

**Windsor, North Carolina
June 16, 2025
REGULAR SESSION**

The Bertie County Commissioners met in Regular Session at 6:00 PM inside the Commissioners room, 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC. This meeting was hosted partially in person and partially via Zoom (conference call). The following members were present or absent:

Present: Chair, Corey Ballance, Sr., District III
Vice-Chair, Lewis Hoggard, III, District I
Ronald “Ron” Roberson, District V
Vivian Saunders, District IV
Michael White, District II

Staff Present: County Manager, Juan Vaughan, II
Assistant County Manager, David Scarborough
County Attorney, Lloyd Smith, Jr.
Clerk to the Board, Tonya Davis
Information Technology Director, Joe Wilkes

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ballance called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Vivian Saunders gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. David Ray from Growing Together Ministry wanted to thank the Board for allowing him to serve on the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail.

APPOINTMENTS AND REPORTS

1. **Introduction of the IT Computer Systems Administrator, Terrance Brown**
IT Director, Joe Wilkes, introduced Terrance Brown to the Board. Mr. Brown is the new IT Computer Systems Administrator.
2. **Introduction of the Case Managers/Employment Specialist for the Local Re-Entry Council**

Gregory Singleton introduced the new Case Managers/Employment Specialists for the Local Re-Entry Council. John Outlaw will represent Bertie and Herford Counties and Emma Nixon will represent Chowan and Gates Counties.

3. Performance Contracting by Dr. Otis Smallwood and Graham Lewis

Dr. Smallwood and Graham Lewis discussed a potential energy savings program for Bertie County Schools, which would allow the district to upgrade facilities using guaranteed utility savings without requiring additional funding. The program, which would save between \$200,000-\$241,000 annually, could generate up to \$4.8 million in capital funding over 20 years. The Board was asked for informal support for the program, which would require a resolution preventing utility budget cuts to enable project funding.

4. Update from Lobbyist Bob Steinburg

Lobbyist Bob Steinburg updated the Board regarding the delayed 2025-2026 biennial budget, which has not yet been finalized due to ongoing negotiations between the House and Senate over tax rates and federal uncertainties. Mr. Steinburg stated that funding will be the same as usual for now. Legislative focus is on Western NC because of the dire needs for that part of the state from the devastation from Hurricane Helene. Mr. Steinburg stated that he does not expect any updates until the end of September.

5. Strategic Plan Presentation, TGOW Phase II (Stage & Pavilion Layout), Choose name for TGOW, Flood Resiliency Contract – Cashie Drainage, Public Comment and Commissioner Approval for Public Access Grant, Travel and Tourism Master Plan, Appointment of TDA Officers by Robin Payne

Robin Payne discussed phase two of the stage and the pavilion layout at the TGOW project. The Board reviewed potential names for the area, narrowing down options to "River Meadow" and "River Landing" being the top picks. Ms. Payne also discussed the need for a registration system for campers and the importance of installing campgrounds to generate revenue for further development.

The Board did not choose a name for the TGOW.

Ms. Payne asked the Board for approval of the Flood Resiliency contract for the Cashie River drainage project with Deelee & Associates. The contract, worth \$281,100, was broken down into two parts: Part A for \$157,500 and Part B for \$123,600. The Board approved Part A, which involves drainage shed modeling and deliverables such as reports and usability studies.

Attorney Smith stated that he read the Flood Resiliency contract for the Cashie River drainage project with Deelee & Associates but had some concerns with verbiage in the contract. Attorney Smith advised the Board that the contract would need to be amended.

Ms. Payne discussed the CAMA grant application for a paved public access from the pavilion down to the Bertie Beach and asked the Board for approval to submit the grant.

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to approve the public access grant application. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Ms. Payne asked the Board to approve the Bertie County Tourism Development Authority Board members: Chair, Lori Orsini, Vice-Chair, Patricia Ferguson, and. The implementation of a new occupancy tax starting July 1 was also addressed, with some questions about its application and collection process.

Commissioner Hoggard made the **MOTION** to approve the Bertie County Tourism Development Authority Board members: President Lori Orsini, Vice-President Patricia Ferguson, and Secretary Kelsey Reside. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **4-0** vote. Commissioner Saunders recused herself from voting do to her being on the TDA Board.

Ms. Payne discussed initiatives from the County's Strategic Plan that identified key assets including downtown areas, main streets, and agriculture. The discussion highlighted the need for capacity building work to support grant applications and business development in vacant buildings.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. ABC BOARD (1 appointment)

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to appoint Timothy Bazemore to the ABC Board. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Chair Ballance. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 3-2vote. Vice-Chair Hoggard and Commissioner Roberson voted nay.

