

Windsor, North Carolina
August 6, 2018
REGULAR MEETING

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regular meeting today inside the Commissioners Room, 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 Tinkham
Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston
Finance Officer William Roberson
ICMA/NCACC Management Fellow Dominique Walker
Economic Development Director Steve Biggs
Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea
4-H Extension Agent Guy Holley
Veteran Services Representative Denise Clark
Cooperative Extension Director Billy Barrow
Water Superintendent Ricky Spivey
Cooperative Extension Admin Assistant Sheila Powell

Gene Motley of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald and Leslie Beachboard were present from the media.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bazemore called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Lee led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vivian Clark of the NAACP, Bertie chapter, was present to announce an event honoring veteran, first responders, and law enforcement would be held on October 13, 2018 in Windsor. Ms. Clark also submitted sponsorship forms for the Board to consider.

APPOINTMENTS

(1) NC Fire Service – introduction of new Bertie County Assistant Fire Ranger, Bryan Hoggard

Mike Hoggard, NCFS Bertie County Ranger, was present to introduce Bertie’s new Assistant Fire Ranger, Bryan Hoggard. Mr. Hoggard thanked the Board for their support as he has worked his way up the ranks in the NCFS first as a smoke chaser.

The Board wished Mr. Hoggard good luck in his new position.

(2) Introduction of Tirah Spivey, NCACC Conference Youth Summit Delegate, and Jackia Chamblee by Guy Holley, 4-H Extension Agent

4-H Extension Agent, Guy Holley, briefly introduced two individuals who have played integral roles in each of their respective programs while participating in Cooperative Extension activities.

Mr. Holley first introduced Tirah Spivey, the 2018 NCACC Conference Youth Summit Delegate who has shown great leadership through her time in the 4-H program. Ms. Spivey will be representing Bertie at the upcoming NCACC Conference in Hickory, NC.

Then, Mr. Holley welcomed Ms. Jackia Chamblee who had recently competed in the State level pork chargrill in the Sr. Division at the 2018 4-H Congress.

Also, Mr. Holley took this opportunity to update the Board on grant opportunities that Cooperative Extension had recently been pursuing including grants for additional cooking classes and swimming lesson for Bertie children.

The Board congratulated each on their accomplishments and there was a brief break for media photos.

(3) Ms. Dominique Walker, ICMA/NCACC Management Fellow will present Equal Justice Initiative proposal recently presented to Superintendent Dr. Catherine Edmonds

ICMA/NCACC Management Fellow, Dominique Walker, presented a brief PowerPoint presentation detailing her experiences visiting the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) headquarters in Montgomery, Alabama. This presentation was also given to Superintendent Dr. Catherine Edmonds.

The presentation provided an overview of EJI's mission and goals which is to bring awareness to the various acts of civil rights infringements and terror lynching that took place between the end of Reconstruction and the 1960's.

Ms. Walker discussed her experience visiting EJI's newly installed monuments and commemorative memorial that features hanging placards of names and locations of those who perished during the respective time period of American History.

She also discussed the impact that trip had on her personally and her passion to spread awareness further through BCPS' "One Book, One District" initiative. Ms. Walker will also be working closely with the school system on other related projects.

The Board thanked Ms. Walker for her thoughtful presentation.

(4) Revaluation Project Update and following items for approval by Tax Administrator, Jodie Rhea

Tax Administrator, Jodie, briefly provided a quick update about the revaluation team. Mr. Rhea stated that the team is currently part time and that they were all unavailable to be introduced to the Board tonight. However, Mr. Rhea expects that by the Board's next meeting in September each team member would be available to attend. As a brief summary of the revaluation team's efforts thus far, the process has been smooth, and letters will soon be sent to homeowners discussing the new revaluation procedures.

Mr. Rhea also reported that this new revaluation team had already discovered and corrected a few errors that were made during the last revaluation, and that he had faith in this group moving forward.

To address items from last fiscal year, Mr. Rhea briefly reviewed and answered Board questions about the following: settlement reports for 2017-2018, report of delinquent personal property taxes, insolvent tax resolution, and the charge of the 2018-2019 tax levy.

Before these items were approved, Vice Chairman Wesson inquired if Mr. Rhea needed anything further from the Board in order to ensure he could perform his job duties as effectively as possible.

Mr. Rhea noted that the addition of TransUnion had been an asset to the County as it gives the Tax Office an additional tool in contacting citizens.

At this time, Chair Bazemore called for two motions to approve the Tax Administrator's needed documents and resolutions.

Vice Chairman Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve the Settlement Reports for 2017-2018. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Vice Chairman Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve the Insolvent Tax Resolution. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

The Board also charged the Tax Administrator with collecting the 2018-2019 tax levy.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

CPTA Board

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to appoint Mitch Cooper to the CPTA Board. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Poverty Commission

Commissioner Lee and Vice Chairman Wesson asked for clarification about this recommended appointment's residence outside of Bertie County.

They just wanted to be sure her appointment did not violate any part of Bertie County's Board Appointment Policy.

