



BERTIE COUNTY

106 DUNDEE STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 530
WINDSOR, NORTH CAROLINA 27983
(252) 794-5300
FAX: (252) 794-5327
WWW.CO.BERTIE.NC.US

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

JOHN TRENT, Chairman
ERNESTINE (BYRD) BAZEMORE, Vice Chairman
RONALD "RON" WESSON
TAMMY A. LEE
STEWART WHITE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2, 2017



WINDSOR, NC. —Thursday June 1st, shortly after 12:00 noon, Bertie County received the call it had been waiting for—the Golden Leaf Foundation in Rocky Mount, NC announced the award of two disaster recovery grants.

- \$72,707 is awarded for the Cashie River Basin Drainage Study seeking planning solutions and technical recommendations to protect families and businesses in the Cashie River Basin Drainage Area by developing strategies for storm water control and flow diversion in Cashie River watershed.
- \$500,000 is awarded for the planning and design development for a multi-use facility to support the public library and cooperative extension programs.

Since late September, Town and the County Board of Commissioners have spent countless hours seeking disaster recovery funding from state and federal legislators as we plan to rebuild facilities and plan for future flood events. This difficult work will continue for the next two to three years at a minimum, and our citizens are fortunate to have the community leadership joining forces to seek grants and utilize resources from across the state. Most evident to date, has been the support from East Carolina University and North Carolina State University in seeking planning solutions and technical recommendations to protect families and business in the Cashie River Basin Drainage Area.

On May 19th Windsor Mayor James Hoggard, County Board Vice Chairman Ernestine Bazemore, Commissioner Tammy Lee and Commissioner Ron Wesson met with Golden Leaf Foundation Executive Director Dan Gerlach at the Bertie Early College campus to press the case for Bertie County residents and businesses. During the meeting, they reviewed the County's four Golden Leaf applications: \$72,707 for the Cashie River Basin feasibility study; \$300,000 for EMS Station One to supplement FEMA's pending project request of \$284,299; \$1.9 million for the relocation and construction of a new public library; and \$1.1 million for the replacement of the Cooperative Extension Building.

One important outcome of the discussions with Mr. Gerlach was the collective thinking toward development of a joint use facility to support both public library programming and cooperative extension services in a single building. Mayor Hoggard commented that "the Cashie River feasibility study is the single most important driving force for the Town's future and successful redevelopment, and we are grateful to have the County Commissioners as our partners."

Vice Chairman Bazemore emphasized "that we must work together to re-establish our library services and the full complement of cooperative extension programming as soon as possible." Commissioner Ron Wesson reminded the group that "we must continue to press upon our federal legislators the importance of bringing FEMA dollars to Bertie County."

Commissioner Tammy Lee spoke strongly in favor of rebuilding EMS Station One, and said that "I am thankful that Mr. Gerlach understands our needs and brought a representative from NC Department of Commerce who indicated that there may be additional funds to make up the difference if the FEMA grant is not adequate for our needs."

County Board Chairman John Trent missed the meeting on May 19th, and summarized "this has been a team effort from day one last September, when the first floodwaters hit Bertie County on Long Branch Road in Colerain. And for eight months we have been talking with FEMA, sometimes fighting with FEMA and always standing shoulder to shoulder with Mayor Hoggard to support our citizens in Bertie County.

County Commissioner Stewart White, who has led other disaster recovery projects noted, "recovering from these floods will take years of work to complete. In my experience, we need to dig in, work hard and remember this will be a long road for Bertie and the Town of Windsor."

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners and the Town of Windsor Board of Commissioners will be scheduling a joint meeting the second week of June to review flood recovery priorities and planning for community resiliency funding and redevelopment projects.



###