

**Windsor, North Carolina**  
**May 18, 2015**  
**Regular Meeting**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00pm inside the Colerain Volunteer Fire Department Training Center located at 106 N. Main Street, Colerain, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: Ronald “Ron” Wesson, District I  
Stewart White, District II  
Tammy A. Lee, District III  
Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore, District V

Absent: John Trent, District IV

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham  
Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston  
Network Administrator Joe Wilkes  
Economic Development Director Steve Biggs  
Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper  
Finance Officer William Roberson  
Planning Director Traci White

Gene Motley of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald was present from the media.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Wesson welcomed all of those present and thanked them for their attendance. He thanked the Town of Colerain for hosting tonight’s meeting, and reiterated the success of the “on the road” meetings that the Board has been hosting for the last 2 years.

Also, Chairman Wesson informed the public that due to personal reasons, Commissioner Trent was unable to attend tonight’s meeting.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Wesson led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lillian Jane Faulk of Windsor approached the Board with her interests in the funding and opening of a youth center in the County that could offer various programs to the area's youth dedicated to reengaging them in academics, as well as providing access to various training classes, and athletic recreation.

Gwen Williams of Windsor brought forward a similar idea regarding a program designed for the youth that could offer educational and work experiences.

Chairman Wesson replied by stating that there are already programs in place within the County that address some of these concerns especially in terms of assistance with educational programs and work experience.

The Board directed Ms. Faulk and Ms. Williams to various individuals in the community with the same ideas in mind, as well as recommended that they seek out support for these ideas from the church community.

Terry Pratt of Merry Hill commented that all of these programs are beneficial but that they cannot be successful without the support and assistance from every parent. He also brought forward his concerns about his recent business personal property tax audit by County Tax Services, Inc.

Mr. Pratt stated that he was concerned with the way the audits were using "like businesses" in the event that a business is found to not owe any or very little tax.

After some discussion, Assistant County Attorney, Jonathan Huddleston, directed the public's attention to the various North Carolina General Statutes regarding tax collection.

Additionally, Mr. Pratt brought forward a resolution that he requested the County consider which would show the lack of support for an initiative by the NC Division of Marine Fisheries (DCDMF) use of supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder.

The Board thanked Mr. Pratt for bringing the issue to their attention, and they would review the resolution at a later time.

## APPOINTMENTS

### **Dr. Michael Elam, President of Roanoke-Chowan Community College will provide a program update**

Dr. Michael Elam, President of Roanoke-Chowan Community College, was present to provide a programmatic update to the Board.

He first thanked all EMS personnel for their dedicated service, and wished them a Happy EMS Week.

He also introduced RCCC Emergency Services Director, Fred Curley, and RCCC Emergency Services Coordinator, Kelly Wiggins, to update the Board about the various programs under their department including EMS/EMT, Fire Science, Basic Law Enforcement, and the newly added CADET program which is a recent partnership between Bertie County, RCCC, and the Bertie County Board of Education.

Currently, there are 11 students in the CADET program, as well as 22 students in the EMT course offered in the evenings at RCCC. They also reported that a new EMT Basic course, and EMT Basic to Paramedic course, and a Basic Law Enforcement course will begin in early summer.

Additionally, they announced that fire training was being completed around the County, and that a new program was also on the horizon for the department that would address various situations that could produce mass casualties including natural disasters, and other dangerous situations.

Dr. Elam announced that enrollment for the entire RCCC campus had risen 8% in the last year with a third of all Bertie County graduates opting to attend the community college over a full-time job or a 4-year college.

He also reported that a total of 80 students were currently enrolled in the Basic Skills/GED program at RCCC through the sites in Aulander and Kelford.

Dr. Elam also updated the Board about the latest efforts in securing an RCCC satellite campus in the County to offer a wide array of classes and programs, and stated that he hoped to continue negotiations with the Board of Education in securing the old Bertie High School as the first, full satellite campus.

Additionally, Dr. Elam touched on various events that had recently taken place at the college, as well as the recent approval of RCCC to administer the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), formerly known as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), to both Hertford and Bertie residents via the Hertford and Bertie County NCWorks Career Centers.

