

**Windsor, North Carolina**  
**February 6, 2023**  
**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  
Michael White, District II  
Corey Ballance, Sr., District III  
Ronald “Ron” Roberson, District V  
John Trent, District IV

Absent:

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

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Wesson called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Ballance gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

Chairman Wesson asked the Board if there were any additions or changes that were needed to be made to the agenda.

Chairman Wesson made two changes to agenda.

1. Communications- put this topic at the end of the agenda under Discussions as item #6

2. Move Ms. Laree Cherry with JCPC from Board Appointment to Item #3 under Appointments.

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** to approve the two changes to the agenda. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

### **NCGS § 138a-15(e)**

Commissioner Wesson read the North Carolina State Ethics Act into the record.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 MINUTES PER SPEAKER)**

#### **Jodey Sary – Midway Fire Department Chief**

Jodey Sary from Merry Hill, NC the Fire Chief of the Mid-way Fire Department and the President of the Bertie Fire Fighter Association came before the Board to follow up with the Board on the Fire Study and where they were at with it.

Chairman Wesson informed Mr. Sary that the Assistant County Manager David Scarborough was heading up the Fire Study. He then asked the Assistant County Manager if he would get in contact with Mr. Sary and make sure that he understands where the County is at with the Fire Study.

#### **Sarah Tinkham-Roanoke Connect (Zoom)**

Mrs. Tinkham spoke to the Board in reference to the “We Care Days” program that Roanoke Connect will be hosting. The program will be organized and completely funded by Roanoke Connect at the end of March or later. She stated that she was looking forward to working with County Manager Vaughan and Assistant County Manager Scarborough to organize a date for the event.

### **APPOINTMENTS (A)**

#### **Soul Saving Saturday Plans by Bertha Washington**

Mrs. Washington came before the Board to discuss the plans for the Soul Saving Saturday event. She stated that the event will be located in the old IGA parking lot and everyone is invited. She provided the Board with agenda for the event.

Chairman Wesson stated to Mrs. Washington that since she wanted to have the event at the Old IGA parking lot she needed to check with the Town of Windsor to make sure she receives permission to use that location first.

#### **Small Business Conference Announcement by Program Manager Nicole Outlaw**

Ms. Outlaw came before the Board to share with them the announcement for the Small Business Conference that will held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> and provide them with a description and the duties of the Small Business Network.

Appointment to Juvenile Crime Prevention Council & Presentation

Ms. Laree Cherry came before the Board to give a presentation on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council and to fill the current vacancies.

County Manager Vaughan pointed out that the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council list has been updated and the current listed was included in the Agenda packet. He stated the vacancy for the member of the community was now filled by Chief Randy Cherry.

Commissioner Trent made the **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the updated list of appointees for the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

Introduction by Representative Shelly Willingham – District 23

Representative Willingham came before the Board to introduce himself and discuss his plans for District 23. He told the Board to tell him what their wishes were and he would work on them. He then stated they would try to make sure everyone gets something.

Plans for Lobbying Efforts by Bob Steinburg

Mr. Steinburg explained the Budget process for the House to the Board. He then spoke with the Board in reference to the goals of Bertie County. Mr. Steinburg stated that primarily Bertie should focus on infrastructure. He stated there was a lot of infrastructure money available.

Mr. Steinburg stated that he was honored to represent Bertie County.

Mr. Steinburg stated they should consider the items that were going to bring the County the greatest economic returns the fastest.

Mr. Steinburg concluded by stating they were going to give it their all to help Bertie County.

Report of delinquent property taxes & Approval to advertise by Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea

Mr. Rhea presented the Board with an annual report of delinquent taxes for real and personal properties.

Mr. Rhea stated the real property as of the end of January was \$49,423.35 which was slightly better than last year. Personal property \$115,910.90 for total outstanding for 2022 taxes only \$965,334.25.

Mr. Rhea. stated that attached to the report by statute is an order to advertise the tax liens which needs the Boards approval.

Commissioner Trent made the **MOTION** to move forward with the advertising of the 2022 tax liens. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Financial Summary by Finance Director William Roberson

Mr. Roberson pointed out that the Financial update provided to the Board was through December. He then stated that 50% was their target goal.

Mr. Roberson stated that their revenues were at 46.9% which was close to the 50% goal. Mr. Roberson then pointed out to the Board a few items under expenditures.

Commissioner Trent asked Mr. Roberson how many grants did the County have out that were paid on and had not been reimbursed for them as of yet.

Mr. Roberson stated as of December “None” were outstanding. However, coming up January they have a grant coming up for Tall Glass of Water which was a big grant for AR Chesson .

### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

#### 1. Appointment to Tri-County Airport Authority

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to nominate Tammy Lee to serve on the Tri-County Airport Board. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Trent. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

#### 2. Appointment to Child Fatality Prevention Child Protection Team

The County Manager recommended Sheriff Tyrone Ruffin be appointed.

