

Windsor, North Carolina
August 4, 2014
Regular Meeting

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for its regularly scheduled meeting at 10:00AM in the Commissioners Room located at 106 Dundee Street Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: J. Wallace Perry, Chairman
Charles L. Smith, Vice-Chairman
John Trent
Ronald "Ron" Wesson

Absent: Rick Harrell

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham
Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston
Network Administrator Joe Wilkes
Finance Director William Roberson
Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper
EMS Division Chief Matt Leicester
Water Department Director Ricky Spivey
Economic Development Steve Biggs
Communications Supervisor JW Stalls
Sheriff John Holley
Parks and Recreation Director Donna Mizelle

Media members present included Thadd White of the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

Chairman Perry opened the meeting and thanked all of those present for their attendance.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Trent led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Perry opened the Public Hearing to receive comments and citizen input regarding the County's intent to seek funding through Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act for FY2014 CDBG grants to install water system improvements to the Bertie County Regional Water System

There were no public comments.

Chairman Perry closed the Public Hearing.

APPOINTMENTS

Black Rock Water Line Project – Charles Joyner

Charles Joyner of McDavid and Associates approached the Board regarding the current state of the Black Rock Water Line Project.

Mr. Joyner stated that Ted Good, President of the Black Rock Homeowner's Association, was not yet satisfied with the clean-up efforts, and therefore has not given his approval for the final payment to be released to Hawley Construction.

Mr. Joyner also informed the Board of the contractor that was to sod the project area once completed, but that the contractor will not be quoting a price on sod.

After a lengthy discussion, the Board agreed that County Manager Sauer should draft a letter to the contractor, Hawley Construction, and to remind them of their original promise to complete the work.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** for the County Manager to send a letter to the contractor as discussed. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

PSAP Back-Up plan as required by recent legislation – Sheriff John Holley and JW Stalls

Communications Supervisor, JW Stalls, informed the Board of new legislation put in place by the State via Senate Bill 797, and the Board received a copy of the legislation in their meeting packet.

The new legislation requires all Counties to have a secondary, back up 9-1-1 call center plan in place in the event of an emergency or natural disaster that directly affects the primary center.

Senate Bill 797 requires that the secondary location be "capable of operating as part of the 911 System and all other features of its associated primary PSAP. The term includes a back-up PSAP that receives 911 calls only when they are transferred from the primary PSAP or an alternate routing basis when calls cannot be completed to the primary PSAP."

The plans and location of this secondary area must be in effect and submitted by July 1, 2016, according to statute N.C.G.S. 62A-40 (4a).

Ms. Stalls, as well as Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, assured the Board that a plan has been verbally in place in the event of an emergency, but that the County would work to satisfy the new State requirements.

The Board was also assured that any funding needed to fully equip the secondary facility would be funded by State 9-1-1 grants, and that the Council on Aging is being considered as the secondary location.

Mr. Cooper stated that certain spaces of the Council on Aging building would be relatively easy to convert in regards to the secondary dispatch center, and that only hardware would need to be stationed there in the case of an emergency.

He stated that quotes would soon be submitted to the Board regarding the required material and equipment to fill the secondary center to comply with the legislation.

Community Report – John Herring, Administrator, Bertie Correctional Institution

John Herring, the Administrator of the Bertie Correctional Institution, approached the Board to brief them about the current programs and population of the prison.

Mr. Herring thanked the Board for all of their work, and stated that he was pleased with the feedback and participation from the community at the prison.

Mr. Herring informed the Board that there were currently 500 employees at the prison performing various departments ranging from all facets of healthcare, to Human Resources, to Maintenance, and Accounting.

Mr. Herring stated that there were approximately 1400 inmates at the facility, and that the capacity of the facility is 1501. Mr. Herring stated that he expected the facility to reach capacity in the coming weeks.

Additionally, Mr. Herring stated that the cost per inmate, per year is approximately \$36,501.

Mr. Herring also informed the Board about various programs and initiatives geared towards rehabilitating, and preparing inmates for their release back into the general population. The prison offers classes in various trades, and also offers various counseling and educational programs to ensure that inmates are able to readjust to normal life upon their release.

On another note, County Manager Sauer informed the Board as well that there is a shell building space available at the Bertie Correctional Institution that could be suited well for a new business looking to expand and settle into the area.

Mr. Sauer described the 24,000 square foot space, as well as the benefits for a new business occupying it including a low cost, and drug free work force among prison inmates.

Mr. Sauer recommended that the Board take a tour of the shell building at the prison so that they could be aware of its features, and could also spread the word about its availability.

Additionally, Mr. Herring stated that these same types of building had been used for various types of businesses including a furniture store manufacturing, denture production facility, as well as a panty hose manufacturer.

The Board concluded that they would like to tour the shell facility as soon as possible with assistance from Mr. Herring and the County Manager.

