

**Windsor, North Carolina**  
**April 24, 2019**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for a special meeting today at the Roanoke-Cashie River Center located at 112 W. Water Street, Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present:        Ronald “Ron” Wesson, District I  
                  Greg Atkins, District II  
                  John Trent, District IV  
                  Tammy Lee, District III  
                  Ernestine (Byrd) Bazemore, District V

Absent:         None

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
                  Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston  
                  Finance Officer William Roberson  
                  Assistant to the County Manager Dominique Walker  
                  Economic Development Director Steve Biggs  
                  Parks and Recreation Director Donna Mizelle

Facilitator: Robin Payne

Sarah Stalls of the Bertie-Ledger Advance was present from the media.

**INTRODUCTION**

Robin Payne, the facilitator, provided as examples, a review of two Hyde County projects, the Ocracoke Fish House Project and the Community Square Revitalization Project. Both had similar goals for the community and the County as a whole: public access to the water, responsible promotion of local assets, incubate small business development, foster tourism, improve quality of life for residents.

Key to the process of project planning is Branding and Visioning.

**BRANDING**

What is Branding?:

- The goal of Brand development: Identifying a name, logo and tagline.

- The Brand must convey a message to the viewer whether they are looking at a sign, printed materials, or information online.
- The message should capture the assets unique to the project and activities within the project.
- Next steps after workshop: a) design team to develop images, names and taglines  
b) Commissioners to review options and vote.

#### Branding Workshop Q&A:

Users: The residents of Bertie County and the traveling public.

#### Assets Unique to the TGOW Project:

- Public Access to the water
- Eco-tourism capabilities
- World class water system/Bertie Water Hub Sites
- Bertie heritage – Geologic, Native American, African American, Early Settlement, Agriculture, River Systems
- Mix of water, forest, farmland

#### Activities to be held at TGOW:

- Learning Center
- Camping
- Welcome Center
- Swimming
- Kayak, canoe
- Horseback Riding
- Ponds
- Pier for boat rentals
- Family Gathering
- RV Parking
- Bicycling
- Pavilion/Entertainment Stage
- Weddings
- Baptisms
- Ropes Course, zipline
- Hiking
- Star Gazing
- Dog Park in anticipation of I85

#### Unique Imagery of TGOW

- Waterways – focus on the Albemarle Sound
- Sand Cliffs
- Beach with its crescent shape
- Cypress trees with knees
- Spanish Moss
- Driftwood
- Multi-uses
- Flat farmland
- Community
- Albemarle

- Concept of OBX and IBX – possibility of similar for Bertie County?

Goal of TGOW: Nature-based public recreation in perpetuity.

### **VISIONING THE POTENTIAL BEYOND PROJECT BORDERS**

The TGOW Project will leverage a long list of benefits to the community and public both within the project borders but throughout the entire County. The visioning process defines the objectives and the activities necessary to achieve that vision and the many benefits it provides.

The workshop results will be used for grant applications, planning and as a reference for developing outreach.

Assets throughout Bertie County: Assets are defined as attributes, have value to residents and are sought by travelers.

- Settlement by Colonists
- Native American
- African American
- Existing historical and eco-activity sites
- Waterways – Chowan River, Albemarle Sound, Cashie River, Salmon Creek etc.
- Pre-history – Geology (Ocean Life)
- Flora and fauna – Natural eco-system
- Untouched landscape, little commercialization
- Country Roads
- Golf Courses
- Diversified agricultural activity – sage, peanut, cotton, corn
- Clay – ideal for pottery
- Rosenwald Schools
- Wildlife
- Hunting, Fishing, Water sports
- Cottage Industries – Leather, taxidermy, pottery, artists, carvers
- Zoo

Benefits: TGOW provides directly or leverages growth throughout Bertie

- Healthy Living
- Outdoor Recreation Activities for the Community
- Impact throughout the region
- Bertie as a destination
- Job Creation
- Retain existing residents
- Attract new residents
- Improve the quality of life
- Bertie County ideal for attracting educational institutions – Faith-based
- Expanded offerings enhance K-12 curricula
- Economic Diversity good for residents and financial stability of Bertie County  
Government – large industry, ag, small business, cottage industry, tourism
- Farm lifestyle is an attraction/desired way of life
- Community Revitalization
- Process of sharing the vision of TGOW and the benefits throughout all of Bertie promotes civic engagement, unite Bertie

- New Revenue Streams
- Youth Enrichment
- Environmental Enhancement

Objectives: Key areas of project and/or initiative development with action steps noted

- Promote 5 Water Hub Sites – as identified in “From Rivers to Sounds in the Bertie Water Crescent” by The North Carolina Land of Water (NLOW)
  - Windsor on the Cashie River
  - Sans Souci on the Lower Cashie River
  - TGOW/Salmon Creek
  - Weeping Mary on the Roanoke River
  - Colerain on the Chowan River Estuary
- Ensure local visitation to TGOW
  - Transportation
  - Swim Lessons
  - Awareness
- Outreach – Share the vision during the planning phases
  - Via the Faith-based Community
  - Commissioners and Mayors
  - TGOW kick-off welcome event – early summer of 2019
  - Regional Allies
  - Website Development and Social Media
  - White Paper to share with partners and prospective funders, donors
- Funding – Project and for initiative throughout Bertie
  - Grants
  - Occupancy Tax
  - Use and Program Fees
  - Lease of space
  - Ownership of Income producing entities
  - Funding Plan is necessary
- Water Quality
  - Partner with regional organizations in support of improved water quality
  - Develop Best Management Practices (BMP’s)
  - Provide education of public and student base
- Promote Economic Diversity
  - Lodging – B&B’s, Hotels, Motels, By-Owner
  - Gas Stations
  - Hunting Needs
  - Shopettes
  - Water Based Recreation
  - Agriculture – Micro Farms, Value-Added Development, crop diversity
  - Craft/Artisan
  - Shooting Range, Archery
  - Grocery (Larger than convenience store)
- Adaptive Reuse
  - Identify vacant property suitable for commercial activity
  - Tear down dilapidated structures to make way for new
- New Commercial Spaces
  - Identify key traffic routes where commercial activity potential exists
- Address Food Desert – 1 grocery for 740 square miles

- Regional Networking
  - Albemarle Loop
  - Hiking Trails
  - Kayaking
  - Golf
  - Historic Albemarle Tour (HAT)
  - Apply for Federal Designation River Systems
  - Water-based races – bicycle, regattas, triathlons
- Marketing
  - Branding
  - Designations – additional HAT sites, Federal
  - Via Regional Partners
  - Mapping
  - Print Media
  - Visit NC
  - NC Outdoors
  - Traveler Membership – AAA, Camp Clubs, etc.
  - Travel NC
- Infrastructure
  - Tourism Development Authority (TDA)
  - Occupancy Tax Legislation
  - Eco-Lodge
  - An Organization made up of all applicable regional groups
- Liability – As it pertains to TGOW
  - Signage
  - Remove any hazardous debris
  - Research buoys for defining swim area
- Workforce Development
  - Eco-tourism
  - Hospitality/Lodging
  - Small Business
- Shoreline Management
  - Jetty's – Reduce erosion of cliff area