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to appoint Sheriff Tyrone Ruffin. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Trent. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

#### 3. Planning Board (Add-on)

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to appoint John Trent to the Planning Board. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ballance. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

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

#### 1. Approve Register of Deeds Fees Report – January 2023

Commissioner Trent made the **MOTION** to approve Register of Deeds Fees Report – January 2023. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

#### 2. Budget Amendments

Commissioner Trent made the **MOTION** to approve the Budget Amendments. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ballance. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

**OTER ITEMS**  
**DISCUSSION AGENDA (D)**

**Discussion of Surplus Property**

Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea and the Board went through the list of Surplus properties that the County wanted to sale.

The Board discussed the list of 11 foreclosures totalling \$61,093.

**Discussion of Pay Schedule**

County Manager Vaughan and HR/Human Risk Director Cortney Ward presented the Board with options in reference to the Bertie County Salary Schedule and Classification plan and what those adjustments would look like.

Mrs. Ward stated that she and Mr. Vaughan have currently identified a group of 22 employees that currently have a salary equivalent to an hourly rate below \$15 an hour.

The Board then discussed other possible options that could assist with raising the County employees' salaries and dealing with any further compression issues.

The Board then requested that Mr. Vaughan and Mrs. Ward come back to them at the upcoming March 20<sup>th</sup> Work Session to provide an update of their new analysis.

**FY 2023-24 Budget Calendar**

County Manager Vaughan presented to the Board the Budget Calendar for FY2023-24. He stated that at the January 30<sup>th</sup> Department Head Meeting they had their Budget kickoff. So, within the next week budget documents budget documents will be distributed to Department Heads.

Mr. Vaughan stated that budget request from departments will be due on March 8<sup>th</sup>. He stated that in the month of April they will be having meetings with Department Heads. Mr. Vaughan then stated that his goal was to present the budget to the Board on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. On May 23<sup>rd</sup> - June 2<sup>nd</sup> is when the Board usually schedules their budget work sessions.

**Strategic Planning February 20-21, 2023**

The Board verified that they were still planning to have their Strategic Planning Session with Project Consultant Robin Payne February 20-21 beginning at 9:00 AM both days.

**2023 NACo Legislative Conference February 11 -14, Washington D.C.**

Commissioner Wesson stated the 2023 NACo Legislative Conference was coming up on this Thursday. He then took a count of the Commissioners planning to attended which included he, Commissioner Ronald Roberson and Commissioner Corey Ballance, Sr.

Communications (Agenda addon)

Commissioner Roberson stated that any event that the County has should be put on the County website as well as be given out to the churches so that the citizens are aware of what's going on in the County.

Commissioner Wesson stated that he suggested to the County Manager that we create an electronic form with key information that could feed into the Calendar site on the County website.

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS (E)**

Commissioner Roberson

Commissioner Roberson wanted make everyone aware that on March 15<sup>th</sup> Voter Registration and Voter ID restrictions goes back to court and Redistricting goes back to court on March 7th.

Commissioner Trent

No Reports.

Commissioner White

No Reports.

Commissioner Ballance

No Reports.

Commissioner Wesson

Commissioner Wesson stated Gold Leaf has granted an additional \$250,000 grant money towards the Teacher Housing Initiative, so now they are only \$50,000 short of building the houses. SECU is expanding the terms to assist in providing more funds, which will mean the rent for the housing would have to be raised a little but still be below market rate.

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

County Manager Vaughan stated that they received correspondence from the LGC (Local Government Commission) stating that the County has been placed on the 2022 Unit Assistance List. The two reasons for being placed on the Unit Assistance List was for the Fund Balance available being low and because of the findings in the area of DSS relating to Medicaid eligibility and ineffective case review process.

As a result, there are four items that are required. Those items include an in person virtual visit with the LGC staff the County Manger and the Finance officer, six hours of education for the County Manager, the Clerk verifying and maintaining the record of completion of those hours and physical training for newly elected or appointed members of the Board.

Mr. Vaughan stated that there will be options available for the trainings and the LGC has requested that the Board sign the agreement.

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

No Reports.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 MINUTES PER SPEAKER)**

Former Commissioner Tammy Lee (Zoom)

Thank you all for allowing me to continue to serve on the Tri-County Airport Authority. I will serve with 100% and will keep you informed along the way. Thank you again.

### **CLOSED SESSION** **PURSUANT TO NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3)(4)(6)**

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to go into Closed Session. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

### **OPEN SESSION**

DHHS/DSS Pay increase and positions

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to support the recommendations that came from DSS in reference to the pay increases and three positions. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Trent. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **3-2 vote**.

Aye – Commissioner Roberson

Aye – Commissioner Trent

Aye – Commissioner Ballance

Nay- Commissioner White

Nay- Commissioner Wesson

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Trent made the **MOTION** to adjourn. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

The meeting adjourned.

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Ronald Wesson, Chair

ATTEST:

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LaShonda Cartwright, Clerk