

**Windsor, North Carolina**  
**May 6, 2019**  
**REGULAR SESSION**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met 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  
Greg Atkins, District II  
Tammy A. Lee, District III  
John Trent, District IV  
Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore, District V

Absent: None

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
County Attorney Lloyd Smith  
Finance Officer William Roberson  
Assistant to the County Manager Dominique Walker  
Economic Development Director Steve Biggs  
Register of Deeds Annie Wilson

Junior Commissioners: Qudre Joyner  
Najella Williams

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

## **CALLED TO ORDER**

Chair Trent called the meeting to order.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INVOCATION**

Dr. Nayland Collier gave the Invocation and Commissioner Atkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Vivian Clark of Windsor provided remarks to Board regarding her discussions with County Manager Scott Sauer and Economic Development Director Steve Biggs about Mid-East Commission grant applications made by Mr. Randy Cherry. She requested that Mr. Cherry's application be reconsidered and be compensated. Ms. Clark also discussed an incident that occurred near Mr. Cherry's business. She stated that inspectors were called on Mr. Cherry's business and that he was "targeted". She shared that Mr. Cherry has lost business due to the closing of his facility. She closed stating that enforcement of building codes should be applied equally across the state and for Mr. Cherry to have a fair and just resolution in resolving this issue.

Mr. Randy Cherry of Aulander provided background on his business, Chief's on the River, to the Board. He shared that due to coding issues, he was not able to open as a sports grille. Mr. Cherry shared that Chief's was inspected as flea market but rents his facility for events and private parties. He discussed with the Board a past incident off that occurred off the premises of his business. He shared that the fire marshal visited his facility and was told that he had thirty days to fix fire code issues. Mr. Cherry also shared that his building was closed down after he was told he had thirty days to fix issues. Additionally, Mr. Cherry stated that an error was made in calculating the square footage of his facility by the building inspector. He also shared that the information provided by the building inspector was not what was told to him during the fire inspections. Subsequently, Mr. Cherry was told that he could only operate as a flea market not as a place for public access. Mr. Cherry expressed the financial burden he is facing. He shared that the Town of Windsor is in the process of cutting is parting. He shared that he feels "targeted" by these actions.

Commissioner Bazemore expressed her support of Mr. Cherry. County Attorney Smith shared reaching out to the head inspector in Raleigh about the issue about accommodating Mr. Cherry and the flexibility of the Board. Commissioner Wesson expressed his opinion on the issue and hopes to get an answer back from Raleigh about a solution. County Manager Scott Sauer that the Town of Windsor connected the County Inspections Department directly.

Mr. Jerry Cowand of Merry Hill expressed his opinion about the Road Safety & Maintenance Ordinance. He suggested the Board develop a policy procedure to clarify the Ordinance, possibly on the County website. Mr. Cowand also stated for the Board to apply the Ordinance equally and

fairly across the Board. He asked “Who can start the process of enforcement? Where in the process does the Board fix the road?” He shared that the Board already adopted the Ordinance and there needs to be transparency regarding enforcement. He thanked the Board for their work.

### **APPOINTMENTS and Reports**

#### **(1) Roanoke River Partners 20th Anniversary Presentation by Carol Shields**

Ms. Shields thanked the Board for their continued support of Roanoke River Partners. She gave an overview of Roanoke River Partners regional history. She shared that Roanoke River Partners are in support of the Rosenwald preservation. Ms. Shields provided outcomes and benefits of the Bertie County and Roanoke River Partners collaboration. She stated that there is a \$600,000 impact across the regional economy. She also shared educating local communities about the region’s historical significance and using that history for economic benefits. She shared that the organization received a \$25,000 grant to engage communities across the region about historical significance. Ms. Shields shared keeping organizations and communities aware and engaged in the work of the Roanoke River Partners. She shared the Board members from Bertie County that sit on Roanoke River Partners organization. She concluded by thanking the Board for their many years of support and partnership.

Commissioner Wesson shared that Bertie County has had the highest number of Rosenwald Schools.

#### **(2) ) Road Safety and Maintenance Ordinance – final reading**

County Manager Scott Sauer shared that the Ordinance has evolved with significant input by the public to include an appeals process. He expressed his support of incorporating a flow chart for explaining the Ordinance on the County’s website. Commissioner Wesson addressed the public about the Ordinance and its purpose. Chairman Trent concurred stating that fire chiefs are in favor of the Ordinance. Commissioner Bazemore expressed her opinion that private road owners should be responsible for fixing roads, not citizens. Commissioner Lee also shared that she is not convinced that there is a general statute the supports the Ordinance.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to vote to adopt the Ordinance. Vice-Chair Atkins **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** – 3 ayes and 2 nays.

