



## **BERTIE COUNTY**

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## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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RONALD WESSON, Vice Chairman  
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JOHN TRENT

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**WINDSOR, N.C.** – Bertie County officials received an early Christmas blessing on Thursday with news from the Golden LEAF Foundation’s Board of Directors approval of additional disaster recovery funds in the amount of \$240,000 for the Teacher Housing Initiative and \$2,750,000 for the library and cooperative extension joint use facility.

The initial communication of this announcement came via telephone call to Vice Chairman Ron Wesson, who shared the news at Thursday’s County Employee Appreciation Luncheon, noting “this is a great day for Bertie County.”

At its meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>, the Golden LEAF Foundation allocated a total of \$14,347,101 in Disaster Recovery Program funding for 22 applications with appropriations from the NC General Assembly following last year’s hurricane and tropical storms. The press release also noted that the Town of Windsor will receive \$311,720 to replace a pump station damaged by flooding.

Newly appointed Chair, Ernestine Bazemore, was excited to hear of the announcement, and quickly noted that “Bertie County’s leadership has worked very hard to seek support for our citizens since the first flood waters rose in September 2016.” Bertie County Commissioners and Windsor Town officials met during the initial recovery period to develop a united strategy to appeal to both federal and state leaders on behalf of families and businesses impacted by Hurricane Matthew and Tropical Storm Julia.

“In May, our leadership team met with Golden LEAF Foundation officials to seek support for replacement of the library, cooperative extension offices, EMS Station One, and funding for university support to study these worsening flood events impacting Windsor and Bertie County,” noted Chair Bazemore. The meeting occurred at the Bertie Early College campus with Golden LEAF Executive Director Dan Gerlach and his staff, where local officials outlined the priorities for unmet needs which were not addressed fully by FEMA.

“Mayor Jim Hoggard, Commissioner Tammy Lee, Commissioner Ron Wesson, and I spent nearly two hours with Golden LEAF officials pressing hard and advocating for disaster recovery funding,” explained Bazemore and, “we have continued this effort working together to pursue every dollar from federal and state sources to assist our citizens,” Chair Bazemore continued.

In June, the Golden LEAF Foundation approved the first two grants for Bertie County including \$72,707 to study the Cashie River Drainage Basin through a research project with NC State University, and a \$500,000 grant to support planning, engineering and design of a joint use facility for co-location of the public library and cooperative extension offices.

In August, the Board of Commissioners approved a contract to purchase 2.9 acres at the intersection of Sterlingworth and Camden Streets for this facility. Also in October, the Board of Commissioners approved a design team engagement with MHAworks, an architectural firm from Greenville, NC to lead this effort.

“We have momentum, enthusiasm, and a lot of positive energy pushing the recovery process for Bertie County and the Town of Windsor,” stated Chair Bazemore and that she was “grateful to our staff and everyone involved who works so hard to ensure this success continues for our community.”

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