

Windsor, North Carolina  
September 7, 2021  
COMMISSIONERS MEETING

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for a regularly scheduled meeting today at 6:00PM inside the Commissioners Room, 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC. Because of 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  
Greg Atkins, District II  
Tammy A. Lee, District III  
Ronald “Ron” Roberson, District V  
John Trent, District IV (Zoom)

Staff Present: County Manager Juan Vaughan, II  
Assistant County Manager David Scarborough  
Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston  
Finance Director William Roberson

Staff Present (Zoom): Clerk to the Board LaShonda Cartwright

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Trent called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Ron Roberson gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 MINUTE LIMIT PER SPEAKER)**

Teresa Perry

Teresa Perry came before the Board and stated that she lives at 604 E. River St. in Colerain, NC. Ms. Perry then stated that on August 17<sup>th</sup> she got out of her vehicle to go to her mailbox and while doing so she forgot to put her vehicle in park. This caused her vehicle to proceed to roll back and while she was trying to stop her vehicle she got ran over by her vehicle.

Ms. Perry stated that she received multiple injuries due to being ran over by her vehicle so she then called the ambulance.

Ms. Perry further stated that when she called 911 the operator did not know where she was located and then she was informed by the 911 operator that there were no available ambulances in the county.

Ms. Perry stated that she was very dissatisfied with the services provided by 911 and there not being any ambulances available.

Ms. Perry's other complaint was that she had returned home one afternoon and there was no water at her residence. This prompted her to contact the Water Department which provided her with poor customer service. Ms. Perry further stated that the Water Department had credited the monies that she paid for a bill to another account but the issue was later corrected.

Ms. Perry then stated to the Board that she wanted to make them aware of these two situations.

Commissioner Atkins stated to Ms. Perry that they will investigate these two incidents further.

Commissioner Lee stated that she was aware of this incident and the ambulance service was extremely busy on that day.

Commissioner Wesson thanked Ms. Perry for bringing these two situations to their attention. Commissioner Wesson also stated that they would look into these two situations and try to prevent them from reoccurring.

Commissioner Lee then asked if there were any more public comments.

#### George Reichle

George Reichle came before the Board and stated that he lived at 1515 US 17 N in Windsor, NC. Mr. Reichle stated to the Board that he was a local Metal Detectorist and he received permission from the previous County Manager Scott T. Sauer to metal detect the local parks in the area.

George Reichle asked the Board for permission to continue to metal detect in the area. Mr. Reichle then offered his services to the county if they every needed anything or if the Sheriff Department needed assistance with locating anything they could use him.

Commissioner Lee stated that County Manager Vaughan would get back with Mr. Reichle and provide him with an answer. However, she did not see an issue with him metal detecting in the area.

Commissioner then asked the Clerk to the Board if there were any other public comments.

The Clerk to the Board stated there were no further public comments.

Commissioner Lee then reminded everyone attending the meeting that there would be another public comment section at the end of the meeting.

### **REPORTS & APPOINTMENTS (A)**

Update on Project Closeout of Library & NC Cooperative Extension Facility by Amber Idol & Dani Huff, MHA Works

Amber Idol stated she and Dani Huff were on the line. Amber Idol provided the Board with an update of the projects that they were currently working on. Amber Idol stated that these projects consisted of finishing up the landscaping and it should be finished up by the end of the month.

Amber Idol stated the some of the other items on the Punch List should have already been taken care of and she and Dani Huff plan to go back out to the facility when the contractors have completed everything and they will check off their list.

Amber Idol then stated that they then would turn that list over to Golden Leaf so that Golden Leaf will know that they are finished.

Amber Idol stated that the repairs to the pavement in the parking lot will be done. Amber Idol stated that she believes A.R. Chesson will be covering the charges for fixing the pavement.

Amber Idol then apologized to the Board for the process of completing the parking lot taking so long.

Commissioner Lee then thanked Amber Idol for everything that have done.

