

**Windsor, North Carolina
February 4, 2019
REGULAR MEETING**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met 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
Greg Atkins, 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
Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea
Sheriff John Holley
Detective Ronald Rascoe
Deputy Doug Jernigan

Junior Commissioners: Qudre Joyner

Gene Motley of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald and Sarah Stalls of the Bertie-Ledger Advance were present from the media.

CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Trent called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INVOCATION

Commissioner Lee led the Pledge of Allegiance. Reverend Darren Whitehurst of First Baptist of Kelford delivered the Invocation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nancy Lee of Ted Cherry Lane in Windsor raised concerns about the safety of her street especially as it related to the access of emergency vehicles and school buses.

Donell Bazemore of County Court Lane in the Lewiston-Woodville area reported an incident of a County Water Department vehicle getting stuck on his road, and how he had assisted the driver in freeing the vehicle. He stated that he and his neighbors had done what they could in the past to remedy the road conditions with sand, but that it was not a lasting solution.

Josephine Jenkins of PGR Trailer Court in Lewiston-Woodville expressed similar concerns about the condition of her road.

Detective Ronald Rascoe, representing the Blue Jay Recreation Committee, came forward to thank the Board of Commissioners for their dedication to the Blue Jay Recreation Center. He mentioned that the entire community was very excited for the Center. He also presented a letter to the Board requesting the new center be coined:

Blue Jay Recreation Center
Bart. F. Smallwood, Founder

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** granting the name request. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Anthony Smallwood, also of the Blue Jay Recreation Committee, thanked the Board for all of their help on this project, and for all they do for the Blue Jay and Indian Woods area.

APPOINTMENTS

- (1) **NC General Assembly House of Representatives District One, Rep. Ed Goodwin will address the Board regarding the upcoming legislative session**

Due to an unforeseen scheduling conflict, Representative Goodwin had to cancel his presentation for tonight's meeting.

- (2) **Holland Consulting Planners' Chris Hilbert provided an update for Hurricane Matthew recovery projects, and make recommendations for the Board's approval: 1) Bid approval for two NCDRA-17 projects (Rehabilitation at 526 US13-17 South; Rehabilitation/Elevation scope of work at 514 US 13-17 South; and approval of Amendment to Memorandum of Agreement between Bertie County and the NC Department of Public Safety for the NCDRA-17 program administrated as requested by the Division of Emergency Management.**

Mr. Hilbert gave a brief update about the buy out project. He reported that his firm had received 27 title opinions out of the suspected 34. So far, surveys and appraisals have been received for 12 of those units. Offers will be made in the near future on those 12 houses. Once the offers are accepted, closing generally occurs 30 days later. 9 more units are up next for appraisals.

On the elevation side of the project, the engineer is now under contract, and elevation of the first home on the list will begin this month.

Regarding the NCDRA-17 project, two units that have suffered from repetitive flooding outside of the flood plain are being recommended for rehabilitation and another for rehabilitation and elevation.

Mr. Hilbert is recommending that the County approve the NCDRA-17 projects to the lowest contract bidders (bid summary for both projects is attached).

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve both of the above projects. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Additionally, Mr. Hilbert requested approval from the Board to give the Chairman the authority to sign the amendment submitted by the State regarding the NCDRA-17 program.

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** for the Chairman to sign and approve. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

| Project: Bertie County NCDRA (Rebid) | | Bid Opening Date 12/21/2018 | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Case File # | Occupant/Address | Actual Bid (Tabulated) | Contractor | Recommended Award (X) | Comments |
| Rehab | Williams - 526 US Hwy 13-17 South, Windsor | \$20,825.00 | B&B Construction | X | Low bidder |
| | | \$43,830.00 | Gilbert Everett Builder Inc. | | |
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| Rehab + Elev | Pierce - 514 US Hwy 17 South, Windsor | \$130,000.00 | B&B Construction | | Low bidder |
| | | \$128,800.00 | Gilbert Everett Builder Inc. | X | |
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(3) Bland Baker, Trillium Northeast Director will provide annual update

Bland Baker, Trillium Northeast Regional Director, presented the annual report for Bertie County.

He reported that 790 Bertie citizens were served by Trillium last year. Of those 790, 687 were treated for mental health, 118 for substance abuse, and 87 sought support for intellectual or developmental disabilities.

The cost associated with treating the 790 Bertie residents who sought treatment last year was \$6,835,847.00.

Mr. Baker also discussed the expansion of Trillium’s service area to Columbus County, making their total service area 26 counties which encompasses a population of over 1.4 million citizens.

He also briefly address funding changes as related to standard plans by insurance companies that will be managing a part of the Medicaid dollars, as well as tailored plans which will cover higher risk individuals.

(4) Melvin Powers, Deputy Director, Choanoke Area Development Association (CADA), will present the FY2019-2020 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Anti-Poverty Work Plan

Sallie Surface, Executive Director, and Melvin Powers, Deputy Director of CADA were both present to familiarize the Board with this year's Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Anti-Poverty Work Plan.

Ms. Surface discussed that the program serves as a central hub to connect low-income families with needed resources such as emergency or standard housing support in hopes to achieve self sufficiency.

A community needs assessment, staff analysis of data, County Commissioners among the service area, and Board members are all instrumental in developing each year's work plan.

For 2019, an estimated 17 families would be served under the 2019-2020 funding allocation with an allocation of \$49,341. Ms. Surface noted that this amount is simply a projection, and this number is based on an insufficient State formula.

She also discussed how funding to this program has been gradually cut over the last several years which has impacted all of the counties that CADA serves.

