

**Windsor, North Carolina
August 4, 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
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

Vice-Chair Hoggard gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Finance Director, Willie Mack Carawan, provided updates on addressing outstanding audit items and internal control policies, including noncompliance with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Brenda Frick expressed her concerns regarding the \$841,000 county deficient shortfall, county jobs not being filled, and the audit reports not being done in a timely manner. Mrs. Frick stated that the county should not be going through this.

Tuesday Sauer stated that the \$841,000 deficient shortfall is disappointing and to hear that the Sheriff's Department received a 15% raise increase when there is a shortfall in the budget is unacceptable. Mrs. Sauer mentioned numerous other concerns that she had including the county being noncompliant with DEQ.

Jean Kozachuk spoke about her concerns with included the county's financial disasters, the Merry Hill EMS station, dangerous waters at Bertie Beach, and the solar farm project.

Michelle Glliam stated that she is a citizen of Lewiston-Woodville and has purchased a trail park in the area and would like to know if there is an ordinance for abandoned vehicles and property.

Jerry Cowand stated that there is a lack of communication and information between the county and citizens. Mr. Cowand expressed his concerns about the occupancy tax increase to 6%.

Deborah Tayloe, a Bertie County resident, expressed concerns about declining property values and the need for stronger countywide standards to address issues like litter and abandoned properties, emphasizing the importance of attracting new residents and businesses.

Robert Jordan, highlighted the impact of the 6% occupancy tax on small businesses and suggested a more reasonable rate at 3%, while also voicing concerns about reduced convenience sites hours.

Rusty Walton raised issues with the proposed animal shelter design, advocating for more space for dogs to exercise.

APPOINTMENTS AND REPORTS

1. Oath of Office Swearing in of Ronald Wesson to the Rural Infrastructure by Register of Deeds Annie Wilson

Ronald Wesson was sworn in by Register of Deeds, Annie Wilson, as a new member of the North Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority.

2. Introduction of the New Expanded Food and Nutrition Program Educator, Keilah Howard by Billy Barrow

Billy Barrow introduced Keilah Howard to the Board as the new Expanded Food and Nutrition Program Educator at the Cooperative Extension Office.

3. Introduction of the Bertie County Youth Voices Representative, Jayda Walton, by Toniqua Young

Toniqua Young introduced Jayda Walton to the Board as the Bertie County Youth Voices representative.

4. Introduction of the Economic Development Director, Allison Browning, by County Manager Juan Vaughan

County Manager Vaughan introduced the new Economic Development Director, Allison Browning to the Board.

5. 2024-2025 Settlement Report for Real and Personal Property Taxes by Jodie Rhea

The Board of Commissioners reviewed the 2024-2025 Settlement Report for Real and Personal Property Taxes provided by the Tax Administrator, Jodie Rhea.

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve the 2024-2025 Settlement Report for Real and Personal Property Taxes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to approve the Tax Administrator to collect delinquent taxes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

6. Financial Summary by Finance Director Willie Mack Carawan

Finance Director, Willie Mack Carawan, provided the Board with a financial summary that showed a decrease in bank account balances because of large payments for fire trucks, but stated that revenues exceeded expenditures in the general fund. Mr. Carawan presented the DEQ Grant and ARPA Funds requirements to the Board. Mr. Carawan also informed the Board that DEQ requires an Internal Control Policy to be put in place by the county in which he will present to the Board at the next meeting for approval.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. Department of Social Services Board (1 Appointment)

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to appoint Vernetta Henderson to the Department of Social Services Board. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

2. Bertie County Public Library Board (3 Re-Appointments)

Vice-Chair Hoggard made the **MOTION** to re-appoint Irene Walker, Daphne Bond, and Kay Brantley to the Bertie County Public Library Board. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve the April 7, 2025 Closed Session

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve the April 7, 2025 Closed Session Minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

2. Approve the June 9, 2025 and June 12, 2025 Open Session and Closed Session Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chair Hoggard made the **MOTION** to approve the June 9, 2025 and the June 12, 2025 Open Session and Closed Session Meeting Minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

3. Approve the June 2025 Tax Release Journal

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

4. Proclamation in Recognition of Child Support Awareness Month

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve the Proclamation in Recognition of Child Support Awareness Month. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

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

1. NCACC Annual Conference August 21-23, 2025 in Pitt County, NC

County Manager Vaughan reminded the Board of the upcoming NCACC Annual Conference in Pitt County on August 21-23, 2025.

2. Bertie County Schools Convocation, August 11, 2025 at 9:00AM at Bertie High School

County Manager Vaughan reminded the Board that the Bertie County Schools Convocation will be held on August 11, 2025 at 9:00AM at Bertie High School.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Roberson

Commissioner Roberson informed the citizens to be aware of AI generated phone calls.

Vice-Chair Hoggard

Vice-Chair Hoggard stated that he had received a concern from Dail Allen, a citizen of Bertie County, questioning why the County does not have a swimming pool for children to learn how to swim.

Commissioner White

Commissioner White – trash collection and budget shortfalls

Commissioner Saunders

Commissioner Saunders thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and expressing their concerns. She asked for everyone to continue to come to the meetings and voice their concerns.

Chair Ballance

Chair Ballance stated that he heard everyone's concerns.

COUNTY MANAGER REPORT

County Manager Vaughan stated that there is work to be done. County Manager stated that a list of items has been sent to DEQ and there are two outstanding documents that needs to been sent.

ATTORNEY REPORT

County Attorney Smith stated that he had some concerns with the Roanoke River Partners contract for the Bertie Beach campsite rentals. The contract states that Roanoke River Partners will receive 50% of the cost for booking the reservations for the campsites.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ronald Wesson asked the Board to allow the Finance Director, Willie Mack Carawan, to finish his statements from earlier so that everyone can understand the financial situation of the county.

Ron Phillips stated that he is a Merry Hill residence and is irritated by the incompetence or lack of training from certain staff members at the county office.

John Davis asked what were the unbudgeted items, projects, overspends, and unbudgeted spends making the county have a deficient.

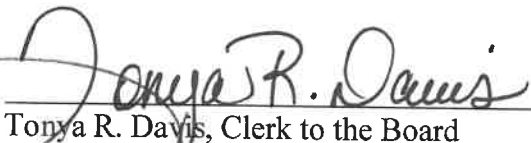
ADJOURN

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a 5-0 vote.



Chair Corey Ballance, Sr.
Bertie County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:


Tonya R. Davis, Clerk to the Board