

Windsor, North Carolina
March 30, 2020
SPECIAL MEETING

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for an SPECIAL MEETING today inside the Commissioners Room, 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was hosted partially in person, and partially via Zoom (conference call). The following members were present or absent:

Present: Ronald “Ron” Wesson, I
Greg Atkins, District II
Tammy A. Lee, District III
John Trent, District IV (Zoom)
Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore, District V

Absent: None

Special Partners Present (Zoom): Windsor Mayor James Hoggard
Windsor Town Administrator Allen Castelloe

Staff Present: Interim County Manager Juan Vaughan, II.
County Attorney Lloyd Smith
Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper
Economic Development Director Steve Biggs
Finance Director William Roberson

Staff Present (Zoom): Clerk to the Board Sarah Tinkham

Cal Bryant of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald and Thadd White of the Bertie-Ledger Advance were present from the media via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wesson called the Work Session to order. He welcomed the limited staff present and thanked those on the phone via Zoom for their participation. Commissioner John Trent was recognized as one of the participants via phone, and

noted that the Board would be checking in with Commissioner Trent throughout today's discussion.

It was also encouraged that any questions be submitted via the Zoom chat feature. All questions will be answered periodically throughout the meeting.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Wesson gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

SPECIAL MEETING

Chairman Wesson noted that the purpose of today's meeting was to address the following items:

Resolution – levy an additional one-quarter percent (.25%) county sales and use tax effective July 1, 2020

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the resolution in order to levy an additional one-quarter percent (.25%) county sales and use tax which would become effective on July 1, 2020. The new revenue would be utilized as supplements for public school system employees. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Additional consideration/discussion of a stay at home order due to COVID-19 pandemic

Chair Wesson requested that Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, provide an updated on the COVID-19 pandemic.

A current confirmed case count of six (6) is in place for Bertie County. He noted that he was continuously monitoring cases in the surrounding counties. The peak of new cases is expected to be reached in mid-April.

Chair Wesson complemented emergency responders as well as the Bertie COVID-19 Taskforce for their hard work in ensuring the public is informed on a regular basis.

In discussions with the legal team, there is no need for Bertie County to approve its own stay at home order, and that Governor Roy Cooper's order is sufficient. The recommendation to supply a simple set of bullet points about the order would be immensely helpful.

Consent Agenda items from March 16, 2020

- Approve Minutes for Regular Meeting 2-10-20

This item was deferred.

- Approve Minutes for Work Session 2-18-20

This item was deferred.

- Approve Minutes for Closed Session 2-18-20

This item was deferred.

- Approve Register of Deeds Fees Report – February 2020
- Budget Amendments
 - Budget for SHIIP grant
 - Increase of Register of Deeds Excise Tax
- Tax Release Journal – January 2020

Commissioner Lee made a **MOTION** to approve the Register of Deeds Fees Report for February 2020, Budget Amendments, and the Tax Release Journal from January 2020. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

- March 13th minutes

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the March 13, 2020 minutes. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this time, Chairman Wesson noted the public comment period was now open for this meeting.

A citizen via Zoom asked what was being done to assist senior centers and those that are home bound. Any seniors who are in need are asked to contact the Council on Aging Office at 794-5315. Programs are in place to deliver meals to seniors who qualify and the Office also serves as a gateway to other services that could be available in the region.

There were no other questions submitted via Zoom.

Chair Wesson closed the public comment period for this meeting.

Upcoming Grant Application Components

Commissioner Lee made a **MOTION** to approve \$52,500 for technical assistance needs for the TGOW project, Phase #1. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Commissioner Lee made a **MOTION** to approve the Parks & Recreation Master Plan through the year 2028. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

Commissioner Tammy Lee

Commissioner Lee noted that she had received a question from the Bertie River Fest Committee about weather or not the committee should continue to plan for the June 6th event. She also encouraged everyone to stay safe and healthy, and to only receive their COVID-19 information from reliable sources.

There was consensus from the Board that planning could continue, but that no financial commitments should be made at this time.

Commissioner Ernestine Bazemore

Commissioner Bazemore noted that recommendations were being made on the State level to have utility disconnections frozen, and that all local entities should consider the same if they have not done so already.

She also encouraged the public to stay safe and to act as if they have already tested positive for COVID-19, and to stay at home to avoid potentially infecting others.

Chairman Ron Wesson

The Chairman noted that the County had recently received Perdue Farm's current health protocols which were mentioned in the Board's meeting on March 26th. The Board is free to provide any additional recommendations.

He encouraged all citizens to take this pandemic seriously, and that all citizens need to do their part to keep themselves and the community healthy and safe during this uncertain time.

Commissioner Greg Atkins

Commissioner Atkins had no remarks at this time.

INTERIM COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS

Interim County Manager, Juan Vaughan, II thanked the Board for their guidance during this rapidly changing time.

He also thanked Bertie County staff for their hard work during this time, and thanked citizens for their continued efforts to follow the new guidelines in place for limited the spread of COVID-19.

ADJOURN

Chair Wesson adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:45 AM.

Ronald Wesson, Chairman

Sarah Tinkham, Clerk to the Board