Parks and Recreation Department – Donna Mizelle

Donna Mizelle, as well as Windsor YMCA Representative Heidi Bonislawski came before the Board to discuss a Golden Leaf Foundation grant awarded to the County and the Bertie County Public School System which took effect on June 10, 2010 regarding recreational programs inside local area schools.

The Board received a copy of the agreement in their meeting packet.

The Golden Leaf Foundation grant totaled \$500,000, and the funds were to be used amongst the County and the Board of Education to bring recreational activities into Bertie County communities via after school, summer, and senior programs.

Mr. Wesson stated that since Bertie County is vastly spread out, the main factor all of the communities have in common, though, is at least one school building. He stated that it would be a personal goal of his to see these school buildings utilized for recreational activities.

He stated that a new partnership with the YMCA would aid in accomplishing this goal.

Ms. Bonislawski stated that all it would take to accomplish is getting key community members in each area to commit to the program themselves, and then spread the word.

The Board came to a consensus to meet with Bertie County Superintendent Elaine White regarding this agreement, and to touch base about each particular school facility as well as a possibility of including the Windsor YMCA into the partnership in regards to this grant.

Economic Development – Steve Biggs and Mike Neal, EDC Chairman

Steve Biggs and Mike Neal (EDC Chairman) approached the Board regarding the 4 Economic Development initiatives that the Board outlined in their recent Planning Retreat in early 2014.

Mr. Biggs and Mr. Neal were ready to begin forming committees for each initiative, and that they were currently looking for suggestions of potential committee members in addition to the names that they already have under consideration.

Mr. Wesson recommended that the Economic Development Department seriously consider expertise first before choosing citizens based on merit and the desire to serve.

The Board also requested that the Mr. Biggs present a list of names for each committee so that the Board can make any additional suggestions.

After some additional discussion regarding the County's "Adventure/Tourism" initiative, Mr. Biggs introduced Skip Green, a Grant Writing Consultant based in Clayton, NC.

Mr. Biggs reminded the Board that funding was allotted in this fiscal year's budget for a Grant Writing Consultant, and that Mr. Green has written many successful grant applications for surrounding counties.

After some discussion, the Board came to a consensus that it would be very beneficial to schedule a work session in the next 30-45 days to discuss Economic Development initiatives and future plans.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Planning Board

The Board received notification of the two current vacancies on the Planning Board. No action was needed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes for Regular Session 7-21-14

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes pending any changes from the County Attorney for Regular Sessions 7-21-14. Vice Chairman Smith **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Register of Deeds Fees Report – June 2014

County Manager Sauer recommended this item for approval.

Vice Chairman Smith made a **MOTION** to accept the Register of Deeds Fees Report for June 2014 as recommended by the County Manager. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Designation of Voting Delegate for NCACC Annual Conference – August 14-17, 2014

Vice Chairman Smith recommended Commissioner Wesson to represent the County at the NCACC Annual Conference in Asheville, NC on August 14-17, 2014.

Chairman Perry verified that Commissioner Wesson wanted to represent the County.

Commissioner Wesson accepted the opportunity.

Road Name Change Policy – latest draft

Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, approached the Board regarding the latest draft of the new Road Name Change Policy.

Mr. Cooper informed the Board that the cost of producing and replacing road name signs has gone up considerably since the original policy was drafted.

Mr. Cooper stated that the cost per road sign is typically between \$50-75.

A new draft of the proposed policy will be submitted to the Board at a later date.

EMS Capital Outlay Vehicles – 2 bids

Mr. Cooper also informed the Board of two bids that he had received involving a new EMS capital outlay vehicle (Ford F-250s). He stated that Capital Ford quoted him \$26,100, which is the State contract price, while Bill Clough Ford in Windsor quoted the County \$21,600.

The Board discussed the bids, and concluded that it was in their best interest to accept Bill Clough Ford's bid of \$21,600.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to accept the bid submitted by Bill Clough Ford in Windsor for the needed capital outlay vehicle. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

NCACC 2015-2016 Legislative Goals Process

County Manager Sauer informed the Board that it was approaching the time for Counties to submit any desired legislative action to the NCACC for consideration.

The Board came to a consensus that they would like a Commissioner to represent the County at the next annual conference early next year.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS

No reports were given by the Board.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS

¼ cent sales tax increase – potential initiative on November 2014 ballot

County Manager Sauer reminded the Board about the ¼ cent sales tax increase that recently appeared on the primary ballot back in May 2014. Mr. Sauer informed the Board that the Board could move to have the same initiative placed on the November 2014 ballot.

He stated that paperwork would need to be filed soon with the Bertie County Board of Elections in order to meet the deadline for the ballot.