Presentation of 2020-2021 Settlement Reports and Charge of the 2021-2022 Tax Levy by Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea

Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea presented to the Board the 2020-2021 Tax Settlement. Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea stated to the Board that this would require a **MOTION** to accept the report. This is required by General Statue to enter the Insolvency List into the minutes of the Official Board.

Chair Lee asked the Board to take a **MOTION**.

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the Insolvency List. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Trent. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea stated to the Board next would be the presentation of the 2021-2022 Tax Levy. Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea stated this would give him permission to collect the current year taxes.

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** to allow Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea to Levy the current year taxes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Trent. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

Senior Center Operations Update by Council on Aging Director Venita Thompson

Director Venita Thompson stated to the Board that the Senior Center meal count was steadily decreasing. Director Venita Thompson provided the Board with a Meal Comparison from July through August to show how many clients they were servicing at that time.

Commissioner Wesson asked Director Venita Thompson to speak with Ms. Eubanks to see if we could continue to keep funding and not lose it.

Director Venita Thompson stated to Commissioner Wesson that they will not lose the funding, the funding will be moved to another area. Director Venita Thompson further stated that instead of the funds being under code 180 they will be moved under code 185.

Commissioner Wesson asked Director Venita Thompson to ask Ms. Eubanks have she was having the same issues in the other four counties that she serves.

Director Venita Thompson explained to the Board that going to five meals on Monday will not cause them to lose their funding it would actually help them to feed more seniors and help them to further keep their funding.

The Board formed a **CONSENSUS** to allow the Senior Center to go back to giving out the five meals on Monday with the understanding that Ms. Eubanks agreed with this suggestion and the Senior Center would not lose any funding.

#### Bertie County Sheriff's Office and Telecommunications Updates by Sheriff John Holley

Sheriff John Holley provided the Board with an update on the Communications Center. Sheriff John Holley stated to the Board that they are currently fully staffed with nine full-time and two part-time employees.

Sheriff John Holley stated that the two part-time employees are two current Sheriff Deputies. Sheriff John Holley then stated that the problem that he is now experiencing is that using those two deputies to work part-time for Communications is now pulling money from his Deputies budget.

Sheriff John Holley stated that he did speak with the County Manager about this and the County Manager advised him that this money should come from the Communications Budget. Sheriff John Holley further stated that they will need to do a Budget Amendment.

The Board then discussed the funding for the two part-time positions.

Sheriff John Holley then stated to the Board that he was asked about his staff and answering non-emergency calls. Sheriff John Holley stated they received 16,258 non-emergency calls since March.

The Board then discussed the handling of the non-emergency calls and the funding for having a person to fill this position.

Commissioner Lee stated that the Board was informed by the County Attorney Lloyd Smith that the Communications Center was not suppose to be answering non-emergency calls and if they were it was against the law.

Sheriff John Holley stated to the Board that he is requiring all of his employees to be vaccinated.

Commissioner Lee asked Sheriff John Holley if was requiring all his staff to be vaccinated including Communications and Administration as well as the deputies.

Sheriff John Holley stated to Commissioner Lee that he was requiring vaccinations for everyone in his department.

### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS (B)**

#### 1. Rivers East Workforce

County Manager Vaughan stated that there are currently two vacant positions that need to be filled.

The Clerk to the Board read the requirements for the fulfillment of the vacant Board positions of the Rivers East Workforce.

#### 2. Bertie County Planning

Commissioner Lee stated they have Jodey Sary, Gregory Hughes and Terry Prat that have expressed interest stay on the Bertie County Planning Board.

County Manager Vaughan stated that there were three vacancies for the Bertie County Planning Board.

