

**Windsor, North Carolina**  
**January 3, 2017**  
**Work Session**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for a Work Session inside the Commissioners Room located at 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: Ronald "Ron" Wesson, District I  
Stewart White, District II  
Tammy A. Lee, District III  
John Trent, District IV  
Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore, District V

Absent: None

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham  
County Attorney Lloyd Smith  
Finance Officer William Roberson  
Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper  
EMS Division Chief Crystal Freeman

No media members were present.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Trent called the meeting to order and thanked those present for their attendance.

## **WORK SESSION**

### **Hurricane Matthew Recovery Efforts and Long Range Planning**

First, County Manager Sauer reported that storm debris removal was due to begin tomorrow January 4, 2017. The contract was secured by Phelps and White Construction Company, Inc.

Second, County Manager Sauer introduced members of the Holland Group including Chris Gilbert, Reid Whitesell, and Dale Holland. Town of Windsor Administrator, Allen Castelloe, was also present as the Holland Group has been representing the Town of Windsor for several years.

Mr. Castelloe reported that the Holland Group had done excellent work for the Town of Windsor and had secured various grants to either buy out or elevate homes in the Town's flood zone during previous disasters.

County Manager Sauer noted that it may be beneficial for the County to have a similar asset to not only work on grant opportunities for the buying out and elevating of homes, but to also secure funding for mitigation projects and more permanent facilities for displaced County buildings and organizations.

Third, after the discussion, County Manager Sauer asked that if the Board desired, a Letter of Understanding could be drafted and to have the Holland Group represent the County at the kick-off meeting at the Vernon James Center on Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup> in Plymouth, NC.

The Board came to a consensus to move forward with the Holland Group pending a Letter of Understanding to be prepared by the County Manager.

## **EMS and Non-Emergency Transport Revenue Collections Update**

Dave Pickren of Colleton Billing Software gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Board.

In his presentation, Mr. Pickren noted that Bertie County had crossed over “into the black” sometime ago, and that the Non-Emergency Transport system has performed better than any other county his firm currently supports.

Mr. Pickren attributed this to the work ethic and diligence of the Emergency Services Department leadership team, as well as to his own staff in South Carolina who work closely with Bertie County every day.

In the month of December 2016, Mr. Pickren reported that the Non-Emergency Transport Division made approximately \$73,464 in bank deposits.

There was a brief discussion per a concern from Commissioner White about whether or not the County is to blame for the closing of local franchises in the last several months.

Vice Chairman Bazemore stated that “business is business, and folks will stay with you if you do what you are supposed to do.”

Mr. Pickren explained that in most instances, the federally required paperwork and “pre-authorizations” had become too burdensome for some companies.

### **EMS – Ambulance bid tabulation**

Additionally, Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, asked the Board for approval to purchase four (4) new ambulance vehicles and needed equipment per the first of two loans, secured from the USDA Rural Development in the amount of \$788,000.

On August 22, 2016, the Board voted to move forward with a signed resolution to hold interest rates at 2.75% for both USDA Rural Development loans in the amounts of \$788,000 and \$610,000 for needed ambulance vehicles and equipment.

The second loan of \$610,000 would be considered by the Board for other needed equipment at a later date based on continued review of the Department’s fiscal operations.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to move forward with the purchase of four (4) new ambulance vehicles and needed equipment per the first of two loans, secured from the USDA Rural Development in the amount of \$788,000. Vice Chairman Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Mr. Cooper thanked the Board for their support, and mentioned his plans for repurposing some of the older ambulance vehicles, and others in his fleet. He mentioned that he would like to repurpose a F-350 with a flatbed instead of a covered box that could be used for various County equipment transport needs. He also mentioned designating one ambulance vehicle as a CADET certified truck for training purposes.

On the note of the CADET EMS training program, County Manager Sauer referenced item D-4 on the Board's 4:00 PM meeting agenda. A letter of support was being proposed for Board approval which would then be sent to the North Carolina Community College System President, Dr. James Williamson.

In the letter, the Board would be supporting the expansion of community college boundaries in order to offer more education and training opportunities to the citizens of Bertie County.

After the Board reviewed the letter, Vice Chairman Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the drafted letter of support. Commissioner White **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

**RECESS**

Chairman Trent recessed the meeting until 4:00 PM in this location.

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John Trent, Chairman

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Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board