

**Windsor, North Carolina
July 13, 2026
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, Jonathan Huddleston
Clerk to the Board, Tonya Davis
Network Administrator, Dashawn Clark

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. David Ray gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Marcia Watford announced an upcoming Guns, Gangs, and Young Lives Matter initiative on July 25th, 2026, aimed at addressing gun violence in the community.

Rachel Bellis from PETA urged the board to pass an ordinance banning chaining and implementing standards of care for animals, sharing disturbing examples of neglected animals in Bertie County.

APPOINTMENTS AND REPORTS

1. Presentation of Employee of the Quarter

County Manager Vaughan recognized James Phil Hoggard of the Bertie County Tax Department as the Employee of the Quarter for the second quarter of 2026. In recognition of this achievement, Mr. Hoggard was presented with a plaque honoring his outstanding performance, dedication, and more than 47 years of faithful service to Bertie County and its residents.

2. Introduction of Interim Director of NC Cooperative Extension Bertie County, Lisa Smith

County Manager Vaughan introduced Interim Director Lisa Smith to the Board of Commissioners and citizens in attendance. Mrs. Smith provided an update on the department's operations and informed the Board that efforts were underway to move forward with the recruitment and hiring process for a permanent director.

3. Real Property Fraud Alert System Update by Annie Wilson

Annie Wilson, Register of Deeds, presented information on the county's new Real Property Fraud Alert system, a free service designed to help protect property owners from potential real estate fraud. She explained that the system allows individuals to register to receive notifications whenever a document is recorded in the Bertie County Register of Deeds Office under their name, providing an added layer of protection against fraudulent property transactions.

4. Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Update by Jail Commission Chair Vivian Saunders

Commissioner Vivian B. Saunders, Chair of the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail Commission, provided the Board with an update on matters related to the regional jail. Her remarks included

information regarding current detention officer staffing levels and the Commission's responses to recent public records requests.

Commissioner Saunders also explained that the Bertie-Martin Regional Jail undergoes inspections twice each year by the North Carolina Division of Health Service Regulation (DHSR) and the local fire marshal. She noted that the facility is inspected for compliance with the minimum standards for local confinement facilities as outlined in 10A NCAC Subchapter 14J.

5. TDA Update by Laura Orsini

Laura Orsini presented the Bertie County Tourism Development Authority's annual report, highlighting the Authority's progress in organizational development during its first year of operation. She reported that occupancy tax collections totaled \$21,169.17 for the year and provided an overview of initiatives undertaken to promote tourism and strengthen the county's tourism program.

Mrs. Orsini also presented the proposed Bertie County Tourism Master Plan and requested the Board's approval of the plan as a guiding framework for future tourism development, marketing, and economic growth initiatives throughout the county.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

No appointments

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve the May 2026 Tax Release Journal

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve the May 2026 Tax Release Journal. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

2. Approve the June 2026 Register of Deeds Fees Report

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the June 2026 Register of Deeds Fees Report. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

3. Approve the May 18, 2026 Open and Closed Session Meeting Minutes

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the May 18, 2026 open and closed session meeting minutes. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

4. Approve the FY 2026-2027 Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) County Funding Plan

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the FY 2026-2027 Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) County Funding Plan. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

5. Approve the Fire Commission Funding Request Document to Complete Grant Applications

Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to approve the County Register of Deeds Record Retention and Disposition Schedule. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Hoggard. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

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

1. Discuss the Board of Education's Travel Stiped Request

County Manager Vaughan informed the Board that he had received a request from the Bertie County Board of Education seeking an adjustment to the compensation provided to its members pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-38, which requires the County to provide funding for the Board of Education's per diem, subsistence, and mileage for official meetings.

County Manager Vaughan explained that Board of Education members currently receive a monthly stipend of \$500.00 and do not receive reimbursement for mileage or subsistence expenses. The Board of Education requested the addition of a \$200.00 monthly travel stipend to help offset travel-related costs. The request did not include an increase to the existing \$500.00 monthly stipend, only the addition of the travel stipend. The Board of Education requested that the travel stipend become effective July 1, 2026.

Commissioner Saunders made the **MOTION** to approve the Board of Education's request to receive a monthly travel stipend in the amount of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) in addition to their current stipend. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to approve the Board of Elections members to receive \$150 on election day and \$75 for regular monthly meetings. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Saunders. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

2. Aulander Elementary School Property Sale by Sealed Bids- Due by 3:00 PM on August 12, 2026

County Manager Vaughan informed the Board that the advertisement for the sale of the Aulander Elementary School property had been published in the Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald. He advised that all bids must be submitted to the County Attorney's office no later than 3:00 p.m. on August 12, 2026, in accordance with the advertised bid process.

3. Next Board of Commissioners Meeting, August 3, 2026 at 6:00 PM

The next scheduled Board of Commissioners meeting will be held on August 3, 2026.

4. NCACC 119th Annual Conference, August 20-22, 2026, Durham County

Chair Ballance reminded the Board of the upcoming 199th Annual NCACC Conference in Durham County, NC on August 20-22, 2026.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Roberson

Commissioner Roberson had no report.

Vice-Chair Hoggard

Vice-Chair Hoggard had no report.

Commissioner White

Commissioner White had no report.

Commissioner Saunders

Commissioner Saunders emphasized the importance of unity and collaboration throughout Bertie County, stating that this is a time for all communities to come together, support one another, and work collectively for the benefit of the county as a whole.

Chair Ballance

Chair Ballance extended the Board's heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Bryant Buck, Executive Director of the Mid-East Commission, on his recent passing. He recognized Mr. Buck's dedicated service and contributions to the region and expressed sympathy on behalf of the Bertie County Board of Commissioners.

COUNTY MANAGER REPORT

County Manager Vaughan reported that the Opioid Settlement Meeting held in the Community Meeting Room was well attended and provided an important opportunity for community engagement. He stated that the County is particularly interested in hearing from individuals with lived experience related to opioid use and addiction, as their perspectives can help guide decisions regarding the most effective and beneficial use of opioid settlement funds to address the needs of Bertie County residents.

ATTORNEY REPORT

No report.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Shaheed Shabazz stated his concerns about trash pickup services in unincorporated areas. Mr. Shabazz asked the Board to consider proposing a \$10 fee added to water bills to fund extended municipal services.

Annie Wilson, Register of Deeds, informed the Board that the Bertie County Register of Deeds Office has expanded its services to better serve residents. She announced that the office now provides access to certified out-of-county and out-of-state birth certificates, as well as marriage licenses and adoption birth certificates, offering residents additional vital records services locally.

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 Commissioner White. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

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

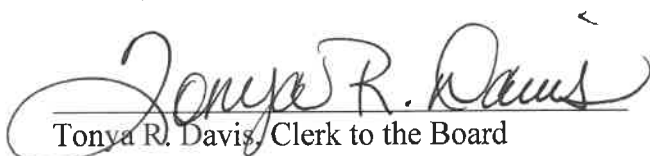
Commissioner White made the **MOTION** to release the June 18, 2025, July 7, 2025, and August 4, 2025 closed session minutes to the public. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Commissioner Roberson. The **MOTION PASSED** with a **5-0** vote.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Roberson made the **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting. 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