

Windsor, North Carolina
May 2, 2022
COMMISSIONERS MEETING

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for a regularly scheduled meeting today at 6:00PM inside the Commissioners Room, 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was hosted partially in person, and partially via Zoom (conference call). The following members were present or absent:

Present: Ronald “Ron” Wesson, District I
Greg Atkins, District II
Tammy A. Lee, District III
Ronald “Ron” Roberson, District V
John Trent, District IV

Staff Present: County Manager Juan Vaughan, II
Assistant County Manager David Scarborough
Assistant County Attorney Lloyd Smith
Finance Director William Roberson

Staff Present (Zoom): Clerk to the Board LaShonda Cartwright

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Trent called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Ronald “Ron” Wesson gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 MINUTE LIMIT PER SPEAKER)

Clerk to the Board stated there were no public comments.

REPORTS & APPOINTMENTS (A)

1. 2022 Primary Election Update by Board of Elections Chair Michael Freeman

Chairman Trent stated that Interim Elections Director Shelia Holloman will be standing in for Board of Elections Chair Michael Freeman.

Interim Elections Director Holloman explained what the Primary Elections were and then provided the date for the upcoming Primary Elections which will be Tuesday, May 17th.

Director Holloman explained that during this election, voters can choose which candidates they prefer to be on the general election's ballot.

Director Holloman further stated that the purpose of the Primary Election was to narrow the field of candidates for the general election.

Director Holloman provided the board with dates for the Primary Elections, which included deadlines and voting site locations.

Commissioner Lee asked Director Holloman if there has to be a runoff when will that date be.

Director Holloman stated that if there was a need for a second Primary, that would be held on July 26th.

Chairman Trent asked if anyone else had any further questions.

There were no further questions.

2. Council of Aging Updates & Upcoming Events by Director Venita Thompson

Director Venita Thompson stated that on May 13th from 10:30 AM – 1:30 PM the Council on Aging will be hosting an Older American Celebration with the theme “Aging My Way”. Director Thompson stated that she would like for the Board of Commissioners to come out and participate in this upcoming event.

Director Venita Thompson stated that on May 27th from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM the Council on Aging will be hosting their annual Senior Citizen Resource Fair. Director Venita Thompson stated that she would like for the Board of Commissioners to come out and participate with this event.

Commissioner Trent asked if there were any questions.

There were no questions from the Board.

3. Economic Development Updates & Upcoming Events by Director Steve Biggs

Director Steve Biggs handed out to the Board a sheet that contained information on the buyout of Valley Protein by a company named Darling Ingredients Inc. Director Steve Biggs stated that this information was public knowledge.

Commissioner Trent stated that when Darling Ingredients reached out to him they stated they were keeping things in-house and Darling Ingredients is a very large company that can bring a lot of opportunities to Bertie County.

Commissioner Trent stated that if there were any more opportunities that we could encourage Darling Ingredients to do then the County should let them do it.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs thanked both Commissioner Trent and Commissioner Wesson for being at the Meet & Greet at Scotch Hall, which is now called Occano.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs said that since their meeting last week Occano was looking to expand several different areas.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs stated that Occano was looking as much money as they can Bertie County.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs stated that the new Family Dollar going up is a welcome mat because it is going to also be a Dollar Tree. He then stated that they will be moving out of location at the Food Lion Shopping Center.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs stated that he was very glad to have them in Bertie County.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs gave an update on Project Sparkle. Economic Development Director stated that they are still moving along and hopefully you will begin to see some of the buildings coming down by mid-June.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs stated that Destination by Design was in the County last week and Monday afternoon. They met with Project Consultant Robin Payne and some others that were on the committee and Mayor Hoggard escorted them around and they went to Little Golden Skillet and they stated that was the best chicken that all had eaten in their life.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs that gave the Board the itinerary that he and Destination by Design had while they were here in the County.

Commissioner Wesson stated to Economic Development Director Steve Biggs if any way possible he would love for Destinations by Design to make the connection with the Hope Plantation next time they come to the County.

Economic Director Steve Biggs stated the East Coast Roofing company was moving right along.

Economic Director Steve Biggs stated that High Speed Gear was going to remain at their current location as of right now and they want to remain at that location. He further stated they are happy to be here and things are rolling along and the only thing they need are more people to work.

Commissioner Trent stated that High Speed Gear has been good for the County.

Commissioner Trent suggested to Economic Director Steve Biggs to set up a meeting with High Speed Geer, the Board and the County Manager to see what their needs and how the County might be able to assist.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs stated that he was now working on building a really nice Industrial Park.

Economic Development Director Steve Biggs thanked the Board for their support on the broadband because this is something that the entire county needs.

Commissioner Wesson stated that he still has concerns with having affordable housing in Bertie County.

