

Bertie County, North Carolina
May 14, 2025
COMMISSIONERS’ WORK SESSION

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for a Work Session on May 14, 2025 at 10:00AM inside the Commissioners Meeting Room, 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: Chair, Corey Ballance, Sr., District III
Vice-Chair, Lewis Hoggard, III, District I
Ronald “Ron” Roberson, District V
Vivian Saunders, District IV
Michael White, District II

Staff Present: County Manager, Juan Vaughan, II
Assistant County Manager, David Scarborough
Finance Director, Willie Mack Carawan
Clerk to the Board, Tonya Davis
Information Technology Director, Joseph Wilkes
Network Administrator, Dashawn Clark

Absent: County Attorney, Jonathan Huddleston

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ballance called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair, Lewis Hoggard, III gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

JCPC Appointment Discussion

Commissioner Robertson informed the Board that he has decided to step down from the JCPC Board to avoid a quorum, allowing Commissioner Saunders to serve. Commissioner Roberson stated that he has served 4 years on the JCPC Board and would like to give someone else the opportunity to serve. Chair Ballance accepted Commissioner Roberson’s resignation from the JCPC Board. No action was needed.

Roanoke-Chowan Community College Board of Trustees Appointments

Clerk to the Board, Tonya Davis informed the Board that there are two available positions on the Roanoke-Chowan Community College Board of Trustees. Ms. Davis explained the nomination procedure to the Board which stated that the Board of Commissioners could elect one of three options which include (1) elect a commissioner and a member of the Board of Education, (2) the Board could allow the Board of Education to select the two members, or (3) the Board could appoint two citizens. Commissioner White made a nomination to elect Commissioner Roberson and Shavonda Pugh from Bertie Rural Health. There were no other nominations.

Commissioner White made a **MOTION** to appoint Commissioner Roberson and Shavonda Pugh to the Roanoke-Chowan Community College Board of Trustees. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Discussion of Memorandum of Understanding with Choanoke Public Transportation Authority (CPTA)

The Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP), administered by the Integrated Mobility Division of the North Carolina Department of Transportation, is a state funded grant program that provides funds for counties to provide transportation services for the elderly, the disabled, low-income and the rural general public population. The Board reviewed the MOU and held a discussion.

Commissioner Saunders made a **MOTION** to approve the MOU with CPTA. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Presentation of Jail Medication for Opioid Use Disorder by Elijah Bazemore

Elijah Bazemore from Vital Strategies, presented the Board with a presentation on implementing medication for opioid use disorder in the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail. Mr. Bazemore explained the program, which aims to treat opioid addiction like other chronic health conditions for detained individuals. He outlined the implementation process, including setting up committees, updating medical plans, and providing training. The program would require funding, estimated at over \$800,000, to be split between Bertie and Martin Counties. Bazemore suggests using opioid settlement money and grants to fund it. Commissioners asked questions about follow-up support and effectiveness.

Presentation of Budget Request for Bertie County Board of Education by Dr. Otis Smallwood

Dr. Otis Smallwood, Superintendent of Bertie County Schools provided an overview of Bertie County Schools' accomplishments and future plans. The district is no longer designated as low-performing, with improved school grades and graduation rates. They have made significant investments in facilities, including a new CTE wing at the High School, upgraded safety measures, and an outdoor learning space. The budget for the upcoming year is projected to be around \$28 million, a slight decrease from the current year. Future plans include completing the athletic complex and addressing infrastructure issues at older buildings. The CTE program will offer courses in auto mechanics, welding, cosmetology, bricklaying, and HVAC, with discussions about potentially expanding to include more trades in the future.

Budget Presentation by County Manager, Juan Vaughan, II

County Manager Vaughan presented the proposed budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 to the Board, which totals \$24.95 million for the general fund. No property tax increase is proposed, keeping the rate at 93 cents per \$100 of assessed value. New positions are included for EMS, courthouse security, and Parks & Recreation. Capital purchases are proposed for IT, emergency services, and other departments. However, no salary increases or cost of living adjustments are included due to budget constraints. The County Manager recommended revisiting potential increases for employees and the Sheriff's department. Budget work sessions will be scheduled in the next two weeks to review the proposal in detail before adoption by July 1st.

Scheduling of Budget Work Sessions – May 19-22 or May 27-30

The Board discussed scheduling a meeting for the 19th and 20th of May for the Budget Work Sessions, with the possibility of extending it to the 23rd if needed. The Board agreed to start the meeting at 10:00AM on the 19th and work through the 20th.

CLOSED SESSION

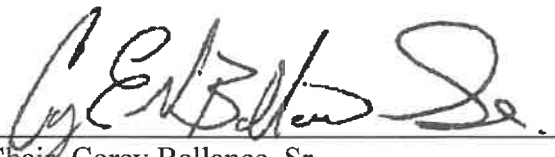
There was no closed session due to the absence of the County Attorney, who had been informed that his presence would not be needed.

OTHER ITEMS AS NEEDED

There were no other discussions.

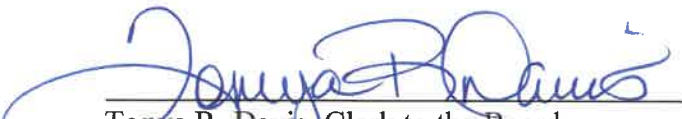
RECESS

Commissioner Saunders made a **MOTION** to recess the meeting until May 19, 2025 at 10:00AM. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.



Chair, Corey Ballance, Sr.
Bertie County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Tonya R. Davis, Clerk to the Board