Votes were as follows:           Ayes: Trent, Atkins, & Wesson  
  Nays: Bazemore & Lee

**(3) Martin County Community College EMS and Fire Department Training presentation by Carla Godwin, Coordinator of Emergency Management Services**

Ms. Godwin gave an overview of changes to the EMS program at community colleges across the state. She also provided an overview EMS program classes at Martin Community College. She stated that paramedics will have to have an associate's degree by 2023 if the proposed rule passes. Commissioner Wesson expressed that Bertie County has the "best EMS department in the state". He also shared that he will be sworn in to the Martin Community College Board of Directors. Chairman Trent shared that there is now representation at both Martin Community College and Roanoke-Chowan Community College.

**(4) NC COUNT Program review for 2020 Census by James Cofield, President and CEO of Cofield Properties, Inc.**

Mr. Cofield shared with the Board the intention of the NC Complete Count Commission to assist throughout NC for the 2020 census to ensure that the participation rate is as high as it can be. He stated that the county day for the 2020 census is April 1, 2020. Mr. Cofield provided an overview of benefits of census data. He shared participation risks in the County. He provided clarity regarding about the census count related to college students and jail inmates. He shared that there will be budgetary cuts by the U.S. Census Bureau. He also shared that there is an increase in trust when local community members serve as enumerators. He reiterated that it is in the interest of the Board and the County that every resident is counted for the census. Commissioner Lee expressed her experience being an enumerator and the importance of informing young people about the census.

**(5) YMCA Annual Update by Executive Director, Casey Owens**

Mr. Owens thanked the Board for their continued support. He gave an overview of the YMCA annual report and highlighted programs. Chairman Trent expressed his support of Mr. Owens and the work of the YMCA.

**(6) Poverty Commission update by Chair, Patricia Ferguson**

Mrs. Ferguson thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide an update on the Poverty Commission. She presented to the Board three phases of the Commission's work. Mrs. Ferguson recognized Assistant to the County Manager Dominique Walker for her work and commitment to the Commission. She gave an overview of the first phase of the Poverty Commission. Mrs. Ferguson gave an overview of the second phase of the Poverty Commission. She presented four key recommendations for the Board's consideration.

**BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

**ABC Board**

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to reappoint Miles Davis to the ABC Board. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Commission**

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to appoint Charles Smith to the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Commission. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **Latest Board Vacancy Advertisement – May 8<sup>th</sup>**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Approve Minutes for Joint Meeting 3-28-2019
2. Approve Regular Session Minutes for Regular Meeting 4-1-2019
3. Approve Closed Session Minutes for 4-1-2019 and 4-16-19
4. Approve Minutes for 4-16-2019 and 4-24-2019 Special Meetings
5. Tax Release Journal- March 2019
6. Register of Deeds Report – May 2019
7. CPTA Agreement for Transportation Services
8. Official Bid – Meals on Wheels Contract, July 1 to June 30, 2020 – Trumps Restaurant
9. Approve FY 2019-2020 JCPC Community Programs for funding plan

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve items 1 through 9 of the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

## **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **CENSUS 2020 Committee Update**

Assistant to the County Manager Dominique Walker shared with the Board a list of interested persons for the Complete Count Committee.

## **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

**Commissioner Lee** shared her experience attending the Don't Drink and Drive program at Bertie High School. She commended the ABC Board for their work. She also shared attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Sergeant Callohand at the Court House. Commissioner Lee shared that she will be attending County Assembly Day on May 8, 2019.

**Commissioner Atkins** had no reports at this time.

**Commissioner Wesson** reported that the Teacher Housing Initiative has passed in the House of Representatives giving Bertie County authority to build teacher housing. He shared that the Coalition of the Cross have received a multi-hundred thousand dollar grant by the Duke Endowment to fix homes in northeastern NC. The organization is looking for a building in Bertie County for permanent residence.

**Commissioner Bazemore** shared that on April 29, 2019 she was sworn in on the Trillium Governing Board in Greenville, NC. She reported her attendance at the junior-senior Beta club induction at the Bertie High School on April 30, 2019. Commissioner Bazemore shared that there will be an opening for the Tall Glass of Water property for the public on June 29, 2019. In closing, she expressed her support to Mr. Randy Cherry.

**Chairman Trent** shared that at the request of Junior Commissioner Qudre Joyner, the County is moving forward to access a pedestrian tunnel or similar infrastructures for safe student crossing NC Hwy 13 at Bertie High School and the BHS Athletic Complex.

### **JUNIOR COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

Qudre Joyner invited the Board to the Bio-Technology Symposium and lunch hosted by the Bertie Early College Bio-Technology class on May 13, 2019.

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

The County Manager had no remarks at this time.

### **COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS**

The County Attorney had no remarks at this time.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments at this time.

### **RECESS**

Chair Trent **RECESSED** the meeting until 9:00 AM on Monday May 20, 2019 where the Board will hold a work session.

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John Trent, Chairman

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Assistant to the County Manager, Dominique Walker