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the reappointments of Jodey Sary, Gregory Hughes and Terry Prat . The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Atkins. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

### **CONSENT AGENDA (C)**

1. Register of Deeds Fee Report – August 2021

2. Tax Release Journal – August 2021

3. Approve 2-1-2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

4. Approve 2-1-2021 Closed Session Minutes

5. Approve 2-17-2021 Work Session Minutes

6. Approve 2-17-2021 Closed Session Minutes

The **MOTION** to **APPROVE** items 1-6 on the Consent Agenda was made by Commissioner Wesson. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Atkins. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

7. Approve 2021 Audit Contract with Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., PA

Commissioner Lee stated that she left item 7 on the Consent Agenda out for transparency purposes. Commissioner stated that the Board voted on this item by phone or by email.

Commissioner Lee then stated that the vote was 4-1 but they will vote again and the contract has been signed and sent so that the Auditors can get started so that they are not late again.

Commissioner Lee stated that the one vote for “No” came from Commissioner Wesson.

Commissioner Wesson then stated that he still stands by his vote. Commissioner Wesson stated that the Auditors should be held to the same standards as the county.

Commissioner Lee then called a Roll Call vote for being in favor of extending the contract date.

Commissioner Lee - Aye

Commissioner Atkins – Aye

Commissioner Wesson – Nay

Commissioner Roberson – Aye

Commissioner Trent – Aye (in favor with the County Attorney changes)

**OTHER ITEMS**  
**DISCUSSION AGENDA (D)**

1. 2022 Bertie County Holiday Calendar and Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule

County Manager Vaughan presented the Board with the 2022 Bertie County Holiday Calendar and the Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule.

The Board decided to put Discussion Agenda Item 1 on the Agenda for the next meeting.

2. Discuss Options for 2021 Employee Appreciation Luncheon

County Manager Vaughan stated to the Board a few suggestions that he had for recognizing the employees and the rising cases of Covid in the County.

The Board then began discussing ideas for the 2021 Employee Appreciation Luncheon. The Board made no decisions at this time.

3. Discussion of funding for Fire Protection Service District Planning with Gregory Grayson, NC Fire Chief Consulting.

County Manager Vaughan stated to the Board that they had identified some sources for funding the Fire Protection Service District Planning. He then turned the floor over to Finance Director William Roberson.

Finance Director William Roberson stated to the Board that there were two line items that they can take enough from to help cover the cost of funding this project.

Emergency Management Director Mitch Cooper then joined the discussion and stated that he and Finance Director William Roberson discussed the funding and he agrees with the decision to take the funding out of the two line items to help fund the Fire Protection Service District Planning.

County Manager Vaughan asked the Board for a **MOTION** to move forward with the funding of the Fire Protection Service District.

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** to move forward with using the funding from the two-line items to help fund the Fire Protection Service District Planning. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS (E)**

#### Commissioner Trent

Commissioner Trent stated that he did not have anything to report.

#### Commissioner Roberson

Commissioner Roberson did not have anything to report.

#### Commissioner Wesson

Commissioner Wesson did not have anything to report.

#### Commissioner Atkins

Commissioner did not have anything to report. However, he asked if anyone else on the Board received complaints about the Convenience sites being closed on Monday.

The other Board members were not aware about the closing of the Convenience sites.

County Manager Vaughan stated that he did ride by one of the Convenience sites and they were closed.

The Board briefly discussed the closing of the Convenience sites and not having proper notification made to them about the sites being closed.

County Manager Vaughan stated that he would reach out to Republic Service and make them aware.

Commissioner Lee

Commissioner Lee stated that she had gone on vacation this past week and she was impressed because she did not see any trash along the sides of any of the roads.

Commissioner Lee stated that she would love our citizens to do a better job and start taking pride in our County.

Commissioner Wesson stated that the reason for this is because our county does not have curb side pickup.

**COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS (F)**

County Manager Vaughan followed up on Mr. George Reichle request to continue to metal detect on County property.

The Board then discussed metal detecting on County property with the County Manager and the County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston.

There was no decision made at this time.

**COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS (G)**

The County Attorney did not have anything to report.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Clerk to the Board stated there were no public comments.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned.

---

Tammy Lee, Board Chair

Attest:

---

LaShonda Cartwright, Clerk to the Board