

**Windsor, North Carolina
May 7, 2018
REGULAR MEETING**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regular meeting today inside the Commissioners Room, 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 Tinkham
County Attorney Lloyd Smith
Finance Officer William Roberson
Network Administrator Joe Wilkes
ICMA/NCACC Management Fellow Dominique Walker

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bazemore called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Lee led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Marie Hendricks of 720 US 13 North in Windsor was present to reiterate her concern about the stability of her home near the new high school. She stated that she believes the home facing structural damage due to the construction needs that were present during the school's building phase. She also mentioned that she was dissatisfied with the response she has received so far from the building's engineering firm, and she strongly requested a commissioner see her home for themselves and to assist her in any way possible. Chair Bazemore asked that she leave her contact information with the Clerk to the Board and stated that she would see to it that someone from the County Board of Commissioners or pertinent staff visits her home to see the damages first hand.

Nancy Harden of Old US 17 N in Windsor presented her concerns about the Hardentown convenience site. In a letter addressed to the Board, she discussed the presence of severe potholes at the entrance of the site, as well as on the grounds of the convenience site. The site is also reportedly very small and avoiding potholes is not an option. She also mentioned that the site does not seem to be large enough to handle the amount of traffic turn into the entrance which makes it also very difficult for cars to exit the site. She respectfully asked for the Board's assistance in forwarding these concerns to the appropriate individuals to hopefully remedy the problems. Lastly, she requested that the Board consider speaking with NCDOT about the possible addition of a caution light at the intersection of Old US 17 North and the new 13/17 bypass, and that she felt the current state of the intersection was unsafe.

Caleb Eller, representing the Peanut RPO Board, was present to introduce himself as the area's representative. He discussed his background and asked for the Board's patience as he assumed his current position in January. Commissioner Lee commended Mr. Eller and stated that since January, Mr. Eller had "hit the ground running" and was doing a great job.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Bazemore called for a motion to approve the agenda as prepared. Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the agenda as prepared. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS

(1) Order of the Long Leaf Pine – presented to Wayne Attkisson, D.D.S.

This item was deferred until June 4, 2018.

(2) Opportunity Zone presentation by Mary Kelley, NC Office of State Budget and Management

Mary Kelley of the NC Office of State Budget and Management was present to unveil Governor Roy Cooper's newest initiative entitled, "Hometown Strong." The program's goal is to better connect rural communities with their state legislature, and therefore, additional state resources for growth and needed improvements.

In printed out slides, Ms. Kelley discussed the initiative's core principles and the importance of "community focused partnerships." Maps of the "opportunity zones" submitted on behalf of Bertie County were reviewed and the opportunity zone that was certified is the Aulander and Snake Bite area.

After some discussion, the Board and County Manager inquired if this zone could be changed in the future. At this time, Ms. Kelley mentioned that there was no guarantee that a change could be made, but that the Board could draft a resolution discussing an area that they feel would be better suited as an opportunity zone.

The Board agreed that it would be beneficial to invite Ms. Kelley back to an upcoming work session to continue discussing this initiative.

(3) YMCA Annual Report presentation by Executive Director, Casey Owens

Casey Owens, Executive Director of the Bertie County YMCA, presented a brief annual report to the Board, as well as showed a short video which showcased the year's best children's activities and sports teams.

Mr. Owens also discussed the various camps that the Bertie County funding allotment is used to provide including Campy Happy, Aulander Hoops, and mental health initiatives for kids.

In summary, 400 children participated in the Bertie YMCA basketball league, 34 participated in cheerleading, and that volunteers are always needed to coach the various sports teams.

Mr. Owens thanked the Board their continued support, and the Board commended Mr. Owens for his hard work and dedication to the youth and family of Bertie.

(4) FY2018-2019 Budget Presentation by Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Catherine Edmunds

Dr. Catherine Edmunds, Superintendent, presented an overview of academic performance for each school and noted several program highlights for the most recent academic year.

Finance Officer Lisa Nowlin reviewed the findings of the June 30, 2017 audit and explained the Board of Education's progress in addressing the five-year deficit reduction plan.

The Board of Commissioners praised the school leadership and the Board of Education for their diligence in addressing the financial condition of the school system.

The proposed FY2018-2019 school budget includes a request of \$3,027,671 for current expense and \$475,000 for capital outlay.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Voluntary Agricultural District Board

Commissioner Lee made a **MOTION** to reappoint the following individuals to the Voluntary Agricultural District Board that were recommended by Cooperative Extension Director, Billy Barrow: Blount Knowles, Tyrone James, George Perry, III. Vice Chairman Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

1. **Minutes** – Regular Session 4-16-18, Closed Session 4-16-18, Joint Session 4-16-18
2. **Fees Report** – April 2018
3. **Tax Release Journals** - April 2018
4. **Budget Amendment**
5. **Workforce Development Area Play** – FYI only.
6. **ARHS 2017 Annual Child Fatality Prevention Team Report** – FYI only.

The Board had no discussion about any of the items above. Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda in its entirety. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Review vehicle use policy for community partner organizations and priority use for County departments and sponsored programs

Commissioner Wesson began by stating that he was in favor of County staff or the Legal Team writing a vehicle use policy giving priority use for County departments and sponsored programs. However, he felt that it would not be unreasonable to allow outside organizations to use County Parks and Recreation vans for their purposes if they adhered to the rules of the policy, paid the required fee, secured a County employee driver, etc.

The Board briefly discussed the request for van use currently under consideration.

Commissioner Wesson reiterated that since the request has been made in a timely manner that he felt they should be accommodated if the vans were available on the date they are needed.