In conclusion, Dr. Elam thanked County Manager Scott Sauer for the great communication and continued relationship with him and RCCC.

The Board thanked Dr. Elam for his report.

### **Manufactured Home Park Ordinance update by Planning Director, Traci White**

Bertie County Planning Director, Traci White, was present to provide an additional draft of the Manufactured Home Park Ordinance, as recommended by the Planning Board.

The previous Board has suggested additional public input sessions as well suggested various changes to be considered before a new draft could be presented.

Ms. White stated that the changes requested by the previous Board of Commissioners had been made, and that the Bertie County Planning Board recommended this draft for Commissioner approval.

After some discussion, this item was deferred so that the newer members of the Board could have adequate time to read and study the draft.

This item was deferred for approval until the Board's 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in June on Monday, June 15, 2015 in Windsor.

### **Economic Development report by Steve Biggs**

Economic Development Director, Steve Biggs, informed the Board of the various conferences and meetings that he had been recently attending regarding new opportunities to bring business to the County.

Mr. Biggs also updated the Board on current projects including the I-44 highway initiative and the latest plans for a McDonald's in Windsor.

Mr. Biggs assured that he had been in recent contact with the McDonald's developer and that they were still slated to bring the chain restaurant to Windsor in the near future.

Lastly, Mr. Biggs thanked the Board for their continued support, and their recent meetings with four Marketing and Economic Development firms.

Chairman Wesson stated that he is impressed to see the Economic Development Department gaining traction, but that he was concerned with a comment that was made at the NC East Alliance conference last week regarding its recent announcement that dedicated resources were solely made to the lower end of the region.

## **Board of Elections – presentation on voting equipment replacement requirements**

Sheila Holloman, Director of the Bertie County Board of Elections, was present with the following Board of Elections members: Chairman Carol Woodard, Secretary Michael Freeman, and member Rodney Mumma, to update the Board about the latest State requirements regarding voting equipment at polling stations.

The Board of Elections requested that the Board vote to allow the Board of Elections to purchase the needed laptops for early, one-stop voting in the amount of \$5,000. This \$5,000 amount is identical to the Board of Election's travel line item, and the Board of Elections requested that the amount in the travel line item be moved to equipment non-capital in order to satisfy the need.

In addition, the Board of Elections was present to remind the Board of an unfunded item in the FY2014-2015 budget cycle regarding the replacement of voting equipment required by the State Board of Elections General Counsel.

In documents submitted to the Board, it is stated that all counties must begin replacing the current voting equipment by 2016 with the completion of the replacements by 2020. The cost of doing so would fall on each county, and no grant funding would be offered to cover the required costs.

The Board of Elections strongly encouraged the Commissioners to consider creating a capital fund for replacing the voting equipment in the near future.

After some discussion, the Board thanked the Board of Elections for their diligence, but stated that due to the continued discussion of this issue on the State level, the County would prefer to wait for more information from the State regarding which machines to install for proper and full compliance.

The Board did come to a consensus regarding the needed laptops for early, one-stop voting, and directed the Board of Elections to County Manager Sauer to handle the matter in house as soon as possible.

### **EMS billing update by Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, and Dave Pickren of Colleton Software**

Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, and Colleton Software Representative, Dave Pickren, were present to discuss the latest revenues for both emergency and non-emergency transport services.

In a report submitted to the Board by Colleton Software, Mr. Pickren highlighted that as of April 1, 2015, the County had completed 2,564 emergency trips resulting in \$1,557,461 in gross charges, and with a collection rate of return at approximately 62%.

Mr. Pickren also highlighted that as of April 1, 2015, the County had completed 349 non-emergency transport trips resulting in \$237,125 in gross charges, and with a collection rate of return at approximately 61%.

Mr. Pickren noted that these numbers are a reflection of the excellent leadership at the County and on the Emergency Services level, and that various Emergency Services staff have visited the Colleton Software's headquarters in South Carolina to meet the team of people that are responsible for processing all medical claims.

Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, also provided some information regarding the latest numbers for Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support Calls received by the County over the past several months.

The Board commended the leadership of Mitch Cooper, as well as Crystal Freeman, Matt Leicester, and Ian Trainor for their diligent leadership.

### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

#### **Discuss Northern Regional Advisory Board Commissioner appointments**

The Board reiterated that their Commissioner appointment to this board was Commissioner Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore.

#### **Appointment of Commissioner to Three Rivers Healthy Carolinians Board**

Vice Chairman Tammy A. Lee volunteered to serve on this Board.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to appoint Tammy A. Lee to the Three River Healthy Carolinians Board. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

#### **Approve minutes for Closed Session 4-30-15**

County Manager Sauer recommended this item for approval.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes for Closed Session 4-30-15. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **Approve minutes for Regular Session 5-4-15**

County Manager Sauer recommended this item for approval.

Commissioner White made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes for Regular Session 5-4-15. Vice Chairman Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **Approve Closed Session minutes for 5-4-15**

County Manager Sauer recommended this item for approval.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes for Closed Session 5-4-15. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **Presentation of Financial Summary by Finance Officer, William Roberson**

This item was presented in the Board's agenda packet simply as an information item. No action was needed.

### **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

#### **Discuss Economic Development proposed scope of work for marketing strategy and system evaluation as phase one of the Board's strategic initiative in the FY 2015-2016 budget plan**

The Board reiterated the process that led to tonight's decision regarding this matter as well as answered questions from the public.

After a short discussion, Vice Chairman Lee made a **MOTION** to move forward with Creative Economic Development Consulting's full service package price of \$71,100 under the following conditions: a suitable contract would be negotiated between Creative and the County Attorney, the contract would receive the required pre-audit certificate, as well as other "fail safe" measures as recommended by the County Attorney, and upon completion the contract would be sent to the Chairman for immediate approval. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

#### **Review "roll out" materials for NACo discount program for Bertie residents**

The Board was briefed on the latest actions taken to begin the roll out process of the NACo discount program for Bertie residents.

Clerk to the Board, Sarah S. Tinkham, provided the latest information available, including the various County departments involved, and the various marketing tools that will be utilized in the coming days to launch the program.

No action was needed for this item.

**Closed Session minutes online – input from County Attorney as requested by Vice Chairman Lee**

Vice Chairman Lee made a **MOTION** to allow Closed Session minutes be placed online on the County's website upon their approval and their release to the public, which release can occur when public inspection would no longer frustrate the purpose of the closed session. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

The Commissioners gave no remarks at this time.

**COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS**

County Manager Sauer requested that the Board consider the topic that Mr. Terry Pratt alerted the Board to earlier in the meeting regarding a resolution that he requested the County sign which would show the lack of support for an initiative by the NC Division of Marine Fisheries (DCDMF) use of a supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to sign the Resolution at the request for Mr. Terry Pratt regarding the NC Division of Marine Fisheries use of a supplement process to implement reductions of southern flounder. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Additionally, County Manager Sauer made a request on behalf of Maintenance Superintendent, Anthony Rascoe, to purchase a bucket truck for his department.

County Manager Sauer stated that Mr. Rascoe had done a thorough job in searching and has found the most suitable bucket truck in price and quality. If Mr. Rascoe were to win a bid, the funding would be taken from the current year's budget, and would not exceed over \$10,000 without additional approval from the Board.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** for Mr. Rascoe to place a bid on the selected bucket truck as requested on his behalf by County Manager Sauer. Vice Chairman Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS**

The Assistant County Attorney made no remarks at this time.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS CONTINUED**

Milton Felton, Chief of the Colerain Volunteer Fire Department, shared a concern with the Board that he has shared with previous Boards over the years.

He stated that during natural disasters equipment like generators and transfer switches are extremely important especially for the County's designated emergency shelters.

He expressed his deep concerns for the citizens of Bertie County, and highly encouraged the Board to implement a plan that would set up and ensure the working use of generators and transfers switches at all of the County's emergency shelters.

The Board requested that Mitch Cooper come forward to discuss the matter in more detail, and in summary, Mr. Cooper was instructed to research the possible needs and costs involved in securing the needed equipment at the 3 designated shelters in the County, and to bring that information forward at an upcoming meeting.

There were no other comments at this time.

### **ADJOURN**

Chairman Wesson adjourned the meeting at 10:15 PM.

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Ronald D. Wesson, Chairman

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Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board