

Windsor, North Carolina
May 10, 2021
REGULAR SESSION

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session meeting today inside the Commissioners Room, 106 Dundee St, 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, District I (Zoom)
Greg Atkins, District II
Tammy A. Lee, District III
Ronald “Ron” Roberson, District V
John Trent, District IV

STAFF PRESENT: County Manager Juan Vaughan, II
Finance Director William Roberson
Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston
HR/Risk Management Director Cortney Ward (Zoom)
Clerk to the Board LaShonda Cartwright (Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lee welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was provided by Commissioner Trent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 MINUTE LIMIT PER SPEAKER)

Clerk to The Board LaShonda Cartwright stated she had not received any public comments.

Chair Lee asked if there were any public comments from the audience present and there were no public comments from the audience.

CPTA ANNUAL REPORT PRESENTATION BY PAMELA PERRY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director Pamela Perry shared a presentation via zoom. Ms. Perry began with a report of the FY2019-2020 Annual Report. Director Perry reviewed the balance sheet with the total for assets and liabilities, which each totaled \$2,646,010.29. Director Perry stated the total for the revenues was \$1,172,942.57 and the expense disbursement was \$1,355,344.05.

Ms. Perry then announced the FY2019-2020 CPTA Board of Directors.

Director Perry stated they were able to obtain the CARES Grant funding, which has been very helpful during the pandemic.

Director Perry also stated they have also received some funding through a DHHS grant that allows them to provide transportation for individuals who are interested in receiving COVID vaccinations.

Director Perry finally thanked the Board for all their continuous support of CPTA.

Director Perry advised that she would send the flyer and any other correspondence to Clerk to the Board LaShonda Cartwright.

**BERTIE COUNTY SCHOOLS UPDATE AND BUDGET REQUEST
BY DR. OTIS SMALLWOOD, SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Smallwood came before the board along with some guests and brought greetings from the Bertie County school system. Dr. Smallwood thanked the board for their help with the funding used to supplement staff's salaries.

Dr. Smallwood provided a presentation along with handouts for his budget request. Dr. Smallwood presented to the board the strategic plan for the next four years.

Dr. Smallwood discussed their fund balance and stated that as of the last fiscal year, they are back on the positive side and are in pretty good financial shape.

Dr. Smallwood stated that the LGC does not require them to have a specific amount in fund balance. However, Dr. Smallwood stated he'd like to see ten percent of operating costs in fund balance, so the is to have approximately \$1.8 Million. Dr. Smallwood stated there is currently \$1.3 Million in fund balance.

Dr. Smallwood read a statement from their auditor Mr. Dail Smith. The school system has proven to improve its financial condition over the years and the school appears to be in sound financial condition as of June 30, 2020.

Dr. Smallwood then stated they are already starting their preliminary audits for this school year.

Dr. Smallwood then gave the board some highlights and achievements of the school.

Commissioner Wesson thanked Dr. Smallwood for allowing them to use the storage space for the backpack giveaway.

Chair Lee thanked the school and staff for doing a remarkable job with keeping the school going.

Commissioner Roberson thanked the Bertie County Board of Education for the outstanding job they are doing.

TGOW UPDATES BY PROJECT CONSULTANT ROBIN PAYNE

Project Consultant Robin Payne came before the Board of Commissioners in person with an update on the County's beach front property, commonly referred to as TGOW. Robin stated she has been meeting with Vines regularly and they are getting closer to getting their construction drawings started.

Robin stated constructing a well is a part of Phase I. Economic Development Director Steve Biggs stated that having access to water will be a relatively expensive component of this project.

Robin stated that Vines is seeing about a seven percent increase in labor and materials, but they really won't know until the project is put out for bid.

Robin informed the Board that they do not have any flexibility in maneuvering the project because they are committed to their grant/grantors. The scope can't be changed at this point.

Robin asked the Board, "If bids start coming in during October with that seven percent increase, which is about \$65,000-\$70,000, will Bertie be able to come up with that seven percent figure?"

Commissioner Trent stated that they could not answer that question until they get through June.

Chair Lee stated that they couldn't answer that question until they see what the pot of money coming from the Federal government can be used for.

Robin stated to the board that Vines needed the flag whether to proceed with the construction drawings or not.

Chair Lee asked Robin if they needed a firm answer from them this evening.

Commissioner Trent asked Robin what is stopping Vines from doing the construction drawings.