Commissioner Lee inquired with the County Attorney regarding the insurance policy and if the County would have coverage if outside groups were to use the vans.

County Attorney Smith mentioned that the County would be covered as long as a County employee accompanied each outside group, but that he strongly encouraged the Board “to draw a line” as to not open up the use of these vans for religious or political groups as such in other County facility policies (Senior Center).

To settle the matter of the current request for an outside group to rent the County Parks and Recreation vans on June 20th, Vice Chairman Wesson made a **MOTION** to grant the van use request on June 20th to the requestee. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion. There was continued discussion and concerns raised by Commissioner Lee regarding “insurance and liability limits.”

Chair Bazemore noted a motion was still **ON THE FLOOR** and **CALLED FOR A VOTE**.

Commissioner Trent and Vice Chairman Wesson voted **IN FAVOR** of the motion. Chair Bazemore then called for those opposed. Commissioner Lee and Commissioner White voted **AGAINST** the motion. A **SPLIT-VOTE** of 2-2 remained on the floor.

Chair Bazemore broke the tie **IN FAVOR** of the request. The **MOTION PASSED** in a 3-2 vote.

There was no further discussion on this matter.

Review Republic Services franchise renewal timetable and discuss proposed calendar for public hearings

County Attorney, Lloyd Smith, briefly discussed the need for a public hearing sometime in the month of July so that the Board could meet the needed requirements in considering a franchise renewal with Republic Services.

County Manager Sauer explained the need to meet soon with Republic Services to review the franchise amendment and landfill host agreement extension which requires action before October 2018.

The Board was not ready to move forward with additional discussion of this item and deferred until the next Board Work Session.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** for this item to be discussed at the next Work Session. Vice Chairman Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

NC Local Government Commission pending action items:

- a. Changes to pre-audit certification requirements for electronic obligations and payments**
- b. Uniform guidance procurement standards effective July 1, 2018**

These items were simply informational for now and they would need to be placed on an upcoming Work Session agenda for future discussion.

Discuss latest site alternatives for joint Bertie County Public Library/Cooperative Extension facility

The Board continued its discussion on new potential sites for the joint use Cooperative Extension and Public Library facility. Ultimately, County staff has been in contact with several land owners about different properties for sale in Windsor, but conditions have not been ideal in order to move forward with an option to purchase.

At this time, County staff briefly brainstormed with the Board on new prospective sites including an 8-acre lot located at South King Street and Lancaster Street in Windsor. The Board also may consider a County owned property where the old DSS and Health Department Buildings stand vacant.

The Chair direct County staff and the Legal Team to reach out to land owners to gauge their level of interest in selling.

Discuss recommendations by the Planning Board pertaining to a height restriction ordinance at the Tri-County Airport

County Manager Sauer stated that this item is informational for now, and that many counties around our area have moved forward with a similar ordinance.

Commissioner Lee noted that since she sits on the Tri-County Airport Authority Board that she could provide this information and recommendation to that Board for their review.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS

Mr. Sauer noted that Governor Cooper's visit could possibly be postponed, but no further word has been received.

COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORTS

County Attorney Smith briefly reviewed an item that has recently surfaced from 2007 regarding Wayne Spruill and access to Jasper Bazemore Avenue.

The County owns a narrow strip of land between the road pavement and the corner lot on King Street which currently prohibits access from the Jasper Bazemore Avenue. A recommendation will be forthcoming to resolve this matter.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments during this session.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

Chair Bazemore

Chair Bazemore briefly discussed figures she had received at the latest North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) meeting regarding EMS Medicaid reimbursement and debt set off for Bertie County.

The NCACC annually reports on the EMS Enhanced Federal Medicaid Settlement Program and the Local Government Delinquent Debt Set Off Program for each county in the State.

According to this year's report, as of 2016, the EMS Enhanced Federal Medicaid Settlement program has returned funds to Bertie County in the amount of \$235,923. Since the program began, an amount of \$818,715 has been returned to the County.

The EMS Enhanced Federal Medicaid Settlement Program is an annual cost reporting program that allows for reimbursement of a portion of a participating units annual operation cost as they relate to Medicaid eligible emergency ambulance services. This program is administered by the NCACC as well as the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

Also, Chair Bazemore discussed funding that had been returned to the County for debt set off purposes via the Local Government Delinquent Debt Setoff program. It was listed that in 2017, a total of \$11,866 had been returned to the County, and for the life of the program, an amount of \$1,097,000 had been dispersed to the County for delinquent debt purposes.

Commissioner Trent

Commissioner Trent announced that construction on the new EMS Building was slated to begin on June 4th and that construction should not exceed 160 days, but updates would be provided as they are received.

Commissioner Lee

Commissioner Lee discussed confirmation that she had received from Henry Joyner of the Tri-County Airport Authority. She stated that she was happy to announce the approval from the Northeast Division of Aviation of \$800,000 for the construction of a new airport terminal. This was the maximum amount that could have been secured for the project.

She also reminded all of those present about Friday, May 19th being Relay for Life Day in Bertie County at the old Bertie High School.

Commissioner White

Commissioner White gave no remarks at this time.

Vice Chairman Wesson

Vice Chairman Wesson announced that a charitable trust, the Bertie-Hertford Community Foundation, had received an endowment fund to cover 1 Bertie project, as well as 1 Hertford project. The Bertie project selected was the Blue Jay Recreation Park. The amount has not yet been disclosed but will grow each year as long as the Recreation Park is in existence.

He also announced that he had just been sworn in as Vice President of the Mid-East Commission.

ADJOURN

Chair Bazemore **ADJOURNED** the meeting at 8:15 PM.

Ernestine Bazemore, Chair

Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board