

**Windsor, North Carolina
May 18, 2026
WORK SESSION**

The Bertie County Commissioners met in a Work Session at 10:00 AM 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, Jonathan Huddleston
Clerk to the Board, Tonya Davis
Finance Director, Willie Carawan
IT Director, Joe Wilkes

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Corey Ballance, Sr. called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

**BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET REQUEST PRESENTATION
BY DR. OTIS SMALLWOOD**

Superintendent Dr. Smallwood and Finance Director Charlene Jones presented the school district's budget request for the 2026-27 fiscal year. The presentation covered local budget requests totaling \$3.8 million, state planning budget estimates of \$17.77 million, and federal planning budget estimates of \$3.23 million. Dr. Smallwood highlighted recent academic achievements including Bertie Middle School coming off the low performing list and increased ACT scores, while also discussing capital outlay needs totaling \$3 million - significantly higher than the typical \$375,000 request due to aging infrastructure across the district.

Additionally, Dr. Smallwood discussed a long-term proposal to consolidate the district's three remaining elementary schools—West Bertie Elementary, Colerain Elementary, and Windsor Elementary—into a single, centrally located elementary school. Dr. Smallwood explained that such a consolidation could reduce long-term operating costs while providing students with a modern educational facility. The estimated cost of constructing a new elementary school is approximately \$42 million, which would require the use of lottery funds and applying for grants before the project could move forward.

AMERICAN RED CROSS REQUEST BY TERRENCE WHITE

Although Mr. White was not present, Dr. Smallwood informed the Board that the American Red Cross has requested assistance in identifying space within Bertie County to store its equipment after it vacates its current location, which is scheduled for demolition. Dr. Smallwood asked the County Manager and the Board to consider available county-owned facilities that may be suitable for this purpose. The Board agreed to explore potential options and investigate appropriate alternatives.

CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST BY ABC BOARD

This item was moved to the June 1, 2026 meeting.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE BERTIE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION BYLAWS AND
FUNDING REQUEST**

On behalf of the Bertie County Fire Commission, County Manager Vaughan presented proposed amendments to the Bertie County Fire Commission Fire Commission Bylaws and discussed changes to the fire service funding structure. He explained that the Windsor Fire Department had requested a restructuring of the fire service funding formula to separate the rural and municipal fire departments operating under one organization and to redirect approximately \$14,500 back to the Fire Commission fund. The proposed bylaw amendments also included revisions to clarify naming conventions, voting membership, and quorum requirements. County Attorney Huddleston recommended several minor editorial changes, including adding the word "voting" to the quorum provision to provide greater clarity and consistency throughout the document.

Following discussion, the Board approved the recommended amendments to the Fire Commission Bylaws, including the clarification of voting membership for quorum purposes. The Board also approved removing \$14,500 from the Town of Windsor's general fund allocation to ensure equitable treatment among all fire districts. Additionally, the Board approved increasing the annual fire tax funding allocation from \$30,000 to \$35,000 for each fire district.

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the recommended amendments to the Fire Commission Bylaws, including the clarification of voting membership for quorum purposes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve removing \$14,500 from the Town of Windsor's general fund allocation to ensure equitable treatment among all fire districts. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve increasing the annual fire tax funding allocation from \$30,000 to \$35,000 for each fire district. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

CONSIDERATION OF THE TRAILER CAMPER #2 BID

County Attorney Huddleston informed the Board that Trailer Camper #2 had received bids and the highest bid came in at \$2,875.00 from Rickey Spivey.

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to accept the \$2,875.00 bid for Trailer Camper #2 from Mr. Spivey. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

**APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENTS BY FINANCE DIRECTOR WILLIE
CARAWAN**

Finance Director Willie Carawan presented Budget Amendment #6 for the Board's consideration. The amendment recognized the receipt of a \$120,000 grant for the Cashie River Drainage and Water Management System project, which requires a local matching contribution of \$37,500.

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to accept Budget Amendment #6 as presented. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

PROJECT UPDATES BY ROBIN PAYNE

Robin Payne provided an update on the shoreline stabilization project at Bertie Beach, reporting that asphalt installation is scheduled to be completed before Memorial Day, followed by vegetation planting along approximately 450 linear feet of the stabilized shoreline. She also presented potential names for the project and asked Board members to submit their top three selections for consideration at a future meeting. In addition, Ms. Payne noted that the economic development components of the County's Strategic Plan would be reviewed during an upcoming work session.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Saunders 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 Vice-Chair Hoggard. 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 Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the County to move forward with the Tall Glass of Water Phase II project by serving as the project manager while hiring a construction manager to oversee construction. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to release the May 5, 2025, June 5, 2025, and July 18, 2025 closed session minutes to the public. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

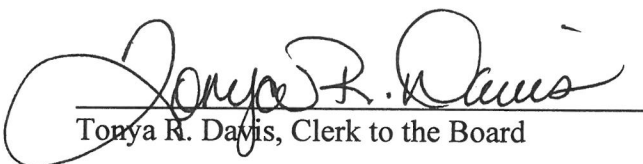
RECESS

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to recess the meeting until June 1, 026 at 10:00AM. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. 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