Chair Lee asked if that was what they're being paid to do.

Commissioner Trent stated that they needed them to go ahead with the construction drawings.

Chair Lee stated that they really needed to decide on a name at this next work session.

Commissioner Roberson asked where they were with putting up the signs for the public. Robin's response to Commissioner Roberson was that she didn't think they were ready to put up signs yet. Chair Lee asked if they should wait for their official name.

Robin asked if they could wait until the next work session so that she can show them some signs and possible locations for placement.

Commissioner Wesson stated to Robin that his concern is regarding what is being done right now to keep the citizens interested in the project. Commissioner Wesson stated that we needed some kind of event at the beginning of this summer to remind citizens that the beach is still here.

Robin stated that they had some small events in mind if it was okay they could talk about it at the next work session.

TGOW SHORELINE STABILIZATION BY GEORGE WOODS, ENVIRONMENT PROFESSIONALS, INC

Mr. George Woods presented the board with a slideshow presentation about shoreline stabilization. Mr. Woods informed the board that he wanted to spend as much time as possible on his recommendations. Mr. Woods then introduced his two interns to the board and explained how they helped him research the information for the shoreline.

Mr. Woods stated to the Board that after much thought, they recommend going with the planting of vegetation option of stabilizing the shoreline. He recommended planting at the top of the hill with natural vegetation for area of about thirty feet back.

Mr. Woods also recommended that they build an offshore breakwater out of unsoft treated wood. That will not last long; but it will last long enough to plant and establish Cypress trees. can create

Mr. Woods stated the reason they recommend this action is because they understand the county would like to provide an unforgettable educational venue. This could be a great opportunity to join with your local college, your local high school kids, 4-H, and other organization to get them involved in creating these structures.

Mr. Woods stated that out of all the options discussed, the vegetation has the greatest chance of maintaining the bay of the beach.

Commissioner Wesson stated that he really loved the idea of getting some of the citizens involved especially the kids. He also stated that we have a great 4-H program under Cooperative Extension and they are always looking for projects. He thinks they would love to be a part of this. He also thinks this would be a great project for the Seniors to get involved in because they have to do Senior projects and this is a way that they can get credit as seniors for graduation.

Commissioner Roberson stated that he thinks that Mr. Woods has done a great job and this would be a good project for FFA.

Chair Lee asked to take a **MOTION** to go with Mr. Woods recommendation.

Commissioner Roberson made a **MOTION** to move forward with Mr. Woods' research and grant proposal towards this project. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **unanimous** decision.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS (B)

Chair Lee stated there were no board appointments at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA (C)

1. Approve Register of Deeds Fees Report – April 2021
2. Approve Tax Release Journal – April 2021
3. Official Bid – Meals on Wheels Contract, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 – Trumps Restaurant
4. Approve FY 2020-21 Discretionary Funding for Teen Court and Conflict Resolutions for JCPC
5. Approve FY 2020-21 Discretionary Funding for Children Matters – Bertie for JCPC
6. Approve FY 2021-2022 JCPC Community Programs County Funding Plan

Chair Lee took a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** Consent Agenda items 1-6.

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to **ACCEPT** Consent Agenda items 1-6. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **unanimous** decision.

7. Approve Resolution Approving the MOA Between the State of NC and Local Governments on Proceeds Relating to the Settlement of Opioid Litigation

Chair Lee turned the floor over to the county attorney for Consent Agenda item 7.

County Attorney Huddleston gave the board an update on how the funds of the Opioid settlement would be handled in the state of North Carolina. Attorney Huddleston stated there has not been a settlement reached yet but things are gradually moving in that direction.

Attorney Huddleston recommended putting this item on pause for now.

Chair Lee asked the board if they agreed with this.

The board formed a **CONSENSUS** in **AGREEMENT** with Attorney Huddleston's recommendation of not taking any action on that item at this time.

Chair Lee asked Commissioner Wesson if he was in favor of this.

Commissioner Wesson stated to Chair Lee that he was in favor of the pause.

DISCUSSION AGENDA (D)

1. Update on Ribbon Cutting Planning
 - a. Library & NC Cooperative Extension Facility
 - b. Blue Jays Recreation Center

County Manager Vaughan stated that at the last meeting the board voted to have the tentative date for the Library & NC Cooperative Extension Facility for Thursday, June 17th. County Manager Vaughan advised the Board that Golden Leaf contacted him and asked him if they would move the ribbon cutting to June 16th. County Manager Vaughan asked the Board if the date of June 16th would work for everyone.