Mr. Powers also alerted the Board that funding was still available to assist families in need with energy share funds as well as emergency food & shelter funds.

Ms. Surface also briefly discussed the recent partnership with CADA's Head Start program and the Askewville Pre-K program.

Commissioner Wesson stated that this partnership was possible because of Better Beginnings for Bertie's Children as it was able to identify children currently in need of Pre-K educational opportunities with available spots that had gone unfilled in years passed.

To conclude, Ms. Surface thanked the Board for all of their support, and encouraged the County to keep advertising the Community Needs Assessment as it assist the organization in tailoring program funding and finding any overlaps or gaps in services.

Commissioner Bazemore expressed interest in being appointed to the CADA Board as she felt it would go hand in hand with her involvement on the Bertie County Poverty Commission.

(5) Choanoke Public Transportation Authority (CPTA), Executive Director, Pamela Perry, will provide annual update

This item was deferred.

(6) Jodie Rhea Tax Administrator will introduce the Revaluation project team and review progress to date

At this time, Jodie Rhea, Tax Administrator introduced the members of revaluation team.

They included: Gary Piner, Gene Roundtree, Renee McGinnis, Paul Kristensen, and Chase Piner.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Commissioner Lee made a **MOTION** to appoint Commissioner Bazemore to the CADA Board per her request. Commissioner Bazemore **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes for Regular Meeting 1-7-19, Work Session 1-14-19, Closed Session 1-7-19 and 1-14-19
2. Register of Deeds Fees Report – January 2019
3. Tax Department Release Journal – December 2018
4. Budget Amendment #19-06

Before a motion was called, Commissioner Wesson requested that the Finance Officer provide additional explanation of requested Budget Amendments in the future. He suggested a more condensed way for the Commissioners to review the needed amendments, as well as explanations for new Commissioners that may be fairly new to the Board.

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

1. Calendar Review:

- Previously advertised: February 18, 2019 – 9:00 AM, Planning Session, Commissioners Room
- NACo Legislative Conference – Washington D.C. – March 2-6, 2019
- Tentative date for March meeting – March 11th

The Board briefly reviewed these calendar reminders.

The Board also reviewed a suggested resolution by VIDANT in support of their endeavors to find solutions for a potential \$40 million loss in hospital reimbursements. The resolution will be submitted to NC legislators, surrounding counties, and hospital leadership. Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to approve the resolution. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Bazemore thanked the Windsor Police Department as well as Bertie County Sheriff's Office for their involvement in the recent MLK Day celebrations. She also discussed an upcoming dinner she will be attending in honor of the NC State Superintendent of Schools. She also discussed the latest workshop she attended for incumbent County Commissioners.

Commissioner Wesson reminded those present of the Black History Month celebration in Windsor on February 16th from 6:00-9:00 PM at the Cashie-Convention Center. The mistress of ceremonies of that event will Dr. Catherine Edmondson, Bertie County Public Schools Superintendent. Commissioner Wesson also discussed that he had been appointed to the East Carolina University School of Business Board of Directors. He will also serve as one of the Keynote Speakers at their March Leadership Conference. His topic of discussion will focus on the importance of diversity and Inclusion as a global business imperative.

Chairman Trent provided an update to the Board about the EMS Building and that it is near completion. Electricity and HVAC are currently up and running, concrete floors will be polished, and that a septic system is due to be installed this week. Weather has played a major role in the delayed opening of this facility.

Commissioner Atkins had no reports at this time.

Commissioner Lee stated that she would be in attendance next week at the Reconnect Rural Urban Forum in Raleigh and that she had received a scholarship to participate.

The Board also thanked those present for allowing the Board to attend the 2019 NACo Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. in early March. This conference always gives the opportunity to meet with many of North Carolina's leaders and to network with other counties to discuss solutions to problems that plague counties across the country.

JUNIOR COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Junior Commissioner, Qudre Joyner, alerted the Board of his concern for his classmates that have been crossing Highway 13 from the new high school to the old high school campus for classes and other activities. He stated that the speed of many vehicles in the area has presented some close calls when it comes to students safely getting across. He has asked for the Board to consider reaching out to NC DOT for their assistance in installing a crosswalk.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS

The County Manager had no remarks at this time.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS

County Attorney Smith reminded the Board of the need for a Closed Session.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Betsy Ruffin expressed the same concerns that others have at tonight's meeting about her road in Kelford.

To respond to all of the concerns the public has presented tonight about road safety and maintenance issues, Chairman Trent noted that the Board would be considering an ordinance at their upcoming Planning Session which could address the needs for better road conditions with the County.

If the Board passes the ordinance, at least one public hearing would be held for citizen input, but that this ordinance would be one of the first of its kind in the State explained County Manager Sauer.

Vice Chairman Atkins thanked the public for presenting their concerns at tonight's meeting.

James Lee of Windsor reported his concern for an abundance of trash building up on the sides of the road on Cow Track Road near Republican Road.

The Board discussed this matter briefly and stated their disfavor in the elimination of a inmate trash collection program that used to assist in matters like this periodically, but that they would try and address the cause of the trash issue purportedly caused by unsecured loads on large industrial trucks.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Bazemore made a **MOTION** for a brief Closed Session pursuant to **N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(4)** to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. The action approves the signing of an economic development contract or commitment, or the action authorizing the payment of economic development expenditures, shall be taken in an open session as well as pursuant to **N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6)** to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of employment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. Commissioner Wesson **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to return to Open Session. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

RECESS

Chairman Trent **RECESSED** the meeting until the Planning Session on Monday, February 18, 2019 at 9:00 AM in the same location.

John Trent, Chairman

Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board