4. Financial Summary & ARPA Project and Expenditure Report Update by Finance Director William Roberson

Finance Director William Roberson stated that his Financial Summary was through March and March being 75% of the year.

Finance Director William Roberson stated that Emergency Services looked alarming because he did not make those adjustments yet.

Commissioner Wesson asked if they could get the company that does the billing for EMS to give them a projection as where they think we are going to finish at with both segments of the business so that the County can have it in time for the upcoming Budget Session.

Finance Director William Roberson then explained the Financial Summary to the Board. Finance Director William Roberson stated that all of the monies that were outstanding have now been collected.

Finance Director William Roberson stated that the cash line item was to about \$3M from last year this time.

Finance Director William Roberson stated that water was almost at 90% almost reaching what was projected to be received.

Finance Director William Roberson stated that we are still within budget.

Finance Director William Roberson then started his discussion on the ARPA Project.

Finance Director William Roberson stated April 30th was the deadline to file the County's annual report and on April 28th at 3:29 PM our County's report was filed.

A discussion then started on how the ARPA funds should be spent and the guidelines that go along with the spending of the ARPA funds.

Commissioner Wesson asked Finance Director William Roberson how does this money affect what the county does in its budget.

Finance Director William Roberson stated that he could not count those funds until the funds are used.

Commissioner Lee stated that the next half of the funds that come in would have to be used for the broadband project.

Commissioner Trent stated that they should have a sit down at a Work Session and discuss all of this to make sure it all gets worked out.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS (B)

There were no Board appointments at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA (c)

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** that they should table item #3 on the Consent Agenda and handle it at another time. Commissioner Lee **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

1. Approve Tax Release Journal – March 2022

Commissioner Lee made the **MOTION** to **APPROVE** Tax Release Journal – March 2022. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wesson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

2. Budget Amendments

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the Budget Amendments. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Lee. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

3. Deed Transferring School Property from Bertie County to Board of Education of Bertie County
 - a. Aulander Elementary
 - b. Colerain Elementary
 - c. West Bertie Elementary
 - d. Windsor Elementary
 - e. Bertie Middle
4. Contract to Audit Accounts for Bertie County for year Ending June 30, 2022 by Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., PA

Commissioner Wesson made the **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the Letter of Engagement Contract with the auditing accounts with year ending June 30, 2022 Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., PA. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Lee. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

OTHER ITEMS **DISCUSSION AGENDA (D)**

1. Upcoming Meetings
 - a. May 23rd 10:00 AM

Manager's Budget Presentation & Budget Work Session

- b. May 24th 10:00 AM
Budget Work Session Continued

- c. June 6th 6:00 PM
Budget Public Hearing

Commissioner Trent went over all the upcoming meetings listed and asked if anyone has any questions. Commissioner Trent then asked the Board if they were okay with the dates and times schedule for the Budget Presentation, Budget Work Session and Public Hearing.

The Board all agreed with the scheduled times and dates listed above.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS (E)

Commissioner Roberson

Commissioner Roberson did not have any reports.

Commissioner Lee

Commissioner Lee stated that the NCACC District Meeting for Districts I and II will be held at 5:30 PM this coming Thursday at the Chowan Old Courthouse. Commissioner Lee stated that it was not too late to register, she plans on attending.

Commissioner Lee stated that they were going to do Doughnuts with the Veterans on the 11th at 9:00 AM.

Commissioner Lee stated that Windsor's Fire Department will be having their Tee and Sea Fundraiser on the 13th at 6:00 PM.

Commissioner Wesson

Commissioner Wesson stated that the two earmarked grants that Congressman G.K. Butterfield had set up were submitted, one by Robin and one by him.

Commissioner Wesson stated the results of who made the cut was delayed but they will be released by this week.

Commissioner Wesson thanked all the citizens that were able to sit in and be apart of the Governors presentation to him on his Community Service Award.

Commissioner Atkins

Commissioner Atkins did not have any reports.

Commissioner Trent

Commissioner Trent did not have any reports.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS (F)

County Manager Vaughan did not have any reports.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS (G)

County Attorney Johnathon Huddleston did not have any reports.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
(3 MINUTES PER SPEAKER)

Clerk to the Board stated there were no Public Comments.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3)(5)(6) (3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. General policy matters may not be discussed in a closed session and nothing herein shall be construed to permit a public body to close a meeting that otherwise would be open merely because an attorney employed or retained by the public body is a participant. (5) To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating (i) the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease; or (ii) the amount of compensation and other material terms of an employment contract or proposed employment contract. (6) To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, 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 Lee made the **MOTION** to go in to **CLOSED SESSION Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3)(5)(6) (3)**. Commissioner Roberson **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Lee made the **MOTION** to **Adjourn**. Commissioner Roberson **SECONDED** the **MOTION**. The **MOTION PASSED** with a unanimous decision.

The meeting was **Adjourned**.

John Trent, Chairman