County
4. **Bid recommendation** for Farm Lane

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Review and consider approval of proposed travel credit card policy

The Board discussed a proposed travel credit card policy for both Commissioners and County staff.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve the policy as presented. Vice Chairman Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Discuss billing policy recommendations for water customers, and possibly the extension of the window for delinquent water bills

After a discussion took place at the Board’s Town Hall meeting on January 5, and after additional discussion with Water Department staff, Commissioner White made a **MOTION** to approve the recommended billing schedule as presented below. Vice Chairman Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

The new schedule is detailed here:

Ricky K. Spivey, Sr.
Water System Superintendent

**BERTIE COUNTY
WATER DEPARTMENT**

POST OFFICE BOX 487
WINDSOR, NORTH CAROLINA 27983
(252) 794-5350
Operation Building: (252) 794-4427
Fax: (252) 794-5327



January 15, 2016

The penalty for the water bills will be due 5 days after the due date of the water bill. The due date for District I & III is the 15th of the month. The due date for District II & IV is the 30th of the month.

Consider recommendation to write off water bills resulting from faulty meters in Lewiston-Woodville per earlier discussion for Account Number's 077838 and 077862

County Manager Sauer reported that upon further investigation, credits were owed to 2 customers for water charges that they were inaccurately charged for due to faulty meters that have since been replaced.

Vice Chairman Bazemore made a **MOTION** to credit \$130.50 to Account Number 077838 as well as a credit of \$268.41 to Account Number 077862. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Commissioner Wesson emphasized that citizens continue to report any concerns that they have regarding their water bills, and also inquired about a third account which showed that the current meter was running backwards and forwards.

Water Superintendent, Ricky Spivey, assured the Board that this account was being investigated.

Additionally, Vice Chairman Bazemore inquired about the request that was made about placing a water bill drop box in some of the municipalities to assist citizens in the depositing of their monthly water bills.

County Manager Sauer stated that he had talked to the Water Department about this request, but that due to state regulations requiring daily bank deposits, he did not think it would be a possibility to have Water Department staff retrieve those bills, and still comply with the NC General Statutes.

Mr. Sauer stated that he hoped the extension of the delinquent deadline would assist citizens more effectively to where a drop box would not be needed.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS

County Manager Sauer gave updates regarding new approval funding just received for the Water Districts.

Water District IV was recommended for a \$500,000 principal forgiveness (grant) and a total financing package of \$1,678,550.

He reported that in the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund category, Bertie County's application was rated #1 having scored the highest in the DWSRF 26 projects recommended for approval.

He stated that this is great news for the Board's efforts to strengthen the water system's aging infrastructure.

Additionally, Water District II was successful in receiving funds for the SCADA system improvements with a loan of \$1,339,350 at 1.95 % over 20 years.

Mr. Sauer reported that when these projects are added to the Water District III USDA Rural Development project in the amount of \$3,305,000 which was approved in August 2015, Bertie County will be set to complete the SCADA telemetry system as proposed in the Green Engineering evaluation report, plus make several line extensions and upgrades—and the merger with Roxobel.

Mr. Sauer stated that the challenge now will be to present these projects to the NC Local Government Commission this spring for review and approval since LGC concurrence is required on any borrowing that exceeds \$500,000.

Lastly, Mr. Sauer assured the Board that the plan is coming together as originally proposed, and the debt service will be more than offset by the 650 new customers (South Windsor, Lewiston-Woodville and Roxobel) plus the cost savings by eliminating the analog telephone charges (\$50,000 per year) when the old telemetry system is replaced with SCADA.

The projections demonstrated that the financing was viable without any grant contributions, and the \$1,067,000 grant from USDA Rural Development and the \$500,000 grant from NC Drinking Water State Revolving Fund both strengthen the fiscal viability for the Bertie County Regional Water system.

County Manager Sauer thanked the Board for its leadership, as well as commended the technical guidance of Green Engineering and the hard work of the Water Department, Finance Staff and Legal Team.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Wesson discussed how blessed we are in the County for the cleanliness of our drinking water, and stated that it was such an important asset. He also discussed the need for middle income housing for local teachers, prison staff, and other individuals in need of local housing. He stated that he was working closely with an individual who could provide resources and contacts in financing a facility in the area.

Vice Chairman Bazemore reported that a request for proposals for at risk youth was currently open and that proposals could be forwarded to Laree Cherry, Chair of the Bertie County JCPC Board. She also reported that per her latest Department of Social Services Board meeting that a Child Support Agent was now located in the Bertie DSS Office. She also presented a couple of items that she would like addressed at the Board’s upcoming work session on Thursday, January 28, 2016.

Commissioner White thanked the Town of Powellsville for hosting and also commended Scotch Hall Preserve and the Windsor Rotary Club for their organization of the first annual Pound the Sound event. He stated that he was excited for this year’s event as well.

Before the close of the meeting, Finance Officer, William Roberson, requested that the Board approve a needed budget amendment (#16-07).

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve Budget Amendment #16-07. Vice Chairman Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

The Budget Amendment reads as follows:

BUDGET AMENDMENT

16-07

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| | INCREASE | | INCREASE |
| 10-0025-4433-08 | \$ 45,000 | 10-4330-5398-99 | \$ 45,000 |

TO SETUP BUDGET FOR EM - HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| | INCREASE | | INCREASE |
| 81-0090-4991-99 | \$ 61,870 | 81-9501-5399-00 | \$ 61,870 |

TO APPROPRIATE PHONE FUND BALANCE - TO INSTALL FIBER TO NEW SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Approved 1/21/16

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments in this section.

RECESS

Chairman Trent recessed the meeting until 9:00AM on Thursday, January 28, 2016 at the Roanoke-Cashie Convention Center

John Trent, Chairman

Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board