Chairman Perry stated that the initiative should be on the ballot until it is able to be passed.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the resolution calling for a voter referendum on the November 4, 2014 ballot. Vice Chairman Smith **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

The resolution reads as follows:

**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR SPECIAL ELECTION TO CONSIDER AN
ADDITIONAL ONE-QUARTER CENT COUNTY SALES AND USE TAX**

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has authorized County Boards of Commissioners across the State of North Carolina to levy a One Quarter Cent (1/4¢) County Sales and Use Tax contingent on a referendum in which the majority of those casting ballots voted for the levy of the tax;

WHEREAS, the Bertie County Board of Commissioners have determined that the citizens of Bertie County should be entitled to determine whether or not they wish to have said One Quarter Cent (1/4¢) County Sales and Use Tax adopted as the same could be used to assist in financing public projects including debt service, and the existing debt service for the new Bertie High School which will open in the fall of the year of 2014;

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C.G.S. §163-287, a county has the authority to call special elections as permitted by law if the governing body of the County adopts a Resolution specifying the details of the election and forthwith delivers a copy of the Resolution to the local Board of Elections;

WHEREAS, under said statute, the Resolution shall call on the local Board of Elections to hold the election described in the said Resolution and shall set the date on which the special election is to be conducted;

WHEREAS, the special election may be held at the same time as any other county, state, or municipal general election or at the same time as a primary election in any even given year;

WHEREAS, there is a general election to be held in Bertie County on November 4, 2014 and the County would have adequate time to provide the public notice required by N.C.G.S. §163-287 (b); and

WHEREAS, it would be in the best interest of the citizens of Bertie County to determine whether or not to adopt said County Sales and Use Tax.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Bertie County Board of Commissioners that:

1. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §163-287 (a), Bertie County hereby calls a special election to be held on November 4, 2014 to determine whether or not a majority of the voting citizens of Bertie County favor or oppose the levy of said One Quarter Cent (1/4¢) County Sales and Use Tax;

2. The question to be placed on the ballot and determined by the voting citizens of Bertie County in said referendum will be:

QUESTION: Should Bertie County levy an additional One Quarter Cent (1/4¢) County Sales and Use Tax in addition to all other County and State Sales and Use Taxes in Bertie County.

For: _____

Against: _____

3. The local Board of Elections conducting the general election on November 4, 2014 will conduct an election on this question on November 4, 2014 which election shall be held at the same time and at the same locations as the primary election in the year 2014.

4. Scott T. Sauer, the Bertie County Manger, is directed to forthwith deliver a certified copy of this Resolution to the Bertie County Board of Elections.

Said Resolution was introduced by Commissioner Ronald Wesson and seconded by Commissioner Charles Smith and unanimously adopted this the 4th day of August, 2014.

ATTEST: BERTIE COUNTY

Sarah S. Tinkham
Clerk to the Board of
Commissioners
(SEAL)

BY: _____
J. Wallace Perry, Chairman of
the Board of Commissioners of
Bertie County

The Board came to a consensus that this initiative should be prudently marketed between now and November.

NCDOT

County Manager Sauer relayed a message from Commissioner Harrell concerning the latest fatal accident on NC-17 at Midway. Mr. Sauer stated that Mr. Harrell recommended that the County draft a letter to NCDOT regarding additional safety measures for this stretch of highway.

County Manager Sauer was given the authority to write this letter and submit it to NCDOT for their review and consideration.

The Board also mentioned having a representative from NCDOT return to the County so that the Board could express their concerns in person.

Council on Aging – roof replacement

County Manager Sauer informed the Board that the roof replacement project on the Council on Aging building is about to be completed.

He also let the Board know that Maintenance Director, Anthony Rascoe, was in the preparation and planning stages for the Lawrence Memorial Library roof replacement. He stated that the project should not require all of the funding that the County has allotted for the project (\$60,000).

Additionally, County Manager Sauer stated that tax bills for FY 2014-2015 have officially gone out as of August 1st, and also reminded the Board of their scheduled Water Department Work Session at 10:00am on Wednesday, August 6th. He also requested that the Board go into a brief Closed Session.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Assistant County Attorney Huddleston had no remarks.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Michael Elam, President of Roanoke Chowan Community College, was present to inform the Board that he would still be in communication with the County. He wanted to assure the Board that he would be present at various meetings so that the Board could feel free to share their concerns with him regarding the community college.

Monica Lassiter of Kelford approached the Board with a concern regarding Economic Development Director, Steve Biggs. She stated that during his remarks earlier in the meeting that she did not understand why he was "asking" the Board about what can be done in regards to the Board's 4 Economic Development clusters, and that she would rather hear Mr. Biggs "tell" the Board what can be done to increase the visibility of Bertie County to potential industry and business.

There were no other Public Comments.

CLOSED SESSION

As requested by County Manager Sauer, Vice Chairman Smith made a **MOTION** to go into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) to go into closed session to consult with the County Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege that exists between the attorney and this public body, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of employment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee, and pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development

incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. The action approving, the signing of an economic development contract or commitment, or the action authorizing the payment of economic development expenditures, shall be taken in an open session. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

The Board shifts into Closed Session.

Vice Chairman Smith made a **MOTION** to return to Open Session. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

RECESS

Chairman Perry recessed the meeting until 10:00am on Wednesday, August 6. The Board is scheduled to meet for a Water Department Work Session in the first floor Commissioners Room.