The board responded by stating June 16th worked.

County Manager Vaughan stated the ribbon cutting would be set for June 16th at 10:00 AM.

County Manager Vaughan stated that the Blue Jay Recreation Center ribbon cutting was scheduled for Monday, June 14th and they are running into a couple of issues with that date. He advised that Maintenance Director Anthony Rascoe needs more time to take care of some items at the facility. County Manager Vaughan asked if the ribbon cutting could be rescheduled for Monday, June 28th at 10:00 AM.

The board agreed with both of the date changes.

2. Discussion of 2021 Bertie River Fest

County Manager advised the board that utilizing the food trucks for this event reduce the costs to host this event.

Chair Lee asked if they could set a date and see where the committee takes them with checking on the food trucks.

Commissioner Wesson advised that the committee should definitely check on the availability of the food trucks but not just here in the county. Commissioner Wesson stated that in addition to this, the committee should look into how we could have something nice that doesn't have to be expensive.

Chair Lee asked if there was an active committee or would they have to start from scratch and if so do they have time for all of that.

County Manager advised that there was a committee, but they have not been active for the last a year because of COVID-19. He stated that they could get a committee up and going easily.

Chair Lee advised that their staff works very hard and she doesn't want to put anything extra on them at this time. She advised that a less costly event would be nice to have.

Chair Lee stated let's see if they can get a committee together and see if they can come up with some plans if they are not already in place from what they were going to do before.

The board agreed with Chair Lee.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT (E)

Commissioner Roberson

Commissioner Roberson reported that he would like to remind everyone about the Saturday vaccinations for round two. Commissioner Roberson stated if you have not had round one, you will be able to get it on Saturday. They have four different locations and everyone is on board for this weekend. They will be at C.G. White from 9:00 AM until 12:30 PM.

Commissioner Roberson stated vaccinations will be given at Blue Jay Recreation Center from 9:00 AM until 12:30 PM, at the Windsor Community Building from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM, and at West Bertie Elementary School in Kelford from 1:00 PM until 12:00 PM.

Commissioner Trent

Commissioner Trent announced that Eddie Kane Steel has bought Golden Peanuts. They are a major steel corporation with a home office out of New Jersey. They have plants in Los Angeles California; Stantonsburg, VA; NC; and numerous other states.

Commissioner Wesson

Commissioner Wesson thanked all the commissioners and everyone in the county for being supportive while he recovers from having a major back surgery.

Commissioner Wesson then thanked Commissioner Roberson on his work for the community-based vaccination clinics coming up this weekend.

Commissioner Wesson stated that last week he had the opportunity to be on a national radio show that syndicated across the country. He stated that Emily Pilloton, who worked to build the Farmers Market for them, wrote a book entitled "Build It and They Will Come". This book is based on her experiences and will be turned into a movie. Commissioner Wesson stated that the movie will not be filmed here in Bertie, but it will be based off of that book.

Commissioner Wesson stated that this movie is going to talk about Bertie County and its attempts to engage students. He stated that he was happy to be on that program and talk about Bertie County and how it has evolved since then and some of the projects that we are working on here.

Chair Lee

Chair Lee advised that this afternoon she was on a call with (VOAD) Voluntary Organization in A Disaster. VOAD is attempting to reconstruct Bertie Interfaith Recovery Team. Chair Lee stated that they are asking for volunteers to join this group. She advised that they needed new members as president, vice president, and treasurer. It is an important group and they need some workers to be a part of it - people who love the county and want to help in the time of a disaster.

COUNTY MANGER'S REPORT (F)

County Manager Vaughan stated that he did not have any reports at this time.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS (G)

Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston stated he did not have any reports at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 MINUTES PER SPEAKER)

Clerk to The Board LaShonda Cartwright stated she had not received any public comments.

There were no public comments from the audience.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to go into **CLOSED SESSION** under NCGS §143-318.11(a)(6). Commissioner Roberson **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **unanimous** decision.

Commissioner Trent made the **MOTION** to come out of **CLOSED SESSION**. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Atkins. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **unanimous** decision.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to move the tax customer service representative position from a salary grade 59 to a salary grade 60, consistent with the similar customer service positions in the County. Commissioner Roberson **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **unanimous** decision.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to **ADJOURN** the meeting. Commissioner Atkins **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **unanimous** decision.