Mr. Sauer clarified that this appointment comes highly recommended by CADA and that Ms. Futrell would be representing CADA as an organization. CADA's services area and the Section 8 program that Ms. Futrell administers covers Bertie County.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to appoint Wendy Futrell to the Poverty Commission. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

VIDANT Bertie Directors Council

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to appoint Dr. Catherine Edmonds to the VIDANT Bertie Director's Council. Vice Chairman Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

1. **Minutes** – Regular Session 7-2-18, Work Session 7-2-18 and 7-31-18, Closed Session 7-31-18
2. **Fees Report** – July 2018
3. **Budget Amendments**
4. **Tax Release Journal** – June 2018
5. **Meeting and State holiday schedule** – regular Board meetings, scheduled work sessions, and 2019 State Holiday schedule
6. **Interlocal Agreement** – County's Solid Waste Management and Junkyard Ordinance with Town of Roxobel
7. **Funding application** – Senior Center General Purpose Funding Application
8. **Settlement** – Tyler Caswell, EEOC

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda in its entirety with no discussed changes or clarifications. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Discuss new timeline for Republic Services proposed franchise amendment and extension of the landfill host agreement, and establish timeline of required advertising and public hearings

The new public hearing date for Republic Services and the proposed franchise amendment and extension of the landfill host agreement will now take place on Monday, September 10th during the Board's regular meeting. The hearing has been advertised per NC General Statutes.

Discuss designation of new revenue from quarter cent sales tax for school teacher supplemental pay, if approved by the voters

At this time, several members of the Bertie County Board of Education were introduced including Chair Bobby Oceana, Vice Chair Emma Johnson, and Board member Norman Cherry.

The Board of Commissioners briefly discussed their desire for this initiative to be widely advertised and for the voters to be fully educated on this topic before the election on November 6th. The Board recommitted their support for this new revenue to be used for teacher supplements so that Bertie County can better compete for the best teachers.

Mr. Sauer noted that an insert was being drafted to be placed in with revaluation notices in the coming weeks and that this would provide a good introduction to the initiative to those that may not have been aware of it when voting during the May election.

For the record, the Board formally reiterated their support and partnership with the Board of Education that any new revenue from a voter approved, local option sales and use tax increase would be set aside for teacher supplements.

Vice Chairman Wesson noted that Bertie was one of only four counties that had not yet approved a similar measure.

Chair Bazemore stated that it would be a "travesty to not support this," and that "if we want good teachers, we need to have better pay."

Commissioner Trent made the respective **MOTION**. Vice Chairman Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Chair Bazemore requested that the Board of Education consider making a similar motion at their next Board meeting to present a unified front for this initiative.

Tri-County Airport height restriction ordinance, covered area, and properties potentially impacted

The Board briefly reviewed this item as it was previously on a Board agenda. A map of the area as well as a list of property owners was reviewed, and steps would be taken to moved forward with notifying those property owners.

Confirm voting delegate for NCACC Annual Conference – Hickory, NC

Chair Bazemore was selected as Bertie County’s voting delegate for the 2018 NCACC Annual Conference in Hickory, NC later this month.

COUNTY MANAGER’S REPORTS

The County Manager gave no reports at this time.

COUNTY ATTORNEY REPORTS

The County Attorney had no report at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments during this section.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

Chair Bazemore

Chair Bazemore stated that a complaint the Board recently received would be presented to the DSS Board since the Board of Commissioners does not have jurisdiction to address or remedy any of these complaints.

Also, she announced that the road marker honoring Aaron Bazemore will be celebrated on November 12th at 12 noon at the marker itself. Mr. Bazemore died in 1992 after serving as founder and pastor of St. John, the first Church of God in Christ ministry. The church was founded in 1911.

Also, Ms. Bazemore reiterated her enthusiasm for the two recent visits by Governor Roy Cooper and Senator _____ to the Blue Jay community, and noted that Bertie was surely “doing great things.”

Commissioner Trent

Commissioner Trent reported that courthouse construction on the sally port was still on going, and that bullet proof glass would soon be installed for ramp/walkway up to the courthouse entrance. This entrance will also be the only entry and exit point with the latest security advancements upon completion.

Also, Mr. Trent reiterated that the County always seeks local contractors first before considering recruiting contractors or products from outside of Bertie County. This includes the under construction EMS Station One out on County Farm Road where steel was being brought in and placed throughout the recent periods of rain.

To conclude, Mr. Trent also announced that the basketball court for the Blue Jay Recreation Park is also underway.

Commissioner Lee

Commissioner Lee briefly discussed her recent travels to Micronesia for a mission trip to provide medical supplies and support.

Also, as the Chair of the Tri-County Airport Authority Board, she reported that logging was recently completed around the Tri-County Airport to allow for the installation of a longer runway.

Ms. Lee also thanked Vivian Clark for her work with the NAACP on honoring veterans, first responders, and law enforcement personnel as these are causes that mean a lot to her with personal ties to all areas.

Commissioner White

Commissioner White gave no remarks at this time.

Vice Chairman Wesson

Vice Chairman Wesson presented the latest Labor Market Overview update. The update shows that the unemployment rate in Bertie County has dropped significantly from 5.9% in May 2017 to 4.8% in May 2018. Currently, 381 individuals in Bertie County are looking for employment. He also reiterated that many Bertie businesses were looking for employees including the State prison, Bertie-Martin Regional Jail, Perdue Farms, and Abrams in Windsor.

He also reiterated his campaign for the District 1 NC House seat and announced that he just received former President Barak Obama's endorsement.

The Board wished Mr. Wesson luck for the rest of his campaign.

ADJOURN

Chair Bazemore **ADJOURNED** the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Ernestine Bazemore, Chair

Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board