2. Planning Board

District I (Windsor)

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to appoint Mary Davis to District I. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

District III (Colerain)

Vice-Chair Hoggard made the **MOTION** to appoint Patricia Ferguson to District III. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

District IV (Roxobel/Lewiston)

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to appoint Dianne Bazemore to District IV. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

District V (Indian Woods)

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to appoint Carl Bond to District V. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

At Large (2 Seats)

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to appoint Pamela Chamblee and Jawana Brown to the At Large seats. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

3. Rivers East Workforce Development (2 appointments)

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to appoint Devon Saunders and Miles Davis to the Rivers East Workforce Development. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 4-0 vote. Commissioner Saunders recused herself from voting due to Devon Saunders being her son.

4. Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Commission (1 appointment)

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to appoint Pamela Chamblee to the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Commission. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve April 3, 2025 Special Meeting & Closed Session Minutes, April 7, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, May 5, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, and May 14, 2025 Work Session Minutes

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the April 3, 2025 Special Meeting & Closed Session Minutes, April 7, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, May 5, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, and May 14, 2025 Work Session Minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.

2. Approve the April 2025 and May 2025 Register of Deeds Fees Reports

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the April 2025 and May 2025 Register of Deeds Fees Reports. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.

3. Approve the April 2025 Tax Release Journal

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the April 2025 Tax Release Journal. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.

4. Approve Council on Aging Food Service Contract with Trumps Restaurant

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve the Approve Council on Aging Food Service Contract with Trumps Restaurant with a tentative (?)address correction. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.

5. Approval Contractual Agreement between Bertie County Council on Aging & Interim Healthcare-Morris Group, Inc.

Vice-Chair Hoggard made the **MOTION** to approve the Contractual Agreement between Bertie County Council on Aging & Interim Healthcare-Morris Group, Inc. with spelling corrections. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.

6. Approve Agreement for Transportation Services between CPTA and Bertie County

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve the Agreement for Transportation Services between CPTA and Bertie County with spelling corrections. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

7. Approval of Special Project Consultant Contract with Robin Payne

Tabled until next meeting.

8. Approval of FY2025-26 County Budget & Schedule of Fees

Tabled until next meeting.

*****OTHER ITEMS*****
DISCUSSION AGENDA (D)

No other discussions

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Roberson

Commissioner Roberson stated that he had attended a conference in Raleigh last week concerning mental health awareness. Commissioner Roberson suggested that the District Attorney's Office collaborate with the Jail Administrator so that some of the cases can be heard quickly so that the inmates will not be held at the jail for unnecessary extended periods of time.

Vice-Chair Hoggard

Vice-Chair Hoggard reminded everyone of the Juneteenth Celebration in Windsor along with Making Music behind the Windsor Town Hall Center.

Commissioner White

No report

Commissioner Saunders

Commissioner Saunders stated that UNC Chapel Hill will be at the Vitality Center in Lewiston to do a survey on health needs throughout the community on June 21, 2025. Commissioner Saunders also thanked the Board for supporting her as the Chair to the Bertie-Marting Regional Jail Commission.

Chair Ballance

Chair Ballance stated that he is grateful that the Board was able to get the 2025-2026 budget balanced and did not have to go into the educational fund.

COUNTY MANAGER REPORT

County Manager Vaughan reminded the Board that this meeting needs to recessed until 6PM on June 18, 2025. During that meeting the Board may adopt the Budget Ordinance and any other contracts that need to be approved.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Attorney Smith stated that the case of Bertie County vs The Cinderella Corporation is scheduled for August 4, 2025 at 10AM. Attorney Smith cordially invited the Board to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Register of Deeds, Annie Wilson, thanked the Board for listening to her budget concerns at their previous meeting.

Jerry Cowand from Merry Hill stated that he has been considering renting one of his properties as an AirBNB but the county website does not have a lot of information on the site concerning the occupancy tax and the TDA members names and contact information are not available. Mr. Cowand stated that he just wants to know what he will be dealing with before he makes a decision.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to enter into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3)(4)(6). The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to re-enter into open session. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

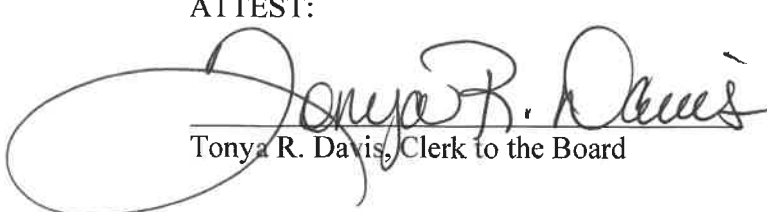
RECESS

The meeting was recessed until Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 6PM.



Lewis Hoggard, III, Vice Chair
Bertie County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Tonya R. Davis, Clerk to the Board